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Chapter 21

Sister, Spouse and a Subversive Split: The Ambiguous Place of Gender in Schleiermacher's Philosophy



Heleen Zorgdrager

“... wherever I look, the nature of women appears to me as more noble and their lives as happier, and if I have ever played with an impossible wish, it is this, to be a woman.” (KGA V.7: 430)¹

1 Introduction

Since the 1980s, feminist scholars have critically attended to the issue of gender in the works of the philosopher and theologian Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768–1834).² A renewed historical interest in the early Romantic movement in Germany has begun to highlight the prominent role of women in the movement, with its bustling centers in Jena and Berlin. In the wake of this revival, Friedrich Schleiermacher, too, has been rediscovered as one of the active participants of the cultural revolution, engaging in the salon life and enjoying friendship and intellectual exchange with women such as Henriette Herz, Dorothea Veit-Mendelssohn, and Rahel Varnhagen.

Like the other early Romantic philosophers, poets, and artists, Schleiermacher came intellectually of age in the 1790s. He was inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution: freedom, equality, and fraternity. In *On Religion. Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, he appraises the French Revolution as “the most sublime act of the Universe” [*der erhabensten That des Universums*] (OR: 9–10/KGA I.2: 196).³ However, Schleiermacher clearly acknowledged that the revolution had produced a type of bourgeois that puts itself as absolute and tends to become despotic. How to “save” the revolution with a human face?⁴ He welcomed the project of modernity,

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which found in Germany its intellectual expression in the Enlightenment philosophy of Kant and Fichte. While supporting the Enlightenment, Schleiermacher and his Romantic allies were also deeply concerned about the ramifications of a modernity that characterized itself by a uniforming reason, by the will to master nature, by an ongoing fragmentation of society, and by a reductionist view of the human being as defined, ideally, by reason alone. To “save” the project of the Enlightenment, they proclaimed a radical cultural and aesthetic revolution that should create the conditions for a true realization of freedom, equality, and fraternity. Schleiermacher contributed to this ambitious project in an original way by formulating innovative views on religion and culture, on moral and intellectual development [*Bildung*], and on individual and social progress, while stressing throughout his writings the need to develop a communicative sociality as a response to the modernizing, differentiating world. For him, awakening the religious dimension would disclose in human beings their potential for such a communicative sociality.

Schleiermacher was not only a preacher, pastor and professor, but also a writer, reformer, philosopher, patriot and publicist. He was active in an astounding range of academic fields, such as philosophical ethics, hermeneutics, dialectics, theology with all its subdisciplines, philosophy of state, pedagogy, and psychology. In almost all of these fields, he included reflections on gender and gender-related topics such as love, friendship, and marriage. Not surprisingly, feminist scholarship on Schleiermacher diverges in regard to the disciplines, texts, and genres it covers. Some concentrate on the experimental literary texts from the early Romantic period, such as *On Religion. Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, *Confidential Letters on Friedrich Schlegel's Lucinde*, and *Christmas Eve: A Dialogue*. Others confine the analysis to mainly one academic discipline, for instance pedagogy, philosophy of religion, or theology. There are even some who attempt to cover both the widespread interdisciplinary range as well as the varied genres of Schleiermacher's works, from speeches, dialogues, aphorisms, and sermons, to academic treatises, university lectures, and doctrinal books.

The studies also differ in their evaluation of the emancipatory, liberating potential of Schleiermacher's thoughts on gender. In particular, his association of woman(hood) with religion has provoked controversy. Critics such as Marilyn Chapin Massey⁵ and Katherine M. Padilla⁶ conclude that by assigning an elevated religious status to women, Schleiermacher actually legitimates and sanctions their confinement within the private sphere of bourgeois society. Studies by Dawn De Vries,⁷ Ruth Drucilla Richardson,⁸ Patricia Guenther-Gleason,⁹ Elisabeth Hartlieb,¹⁰ myself,¹¹ and others¹² offer alternative interpretations, which partially counter or at least nuance that criticism and open up his writings as a resource for contemporary critical thought.

From the lively debate, it has become clear that gender difference is not just a particular subject of attention in Schleiermacher's thinking, but that it is deeply woven into his thoughts. It functions as explicit and implicit *coding*,¹³ permeating his central concepts such as religion, feeling, individuality, free sociability, love, and the Universe. Throughout Schleiermacher's works, therefore, two strands can be distinguished: one strand is gender difference as a theme in itself of

ethical-anthropological reflection, and the second pertains to metaphors and connotations that suggest an explicit or implicit gender coding of religious-philosophical and theological concepts.¹⁴

In this chapter, I have chosen to present and analyze in detail one text fragment from the rich oeuvre of Schleiermacher. It is the *Brouillon on Ethics 1805–1806*, an early draft of lectures on philosophical ethics he delivered at the university of Halle. In four lectures, he dwells extensively on the topic of gender difference. The modest manuscript of *Brouillon* is so interesting because here for the first time a philosophical theory of gender comes to the surface, which from then on receives a central place in his thought and permeates his ethical, hermeneutical, dialectical, psychological, pedagogical, and theological works.¹⁵

But first, I introduce the thoughts on gender in Schleiermacher's early works (1790–1800), present him as a post-Kantian reader of Spinoza, highlight the concept of individuality which becomes decisive for his distinct place within German Idealism, and draw attention to the female coding of religion in *Speeches*, before I turn at the end to the gender theory in the ethical draft.

