

Martin
Heidegger
The
Metaphysics
of
German
Idealism

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The Metaphysics of German Idealism

**A New Interpretation of Schelling's
*Philosophical Investigations into the
Essence of Human Freedom and the
Matters Connected Therewith (1809)***

Martin Heidegger

Translated by Ian Alexander Moore and Rodrigo Therezo

polity

First published in German as GA vol. 49, *Die Metaphysik des deutschen Idealismus. Zur erneuten Auslegung von Schelling*: Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände (1809) © Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, Frankfurt am Main, 1991. 2nd, revised edition 2006.

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Translators' Introduction

The decision to translate Heidegger into English is in many respects a difficult one. Not simply because Heidegger's thought remains irreducibly tied to language and to a certain artisanal craft of writing – a “*Hand-werk der Schrift*,” as he calls it in “The Letter on ‘Humanism’”¹ – but also because English, to all appearances, at least, was not a language Heidegger particularly esteemed. This *would* be philosophically irrelevant were it not for the utmost significance Heidegger himself ascribes to “the essential danger” that the “English-American” language poses, a threat to nothing less than the “shrine” of being in which “the essence of the human is held in store.”² It is difficult to overlook, then, a certain irony at the heart of any English translation of Heidegger, particularly of a Heidegger text, such as *The Metaphysics of German Idealism*, dating back to the early 1940s, when Heidegger's most explicit condemnation of English takes place. Would it not be an ontological disaster to translate the thinker of this ontological disaster precisely into the language in which this disaster is supposed to unfold?

Yet we maintain that such an undertaking is nevertheless in keeping with *another* Heidegger, more open to a non-Greek other and capable of writing – in 1946 – that “in the most diverse ways, being speaks everywhere and always, through *all* language,” even, dare we say, the English language?³

Translated here in its entirety for the first time is volume forty-nine of Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* or “Collected Works,” a volume comprised of a lecture course delivered at the University of Freiburg in the first trimester of 1941 and of material for a seminar held there in the summer

semester of that year. Previously, excerpts from this volume, occasionally revised, had appeared in the appendix to Heidegger's first lecture course on Schelling from 1936, whose 1971 publication (English 1985) was overseen by Heidegger himself.⁴ As indicated by the title of the present volume, here Heidegger again takes up Schelling's 1809 treatise on freedom, which, he argues, marks the peak of German Idealism. Only, this time, Heidegger more explicitly distinguishes his own thought from that of his German predecessor, whose work he situates within the continuum of Western metaphysics. Along the way, taking up Schelling's important distinction between ground and existence, Heidegger provides an extensive history of the concepts of existence and ground, with detailed discussions of Jaspers, Kierkegaard, Hegel, and his own opus magnum *Being and Time* – including its unpublished third division.

The style of the present volume is uneven. Some of the material appears as fully worked-out prose. Other portions resemble notes. We have endeavored to remain faithful to the character of the text, at the expense of occasional inelegance or grammatical incompleteness.

The reader can consult the glossaries to see how we have typically rendered Heidegger's terminology, but there are four sets of terms which we believe it will prove helpful to discuss in advance.

1. We have rendered the noun *das Sein* as "being" and the nominalized present participle *das Seiende* as "beings," "the being," or "that which is." When it is unclear in the English which is meant, as in the phrases "the being {*Sein*} that human Dasein itself is" and "the proper being {*Seiende*} in itself," we have, as here, inserted the German. Heidegger's use of the archaic German spelling *Seyn* has been translated by the obsolete English *beyng*. Since, in Schelling's time, *Seyn*, with a "y," was standard,

we have used “being” when translating authors from that period, although here too we have included the German. The abstract *Seiendheit* appears as “beingness.” Although, in Schelling’s later philosophy, which Heidegger occasionally references, Schelling does not use *Sein* and *Seiendes* in the same way Heidegger does, we thought it important to maintain terminological consistency. In cases where confusion might result, we have interpolated the German.

