

SCHELLING

[FROM LARRIMORE'S POE COMPILATION]

F. W. J. "Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human

Freedom and Related Matters." trans. Priscilla Hayden-Roy in *Philosophy of German Idealism*. ed. Ernst Eichler (The German library, vol. 23) (New York: Continuum, 1987). 217-84: 27r1-5.

In the divine understanding there is a system; however, God himself is not a system, but a life, and therein alone lies the answer to the question concerning the possibility of evil with reference to God, . . . All existence requires a condition in order for it to become actual, i.e. personal, existence. God's existence, too, could not be personal without such a condition, except that he has this condition within himself, not outside himself. He cannot annul this condition, for in that case he would have to annul himself; he can only overpower it through love and subordinate it to himself for his glorification. In God, too, there would be a ground of darkness if he did not integrate the condition into himself, combining himself with it as one, in absolute personality. Man never obtains control of this condition, although in evil he strives to do to; it is only loaned to him; is independent of him; thus his personality and selfhood can never rise to perfect act. This is the sadness clinging to all finite life and if in God, too, there is a condition which is at least relatively independent, then within him there is a well of sadness, which, however, never comes to actuality, but serves only for the eternal joy of overcoming. Hence the veil of despondency spread over all of nature, the deep, indestructible melancholy of all life. Joy must have sorrow, sorrow must be transfigured into joy. Hence whatever comes from this niece condition or from the ground does not come from God, even though it is necessary for his existence. Neither can it be said that evil comes from the ground, or that the will of the ground is its originator. For evil can arise only in the innermost will of one's own heart, and is never accomplished without one's own deed. The solicitation of the ground or the reaction to the supercreaturely awakens the appetite for the creaturely, that is, one's own will, but at awakens this will only so that an independent ground exist for the good, and so that it be overpowered and penetrated by the good. ...

Thus whoever asserted that God himself willed evil would have to seek the ground of this assertion in the act of self-revelation as creation, even as it has often been supposed that he who willed the world also had to will evil. However, in that God brought the disorderly births of chaos into order and spoke his eternal unity into nature, he much rather acted against darkness, and opposed the ruleless movement of the unintelligent principle with *the* word as a constant center and eternal lamp. The will to create was thus immediately but a will to give birth to light, and thereby to the good. But evil came into consideration for this will neither as a means, nor even, as Leibniz says, as a *eonditio sine qua non* of the greatest possible perfection of the world. It was neither the object of divine decree, nor even less of permission. But

the question why God did not prefer to forgo self-revelation altogether, since he necessarily foresaw that evil would result, at least attendantly, indeed does not deserve a reply. For this would amount to saving in order that there be no opposition to love, love itself should not be. i.e., the absolutely positive should be sacrificed for what has existence only as an opposite. and the eternal should be sacrificed for the merely temporal. We have already explained that self-revelation in God must be viewed not as an unconditional, voluntary act, but as a morally necessary act in which love and goodness have overcome absolute inwardness. Thus if God had not revealed himself for the sake of evil, evil would have triumphed over the good and love. The Leibnizian concept of evil as a *cowling sine qua non* can be applied only to the ground, so that it arouses the maturely will (the principle of evil as possibility) as the condition under which the will of love alone can be actualized. Furthermore, we have already shown why God does not resist the will of the ground or annul it. This would amount to God annulling the condition of his existence. i.e., annulling his own personality. Thus us order for there to be no evil, there would have to be no God.

After all this the question soli remains: does evil come to an end, and how? Does creation have a final intent at all, and if so. why is it not achieved immediately; why is the perfect not there from the beginning? There is no answer to this except the one already given: because God is a life, not merely a being. But all lift has a fate and is subject to suffering and becoming, To this, too, God has subjugated himself freely, ever since he separated the world of light from the world of darkness in order to become personal. Being becomes sensitive to itself only in becoming. In being there is no becoming, to be sure; rather being itself is posited as eternity in becoming; but in actualization through opposition there is necessarily a becoming. Without the concept of a humanly suffering God, which is common to all the mysteries and spiritual religions of ancient times, all of history remains incomprehensible: even Scripture distinguishes periods of revelation, and posits a time in the distant future when God will be all in all, i.e., when he will be entirely actualized. The first period of creation is, as has been shown earlier, the birth of light. Light or the ideal principle is, as an eternal opposite of the dark principle, the creating word which redeems the life hidden in the ground from non-being, raising it from potential to act. Spirit rises above the word, and spirit is the first being which unites the worlds of darkness and light. subjugating both principles to itself for the sake of actualization and personality. The ground, however, reacts against this unity and asserts the initial duality, but only towards ever heightening intensification and the final division of good and evil. The will of the ground must remain in its freedom until all has been fulfilled, all has become actual. If it were subjugated before this, then good and evil together would remain hidden within it. However, the good shall be raised from darkness to actuality to dwell immortally with God: but evil shall be separated from the good to be cast out eternally into non-being. For this is the final intent of creation: that whatever could not be for itself, should be for itself by being raised from darkness, as from a ground independent of God, into existence. Hence the necessity of birth and death. God yields the ideas. which within him were without autonomous life, to selfhood and non-being, so that by being called forth from this into life, they may be in him again as independent existences. Thus in its freedom the ground effects separation and judgment

(thesis). and precisely therein it effects the complete actualization of God. For evil, when it is entirely separated from the good, no longer *is* as evil. It had been able to act only through the (abused) good that was in it, itself being unconscious of it in life it still enjoyed the forces of external nature with which it attempted to create, and it still participated mediately in God's goodness. But in death it is divided from all that is good, and while it remains a desire, as eternal hunger and thirst for actuality, it can never step out of potentiality. Thus its state is one of non-being, a state in which its activity, or what strives within it to be active, is constantly being consumed. Thus the restitution of evil to the good (the restoration of all things) is in nowise required for the realization of the idea of a final, comprehensive perfection, for evil is evil only insofar as it goes beyond potentiality, but when reduced to non-being, or to the state of potential, it is what it always should be: a basis, subjugated, and as such no longer in contradiction to God's holiness or love. Thus the end of revelation is the expulsion of evil from the good, the explanation of evil as complete unreality. On the other hand, the good that was raised from the ground is combined with original good in eternal unity; those born out of darkness into light join the ideal principle as limbs of its body in which is the perfectly actualized and now completely personal being.