2 Gender in Schleiermacher's Early Works

From his childhood and youth in the Moravian institutions in Niesky and Barby, Friedrich Schleiermacher was familiar with a positive esteem of women, marriage, and the role of feeling as the place of spiritual truth. Although the abundant erotic mysticism of Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf's theology had been tempered by his followers in the late eighteenth century,¹⁶ there was still enough left in the Moravian communities of a culture of piety that affected the emotions and senses. Schleiermacher was acquainted with the female symbol of the soul as the bride of Christ and with the positive evaluation of sexuality in its sacramental consummation in marriage. Although at the age of seventeen he cut institutional ties with the Moravians, he remained in lively communication with the community mainly through his sister Charlotte, who lived in the single sisters' house in Gnadenfrei. Encounters and friendship with women in his later life added to Schleiermacher's high esteem of women's intelligence, esprit, knowledge, moral and intellectual cultivation, and social skills.

In the Berlin years (1796–1802), Schleiermacher started to write and publish on topics of gender, love, friendship, and marriage. His provocative piece *Outline for a Reasonable Catechism for Noble Women* was published in the literary magazine *Athenaeum* of the rebellious romantic brothers August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel (KGA I.2: 153–154).¹⁷ The *Catechism* can be read as a program for the moral and intellectual emancipation of women. Manhood and womanhood are defined as secondary phenomena, as a "cloak," and as boundaries that should be transcended in order to unfold and uniquely realize in one's life the idea of infinite humanity [*Menschheit*]. In the *Confidential Letters on Friedrich Schlegel's Lucinde*, he advocates for an understanding of love in which sensibility and reason, lust and

love do not drift apart, but are integrated and equally shared by man and woman (KGA I.3: 139–216). Where Schlegel’s imagination of femininity in *Lucinde* shows, in the view of Schleiermacher, idealizing and absolutizing traits, for instance in the identification of the adored Lucinde with her “nature” that would be perfectly bound to love, Schleiermacher’s text presents women as responsible moral agents involved in a process of moral cultivation in social life, friendship, and love relationships, challenged to oppose gender despotism [*Geschlechtsdespotismus*] and to grow beyond the one-sidedness of gender.

In *Speeches* (OR, KGA I.2: 185–326) and *Soliloquies* (S, KGA I.3: 1–62), Schleiermacher fully develops the concept of individuality that had fascinated him since his very early writings on Kant, Spinoza, F.H. Jacobi, and Lord Shaftesbury. The concept of individuality is considered Schleiermacher’s most original contribution both to philosophy and theology, and also of crucial importance for his gender theory.

3 A Post-Kantian Reading of Spinoza

To grasp the full contents of Schleiermacher’s concept of individuality we have to turn to his post-Kantian, modernizing reading of Spinoza, in essays from 1793–1794 (KGA I.1: 511–558, 559–582). At that time, he did not have access to Spinoza’s *Ethica* itself, but was dependent on the presentation by Jacobi.¹⁸ Yet it is astonishing how much he understood about Spinoza’s philosophy. He must have taken notice of Spinoza’s theory of the three kinds of knowledge. The first one is the *imaginatio*, which is strictly bound to the body and therefore always perspective. The second kind of knowledge is the *ratio* (intellect), which recognizes general laws governing human behavior. In the third form, the *scientia intuitiva*, the other two come together and are transcended. Here the mind gains an experience of eternity. *Scientia intuitiva* comprehends things in an immediate way. It is the highest form of thinking and a mystical experience. For Spinoza, the experience of eternity is always individuating. The mind learns to see itself in its unique history, constitution, and situatedness, which makes the third form of knowing into a purified return to the first form of knowing, *imaginatio*, and one comes to see oneself and all things as they are in God (*sub specie aeterna*). Schleiermacher’s concept of religious *Anschauung* as an intuition of the infinite comes close to Spinoza’s *scientia intuitiva*.

What constitutes the individuality of a thing? For Schleiermacher, this was the question that Kant left unresolved. Kant assumes the *noumenon*, the thing in itself as distinct from things as they are knowable by the senses through phenomenal attributes. Thus, he must assume a plurality of noumena. However, does every consciousness (of something) have its own noumenon as a basis?—Schleiermacher asks. What remains of the unity of the world? Instead of noumena, Schleiermacher finds in Spinoza the assumption of the infinite for the things that are beyond our perception. The essence of infinity is absolute matter, and absolute extension and absolute thinking are the only attributes of infinity. Spinoza could assume this,

Schleiermacher explains, because we cannot have access to attributes other than extension and thought. We have no access to that which cannot be perceived in space and experienced in time. Here, in Schleiermacher's view, Spinoza is very close to the critical realism of Kant. Space and time are also for Spinoza the modifying medium, yet he doesn't locate them *in us*, but in an unknown *infinite substance*. The turn to the subject in modernity requires for Schleiermacher that we also need to correct Spinoza from Kant, and that we should locate the attributes of extension and thought in ourselves (KGA I.1: 575).

The category of infinity, nevertheless, allows Spinoza to have a double view of things: how they really are in themselves (eternal, unchangeable, *substantia*) and how they are perceived outside infinity for themselves (in their changeable appearance, *accidentia*). Therefore, Spinoza's statement of "the inherence of finite things in infinity" (*ibid.*) makes the knowledge of the substance of a thing *real*, and prevents the substance from disappearing behind the attributes, as might happen with a Kantian *Ding an sich*.