2. Heidegger uses numerous words for existence and for the human being in particular. In order to keep them apart, we have, with two exceptions, consistently rendered *Existenz* as “existence,” *Ex-sistenz* as “ex-sistence,” *existenzial* as “existential,” *existenziell* as “existentiell,” *Mensch* as “human,” and *Menschsein* as “the being of the human,” “human being” (no article), or, in one instance, “being-human.” (In two cases, in which we include the German, it seemed more appropriate to translate *das Existenzielle* in Schelling as “the existential.”) Unless indicated by a German interpolation, we have, as in point 1, left *Dasein* and *Da-sein* in the original. In § 11, θ , Heidegger claims this term is “*untranslatable*,” although he does provide – translating from within German, as it were – an explanation as to how one should understand it, which we reproduce here:

The word “*Da*” {there, here}, the “*Da*,” means precisely this clearing for *Sein* {being}. The essence of *Da-sein* is *to be* this “*Da*.” The human takes this on, namely, to be the *Da*, insofar as he exists {...}. What is meant is not “*Dasein*” in the sense of the presence of a thing or of the human that is here and there and “*da*”; rather, what is being thought is “*Da-sein*,” that the clearing for being in general essences and is (p. 47).

3. The verb *essences* translates the rare verb *wesen*, which, in its noun form, *Wesen*, means “essence.” Although *Wesen* can refer to a being, as in the term *Lebewesen*, “creature” or “living being,” we have either translated it as “essence” or, when not, supplied the German, since this is a crucial term for both Heidegger and Schelling. Heidegger occasionally accentuates the verbal character of the word with the noun *Wesung*, which we have translated by “essencing.” “Presencing” and “to presence” translate *Anwesung* and *anwesen*.

4. Heidegger exploits the etymology of numerous words built on the root verb *stellen*, “to place.” *Darstellen* appears as “presenting” or, when hyphenated, as “presenting forth”; *Vorstellen* appears as “representing” or, when hyphenated, as “re-presenting,” although one should bear in mind that it also has the literal spatial sense of “placing before”; *Herstellen* appears as “producing”; and *Zustellen* as “delivering.”

Since Heidegger uses both parentheses and square brackets, we have placed all of our notes and interpolations in curly brackets. We have also included, in the margins, the pagination of the original German.⁵ For foreign phrases that cannot readily be found in a lexicon, we have provided common translations in footnotes. For individual Greek and Latin words, we have supplied, at the end of the volume, a lexicon with typical translations. Readers consulting the lexicon should bear in mind that it is intended as a resource for beginning to work through Heidegger’s own use and interpretation of these words, not as a replacement or definitive rendering.

Following Anglophone conventions, we have italicized foreign words and phrases. When Heidegger himself emphasizes them, or when the words are already emphasized in material he is quoting, we have added

underlining. In his citations of Leibniz, several words are written *gesperrt*, spaced out for emphasis. We have retained this spacing in order to distinguish it from other types of emphasis. Words appearing in Greek script have been transliterated.

We would like to thank Katie Chenoweth, Tobias Keiling, Richard Polt, Philipp Schwab, Tim Steinebach, and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on the translation.

Ian Alexander Moore
Rodrigo Therezo

- [1.](#) Martin Heidegger, "Brief über den 'Humanismus,'" in *Wegmarken*, Gesamtausgabe vol. 9, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976), p. 344.
- [2.](#) Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymne "Der Ister,"* Gesamtausgabe vol. 53, ed. Walter Biemel (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1984), pp. 80-81.
- [3.](#) Heidegger, "Der Spruch des Anaximander," in *Holzwege*, Gesamtausgabe vol. 5, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977), p. 338 (emphasis added).
- [4.](#) Martin Heidegger, *Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit (1809)*, ed. Hildegard Feick (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1971) / *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1985).
- [5.](#) Martin Heidegger, *Die Metaphysik des deutschen Idealismus. Zur erneuten Auslegung von Schelling: Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit*

zusammenhängenden Gegenstände (1809),
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Introduction: The Necessity of a Historical Thinking

§ 1 Schelling's Treatise as the Peak of the Metaphysics of German Idealism

According to the announcement,¹ we will deal with *the Metaphysics of German Idealism* here. We shall attempt to do so by way of an interpretation of Schelling's "Freedom Treatise." We have thus singled out an isolated writing of *one* single thinker from this epoch. This procedure is in order if we generally limit ourselves to learning about only this text of this thinker, thereby becoming familiar with a limited sphere of the thinking of German Idealism. Yet this procedure becomes questionable as soon as there lurks in the background the claim to think through, by way of such a path, "*the metaphysics of German Idealism as such.*" This claim will guide us nevertheless.

