

The Subject as Substance: Bruno Bauer's Critique of Stirner

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Abstract: Bruno Bauer's response to Max Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (1845) is here examined closely, for the first time. In working out their concepts of freedom and self-determination, the Hegelian Left stressed different elements in the synthesis which Hegel himself had effected. Options appear that can be described as generally Fichtean or Spinozistic; each has distinct political and ethical implications. Bauer's claim is that Stirner "Unique One" is to be understood as a version of Spinozist substance, which fails to rise to the Fichtean-Hegelian standpoint of rational subjectivity which his own thought represents. The paper endorses Bauer's conclusion that essential differences between his republicanism and universalism, as opposed to Stirner's anarchism and particularism, can be traced to divergent receptions of Fichte and Spinoza, as mediated through Hegel. With references to Hegel's critiques of Spinoza, the paper reconstructs Bauer's argumentation on the inadequacies of a merely substantial view of freedom.

The period 1780 to 1830 witnessed an unprecedented explosion of philosophical creativity in the German territories. In the thinking of Kant, Schiller, Fichte, and Hegel, new conceptions of freedom, right, society, and politics arose in rapid succession, offering powerful diagnoses of modernity. What is less clear is the status of the subsequent era, the *Vormärz* preceding the Revolutions of 1848. In this period, the role of the Hegelian School has often been deprecated: its members have been depicted as mere epigones, whose writings are at best of historical interest, or as intermediaries between Hegel and Marx, notable only, perhaps, for their eccentricities and theatrical posturing, but insubstantial in themselves, and floating free of political context.¹

Recent research has decisively challenged this image of the Hegelian School, developing both the philosophical and political dimensions of its

thought, and depicting it, in all its variety, as a creative response to the emergence of modern society.² The mutual polemics among Hegelians in the *Vormärz* were both intensely philosophical and intensely political. In working out their concepts of freedom and self-determination, the Hegelians drew on a variety of sources, not only directly from Hegel, but also from Kant, Fichte, and Spinoza. The synthesis of diverse sources led to markedly distinct political positions, and to distinct ethical programmes, whose differences can be traced at both the meta-ethical and the normative levels.³ Here I want to focus on the contrast between two such programmes, those of Bruno Bauer and Max Stirner, while offering illustrative comparisons with Ludwig Feuerbach and other Hegelians. I will endorse Bauer's conclusion that essential differences can be seen to be rooted in the Fichtean and Spinozist elements of Hegel's thought, but will seek to buttress Bauer's contentions where his argumentation is allusive or incomplete. While the Stirner-Bauer connection has elicited recent interest,⁴ Bauer's response to Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (1845) has nowhere been examined. The 2009 bicentennial of Bauer's birth seems an apt occasion for such an investigation into the lesser-known aspects of his work. *Der Einzige* can be read as a sustained critique of Bauer's position,⁵ and hence his own response is all the more important to understand.

As Bauer presents the issue in his 1845 critique of Feuerbach and Stirner, the Hegelian heritage splits along two axes, the Fichtean and the Spinozist, which Hegel himself had attempted to fuse.⁶ The criticism runs as follows:

Hegel combined Spinoza's substance and the Fichtean *Ich*. The unity of both, the tying together of these opposed spheres, the oscillation between two sides, which permit no rest and yet in their repulsion cannot get clear of each other, the breaking out and prevailing of the one over the other and of the other over the first, constitute the particular interest, the epochal and essential, but also the weakness, finitude, and nullity of Hegelian philosophy. While for Spinoza, all reality is substance, "that which is thought or comprehended in itself and through itself, that is, whose concept does not require the concept of another thing from which it can first be constructed"; while Fichte posits the absolute self, which develops out of itself all the activities of spirit and the manifold of the universe; for Hegel the point is "to conceive and express the true not as substance, but also as subject." On the one hand, he takes seriously the sublation of the finite. . . . He demands above all, that the self in its finitude "renounce itself in deed and reality [*Wirklichkeit*]," "as the particular against the universal, as the accident of this substance, as a moment or a distinction which is not for-itself, but which has renounced itself and knows itself as finite." On the other hand, though, absolute spirit is nothing but the concept of spirit, which grasps and develops itself in the only spiritual realm that there is, that long train of spirits in history. "Religion, political history, the constitutions

of states, arts, sciences, and philosophy" are nothing but "works of thought"; the work of previous history has no other purpose than "to recognise self-consciousness as the only power in the world and in history," "the strivings of spirit through almost 2500 years of its most strenuous labour" have no other aim than [for spirit] "to become objective to itself, to recognise itself: *tantae molis erat, se ipsam cognoscere mentem.*"

This contradiction, that the absolute is the best and highest, the whole, the truth for man, the measure, the essence, the substance, the end of man, but that again man is the substance, is self-consciousness, is the result of his own activity and owes his existence to his deed, his historical struggles, therefore necessarily making the absolute into something limited [*beschränkt*],—this contradiction, in which the Hegelian system moved back and forth, but from which it could not escape, had to be dissolved and annulled. This could only occur if the posing of the question how self-consciousness relates to absolute spirit, and absolute spirit to self-consciousness, were not silenced with half-measures and fantasies, but were made for ever more impossible. This could be done in two ways. Either self-consciousness has to be consumed again in the fire of substance, that is, only the pure substantiality relation can persist and exist; or it has to be shown that personality is the creator of its attributes and of its essence, that it lies in the concept of personality in general to posit itself as limited, and to sublimate again this limitation, which posits itself through this universal essence, since this very essence is only the result of its inner self-differentiation, of its activity.⁷

This analysis allows Bauer to trace out the topography of the Hegelian School, and to situate its members in their appropriate location. Those who pursue the Fichtean route, notably (and by his own reckoning almost uniquely) Bauer himself, stress the principles of singularity and autonomy, developing the dialectic of the will, which Hegel presents in the *Philosophy of Right*,⁸ as requiring the conscious, *individual* enactment of universal interests. This is a doctrine of rational self-legislation, in contrast to arbitrary will or divine command. For Bauer, universality is not a property merely distributed or shared unselfconsciously among its many particular bearers, but must be regarded by individuals as having normative status: it is taken up or posited by them, and is directive of action. Autonomy is the principle of spontaneity or choice, disciplining itself under universal rules. One of the alternate, Spinozist routes from Hegel, followed by D. F. Strauss and Ludwig Feuerbach, leads to the affirmation of universality as community or shared interests, while placing less emphasis on the formal side, the element of individual willing. In the political application which Feuerbach gives of this idea (together with Karl Marx, and much more explicitly than Strauss), it leads to the notion of a collective substance or species-being, damaged by particularistic and egoistic activities, but potentially retrievable through changes in social relationships.

Both Bauer's Fichtean and Feuerbach's Spinozist readings of Hegel stress the importance of universality, a general will which transcends immediate interests and desires. Both tendencies represent distinct ways of determining the universal, and thus rifts appear in the textures of *Vormärz* Hegelianism, as the components of the Hegelian synthesis break apart.