4 Religion and Individuality

Schleiermacher now, in turn, takes the notion of individuality one step further than Spinoza. From "the inherence of finite things in the infinite" he arrives at the recognition of "the infinite in all finite things" (KGA I.2: 214).¹⁹ At the same time, he dynamizes the Spinozist view of substance. For Schleiermacher, it becomes an energy of (human) life. Schleiermacher can rightly be called the creator and promulgator of the early Romantic expressivist anthropology in the way Charles Taylor has defined it.²⁰ Each individual is a manifestation of the infinite humanity (*Menschheit*) and has an infinite value as this unique and distinctive person. Schleiermacher calls the principle of individuality the "most mystical" in the field of philosophy, and expresses his joy at discovering this "highest intuition" (Briefe 4: 59)²¹ In *Soliloquies* he writes: "It became clear to me that each person should represent humanity in his or her own way, with a particular mixture of its elements, so that humanity reveals itself in each way and all becomes realized in the fullness of space and time" (KGA I.3: 18).²²

Each person should develop and unify his or her powers in a manner characteristic of that person.²³ Schleiermacher regards encouraging the development of this individuality-in-relation as the highest goal of ethics. He describes the ongoing process of self-cultivation [*Selbstbildung*] in artistic metaphors. The "humanity in me" is the substance out of which I mold the unique design of my personality. Freedom is the self-expression towards that image. The process of moral cultivation, as he envisions it, takes place in a dialogue with and commitment to the social community in which humanity expresses itself in its rich diversity (KGA I.3: 43).

For Schleiermacher, the concept of individuality is religiously inspired. It emerges from being personally and irreducibly affected by the Universe, by the living richness of the infinite world that in particular reveals itself in loving

communication between humans. In the ungraspable moment of being affected, the person becomes aware of his/her unique relation to the divine Universe. The Universe seeks to express itself in the individual, as in everything else, in a unique way (KGA I.2: 211–212).

This particular understanding of individuality is key to Schleiermacher's response to the unresolved problems of the Enlightenment both in its sociopolitical ramifications—see the derailment of the French Revolution—and in the philosophical accounts of Kant and Fichte. In *Speeches*, Schleiermacher rejects “the completed and rounded idealism” [*dem vollendeten und abgerundeten Idealismus*], which he finds in particular in Fichte's work:

And how will the triumph of speculation, the completed and rounded idealism, fare if religion does not counterbalance it and allow it to glimpse a higher realism than that which it subordinates to itself so boldly and for such a good reason? Idealism will destroy the universe by appearing to fashion it; it will degrade it to a mere allegory, to an empty silhouette of our own limitedness. (OR: 24/KGA I.2: 213)

Religion reminds modern subjects of a dimension of human life that they seem to have forgotten: “... and after having created a universe for yourselves, you are spared from thinking about that which created you” (OR: 3–4/KGA I.2: 189). Religion as intuition (*Anschauung*) and feeling (*Gefühl*), both on the passive side, points to a certain state of openness prior to the mind's active categorizing and mastering of the world. Such a state of immediacy, prior to the object/subject split in the consciousness, Schleiermacher calls—in terminology reminiscent of Spinoza—“immediate perception” (*unmittelbare Wahrnehmung*) and “immediate experiences of the existence and acting of the Universe” (OR: 24/KGA I.2: 214). It is the highest state for which the mystic strives: “Thus to accept everything individual as a part of the whole and everything limited as a representation of the infinite is religion” (OR: 25/KGA I.2: 214).²⁴ All intuitions of the universe are original and irreducible. Religion is infinite because it is infinite on all sides. Schleiermacher acknowledges a plurality of religious perspectives:

Each person must be conscious that theirs is only a part of the whole, that regarding the same objects that affect them religiously, there are views just as pious, and, nevertheless, completely different from their own, and that from other elements of religion intuitions and feelings flow, the sense for which they may be completely lacking. (OR: 27/KGA I.2: 216–217)

Terry Pinkard argues that this idea of plurality of religions—including religious intuitions, feelings, practices, and views—became constitutive for Schleiermacher's idea of hermeneutics.²⁵ Schleiermacher, as a pioneer, famously developed hermeneutics—which until then, as *hermeneutica sacra*, had been only a derived biblical discipline—into a universal academic discipline that reflects on the art of understanding. For Pinkard, the basis for this is to be found in Schleiermacher's theory of religion. If the various intuitions were incommensurable, then it would become very unclear how we were to understand what people actually meant when they claimed that they had this or that religious sense. Indeed, for Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, the basic question is: How can individuality express itself in language and be understood within language?

5 Gendering of Intuition and Feeling

The philosophical starting point of *Speeches* is the all-encompassing unity of the Universe, which as a unity cannot be grasped by reflection and communicates itself only in a pre-reflective act. Religion is all about intuition [*Anschauung*] of the Universe. Intuition is paired with feeling [*Gefühl*] as a response of the inner self to being affected by the Universe. Intuition and feeling are the two modes of contemplating the Universe. Schleiermacher emphasizes the passive character of both modes. In the so-called “love scene” in the second speech on religion (OR: 31–32/ KGA I.2: 221–222) he draws extensively on metaphorical language. Images from nature (scent, dew, and flowers) as well as erotic metaphors of being touched and embraced (a maidenly kiss, a bridal embrace) serve to depict the volatility, tenderness, and fertility of the “birth hour of religion.” In the moment of separation from the embrace a reflective relation is produced:

... and now for the first time the *intuition* stands before me as a separate form; I survey it, and it mirrors itself in my open soul as the image of the vanishing beloved in the awakened eye of a youth; now for the first time the *feeling* works its way up from inside and diffuses itself like the blush of shame and desire on his cheek. (OR: 32/KGA I.2: 221–222)²⁶

In these erotically charged metaphors, femininity and (the awakening to) religion become associated. Religion also becomes implicitly female-coded in the notions of intuition and feeling, in which a receptive disposition dominates. Receptivity is understood by Schleiermacher, as we will see in the *Brouillon*, as predominantly a feminine gender characteristic.