But then the intended one-sided approach requires a particular justification. How else should this be accomplished than by a knowledge of what is thought in this isolated treatise by Schelling? In this, we already presuppose that this isolated treatise reaches the peak of the metaphysics of German Idealism. However, the earliest we can discern this is at the end of a completed interpretation, or perhaps even only after a *manifold* interpretation.

When is it the case that this apparently isolated and arbitrary path is justified and even necessary?

1. If Schelling's treatise is the *peak* of the metaphysics of German Idealism.

2. If all the essential determinations of this metaphysics are borne out in this treatise.

3. If, *at all*, the essential core of all Western metaphysics is able to be exposed in complete determinacy on the basis of this treatise.

2

The procedure therefore remains violent, at least at the beginning. Put more precisely: the procedure always appears violent to the commonplace opinion that only the frequently mentioned “historiographic completeness” provides the guarantee for the knowledge of history. But *perhaps* this opinion is *only* an opinion, an assumption that is ungrounded, or poorly grounded, or even altogether ungroundable in terms of the essence of history. Perhaps that is so. In order to raise this conjecture to the level of certainty and, in this way, to justify our undertaking, we would admittedly have to engage in a consideration whose extensive scope and difficulty hardly take a back seat to an interpretation of the selected treatise. For it would have to be shown that, and in what way, the historicity of the history of thinking is unique, that this history can, to be sure, look like historiographic reflection, but in truth has, rather, an essence of its own and also does not coincide with what one in this field otherwise tends to oppose to historiographic presentation, namely, “systematic” reflection.

These brief indications already make clear that, at the beginning, our undertaking remains surrounded by a tangle of different sorts of misgivings and all too easily misleads one to untangle and iron them all out prior to the proper work, thereby deferring, however, the proper work of interpretation time and again. In order to avoid this danger, there is evidently only one good way out, namely, to begin

blindly with the elucidation of Schelling's treatise and to trust that some benefit will come of it.

§ 2 Historical Thinking, Historiographic Explanation, Systematic Reflection

This seemingly "natural" carefreeness would certainly be allowed to guide us if it were *only* a matter of drawing out what Schelling meant. To be sure, the correct rendering of his thought already requires enough of our ability to think. And yet - thinking it once again does not already guarantee that we *ourselves* would presently also be those who think, in the sense of those whom we call thinkers. But we are not willing to renounce this. Why not? Out of some stubbornness and will to thought? That would be too little, essentially too little, to let us persevere with thought.

3

But from where else can a necessity come to us? If we could reckon this necessity up for ourselves of our own accord, as it were, it would, then, not be a necessity that compelled us. Are there, then, mysterious experiences in play, which destine us to persevere with thought and to awaken a thinking which questions? This can suffice least of all in the realm of thought; here, cold audacity alone has the word. But this, too, is again only an assertion, which, moreover, takes it to be already decided that we are actually placed into a necessity to think. We appear thus again, only in another direction, to rush ahead endlessly on the path of misgivings. And is it not by now already clear that misgivings {*Bedenken*} most of all hinder us from thinking {*Denken*}?

Then, *as a point of fact*, everything hinges precisely on “making” a beginning in thought without having any misgivings. But should we then still engage with “the historiographic” at all? If not, where should we begin? How insignificant the aforementioned misgivings – regarding the restriction to a particular text of a single thinker – now seem in relation to the objection that, in reflecting on the metaphysics of German Idealism, we are already running after something past and “orienting” ourselves “historiographically.” This sort of orientation contains, after all, the admission that philosophy would only be the historiographical making-present of its past, which it admittedly must be when it no longer finds “a measure or rule” in itself. Schelling expressed himself clearly enough on this matter in the final paragraph of his Freedom Treatise (415):²

If the dialectical principle, that is, the understanding which is differentiating but thereby organically ordering and shaping things in conjunction with the archetype by which it steers itself, is withdrawn from philosophy so that philosophy no longer has in itself either measure or rule, then nothing else is left to philosophy but to seek to orient itself historiographically and to take the *tradition* as its source and plumb line [...]. Then it is time, as one intended to ground our poetry through acquaintance with the literature of all nations, to seek for philosophy a historical norm and foundation as well.