While they admit an immanent, not a transcendent or other-worldly universality, Strauss and Feuerbach remain fixed in what Bauer calls a substantiality relation.⁹ On this account, Strauss' interpretation of the gospels as a product of the mythological consciousness of the early Christian community reproduces the pantheistic substance metaphysic of Spinoza, as a kind of collective (un)consciousness.¹⁰ Relatedly, Feuerbach's materialism, proclaiming the primacy of being over thought, immerses individuals (as sensuous beings) in nature or the community, from which they derive their values through a kind of osmosis. For these Spinozistic Hegelians, the universal is substance, not subject: more precisely, it occurs in the element of extension, a spreading out of universality or collective interest to encompass the diverse, the particular. They conceive the universal, or species-being, as merely generic: a given, shared property, and not a spontaneous, personal acquisition. Here, individuals are merely unreflective accidents or moments of the whole, exhibiting its properties without having critically internalised them. Bauer insists, rather, that we conceive individuals as spontaneous rational beings capable of relating to and adopting general interests through their own consciousness and acts, and in their own way. Leaving the idea of individual agency underdeveloped, Strauss and Feuerbach thus miss the implications of the Kantian-Fichtean turn in Hegel's thought.¹¹ Bauer describes this approach as mysterious, because it invokes a universal which is immediately effective, without showing how it operates, how it is taken up and internalised by individual self-consciousness. Lacking the decisive moment of individuality, of form, which, Bauer contends, self-consciousness alone can provide, this alternative Hegelianism dissolves individuals into an amorphous whole, an undifferentiated mass.¹² Universality as (Spinozist) extension remains mute, passive, and untransparent.

Spinoza's substance, although the dissolution of the religious representation, is still the absolute in the form of a thing. Only in self-consciousness do the separated relations, all oppositions and contradictions, come into their unity, that is, they know themselves as one, since each one knows the other as itself. Self-consciousness does not proclaim itself as the absolute, but as infinite movement through all forms and oppositions of its creations, [it is] only the development of itself.¹³

To understand this claim, we must recall the dialectic of substance as Bauer had developed it in the philosophical argumentation contained in his inflammatory work of 1841, *Die Posaune*. Here he maintains that the concept of substance undergoes a complex evolution driven by changes in the understanding and practice of freedom. Unaware of its own architectonic powers, consciousness first posits a transcendent, absolute substance, as an otherworldly divine being. This is the essence of the alienated religious consciousness; in this dialectical illusion, self-consciousness abases itself before substance, its own unknowing product. The advance achieved by modern philosophy is to re-integrate substance from its otherworldly domain into the life-activities of individuals. As an expression of the principle of universality, an intrinsic component of the rational will,¹⁴ substance may not simply be dispensed with, but has imperative force: individuals must sacrifice themselves to substance, breaking the stubborn particularity of the will by recognising a universal as immanent in the world, and the self as an accident of this substance. In his idea of a single substance of which individuals are merely modes, Spinoza attains this standpoint, and following him, Feuerbach; but consciousness must not remain at this level, a necessary but transient stage. The next step in emancipation is to recognise substance not as a given, independent, self-causing and self-sufficient power, but as a mutable record of historical struggles, the result of subjects' own deeds. Subjectivity is the principle and essence of substance, of shared commitments and values, and of the general interests that bind the self-legislating individuals who posit them.

Bauer's ethical idealism, echoing Fichte, insists that the accord of thought and being must be achieved not by passively mirroring nature or the community, but by subjective activity, both moulding the self and transforming the external world. The formal characteristics of substance, of the ethical bonds among individuals, and the institutions which express them, must be seen as the product of self-consciousness, of the creative work of individuals and their strivings for rational freedom. So conceived, ethical substance is not self-causing, but caused: sustained and changed by struggle and insight. On this reading, the Spinozism of Feuerbach and Strauss consists in their failure to understand spontaneous formative action: the ethical substance of which individuals partake is of their own making. The universal, conceived in a Spinozist manner, is merely distributive; its operation is mythical because it is taken to work immediately upon its individual bearers, who are reduced to its passive substrate.

Against this Spinozistic view, it would appear that the position of Max Stirner offers certain analogies, at least, to Bauer's own: the stress on the individual, on the formative and active, rather than on the generic and collective, would seem to place Stirner on the Fichtean side of the divide within the Hegelian School. Indeed, Stirner seems to assert as much, comparing his own idea of the self to Fichte's. Stirner claims merely to have naturalized the Fichtean transcendental self, turning the absolute I into the finite:

When Fichte says, "the ego is all," this seems to harmonize perfectly with my thesis. But it is not that the ego is all, but the ego destroys all, and only the self-dissolving ego, the never-being ego, the—finite ego is really I. Fichte speaks of the "absolute" ego, but I speak of me, the transitory ego.¹⁵

If we accept Stirner's self-characterisation, the differences between him and Bauer, though significant, would lie primarily at the normative level, because they would stake out for themselves a broadly similar Fichtean meta-ethical ground. Normatively, it is clear that Stirner stands for particularism, not universalism, viewing any putative universal as necessarily a transcendent power holding the (particular) self in thralldom; whereas Bauer distinguishes true and false universals, defining the former as the immanent striving of reason to realise itself in the world, and thus to further the cause of emancipation, while the latter merely feign universality, or treat it as an exclusive privilege. Bauer thus sees freedom as self-transformation in light of universal purposes, not as immediate gratification or self-assertion. Politically, this translates into a difference between Stirner's anarchism (described more precisely in recent research as a weak *a priori* anarchism),¹⁶ and the republican rigorism of Bruno Bauer.¹⁷

Yet though these divergences are already profound, their sources lie much deeper. In his response to Stirner, Bauer stresses less these obvious normative differences than the meta-ethical dimensions of the dispute. He reads Stirner not as a perhaps unorthodox fellow Fichtean, but as a Spinozist, differing from Feuerbach, but like the latter reducing subjectivity to substance. This is substance in another sense from that of the universality of ethical bonds, but as thing-like fixity, givenness, and imperviousness to critique; both senses, however, are the legacy of Spinoza. The claim is that neither Feuerbach nor Stirner has an adequate conception of subjectivity, and that this defect can be traced to different aspects of Spinoza's system, as retained by Hegel. Bauer's argument in "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs," his most extensive engagement with Stirner's views, is polemical and allusive. I exercise some interpretative freedom in reconstructing it, but I hope to

clarify its essential philosophical core in a way consistent with the indications given in the text.

As Bauer explains, Spinozist substance possesses not only the attribute of extension (taken up anew by Feuerbach and Strauss), but also thought. It is the latter, the Spinozist attribute of thought, that Stirner represents. This is what marks his uniqueness.¹⁸ Speaking of Stirner's "*Einzigiger*," Bauer elaborates:

The Unique One [*Der Einzige*] is substance, driven to its greatest abstraction. This unsayable I, that names do not name and properties [*Eigenschaften*] do not express,¹⁹ that has its content neither in the physical nor in the psychic world, and even less in both; [this I] that pitches its dwelling neither in heaven nor on earth, but hovers and wavers about, God knows where in the air; this I, the most elevated, mightiest and most powerful egoism of the old world, but therefore also powerlessness itself, the egoism which shows how null and fleeting, flaccid and lifeless the egoism of the old world was and had to be; this I, not self-supporting and world-directing self-consciousness, not the self-sustaining personality, not the man who binds and looses with his own strength and rules the world, because he has the power in his own hands, but rather the I that needs hypocrisy, deceit, external force, petty persuasion to support its egoism—this I is substance at its hardest, "the spook of all spooks," the culmination and apex of a past historical period.²⁰