In the revised second edition of *Speeches*, Schleiermacher transfers the moment of being affected by the Universe entirely to the feeling. *Anschauung* is no longer understood as intuitive, contemplative knowing, but shifts, in a more proper Kantian sense, to the predominantly active, integrative ability of the human mind. Henceforth, Schleiermacher connotes *Anschauung* with the male gender character, and the female-coded notion of feeling becomes the pivotal concept in his understanding of religion and in his theory of piety in *Christian Faith* (Ch 3: 8–18).

As we now turn to the philosophical ethics as presented in *Brouillon*, we will bear in mind the tension between the emancipatory notion of individuality, which marks Schleiermacher’s thoughts from the beginning, and an increasing “ontologizing” of gender, divided into womanhood/feeling and manhood/active knowing, which we see taking shape in the works after 1800. Which is given more weight in the end, and how shall we evaluate his gender theory within the context of his time and from a contemporary feminist point of view?

6 Outline of *Brouillon on Ethics 1805–1806*

As a newly appointed professor at the University of Halle, Schleiermacher lectured on ethics in the winter semester of 1805–1806. The manuscript remained unpublished during his lifetime. The unpretentious name “brouillon” refers to a draft, a

first overall design. The discipline that Schleiermacher calls philosophical ethics is best conceived of as a theory of culture. There is no aspect of human activity and human community that doesn't belong to the ethical realm, which includes gender, love, marriage, family, and friendship.

Schleiermacher lectured on the topic of gender difference from the 32nd to the 36th lesson of the course. His lectures take place in immediate temporal proximity to, on the one hand, the revision of the *Speeches*, in which he prioritizes feeling above intuition as the higher sense for religion, and, on the other hand, the writing of the cheerful dialogue novella *Christmas Eve*, in which various gender positions play a prominent role in representing different views on Christ, salvation, and community (Brou: 51).²⁷

To understand what type of ethics Schleiermacher is aiming at, and in what aspects it differs from (other forms of) German Idealism, we have to go back to the work he wrote a few years before, *Baselines of a Criticism of Ethics* (KGA I.4: 27–358). In this, Schleiermacher criticizes the dualism in the ethical systems of Kant and Fichte, and the fact that they prioritize the universal over the particular of the concrete lived life. As for the relation between the moral and the natural, physical world, they assume two separate inclinations: a natural one that strives for lust, and a moral one that is linked to reason and strives for a moral act. When it comes to love and marriage, Fichte, for instance, is not able to construct a genuine ethical view of it, according to Schleiermacher (KGA I.4: 218–222).²⁸ Fichte sees the sexual drive as an urge to self-preservation, and considers it a moral duty to curtail it. This, Schleiermacher judges, is a prohibition and not a positive ethical imperative. It becomes even more problematic when Fichte assumes that the animalistic sexual drive of the man will transform into moral love when it encounters the moral form of self-sacrificing love of the woman. This is not a conscious moral process, in Fichte's account, but it appears to be the woman's destiny that she transform her sexual desire into utter submissiveness. Likewise, Kant constructs in his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), the destiny of the female nature as being to support and complement the male sex. In Kant's view, a woman is ruled by inclination [*Neigung*], a man is ruled by reason [*Verstand*], and the woman is ontologically bound to the sensual world, whereas the man is capable of transcending the sensual world in moral freedom.²⁹

Schleiermacher's sympathy is with the ethical systems of Plato and Spinoza because, in contrast to Kant and Fichte, they avoid dualism. They presuppose one inclination in the human being, which encompasses the integral moral-natural life and present an ethics of wholeness and perfection [*Vollkommenheitsethik*]. In their systems, reason is creative and cultivating, the particular is qualified as a manifestation of the infinite, and the moral and natural are organically integrated.

Accordingly, in *Brouillon* then, Schleiermacher acknowledges love as the driving force in the moral process. Love is the "drive for community" [*Trieb auf Gemeinschaft*] (Brou: 35). Love is the desire to animate [*Beseelenwollen*] (Brou: 140). Love is "wanting-to-be-soul through which reason unites with matter," just as, from the opposite direction, love is also "wanting-to-be-body" through which matter unites with reason (Brou: 137). Love is the basic drive [*Grundtrieb*] that unites

in itself the natural and spiritual, as well as the individual and the community. In Schleiermacher's view, universal reason always inhabits historic-empirical subjects, and is therefore only to be found in particular, differentiated, and multiple appearances. Love motivates a person's reason to seek other individualities and so to build higher forms of community. For Schleiermacher, the purpose of the ethical process is the full integration of reason and nature. This is what he calls "the highest good" or from a religious perspective "the kingdom of God" (Brou: 17). The highest purpose can never be achieved by abstract reasoning alone. "Pure reason" or "universal objective knowledge" finds no place in his system (Brou: 99).³⁰ Reason is always mediated, bound to particular perspectives of knowledge of historical subjects. To phrase it in contemporary language: knowledge is always situated and contextual. Schleiermacher's ethical project is always concerned with a mutual integration of reason and nature, bearing in mind that a final unity can never be achieved within the boundaries of finite life.³¹ Basically, both in philosophy and theology he takes a non-speculative standpoint, which is summarized as *finitum non est capax infiniti*. The ethical process is reflected in a continuous movement of oscillation between organizing and symbolizing forms of action on the one hand and particular and universal modes of being on the other hand. Every union of reason and nature produced by the action of the former on the latter is called a good; the sum of these unities, the highest good. When reason uses nature as an instrument in formation its action is organizing/formative; when reason uses nature as a symbol in cognition its action is symbolizing/indicative. Reason, further, tends more towards the universal/common or more towards the particular/individual. On the crossing of these (fluctuating) distinctions of identical and individual organization and symbolization the division of the theory of goods is based. Schleiermacher scholarship has interpreted this structure of quadruplicity as a theoretical attempt to "flow" with the movement of life itself.³²