4

But Schelling turns against this time and says:

The time of merely historiographical faith is past, if the possibility of immediate cognition is given. We have an older revelation than any written one – nature. (Ibid.)

Yet does this hold straight away for our time as well? Or is this time - our time - a different one? Which law, then, requires that thinking conform to its time? Or is thinking untimely, and indeed always and necessarily so? But how could this be the case, if the untimely were but the inversion of the timely - a still fiercer dependence on "time" { "*Zeit*" }? In accordance with what should "an age" { "*Zeitalter*" } be determined in order for it to be definitive for a thinking? But how, if essential thinking first decides an age in what is most proper to it, and does so without this age having or being able to have a public consciousness of its own historical essence? But then this decisive thinking must in turn be so ordinary that it cannot lose itself to a past epoch, so as to reckon up from this epoch what is necessary for the present, making what is necessary conform with the present. That reckoning up is the essence of "historicism"; and this making-conform is the essence of "currentism" { "*Aktualismus*" }. Both belong together. They are the sometimes overt, sometimes covert enemies of decisive thinking (see [§5](#)).

5

If, however, as our undertaking suggests, we do *not* abandon the historical reflection on the metaphysics of German Idealism - but perhaps first introduce it, in fact, and thereby nevertheless act only from the *one* necessity { *Notwendigkeit* } to think in the sense of essential thinking - then that is a sign that our necessities are different, different because the need { *Not* } has become a different one. Or is it perhaps even the *same* need, not the need of an age, not the need of a century, but the need of two millennia, the need arising from the fact that, ever since then, thinking has been "metaphysics"? Perhaps this need has meanwhile become more pressing, which does not preclude that it has become even less visible. Indeed, our thinking, when it attempts to reflect on German Idealism

historically, is not a historiographic orientation; but neither is it “immediate cognition” in the manner of the metaphysics of German Idealism. The thinking that has become necessary is a *historical* thinking. An actual attempt should clarify what this means.

We will therefore now leave all misgivings about our undertaking to the side; we will, however, attend to how they resolve and sort themselves out in due course. For a long time to come, we will perhaps not be able to distinguish historiographic explanation from historical thinking. Yet this we shall keep in mind, namely, that the historical thinking attempted here can be subsumed neither under philosophical-historiographic explanation nor under “systematic” reflection, nor under a mixture of both. It suffices if we glean from what has been said, even if only in broad strokes, the manner in which we do not arbitrarily and blindly take up Schelling’s treatise so as to publicize it for erudite ends.

Several tools of the trade are necessary for the work of interpretation. But all this remains obtuse if we do not question and think from out of what presses and determines us, no matter how confused all this may be, and how beset it may be with habits of thought that have converged from often unknown sources and impetuses.

6

§ 3 Elucidations of the Title of the Treatise

Schelling’s treatise bears the title: “Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and the Matters Connected Therewith.” It appeared in the year 1809 as the final part of a collection of investigations that Schelling had already published earlier and that were

selected from the totality of his existing publications in order to serve as an introduction to the “Freedom Treatise.”

Cite the four preceding parts (do not at first go into the “works” and biography):

- I. Of the I as Principle of Philosophy, or, On the Unconditional in Human Knowledge (1795)
- II. Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism (1795)
- III. Treatises on the Elucidation of the Idealism of the Doctrine of Science (1796–1797)
- IV. On the Relation of the Fine Arts to Nature: An Academic Speech (1807)

The text of the Freedom Treatise will be cited according to volume and page numbers of the edition of Schelling’s *Sämtliche Werke*, 1856–1861, fourteen volumes.³ The Freedom Treatise can be found in volume VII, pp. 336–416. These page numbers are printed on the inner margin of the edition of the *Philosophische Bibliothek*.⁴

7

The title of the treatise: *philosophical* investigations: “*philosophical*”? – *zētēsis*; “*freedom*”: arbitrary topic? freedom of the will? Kant; “*human*”: essence of the human; “*essence*”: inner possibility (formal concept) and *ground of actuality* (*centrum*),⁵ the absolute; “*and {...} therewith*”: with the “*essence*” (that is, with the absolute); “*connected*”: nexus – *sustasis* – *system*; “*matters*” {*Gegenstände*}: (formally) what *stands* {*steht*} ‘there’ in such a *standing-together* (*system*); “*the*”: not a few – arbitrary ones, but, rather, eminent ones.