"The Unique One is substance." This is the idea that must be expounded if we are to understand Bauer's critique of Stirner, and the meta-ethical differences between them. Let us first examine Bauer's explicit argument, and then look for deeper philosophical motives that remain tacit in his text. Bauer describes Stirner as the leader of the crusade conducted by the old world of egoism against the emergent new principle of universal self-consciousness and autonomy, of which Bauer positions himself as the main proponent. While Stirner effectively attacks political and social liberalism for vacillation and in consequence, he is impotent against the force of Bauer's own *critical* liberalism; as the old world is historically transcended, the egoism upon which it is based, and which Stirner uncritically retains, is powerless in face of the new.²¹

What does the Unique One make of him [the critic Bauer]? "No," he cries, "nothing will come of this. My ownness belongs to me. This I keep; you may not take it away from me, critic." He stretches his limbs and lies down. "Hurrah! Now I'm set. Rid of everything, free of everything. All things are nothing to me."—The Unique One is the last recourse of the old world, the last hiding place from which it can launch its attacks on a formation wholly different from it, and therefore unrecognizable by it.²²

Contrasting his own idea of the “self-positing personality” to the “inwardly dominated criticism” of Stirner, Bauer indicts Stirner’s willingness to have recourse to “hypocrisy, deceit, external force” in pursuit of egoistic satisfactions, and concludes that while the Spinozism of Feuerbach evolves (problematically) into various schools of socialism, Stirner’s own principle is sterile, and incapable of further development.²³ The principle of ownness seeks to exempt a privileged region of selfhood from critique; it is the affirmation of pure particularity. “My ownness belongs to me. This I keep; you may not take it away from me, critic.” Stirner upholds a contentless, abstract self-relation as immune from criticism, as an exclusive right²⁴ and a privilege not to have its claims contested or legitimated through rational criteria; this is the hard, rigid, substantial core that Bauer identifies in Stirner’s conception of ownness. Bauer describes such fixed, stubborn affirmation of the self as Spinoza’s substance in its most abstract guise, the bare thought of selfhood. Here he applies to Stirner Hegel’s own characterization of Spinoza.²⁵ But such selves, Bauer claims, are not yet *subjects*. This is the key idea.

Behind the illusion of fixity and detachment, Bauer reveals a broad historical configuration wherein the Stirnerian *Einzigster* is unwittingly shaped. He depicts Stirner as a partisan of the old (pre-Revolutionary) order of particularity; this order, as we are informed in other Bauerian texts, was constituted (in both religious and secular guises) by the split between the universal and the particular, in which the universal was appropriated by a single instance.²⁶ This arrogation is, for Bauer, the common feature of both religious orthodoxy and political absolutism. When the One claims the absolute as its own exclusive privilege, the Many are reduced to pettiness, insignificance, and evil.²⁷ The generation of a transcendent absolute or hypostasis divorced from the concrete activities of individuals leaves them prey to egoism, the consequence of the projection of universality into a beyond. Stirner simply decapitates this structure but leaves its basis intact, the particulars untransformed. Their egoistic tendencies are not simply natural or merely given, but are a historical *result* of the renunciation of universality in religion and politics. For Bauer the solution is to re-integrate the universal, not merely to deny it; this permits the particulars to transform *themselves*, to acquire the standpoint of universal self-consciousness, and not simply to remain unchanged, mired in particularity. Here egoism is understood as the failure to elevate oneself to universality, or to become a subject. While Feuerbach recognises the necessity of an immanent universal (even while misconceiving it fundamentally),

Stirner advocates pure particularism. Despite his ultra-radical posture, he is a defender of the old order, not an advocate of the new (post-Kantian) principle of rational self-determination.

This argument, however, does not yet establish Stirner's Spinozism. There are two obvious senses in which Stirner's theory seems far removed from Spinoza's. The latter holds that there is only one substance, 'that which is thought or comprehended in itself and through itself, that is, whose concept does not require the concept of another thing from which it can first be constructed.' Finite bodies and minds for Spinoza are modes or exemplifications of this unique substance, in the attributes of extension and thought, respectively. Stirner, however, takes these modes or finite selves as themselves substances, as self-causing centres of thought and action. "Ownness" captures the definition of substance: to be the sufficient cause of one's own representations and actions. But there are now as many substances as there are egoists. Each finite self for Stirner is potentially such a substance. Stirner's alleged Spinozism then cannot clearly lie in any monism or pantheism; it would have to be shown that the multiple substances continue to act in Spinozistic ways, which still need to be defined. Secondly, by conceiving Spinoza's modes as substances, Stirner then construes the momentary thoughts and actions of these substances as their own modes; but he changes the relationship which Spinoza had posited between these metaphysical levels. Spinoza insists on continuity, the *presence* of substance in its attributes and modes. Though upon further analysis the difference here will prove more subtle, this expressiveness of Spinoza disappears in Stirner's rendition. Perhaps reflecting Romantic influences,²⁸ Stirner depicts the *Einzigiger* as ineffable in his acts, as maintaining an attitude of ironic detachment toward them,²⁹ and as simply appropriating and discarding external objects, rather than seeking expression through them.³⁰ The modes are not expressive of the substances, but are simply available for momentary consumption and annihilation. One must not be tied or overly committed to one's own modes, or they become fetishes, 'spooks,' possessing the self and limiting its freedom. Again, Stirner's alleged Spinozism seems elusive from this point of view. How then can Bauer's claim that Stirner's *Einzigiger* is a substance, but not a subject, be justified?

We can distinguish two elements in Bauer's critique: the conception of substance as mere abstract self-relation, as falling short of the requirements for rational subjectivity; and the problematic relation of such a substance to its modes. Such a self fails to achieve rational autonomy, and is heteronomously

determined. It is here, in reconstructing Bauer's compressed account, that interpretative latitude is required, drawing on Hegel's exposition of Spinoza to supply Bauer's missing arguments, and seeking parallels to Stirner's claims.

First, let us examine the conception of substance as immediate self-relation. It would appear that in Bauer's analysis, consistent with Hegel's own, the representation of substance differs essentially in each of its two attributes, of extension and thought. In extension, substance means universality as spread out or shared among its modes; here the principle of a positive universality (that is, a universality with a content, including particulars within it) can be retained, as in Feuerbachian species-being, even if it is, as Bauer contends, formally inadequate. In the attribute of thought, however, substance appears as contracted or concentrated, not distributed; it is the mere abstract idea of a contentless self-relation. In this attribute, universality is relinquished as any kind of shared or collective property, or as anything objective. As Hegel puts it of Spinoza, it is a "simple equality with itself."³¹ As a bare *thought* of self, or self-relating, it opposes itself to all content, which is external or indifferent to it. This is another version of the *nuda subjectivitas* of which Bauer speaks critically in his first text, *De pulchri principii* of 1829;³² it contrasts with the authentic subjectivity which realises itself in its acts, which finds itself concretely present in its deeds, its reason manifest and duplicated in the sense-world. Abstract self-relation is moreover *immediate*, because it presupposes that the self, as merely given, is true and valid, just as it stands.³³ Because it does not expose itself to the fire of criticism, it is in its essence static and immobile, even when indulging in a flurry of external activity. This immediacy, this lack of a critical relation to itself and its possible objects, marks it as the "absolute in the form of a thing."

Like the Spinozian self, Stirner's *Einzigiger* is an abstract self-relation, without content. Thought, and not extension, is fundamental here: the essence of freedom, or "ownness," is the mere affirmation of the self in its unreflective immediacy. In Stirner's own words:

No concept expresses me, nothing that is designated as my essence exhausts me; they are only names. Likewise they say of God that he is perfect and has no calling to strive after perfection. That too holds good of me alone.