In *Brouillon*, Schleiermacher addresses the topic of gender difference in the broader chapter on free sociability [*freie Geselligkeit*]. In this domain, moral agency predominantly has the imprint of individuality. The ethical challenge of free sociability lies in the fact that the individual, who wants to communicate his/her individuality to others, is confronted by the (hermeneutical) problem of its non-transferability (Brou: 49). The principle of love is presented as the necessary counterpart of individuality. Love is at play when we become intrigued by "the strange life that takes hold of ours" (Brou: 50)³³ and desire to relate and be in some kind of communion with it. In this context, Schleiermacher offers his reflections on friendship and hospitality first, and then on the topics of gender, sexuality, marriage, and family.

In my reading of the text fragments, I selectively and pragmatically make use of the tools of the deconstructive reading strategy of Jacques Derrida. This way of reading pays attention to seemingly meaningless details, caveats, gaps, sudden transitions and fractures, internal tensions and inconsistencies in the textual material itself. These may question and subvert the homogeneity of the text. I believe there are good reasons to approach Schleiermacher's texts this way. In several aspects, Schleiermacher's own theory of interpretation corresponds with postmodern

insights and approaches. There is, firstly, the early Romantic concept of art criticism, endorsed by Schleiermacher, which says that in the endless task of interpretation the artwork performs its self-reflection in history. The interpreter can reveal a meaning of the text that was not (yet) intentional by the author. And secondly, in Schleiermacher's skillful construction of rules for the art of understanding, he distinguishes two methods for discovering the meaning of a linguistic articulation: the comparative and the divinatory method.³⁴ The comparative method strives analytically by means of comparison to find the meaning of a sentence. The divinatory method tries to grasp meaning and coherence intuitively, in a synthesizing way.³⁵ Every interpretation will always be a provisional result of knowledge that has been gained by the philological-historic method and knowledge by "immediate" divination [*Errathen, Ahn[d]en*]. With divination he introduces an element in hermeneutics that cannot be disciplined. He calls it a "method" but, as Julie Ellison argues, this seems to be an error, for actually divination eludes the domain of method.³⁶ It is a feeling of unity in the interpreter as a substitute or surrogate for the ungraspable unity of the text. Schleiermacher characterizes the divinatory method as a female strength and the comparative method as a male strength. He strives to balance them, but unsuccessfully. In the words of Ellison, divination "strains the symmetrical apparatus designed to limit it."³⁷ In Schleiermacher's hermeneutics the divinatory procedure stands for the acknowledgement that there remain always traces of an "otherness" that might subvert the systematic construction of a text.

7 Theory of Gender Characters in *Brouillon*

Schleiermacher introduces the topic of gender difference by calling to mind the premise of his ethical theory, namely that reason appears always individualized in historic reality, "divided in personalities, transposed in space and time" (Brou: 13). Reason connects with the particularities [*Eigentümlichkeiten*] of separate individuals. This is the normal differentiation. However, a striking natural particularity for him is the genderedness of human existence. He grants it a special status within the natural predeterminations of human life. This becomes obvious from the extraordinary terminology he introduces in the text:

The individuation of reason in the personality appears to us *split apart* in the gender character [*zerspalten im Geschlechtscharakter*]. If reason has to become one with the natural determination of the individual, it has to become one with the gender character as well. This should necessarily be considered, if we want to ethically represent the cultivation [*Bildung*] of individuality and the community generated by it. (Brou: 54)

Something curious happens here in the discourse. The "splitting apart" [*Zerspaltung*], as the "cleaving" of reason in the gender character of male or female, opens the view onto a—within Schleiermacher's system of thought—truly *exceptional* polarity in the empirical world. The "splitting apart" suggests an absolute difference, an absolute rupture, whereas his entire philosophical ethics only assumes relative differences. The

author doesn't provide an argument here; the statement of the "splitting apart" has the power of an axiom. The moment of individuation of reason in the human being is manifested in the binary structure of gender characters as "absolute split" (Brou 55). Ethical reflection is now challenged by the question of how this polarity, this being "split apart" in gender characters, can be included and integrated in the moral process that aims at the full unification of reason and nature.

Notably, Schleiermacher adopts the notion of "gender character" [*Geschlechtscharacter*] that was introduced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau [*caractéristiques de sexe*]³⁸ and had become an established concept in German philosophy in the late eighteenth century.³⁹ It is risky to adopt this term "gender character" for it has led to hierarchical oppositions. Will Schleiermacher be able to meet the self-imposed criterion of moral equality of the sexes? In the construction of male and female characters, he starts, like his fellow-philosophers, with the physical sexual organs and their functions. However, he introduces the issue with great restraint: "It is difficult, because little has been said scientifically about the physical basis. Therefore, in this matter we can expect completion the least of all. One only has to start from what is clearly evident" (Brou: 55).

Physical gender difference cannot be limited to the genital organs but permeates the whole organic system of human beings. It appears to Schleiermacher even more difficult to determine a psychic gender difference. Nonetheless, he believes gender difference is not just in the physical realm, "but also in the psychic realm, and it would be foolish not to acknowledge a gender difference of the soul" (Brou: 55).