Depending on how human freedom in its essence belongs to this nexus or even determines it, the treatise on human freedom either is an isolated and separate reflection or comprises the “innermost centerpoint of philosophy ...” (Preface 1809, p. VIII).

The treatise goes into the center of the system as the “*system of freedom.*”

In his Berlin lectures on the history of philosophy, Hegel also dealt with Schelling’s philosophy - he calls it “the latest interesting, true shape of philosophy.” He assesses the Freedom Treatise in particular as follows:

Schelling published a separate treatise on freedom that is of a profound, speculative character, but it stands apart and for itself; in philosophy, nothing that stands apart can be developed.⁶

To what extent Hegel’s assessment is mistaken, to what extent it hits the mark, this can be gleaned already from the precise elucidation of the title. What stands “apart and for itself” here in this treatise is the *center* of the system, that is, it does *not* stand *apart*. Quite the contrary, what stands apart in this system is not carried out, above all not in the manner that Hegel demands and has himself actualized. The question must remain open as to what extent Hegel’s demand conforms with and does justice to Schelling’s system.

8

§ 4 The Organization of the Treatise

As typeset, the treatise is, to be sure, organized into segments and paragraphs. At important places we also find remarks on the present state of the investigation; but an

explicit table of contents and organization are lacking. We should not let this belie its rigorous internal structure.

We shall begin by providing here the missing table of contents; it can serve as a guide to a first understanding.

Introduction (336-357)

On the Question of System in General and the Question of the “System of Freedom” in Particular by Way of the Clarification of the Concept of “Pantheism”

Primary Investigation (*middle of 357 - beginning of 415*)

- I. The Inner Possibility of Evil (middle of 357 – beginning of 373)
- II. The General Actuality of Evil as Possibility for Particular Evil (373 – beginning of 382)
- III. The Process of Particularization of Actual Evil (382–389)
- IV. The Shape of Evil Appearing in the Human (end of 389 – middle of 394)
- V. The Justification of God’s Divinity in View of Evil (394–399)
- VI. Evil within the Whole of the System (399 – beginning of 406)
- VII. The Highest Unity of Beings as a Whole and Human Freedom (406 – beginning of 415)

9

Concluding Remark (415/416)

On the Only True System

From the basic contents of the primary investigation and its trajectory, it becomes clear that the Freedom Treatise is a treatise on "*evil*." Thus, "human freedom" and "evil" must be essentially connected; and this connection must essentially determine how beings stand together as a whole - the system.

§ 5 Brief Excursus on a Further Misgiving (the Historiographic - the Current - That Which Has Been)

In reflecting on what is treated in the Freedom Treatise, we find our way into essential relations to that which "is"; or, better put, we experience that and how we "are" in such relations. We experience and consider that which "is." Fine; but what merits the distinctive designation: it "is"? What is called "being"?

This chair over there - "is." Is that which "*is*," in the manner of the chair? With this, do we have a yardstick for measuring what "is"? All sorts of things "are" in such a way; whence the measure of being? Is there a measure here at all? The relation to that which "is," and even the essential relations: difficult to experience. Wherein lies the ground of the "difficulty"? (the abandonment of beings by being - the forgetting of being by the human)

So, not only, nor first of all, to learn about something or other; not some sort of "instruction" about learned matters. But surely still less a snatching at what is "practically" useful and "germane to life."

If, however, a reflection on essential relations in which "we" stand - we, here and now - why then a treatise from a bygone age?

Historicism! The making-present of the past – and explaining on the basis of what lies further back in the past { *Vor-vergangenem* }; flight into a holding onto the past; *counting on ways out of the present*; “restoration” – “eschatology”; (the essence of historicism is not mere “relativizing”);

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Or, alternatively,

Currentism – as its flipside; *to settle the past on the basis of its value for the present*, and the “future” as the extended “present” (its plans); – “untimeliness” as the fiercest dependence on time; constantly staring at it. Even the relation to the “future” changes nothing if the latter is but the forward extension of the present – indeed of a present in its congealment. (See, for example, Pinder, *Essential Features of German Art*).⁷ The calculative game between “past” { *“Herkunft”* } and “future” { *“Zukunft”* } as enslavement to an uncomprehended present; whereby relativism is apparently supposed to be abolished.