I am owner of my might, and I am so when I know myself as unique. In the unique one the owner himself returns into his creative nothing, of which he is born. . . . If I concern myself for myself, the unique one, then my concern rests on its transitory, mortal creator, who consumes himself, and I may say: All things are nothing to me.³⁴

There is a kind of universality here, but it rests on the repugnance of the self to any content, its purely negative or exclusive self-relation. In his account of the dialectic of the will and its complex inner structure, Hegel had referred to this process as the will's abstractive capacity, its ability, as a moment in its self-determination, to withdraw from any given particularity or content; but although it must perform this act of abstraction, the will must not remain in isolation, but must relate selectively to internal desires and external objects, taking them up in the element of thought, while attaining concreteness through this relation. A one-sidedly abstractive attitude generates the fanaticism and nihilistic destruction which Hegel decries in Jacobinism. But he also finds this naked conception of self, devoid of content, to be the essence of the Spinozist attribute of thought; and Bauer for his part identifies the same attitude in Stirner. The self is here substantial in its thing-like fixity and its immediacy, its lack of inner self-differentiation between its universal and particular aspects. This conclusion is reinforced when we consider how this substance acts, how it establishes transient relations to its modes. Here we encounter the concept of *conatus*, central in Spinoza, and, if the analysis is correct, in Stirner.

To be a substance for Spinoza is to be the cause of oneself.³⁵ Such causality is exerted through the *conatus* or the striving to maintain oneself in being.³⁶ Activity for Spinoza means that "we are the adequate cause" of an internal or external occurrence; passivity means that "we are only a partial cause" of an effect.³⁷ Such activity is conceived by Spinoza, borrowing from the mechanistic physics of his day, as a kind of inertial motion. Action is propelled not by rationally selected ends, but by internal tendencies, which manifest themselves simultaneously as displacement in space (extension) and as appetite (thought).³⁸ For Spinoza, as one commentator puts it, "ends do not shape motive tendencies. Rather, for him, an 'end' is simply that toward which a thing's constellation of inertial tendencies 'directs' it. . . . As long as a body continues to move along according to its inertial tendency, it acts; and when it is deflected from its inertial path, it suffers or is acted on."³⁹

The application of this idea to Stirner, as an account of his concept of "ownness," is highly illuminating, and I take it that this is what Bauer is proposing. The *conatus* of Spinoza is the secret of Stirnerian "ownness." The "*Einzigster*" acts in Spinozistic ways. This appears from three features, in particular, which characterise "ownness": constant (inertial) motion; the

juxtaposition of power and freedom; and the substitution of inertial tendencies for rational ends as sources of action.

Constancy of motion is described thus by Stirner: “[The individual] exists only in raising himself, he exists only in not remaining what he is; otherwise he would be done, dead.”⁴⁰ Once in motion, we continue in motion until some obstacle blocks our path. Our ability to sustain our motion is measured by our power, and the nature of that power depends on our own internal constitution, which I read as the nature of our inertial tendencies. In a passage which evokes Bauer’s complaint against hypocrisy and deceit, Stirner contends:

I secure my freedom with regard to the world in the degree that I make the world my own, “gain it and take possession of it” for myself, by whatever might, by that of persuasion, of petition, of categorical demand, yes, even by hypocrisy, cheating, etc.; for the means that I use for it are determined by what I am.⁴¹

Power is moreover distinct from freedom; it is not merely a claim upon an unattainable object, as Stirner thinks political and social liberals believe, but the concrete ability to eliminate obstacles; again, I gloss this as maintaining our inertial motion. Defining ownness as one’s whole being and power, Stirner here comes close to explicitly identifying the self with the *conatus*.

Freedom is and remains a longing, a romantic plaint, a Christian hope for unearthliness and futurity; “ownness” is a reality, which of itself removes just so much unfreedom as by barring your own way hinders you.⁴²

Ownness, on the contrary, is my whole being and existence, it is I myself. I am free of what I am rid of, owner of what I have in my power or what I control. My own I am at all times and under all circumstances, if I know how to have myself and do not throw myself away on others. To be free is something I cannot truly will because I cannot make it, cannot create it: I can only wish it and—aspire toward it, for it remains an ideal, a spook. The fetters of reality cut the sharpest welts in my flesh every moment. But my own I remain.⁴³

Replicating Spinoza’s distinction of activity and passivity, Stirner claims that we are our own when we are wholly self-reliant, and not dependent on any external agency which might deflect us from our course.⁴⁴ Further, these tendencies that we deploy are not activated by far-reaching purposes, but by immediate gratification, and their unfolding does not constitute development toward an ideal or an end.

To the egoist only his history has value, because he wants to develop only himself not the mankind-idea, not God’s plan, not the purposes of Providence,

not liberty, and the like. He does not look upon himself as a tool of the idea or a vessel of God, he recognizes no calling, he does not fancy that he exists for the further development of mankind and that he must contribute his mite to it, but he lives himself out, careless of how well or ill humanity may fare thereby.⁴⁵

Most striking here is not the indifference to consequences, but the repudiation of ends, or of teleological conceptions of action. As De Ridder explains:

Stirner grasps the relation between "the Unique One" and "his property" precisely not as a dialectical relation. Property is dissolved in the "finite I," and nothing is elevated and preserved on a so-called "higher plane." In contrast to Bauer's "critical criticism" there was thus never talk of development. For development presupposes a *telos*, an end and a means by which the end can be attained.⁴⁶

The absence of *tele* is at least an indication that we find ourselves in a world of inertial movement, of Spinozistic substance rather than Hegelian subjectivity; and taken together with the ideas of ownness as power and constant displacement, helps to confirm Bauer's insight into Stirner's meta-ethical position. The "*Einzigster*" is *causa sui* in a Spinozist sense. He is a representation of Spinoza's substance in the form of the finite self.

For Bauer, one can be *self-causing* in Stirner's sense without being fully *autonomous*, as autonomy requires that we subject our momentary impulses and our particularity to rational criticism, that we retain universal standards of judgement in light of which we endorse some particular desires and objects, but not others.⁴⁷ The result of the *Einzigster's* immediate, abstract self-relation is that its content is then filled in empirically, and not critically, as momentary impulse directs. This I think is the meaning of Bauer's characterisation of Stirner as advocating an "inwardly dominated criticism"; Stirner's ethic is essentially heteronomous. As Bauer contends elsewhere, "the conception of substance is critical—see Spinoza—but even so falls back again into immediate recognition of the positive—see Spinoza."⁴⁸ For Bauer, the particular, as the material of the will provided by contingent desires and experiences must be submitted to critique, and may not count as immediately valid. Particularity in its various guises is heteronomously shaped by the impress of the existing order, and by the narrow and egoistic material interests which correspond to it. These forms represent spirit sunk in substantiality, and not yet freely self-determining. Autonomy issues from the critique of the positive and the particular, and not from enacting immediate interests. Directed by appetite, the

inertial motion of the Stirnerian self falls short of rational self-determination. Bauer thus opposes to “ownness” a conception of freedom as universalist and critical, and not simply as an idle wish.

