

“Higher Necessity”: Determinism and Freedom in German Idealism

The aim of my talk is to analyze important contributions to the debate on freedom and determinism after Kant, beginning with the early reception of his moral philosophy by Johann Heinrich August Ulrich in his book *Eleutheriology or on Freedom and Necessity* (1788) and ending with Schelling’s *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom* (1809). I will argue that the post-Kantian debate is not so much concerned with the problem of how to reconcile freedom with the laws of nature but rather with the problem of “intelligible fatalism,” according to which we are only free to act morally good but not free to act immorally. I show how philosophers such as Karl Leonhard Reinhold, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling attempted to respond to the challenge of “intelligible fatalism”.