Moreover, {see} *Schelling* himself (see above, p. 3) in the final remark of the treatise.

Nevertheless: not a historiographic and up-to-date explanation of something past, but rather a historical confrontation with what has been { *Gewesenem* } and thus with what first essences { *Wesendem* }.

The aforementioned misgiving subsides; but it can also persist { *bestehen* } – but not for those who under-“stand” { *ver-“stehen”* } otherwise.

1. {TN: i.e., the advertisement about the lecture course made available to students.}

- [2.](#) {TN: For bibliographic information, see § 3 and the relevant note in that section, below.}
- [3.](#) *Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schellings sämtliche Werke*, ed. Karl Friedrich August Schelling (Stuttgart and Augsburg: J. G. Cotta, 1856–1861).
- [4.](#) F. W. J. Schelling, *Das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit. (Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände, 1809)*, newly edited with an introduction, index of names, and index of subjects by Christian Herrmann (Philosophische Bibliothek, vol. 197) (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1925). {TN: Translations of Schelling’s treatise come, with occasional modifications, from Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt’s rendering in F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006). This edition also includes the pagination of *Sämtliche Werke*.}
- [5.](#) {TN: Heidegger writes both *Centrum* (without italics) and *Zentrum*. We distinguish them in the translation by italicizing the former. *Mitte* appears as ‘center.’}
- [6.](#) G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart 1928), p. 682 [XV, 682], *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Hermann Glockner, vol. 19. [In what follows, all Hegel citations and references are based on this edition.]
- [7.](#) Wilhelm Pinder, *Wesenszüge deutscher Kunst* (Leipzig: Seemann, 1940).

Part I

Preliminary Reflection on the Distinction Between Ground and Existence

§ 6 The Core Section of the Treatise: The Distinction between Essence Insofar as it Exists and Essence Insofar as it is Merely Ground of Existence

We shall initially skip over the introduction and consider the section with which the *primary investigation* begins (357-364). This section, as we have divided it, contains, at its core, the entire treatise, and it does so *in two respects* (see also below, [p. 75](#)): *first, as regards content* – insofar as the entire realm of questioning is unfolded, and insofar as what is asked about (the freedom of the human) is outlined. *Then, however, also as regards the mode of thinking*: for *how* thinking happens in these investigations comes most acutely to the fore here. Thus, we first practice here that thinking which is also already required in order to think through the introduction appropriately. (“*Dialectics*” – in unconditional thinking, and especially “identity”-thinking.)

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Nevertheless, the interpretation of this section will not resolve all of the difficulties, given that we are able to follow it out in thought {*nachdenken*} only in a first attempt; *thus*, once again, the last for comprehension.

This core section is itself organized in turn.

It begins with a paragraph that indicates, as a preliminary remark: (A) what is being treated: the distinction between “ground” and “existence”;¹

(B) two things are said about this distinction, if we disregard the “polemical” side remark which belongs in the context of the introduction.

Regarding A: What is being treated? A distinction, namely the distinction “between essence ... and essence....”

Between two “essences”?

Two sorts of essence?

What does essence mean here? Beings; entities { *Wesen* } belonging to nature, to the household, to the state, to the realm of banditry; that which respectively is, with the stress placed on its being.

It is not two essences that are distinguished, but rather *one* essence – that is, *any essence* in a twofold “view”; “view” – but not only that of a viewing observer. What is distinguished cannot, however, be separated; yet what can be separated is, in turn, the *entire* twofold essence each time.

The fact that every essence is distinguished nevertheless has peculiar consequences, so that even disparate and manifold “essences” are each time disparate and manifold in accordance with the *distinction* that determines these respective essences. What does this distinction mean?

Let us first, however, consider what is said about the distinction in a preliminary manner.

Regarding B: What is said about this distinction?

1. That the “philosophy of nature of our time has first advanced” it “in science.”
2. The Freedom Treatise “is grounded” on this distinction. Regarding 1, (a) The “philosophy of nature of our time” = Schelling’s “philosophy of nature”; the latter is not a philosophical reflection on the region of “nature” – for instance in Kant’s sense (doctrine of categories) – but rather, contra Fichte: nature itself is, in itself, the absolute; “the visible spirit” (subject-object). “Nature” is “the