Summing up his position on Spinoza, Hegel lays out the criticism that Bauer will also offer of Stirner, and further suggests the resolution of a difficulty that we had noted earlier:

In the system of Spinoza all things are merely cast down into this abyss of annihilation. . . . [Spinoza’s substance is characterised by] rigid motionlessness, whose single form of activity is this, to divest all things of their determination and particularity and cast them back into the one absolute substance, wherein they are simply swallowed up, and all life itself is utterly destroyed.⁴⁹

Hegel’s analysis is highly germane to Stirner’s Spinozist meta-ethical position. We had previously anticipated a potential problem in linking Spinoza and Stirner, in that the former stresses the *expression* of substance through its modes, the latter the *divorce* or incommensurability between them. Hegel here provides the interpretative key: he argues that despite Spinoza’s pantheistic and expressivist intentions, substance *cannot* be present in its modes. Spinoza merely asserts such a continuity between metaphysical levels, whereas in his system all determinacy is actually annulled, because the rigid core of selfhood as Spinoza conceives it cannot genuinely be enveloped in the concrete, but simply remains resistant to it. We can now conclude that Stirner, following his Romantic contemporaries, makes this disconnect thematic. It becomes emblematic of freedom itself; from this perspective, ownness means not to be bound by one’s creations, but to maintain an ironic detachment from them.⁵⁰ Stirner thus makes explicit, as the essence of freedom, what is simply a theoretical failing in Spinoza, the inability of substance to realise itself in its modes. The German Romantics are themselves heirs to Spinoza in various ways:⁵¹ Stirner shares with them the idea that no deed can represent the fullness and creativity of the self. Freedom for the Romantics consists in the recognition of this ontological gap of self and world, and revelling in the difference. This sense of permanent separation and alienation is the essence of Romantic irony, and it pervades Stirnerian “ownness.” In contrast, Bauer approximates the Fichtean position, the ethical imperative to transform the sense-world under the aegis of the rational idea, of rational freedom. Alienation, or the noncorrespondence of thought and being, sets a task for resolution; it does not mark out the permanent limits of freedom.

At the conclusion of his discussion of Spinoza, as the idea of thought taken abstractly, but not in its vitality,⁵² Hegel describes the requirements for further progress in rational freedom. The lack of self-consciousness in Spinoza's system has to be supplied by developments on the side of objectivity (showing that the relation to the modes is not merely negative, but has a positive universality: that is, the recognition that rational subjectivity manifests itself in the world, in the changing patterns of social life and institutions as embodiments of freedom); and by further developments in self-consciousness, where the principle of individuality is seen to contain the universal. This is the programme that Bauer seeks to execute, developing the Fichtean side of Hegel in the process. Bauer depicts the self as mediating the extremes of universality and particularity, each of which both seeks and repels the other. Citing Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion* lectures, he elaborates,

In thinking, I elevate myself to the Absolute over everything finite and am infinite consciousness, and at the same time I am finite self-consciousness, indeed I am this according to my whole empirical determination. . . . I am determined in myself as infinite against myself as finite, and in my finite consciousness against my thought as infinite. I am the feeling, the perception, the representation of this unity and this mutual struggle, I am that which holds together the competing elements, the effort of this preservation and the labour of mind [*Gemüt*] to become master of this contradiction. I am not one of those caught up in the struggle, but I am both opponents and the struggle itself.⁵³

This process is that of rational subjectivity, in contrast to substance, immediacy, and thinghood. Here the moment of conscious universality must be present, not as a 'spook' or a fetish, but as a self-given trait, a necessary component in the dialectic of the will. Bauer insists that critical self-consciousness is not an immediate, particular awareness, but results from a highly mediated, syllogistic process, the creation of singularity as a dialectical unity of particular and universal. The universal divorces itself initially from all given contents or particularity, subjects them to criticism, and then validates only those particulars which pass the test of rationality. The Fichtean language of self-consciousness stresses the active, formal side of this process: the universal is no transcendent force, but is immanent in the subjective actions and judgements of individuals.

The bearers of critical self-consciousness are concrete empirical subjects, but in their universal, not particular characters.

When we employ the category of self-consciousness, we do not mean the empirical ego, as if this had constructed its conceptions [*Anschauungen*] out

of pure accident or arbitrary combinations. . . . Unlike the immediate ego, . . . the developed self-consciousness . . . relates to reality with a wholly different consciousness, a critical consciousness.⁵⁴

The criterion of judgement is no longer immediate or egoistic advantage, but the universal interests of rational subjects who comprehend and transform themselves in the flux of historical becoming.

This transition consists in nothing other than the freeing of the atoms which up till now have been fixed in their own right, but which from now on can only win their equal justification by giving up the immediate rigidity with which they had held fast to their presupposed rights, and by setting themselves in unity with each other through the conquest of themselves. Self-denial is the first law, and freedom the necessary consequence.⁵⁵

This passage from an 1841 text anticipates the failings that Bauer will identify in Stirner four years later: he represents the self as fixed in its own presupposed right (hence confirming that he is part of the old world, where freedom equals privilege and immunity); he rigidly upholds immediate consciousness in place of critical self-awareness; and he is unable to conceive a genuine, expansive universality which would allow individuals to set themselves in unity. The frequent repudiation of self-denial in Stirner's text⁵⁶ finds its riposte here. For Bauer, the particular consciousness must elevate itself to universality as a condition of genuine self-consciousness, freed from determination by alienated, merely given forms of life. This new kind of freedom, universal self-consciousness, requires individuals to disavow their immediate interests and identities wherever these conflict with higher aims. In the *Vormärz*, Bauer defends a comprehensive, non-exclusionary, modern republican freedom as the core of a doctrine of rational self-consciousness. Mere particularism, whether of religious sect, economic interest, national advantage, or Stirnerian egoism, is a vestige of the old order, and not a harbinger of the new.

If, in conclusion, we revert to Bauer's interpretative scheme, it appears basically sound in characterising opposed tendencies within *Vormärz* Hegelianism. It should not, however, be read as a simple dichotomy between Spinoza and Fichte, or as an absolutely faithful rendering of either philosopher, but rather of Spinoza and Fichte as taken up by Hegel, and as bequeathed by him to his successors. Thus different ways are available of combining the Fichtean and Spinozist elements of the Hegelian synthesis. In Bauer, immersion in substance is a necessary precondition to emancipation from it, through self-denial and disciplining of particularity; here is no immediate Fichtean

self-positing, but a historical process of alienation and re-integration, a passage *tantae molis* through Spinozist substance. In Stirner, a basically Spinozist self, directed not by rational purposes, but by its own inertial tendencies, is not without marked Fichtean inflections, as Stirner himself insists. But these are complexities for another day.

NOTES

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1. Typical of the older Anglophone literature are W. J. Brazill, *The Young Hegelians* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970); and Sydney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962).

2. Douglas Moggach, ed., *The New Hegelians: Politics and Philosophy in the Hegelian School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

3. Luca Fonesu, *Dovere* (Florence: Nuova Italia, 1998), pp. 21–42.

4. Widukind De Ridder, "Max Stirner, Hegel and the Young Hegelians: A Reassessment," *History of European Ideas* Vol. 34, No. 3 (2008): pp. 285–97.