"It would be foolish":⁴⁰ the rhetoric shows how an appeal to common sense creeps into the argument. Schleiermacher apparently struggles with how to integrate the topic of gender difference within the ethical framework. He struggles to formulate and determine gender difference in a proper academic manner and to deduce it from the principles of his system. Obviously, he wants to attribute an essential meaning to it on the level of being human itself—"this must necessarily be considered" if we want to ethically describe the cultivation of individuality and the formation of human communities. However, in order to demonstrate this, he has to move beyond the coordinates and usual terminology of his system.

We can further ask: if the individuation of reason in the personality appears to us "split in the gender character" how then do splitting [*Zerspaltung*] and individuation [*Vereinzelung*] relate to one another?

The term "splitting" has a far more radical meaning than "individuation". It is reminiscent of Aristophanes's speech in Plato's *Symposium*. Aristophanes offers a visual description of the androgynous person as being cut in two by Zeus. "Each of us when separated, having one side only, like a flat fish, is but the indenture of a man, and he is always looking for his other half."⁴¹ Yet this is not the direction Schleiermacher wants to take. In one of the next lectures, he distances himself from the "myth of the two halves" (Brou: 61). He writes that gender difference in the myth is only conceived of as externally separated, whereas the difference affects [*durchgreift*] the entire person. For him, gender difference seems to be a more radical fact than in Plato's myth of the androgynous man. The "splitting" also relates to the psychic and intellectual dimensions of the human being.

On the relation between “splitting” and “individuation”, we can further comment that “individuation” belongs to the basic concepts of Schleiermacher’s ethics, while “splitting” is not part of it at all. Individuation is integrated within the movement of individualization, which is the highest individual integration of universal reason with the particular nature in the person. The individuation of reason in the isolated individual fits within his ethical scheme.

However, Schleiermacher now raises the problem that this individual appears to be split, cleaved, broken in a gender character. The act of “splitting” is at odds with the system. In the state of “being split” there can be no individuality. The splitting as a separation both physical and psychic forbids us to speak of the individuality of a single human being. The fact of a radical rupture raises the question of whether the single person can actually be seen as an individuality in the highly ethical-qualitative sense in which Schleiermacher has defined the concept. Apparently, the concept of individuality cannot be applied directly and unmediated to the individual person. *Gender difference gets in the way.* Earlier in the series of lectures, he had stated that the moral value of the individuality of the person was greater than that of the community. Now he questions this statement. How does he solve the problem this “splitting” creates for his ethics? Does he solve the problem satisfactorily?

8 Incompatibility of Gender Difference with the Ethical System

Schleiermacher makes various and creative attempts to somehow integrate gender difference within his ethical theory:

1. Reasoning by analogy, from the physical to the psychic to the intellectual, comes to the rescue in determining the “gender characters”, and sexual intercourse and marriage are presented as a unification that transcends “gender characters.”
2. The family as a “higher individuality” is placed above gender difference, while the position of the child as a “third” destabilizes the binary.
3. The love between siblings is qualified as the original friendship between man and woman, and opens a window to recognizing individuality in the opposite gender.

8.1 Theoretical Construction of Gender Difference

The reasoning by analogy is as follows: Schleiermacher begins with the sexual organs and their functions, and sets up a dual line, proceeding from the physical to the psychic to the intellectual. In the reproductive function, one can distinguish between “procreating,” which is the male function, and “receiving,” which is the female function. In the physical constitution, man is characterized by “dominance of muscle power,” and woman by “dominance of sensibility [*Sinnlichkeit*].” This effects in the psychic realm how man and woman perceive reality: in male perception, the

active method of knowing through the senses [*Anschauung*] is predominant, whereas in female perception the receptive feeling predominates. From here, Schleiermacher takes the step to the ethical description of the “gender character.” He elaborates on the symbolizing act. In the realm of knowing, for men “thinking” is dominant, and for women the “higher feeling”. Likewise, he argues, men and women show a gender-differentiated way of articulating their impressions of reality in artistic activity. For men, the predominant activity is virtuous art, “because this art requires ideas, thought.” The men’s way of expressing themselves in the world is more individually orientated, whereas women express their perception of reality primarily in artistic expressions that are communally orientated. In general, they are the guardians of morality, of the “custom as communal representation,” and of fashion (Brou: 55).

Later, in *Ethics 1812/1813*, he will define the polarity that permeates all oppositional gendered pairs as “spontaneity” versus “receptivity”. He will assign to women primarily the sphere of the private home and the salon, and to men primarily the public sphere of economy, politics, and the state (Eth: 322). The full consequences for a gendered labor division thus become explicit.

Does Schleiermacher, with this theory of “gender characters”, attribute an ontological status to gender difference? Has he constructed an essentialist gender theory that plainly affirms and legitimizes nineteenth-century bourgeois social and cultural roles of men and women?

To ascribe ontological status to gender difference is not his intention, as he explicitly states: “This gender character now is absolute one-sidedness, which is to be seen as always expanding. It is not, like the individuality, a representation of the Universe, but simply absolutely split [*absolut gespalten*]. Therefore, it is only to be integrated by absolute unification [*absolute Vereinigung*]” (Brou: 55).

From an ethical viewpoint, the gender character doesn’t qualify as “good,” because, as Schleiermacher states in the introductory sections of the *Brouillon*, good is only that in which the cleft, the conflict, the collision [*Zwiespalt*] is overcome (Brou: 7).⁴² Good in the ethical sense is only the individuality in which the universal reason has unified itself in a harmonic way with a particular nature.