5. This is Widukind De Ridder's suggestion in private correspondence.

6. Bruno Bauer (anon.), "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs," *Wigands Vierteljahrsschrift* Vol. III (1845), pp. 86–146. Although this text was published anonymously in *Wigands Vierteljahrsschrift*, the authorship of Bruno Bauer is, I think, firmly established. As stated in the bibliography of Bauer's works by Aldo Zanardo, "Bruno Bauer hegeliano e giovane hegeliano," *Rivista Critica di Storia della Filosofia* Vol. 22, No. 2 (1966): pp. 189–210; and Vol. 21 [sic], No. 3 (1966): pp. 293–327 (here p. 315 and p. 312), the text partially reproduces, and expands, arguments put forward in a prior publication, "Ludwig Feuerbach," *Norddeutsche Blätter* Vol. 4 (October 1844): pp. 1–13; while this earlier article was also anonymously published, Bauer claims it as his own work in his *Vollständige Geschichte der Partheikämpfe in Deutschland während der Jahre 1842–1846* (Charlottenburg: Egbert Bauer, 1847), vol. 3, p. 179, n. 1. For further indications, see the *Marx Engels Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA) (Berlin: Marx-Engels Verlag, 1929), vol. 1, 5, p. xviii; and vol. 3, 1, p. 71. Zanardo indicates contemporary discussions in the *Gesellschaftsspiegel* of January 1846 (cited in MEGA, vol. 1, 5, pp. 541–44). Marx and Engels consider aspects of the text as of unquestionably Bauerian origin in *The German Ideology*, *Marx-Engels Collected Works*, vol. 5 (New York: International Publishers, 1976), pp. 94–116. I am grateful to Massimiliano Tomba and Widukind de Ridder for their assistance in tracking these references.

7. Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs," pp. 86–88.

Hegel hat die Substanz Spinozas und das Fichtische Ich in Eins zusammengefaßt. Die Einheit von beiden, die Verknüpfung dieser entgegengesetzten Sphären, das Oszillieren zwischen zwei Seiten, die keine Ruhe gönnen und in ihrem Abstoßen doch nicht voneinander lassen können, das Hervonbrechen und Überwiegen des Einen vor dem Anderen und des Andern vor dem Ersten bilden das eigentümliche Interesse, das Epochmachende, das Wesenhafte, aber auch zugleich die Schwäche, die Endlichkeit und Nichtigkeit an der Hegelschen Philosophie. Während für Spinoza die Substanz, “das, was in sich ist, und durch sich gedacht oder begriffen wird, d. h. das, dessen Begriff nicht des Begriffs eines andern Dinges bedarf, um aus ihm erst gebildet zu werden,” alle Wirklichkeit ist; während Fichte das absolute Ich aufstellt, das alle Tätigkeiten des Geistes und die Mannigfältigkeit des Universums aus sich entwickelt; kommt nach Hegel alles darauf an, “das Wahre nicht als Substanz, sondern ebensosehr als Subjekt aufzufassen und auszudrücken.” Er macht auf der einen Seite Ernst mit der Aufhebung des Endlichen. . . . Er fordert vor allem, daß das Ich in seiner Einzelheit “in der Tat und Wirklichkeit auf sich Verzicht tue,” “als das Particulare gegen dem Allgemeinen, als das Akzidentelle an dieser Substanz, als ein Moment, als ein Unterschied, das zugleich nicht für sich ist, sondern das auf sich Verzicht geleistet hat und sich als endlich weiß.” Auf der andern Seite ist aber der absolute Geist nichts, als der Begriff des Geistes, der in “dem einzigen Geisterreiche, das es gibt, jenem langen Zuge von Geistern” in der Geschichte sich selber erfaßt und entwickelt, “Religion, politische Geschichte, Staatsverfassung, Künste und Wissenschaften wie die Philosophie” nichts anderes, als “Werke des Gedankens”—die Arbeit der bisherigen Geschichte mit keinem anderen Ziele, als “das Selbstbewußtsein als einzige Macht der Welt und der Geschichte zu erkennen”—“die Bemühungen des Geistes durch fast 2500 Jahre seiner ernsthaftesten Arbeit” in keiner anderen Absicht, als “sich selbst objectiv zu werden, sich zu erkennen: *tanta molis erat, se ipsam cognoscere mentem.*”

Dieser Widerspruch, daß das Absolute das Beste und Höchste, das Ganze, die Wahrheit für die Menschen, das Maß, das Wesen, die Substanz, das Ende des Menschen ist, daß aber wiederum der Mensch die Substanz, das Selbstbewußtsein ist, welches das Resultat seiner eigenen Tätigkeit, sein eigenes schöpferisches Produkt ist und sein Bestehen in seiner Tat, seinem geschichtlichen Ringen verdankt, darum auch notwendig das Absolute zu einer beschränkten Macht,—dieser Widerspruch, in dem sich das Hegelschen System hin und her bewegte, das dem es aber nicht herauskommen konnte, mußte gelöst und vernichtet werden. Er konnte es aber nur dadurch, daß die Aufstellung der Frage, wie verhält sich das Selbstbewußtsein zum absoluten Geiste und der absolute Geist zum Selbstbewußtsein nicht mit Halbheiten oder Phantasien vertuscht, sondern für immer unmöglich gemacht wurde. Es war nach zwei Seiten möglich. Entweder muß das Selbstbewußtsein wieder in der Glut der Substanz verbrennen, d.h. das reine Substanzialitätsverhältnis feststellen und bestehen, oder es muß aufgezeigt werden, “daß die Persönlichkeit der Urheber ihrer Attribute und ihres Wesens ist, daß es “im Begriffe der Persönlichkeit überhaupt liegt, sich selbst beschränkt zu setzen und diese Beschänkung, die sich durch ihr allgemeines Wesen setzt, wieder aufzuheben, da eben dieses Wesen nur das Resultat ihrer inneren Selbstunterscheidung, ihrer Tätigkeit ist.

8. G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (1821), ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), §5–7; *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1955), §5–7. See Michael Quante, “The Personality of the Will’ as the Principle of Abstract Right: An Analysis of §34–40 of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* in Terms of the Logical Structure of the Concept,” in *Hegel on Ethics and Politics*, ed. R. B. Pippin and O. Höffe, trans. N. Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 81–100.

9. On Strauss, see Bruno Bauer, "Rezension: Die christliche Glaubenslehre in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung und im Kampf mit der modernen Wissenschaft. von D. F. Strauss. 2 Bde. 1840–1841," *Deutsche Jahrbücher*, Jan. 25–28, 1843, nos. 21–24, pp. 81–95.

10. D. F. Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet*, 2 vol. (Tübingen, 1835; 2nd ed. 1836; 3rd ed. 1838; 4th ed. 1840); Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs," pp. 102–23.

11. Feuerbach's philosophy also retains markedly pre-Kantian elements. Cf. Daniel Brudney, *Marx's Attempt to Leave Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 25–108; David Leopold, *The Young Karl Marx. German Philosophy, Modern Politics, and Human Flourishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 183–218.

12. Bruno Bauer, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker. Erster Band* (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1841), p. 69; Douglas Moggach, *The Philosophy and Politics of Bruno Bauer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 115–17.

13. Bruno Bauer, "Rezension: Die christliche Glaubenslehre in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung und im Kampf mit der modernen Wissenschaft. von D.F. Strauss. 2 Bde. 1840–1841," *Deutsche Jahrbücher*, Jan. 25–28, 1843, nos. 21–24, p. 82.

Die Substanz von Spinoza, obwohl die Auflösung der religiösen Vorstellung, ist noch das Absolute als Ding. Erst im Selbstbewußtsein kommen die getrennten Relationen, alle Gegensätze und Widersprüche zu ihrer Einheit, d.h. *wissen sie sich als Eins*, da jede die Andere als sich selbst weiß. Das Selbstbewußtsein proklamiert sich selbst nicht als das Absolute, sondern als unendliche Bewegung durch alle Formen und Gegensätze seiner Schöpfungen, nur Entwicklung seiner selbst.

14. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, §5.

15. Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*, ed. David Leopold (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 163; Max Stirner, *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (1845) (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1972), p. 199.

Wenn Fichte sagt: "Das Ich ist Alles," so scheint dies mit meinen Aufstellungen vollkommen zu harmonieren. Allein nicht das Ich ist Alles, sondern das Ich zerstört Alles, und nur das sich selbst auflösende Ich, das nie seiende Ich, das—endliche Ich ist wirklich Ich. Fichte spricht vom "absoluten" Ich, Ich aber spreche von Mir, dem vergänglichen Ich.

16. David Leopold, "The State and I': Max Stirner's Anarchism," in Moggach, *New Hegelians*, pp. 176–99.

17. Douglas Moggach, "Republican Rigorism and Emancipation in Bruno Bauer," in Moggach, *New Hegelians*, pp. 114–35.

18. Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs," p. 128.

Während Stirner das punktuelle Ich, das zum Außersten gebrachte "Denken," das ein Attribut der Substanz, auf das Schild gehoben hat, bringt Feuerbach das andere, "die Ausdehnung" und restauriert diese in der "Sinnlichkeit."

While Stirner raises the signpost of the atomic [punctual] self, of thought taken to its greatest extreme [as] one attribute of substance, Feuerbach brings [forth] the other [attribute], extension, and restores this in "sensuousness."

19. Cf. Max Stirner, *Parerga, Kritiken, Repliken*, cited in Widukind De Ridder, "Nawoord," in Max Stirner, *De enige en zijn eigendom*, vertaling van Thomas Eden en Widukind De Ridder (Brussel: Archief- en Bibliotheekwezen in België, 2008), p. 269.

20. Bauer, "Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs," p. 124.

Der Einzige ist die Substanz, fortgeführt zu ihrer abstractesten Abstractheit. Dieses Ich, das unsagbare, das Namen nicht nennen und Eigenschaften nicht ausdrücken, das weder an der physischen noch an der psychischen Welt, viel weniger an beiden seinen Inhalt hat, das weder im Himmel noch auf Erden seine Wohnung aufschlägt, sondern Gott weiß wo in der Luft umher wankt und schwankt, lebt und schwebt, dieses Ich, der gesteigerteste, mächtigste und kräftigste Egoismus der alten Welt, aber darum doch die Ohnmacht selbst, der Egoismus, der zeigt, wie nichtig und flüchtig, ohne Halt und Leben der Egoismus der alten Welt war und sein muß, dieses Ich, nicht das auf sich gestützte und die Welt von sich aus lenkende Selbstbewußtsein, nicht die auf sich selbst gestellte Persönlichkeit, nicht der Mensch, der mit seiner Kraft bindet und löst und die Welt beherrscht, weil er eben die Macht in seinen Händen hat, sondern das Ich, welches zur Stützung seines Egoismus der Heuchelei, des Betrugs, der äußern Gewalt, der kleinlichen Ueberredungskunst bedarf—dieses Ich ist die Substanz in ihrer härtesten Härte, “das Gespenst aller Gespenster,” die Vollendung und der Höhepunkt einer vergangenen Geschichtsepoche.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 123–24.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

Was macht der Einzige mit ihm [dem Kritiker Bauer]? Nein, ruft er, es wird nichts daraus. Meine Eigenheit gehört mir. Die behalte ich; die darfst und sollst du mir nicht nehmen, Kritiker. Er reckt die Glieder und legt sich nieder. Juchhe! Nun bin ich fertig. Alles los, von Allem frei. Ich hab’ mein’ Sach’ auf Nichts gestellt.—Der Einzige ist der letzte Zufluchtsort in der alten Welt, der letzte Schlupfwinkel, von wo aus sie ihre Angriffe auf eine von ihr ganz verschiedene, darum von ihr unverkennbare Gestaltung machen kann.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

24. Massimiliano Tomba, *Crisi e critica in Bruno Bauer* (Naples: Bibliopolis, 2002). For Stirner’s view of Bauer on privilege and emancipation, see *Einzige*, pp. 227, 228.

25. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simpson, vol. 3 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 252–90; G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, III, *Werke*, Bd. 20 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1971), pp. 157–97. Asserting that Stirner wants to dissolve substance but cannot do so, Bauer describes Stirner as a *reluctant* Spinozist (Bauer, “Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs,” p. 126).

26. Bruno Bauer, “Der christliche Staat und unsere Zeit,” *Hallische Jahrbücher für deutsche Wissenschaft und Kunst*, 7–12 June 1841, nos. 135–140, pp. 537–58; reprinted in *Feldzüge der reinen Kritik*, ed. H.-M. Sass (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1968).

27. Bruno Bauer, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker*. Zweiter Band (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1841), p. 46.

28. Douglas Moggach, “Aesthetics and Politics, 1790–1890,” in *Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Political Thought*, ed. Gareth Stedman Jones and Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), 80 pp.

29. De Ridder, “Nawoord,” pp. 270–72.

30. Stirner, *Einzige*, p. 189ff.

31. Hegel, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 257; *Geschichte der Philosophie*, III, p. 165.

32. Bruno Bauer, *Über die Prinzipien des Schönen. De pulchri principii. Eine Preisschrift*, hrsg. Douglas Moggach und Winfried Schultze, mit einem Vorwort von Volker Gerhardt (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996), pp. 48–50.

33. Hegel, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 264; *Geschichte der Philosophie*, III, p. 173.

34. Stirner, *Ego and Its Own*, p. 324.

[K]lein Begriff drückt Mich aus, nichts, was man als mein Wesen angibt, erschöpft Mich; es sind nur Namen. Gleichfalls sagt man von Gott, er sei vollkommen und habe keinen Beruf, nach Vollkommenheit zu streben. Auch das gilt allein von Mir. Eigner bin Ich meiner Gewalt, und Ich bin es dann, wenn Ich Mich als Einzigen weiss. Im Einzigen kehrt selbst der Eigner in sein schöpferisches Nichts zurück, aus welchem er geboren wird. . . . Stell' Ich auf Mich, den Einzigen, meine Sache, dann steht sie auf dem Vergänglichen, dem sterblichen Schöpfer seiner, der sich selbst verzehrt, und Ich darf sagen: Ich hab' mein' Sach' auf Nichts gestellt. (*Einzige*, p. 412)

35. For Spinoza, there is only one such substance. For Hegel's comments, see *History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, pp. 264–66; *Geschichte der Philosophie*, III, pp. 173–75.

36. On the *conatus*, see Spinoza, *Ethics*, part 3, Propositions VI–VIII, in *Works of Spinoza*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover, 1955).

37. Benedictus de Spinoza, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Edwin M. Curley (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 493, cited in John Carriero, "Substance and Ends in Leibniz," in *Contemporary Perspectives on Early Modern Philosophy: Essays in Honor of Vere Chappell*, ed. Paul Hoffman, David Owen, and Gideon Yaffe (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2008), p. 122. See also Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

38. Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part 1, Proposition XIV.

39. Carriero, "Substance and Ends," pp. 120–21, describes the *conatus* as a generalization of the principle of inertia. See also John Carriero, "Spinoza on Final Causality," in Daniel Garber and Steven Nadler, eds., *Oxford Studies in Early Modern Philosophy*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 116–26.

40. Stirner, *Ego and Its Own*, p. 163. ". . . so ist dies vielmehr gerade Er selbst als Einzelner, er ist nur, indem er sich erhebt, er ist nur, indem er nicht bleibt, was er ist; sonst wäre er fertig, tot" (*Einzige*, p. 200).