The gender character in its “absolute one-sidedness” is far removed from individuality. By assuming a gender binary as a deep fracture in human existence, Schleiermacher has posed a very special problem that can only be solved by a very special measure. The fracture must be healed, and can be healed only in a similarly “absolute” way. Absolute unification demands a far more radical intervention than the usual ethical movement of “integrating” [*Ineinsbilden*] of relative opposites. No other difference within his ethics is attributed such a splitting power as gender difference. Gender difference is given a *status aparte*. From the system’s standpoint, its ontological status is radical and irreducible. Therefore, it is logical that Schleiermacher contends that a male or female “gender character” in itself is not able to represent individuality. The isolated individual cannot experience wholeness if the encounter with the (hetero)sexual other is not given a constitutive place. As Thandeka contends: “The key to Schleiermacher’s use of male and female gender concepts and images is his understanding of consciousness as a split.”⁴³

Schleiermacher argues that for man and woman to achieve individuality, an integration of the gender characters needs to take place, in the sense of an “absolute

unification” that includes the physical, psychic and spiritual dimensions of human life. The drive for communion is love. Love imparts the physical sexual drive with a spiritual content. In free sociability, the gender character is only secondarily involved, for it aims at perception of individuality, not at perception of gender first. Only in sexual intercourse is this absolute unification of gender characters realized. Love produces an organic union of consciousness between man and woman in which the difference is abolished [*aufgehoben*] and the opposing factors become saturated (Brou: 56). For Schleiermacher, this can only happen in (heterosexual) marriage. There is no other ethical form for sexual union than marriage, he argues, for in marriage the requirements of both duality (in permanent dependence on the other) and indissolubility are fulfilled. In the loving union of marriage, gender difference is “extinguished.” Man and woman participate in and through each other in a consciousness of individuality (Brou: 57). The organic fusion of sexual intercourse generates in both man and woman an immediate feeling of their individuality, rooted in one another.

Schleiermacher emphasizes the egalitarian basic structure of the complementary gender model. Both man and woman arrive at a full moral consciousness of individuality.

Marriage is seen as the communion in which an exchange of specific gender characteristics between man and woman takes place. Through sexual union, they forever have their consciousness in each other; it is a complete, reciprocal possession. Through the union in love, what was subordinate in the one-sidedness of the gender character can now fully flourish: the “feeling” of the man becomes founded in the woman, and the “*Anschauung* of the woman becomes rooted in the man. In the loving relationship, an identity is generated that transcends the one-sidedness of gender characteristics. However, the “extinction” [*Extinction*] in the sexual act does not entail that in empirical reality the difference between men and women no longer exists. This transcending of gender characters in sexual intercourse only occurs “in a transitory moment or rather purely inwardly” (Brou: 57).

In *Confidential Letters*, Schleiermacher poetically writes about this moment in which love reveals itself in its synthesizing power. This moment is “inexplicable and incomprehensible” (KGA I.3: 210). As a mystical experience it cannot be grasped by reflection. It is impossible to perpetuate this moment of unification; it cannot be given a fixed, continuing form in finite reality. Likewise, here in *Brouillon*, Schleiermacher admits that empirically a difference between man and woman remains. However, because of the unifying moment in the all-encompassing sexual act, difference might become more fluid and versatile, with a potential to move and transcend boundaries.

8.2 *The Family as the Original Individuality*

“As love = marriage, so marriage = family” (Brou: 57). This process does not stop with the duality of man and woman in marriage. Over time, an indifference to the genders materializes in the new organic entity that emerges from the sexual

unification: the family. The extinction of gender difference in the family becomes outwardly visible in the reproduction of the genus [*Gattung*], which is indifferent in terms of gender.

It is not easy to follow Schleiermacher's argument here, but this seems to be the core: the child appears symbolically as the extinction of the gender characters. In the child, the differentiation of male or female does not come first. The child is primarily a reproduction of the genus, a fruit of the unification of the sexes. Whereas in sexual intercourse the abolishment of gender difference is only a transitory moment, in the child it takes on an outward appearance over time. The child is, so to speak, an "indifferent", a "third". It sets things in motion. The child as a "third" is given the role of actual destabilizer of the gender binary. In a strictly dual construction, the opposition would become rigid. Schleiermacher's versatile style of thinking is characterized by such attempts to escape a dualism in ethics.⁴⁴

In the triangular relationship that constitutes the family, gender difference is being dynamized: "In this way the family becomes a totality of everything that is otherwise only present in split form [*zerspalten*], both of the genders and the generations" (Brou: 58).

What in time and space is only present in the split form of genders and generations becomes one, as it were, in the family. Therefore, the family, Schleiermacher writes, can be considered a full representation of the idea of humanity. Only here we can speak of a full individual [*ein völliges Individuum*]. The family is the original individuality in history. The community of the family "obtains an own soul in which likewise those limitations are annihilated: the *family character*, which is actually pure indifference of gender and eternal maturity" (Brou: 58).

This family character as a true, full individuality is ranked above the gender character that in its one-sidedness cannot represent individuality. Individuality, thus, is not attributed to an exclusively male or female defined subject, but primarily to the internal plurality of the family. The consciousness of personal individuality is thus for Schleiermacher always related to the consciousness of the common individuality in the family that transcends and relativizes the limitations of gender: "In empirical reality, however, [there will be] a remaining dominance of the male or female or alternating in individual moments" (Brou: 58).