41. Stirner, *Ego and Its Own*, pp. 149–50.

Meine Freiheit gegen die Welt sichere Ich in dem Grade, als Ich Mir die Welt zu eigen mache, d.h. sie für Mich "gewinne und einnehme," sei es durch welche Gewalt es wolle, durch die der Überredung, der Bitte, der kategorischen Forderung, ja selbst durch Heuchelei, Betrug usw.; denn die Mittel, welche Ich dazu gebrauche, richten sich nach dem, was Ich bin. (*Einzige*, p. 182)

42. Stirner, *Ego and Its Own*, p. 148.

[D]ie "Freiheit" ist und bleibt eine Sehnsucht, ein romantischer Klagelaut, eine christliche Hoffnung auf Jenseitigkeit und Zukunft; die "Eigenheit" ist eine Wirklichkeit, die von selbst gerade soviel Unfreiheit beseitigt, als Euch hinderlich den eigenen Weg versperrt. (*Einzige*, p. 180)

43. Stirner, *Ego and Its Own*, p. 143.

Dagegen Eigenheit, das ist mein ganzes Wesen und Dasein, das bin Ich selbst. Frei bin Ich von Dem, was Ich los bin, Eigner von dem, was Ich in meiner Macht habe, oder dessen Ich mächtig bin. Mein eigen bin Ich jederzeit und unter allen Umständen, wenn Ich Mich zu haben verstehe und nicht an Andere wegwerfe. Das Freisein kann Ich nicht wahrhaft wollen, weil Ich's nicht machen, nicht erschaffen kann: Ich kann es nur wünschen und darnach–trachten, denn es bleibt ein Ideal, ein Spuk. Die Fesseln der Wirklichkeit schneiden jeden Augenblick in mein Fleisch die schärfsten Striemen. Mein eigen aber bleibe Ich. (*Einzige*, p. 173)

44. Stirner, *Einzig*, pp. 165ff.

45. Stirner, *Ego and Its Own*, p. 323.

[D]em Egoisten hat nur seine Geschichte Wert, weil er nur sich entwickeln will, nicht die Menschheits-Idee, nicht den Plan Gottes, nicht die Absichten der Vorsehung, nicht die Freiheit u. dgl. Er sieht sich nicht für ein Werkzeug der Idee oder ein Gefäß Gottes an, er erkennt keinen Beruf an, er wähnt nicht, zur Fortentwicklung der Menschheit dazusein und sein Scherflein dazu beitragen zu müssen, sondern er lebt sich aus, unbesorgt darum, wie gut oder schlecht die Menschheit dabei fahre. (*Einzig*, p. 411)

46. De Ridder, “Nawoord,” p. 269.

47. In “Das unwahre Prinzip unserer Erziehung oder der Humanismus und Realismus,” of 1842 (in Heinz und Ingrid Pepperle, hrsg., *Die Hegelsche Linke. Dokumente zu Philosophie und Politik im deutschen Vormärz* [Frankfurt/M.: Röderberg, 1986], pp. 412–30), Stirner distinguishes egoism from self-determination: the former is seen as heteronomous, depending on others and on the passions. This distinction is recast in *Der Einzige’s* conception of ownness. Now egoism and ownness are synonymous: *Einzig*, p. 165. The distinction is now between egoism, on the one hand, and possessedness, on the other, where we do not manifest the requisite ironic detachment from our deeds, from objects, and from others. Thus the emphasis shifts from the earlier concern about the relation between a *telos* or maxim and an act, to that between an act and its effect. This is consistent with the interpretation offered here, according to which the idea of *telos* is minimised in *Der Einzige*.

48. Bruno Bauer, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker*. Erster Band, ix: “Die Anschauung der Substanz ist kritisch—siehe Spinoza—aber eben so sehr fällt sie zu unmittelbarer Anerkennung des Positiven wieder herab—siehe Spinoza.”

49. Hegel, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 288; *Geschichte der Philosophie*, III, pp. 166–67:

So, kann man sagen, wird im Spinozistischen System alles nur in diesen Abgrund der Vernichtung hineingeworfen. . . . Denn es ist starre Bewegungslosigkeit, deren einzige Tätigkeit ist, alles in den Abgrund der Substanz zu werfen, in dem alles nur dahinschwindet, alles Leben in sich selbst verkommt.

50. Moggach, “Aesthetics and Politics”; de Ridder, “Nawoord,” pp. 270–72.

51. Frederick Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

52. Hegel, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 289; *Geschichte der Philosophie*, III, p. 196.

53. Bruno Bauer (anon.), *Die Posaune des jüngsten Gerichts über Hegel, den Atheisten und Antichristen. Ein Ultimatum* (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1841), pp. 146–48, citing Hegel’s *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Bd. 1, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1840), pp. 63–65.

Ich erhebe mich denkend zum Absoluten über alles Endliche und bin unendliches Bewußtsein und zugleich bin ich endliches Selbstbewußtsein und zwar nach meiner ganzen empirischen Bestimmung . . . Ich bin in mir selbst als unendlich, gegen mich als endlich und als endliches Bewußtsein gegen mein Denken als unendliches bestimmt. Ich bin das Gefühl, die Anschauung, die Vorstellung dieser Einigkeit und dieses Widerstreites und das Zusammenhalten des Widerstreitenden, die Bemühung dieses Zusammenhaltens und die Arbeit des Gemüths, dieses Gegensatzes Meister zu werden . . . Ich bin nicht Einer der im Kampf Begriffenen, sondern ich bin beide Kämpfende und der Kampf selbst.

Cf. Hegel, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 261:

True individuality and subjectivity is not a mere retreat from the universal, not merely something clearly determinate; for, as clearly determinate, it is at the same time Being-for-itself, determined by itself alone. The individual, the subjective, is even in being so the return to the universal; and in that it is at home with itself, it is itself the universal.

Die wahrhafte Einzelheit, Individualität, wahrhafte Subjektivität ist nicht nur Entfernung vom Allgemeinen, das schlechthin Bestimmte; sondern es ist, als schlechthin bestimmt, das Fürsichseiende, nur sich selbst Bestimmende. Das Subjektive ist so ebenso die Rückkehr zum Allgemeinen; das Einzelne ist das bei sich selbst Seiende und so das Allgemeine. (G. W. F. Hegel, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, III, p. 170)

54. Bauer, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker*, Erster Band, p. 81.

Wenn wir die Kategorie des Selbstbewußtseins gebrauchen, so meinen wir nicht das empirische Ich, als ob dieses aus seinen bloßen Einfällen oder willkürlichen Kombinationen jene Anschauungen gebildet habe . . . Das . . . gebildete Selbstbewußtsein . . . [verhält] sich zur Wirklichkeit mit einem ganz anderen Bewußtsein, nämlich mit dem kritischen.

55. Bruno Bauer, "Der christliche Staat und unsere Zeit," in Sass, *Feldzüge*, p. 26.

Dieser Umschwung besteht in nichts anderem als in der Befreiung der bisher durch ihr eigenes Recht fixierten Atome, die von jetzt an ihre gleiche Berechtigung haben und dadurch gewinnen können, daß sie zunächst ihre unmittelbare Sprödigkeit, mit der sie an ihrem vorausgesetzten Recht festhielten, aufgeben und jenes durch die Überwindung seiner selbst mit dem andern sich in eine Einheit setzen. Die Selbstverleugnung ist das erste Gesetz und die Freiheit die notwendige Folge.

56. For Stirner's repudiation of self-denial, see *Einziges*, e.g. pp. 165, 172, 181.