8.3 *Love Between Siblings as the Original Friendship Between the Genders*

From still another angle, Schleiermacher addresses the problem of the gender split. Sexual intercourse in love heals the fracture between "male" and "female". Indeed, but how do man and woman come to view each other in their potential yet incomplete individuality? In order to be able to love someone of the other gender, Schleiermacher argues, there has to be an elementary familiarity with the "otherness" of that gender. After all, something that is completely strange cannot be

known. At this place in the text, surprisingly, the brother and sister appear. In their mutual love, Schleiermacher discovers an elementary familiarity with the other gender. Between the brother and sister there is no absolute split, because they belong to the same family, and originate from the sexual union of the same parents. In the common individuality of the family, brother and sister distinguish familiarities in the other. Against this backdrop, Schleiermacher states: “the love between siblings [*Geschwisterliebe*] is the original friendship between the genders” (Brou: 60). On the basis of this friendship, both are, in later stages of their lives, in the sphere of free sociability capable of having a loving view of persons of the other gender, and ultimately to fall in love. We can conclude: the love between brother and sister is in Schleiermacher’s ethics the foundation of the unity between the sexes to be achieved in marriage. If one removes this from the system, the construction is on the verge of collapse. Who or what should then stop the splitting potential of gender characters?

There is no space in this chapter to make an extensive comparison between Schleiermacher and Hegel on this point, but so much can be said: in Hegel’s life and thought, the role of the sister, the concrete (Christiane) and the transcendental (Antigone), is tragic.⁴⁵ For Hegel, the ethical significance of Antigone’s agency cannot be expressed within the binary terms of divine and human law. She is too good to live; that is, too extreme an embodiment of a particular good to survive in the world. Notably, where Hegel pushes the sister to the margins of his system (and his life), Schleiermacher takes her into his discourse (and gives her a meaningful place in his life as well). In every respect, he takes good care of the sister. For him, the relationship between brother and sister is more than a natural blood relationship. It has a full moral dimension. It is ennobled by a love in which both nature and reason are at stake.

The relationship of brother and sister becomes the positive preform and a necessary social practice arena for the germination of love and friendship between the sexes. It would be contrary to Schleiermacher’s thought and spirit to assume, like Hegel, an opposition between the sphere of the particular of the family and the universal sphere of the state, which would urge the man who leaves the family to break the relationship with the sister in order to make the transition to moral, self-conscious life.

Similarly, in his own life Schleiermacher demonstrates that the love between siblings should not be annihilated through marital love. He refuses to draw a line of division between the love for the sister and the love for the spouse. This is illustrated by a letter to his beloved Eleonore Grünow, sent from Gnadenfrei on May 3, 1802. While visiting his sister Charlotte in the Moravian community, he was grasped by a religious experience. Standing on a hill near the town, he was overwhelmed by the beauty of nature. In this ecstatic state of mind, a desire arose in him:

There it soon happened that everything came together in two feelings: I adored and I loved, I would have liked to have passed away with devotion and tenderness. You and my dear sister Lotte I wished by my side, each of us with our own piety in the heart, each moved in the same way, and all united and embraced in love.⁴⁶

9 Conclusion

My analysis of Schleiermacher's theory of gender has pointed out several frictions, emergency solutions, and imbalances that make it anything but unambiguous. I have mentioned the appeal to common sense within the stringent academic argumentation, the term "splitting apart," the position of the child as a "third," the relationship of brother and sister that counterbalances the division of genders, and the ambivalence in the text about whether the personal individuality or the communal individuality of the family should be granted the highest moral value. These ambivalences and inconsistencies demonstrate how Schleiermacher as a philosopher of gender opens the door for elements that do not fit within or that even risk disrupting the construction as a whole. Notwithstanding the measures he takes to solve the problems, there still remains something that simply doesn't fit.

I argue that this is precisely what makes his work challenging and worth considering, in particular in the context of German idealism. Schleiermacher's theory is full of moments that potentially criticize and subvert the assumptions about gender within his own system. He actively wants to present an alternative to the gender theories of Kant and Fichte, and in the dialogical style of his thinking he offers an alternative to the logic of oppositional dialectics such as Hegel's. *Pars pro toto* Schleiermacher's theory of gender displays his unique style of thinking: however systematic it may be, it continues to enjoy a free and vibrant movement that aims to reflect the lived life, with its experiences and affections that can never be discursively regulated and grasped. At times, subconsciously or willingly, the author allows such experiences to disrupt the order and logic of the system. We could call this a "self-deconstructing" aspect of his thinking.

As for the social implications of his gender theory, we may conclude that, in comparison to his early writings, he brings the model of egalitarian gender difference increasingly more in line with emerging patterns in bourgeois society. The civil institution of marriage, with its gendered labor division, is linked to the distinction of the private and public realms that Schleiermacher postulates in his ethics without any further reflection (Brou: 59–60).⁴⁷ The gender model that originally aimed at egalitarian complementarity comes significantly under the hierarchical sign of patriarchy. Also, in relation to the *Confidential Letters on Friedrich Schlegel's Lucinde*, the social subversive energy of erotic love becomes domesticated. For this "taming" of love, we might blame the concept of gender characters and its crucial role.⁴⁸

There is also a tension in the conception of the family. The recognition of the family as the original sphere of all social domains should include the possibility that the original, in itself plural community of the family can exert a critical transformative influence on gender roles and patterns that are present in the different domains of economy, politics, science, and religion. However, Schleiermacher's practical-social elaboration lags behind the promising ideals that are dormant in his ethical theory. After he has defined the family with its gender-transcending "indifference" [*Menschheit* = humanity] as the original social sphere, he introduces a division of

roles—again on the basis of gender characters—between man and woman in the family. The woman is assigned the role of cultivator of morality and religion in the family, whereas the man is assigned the juridical role as representative of the family in the state (Brou: 59–60). I believe that assumptions about “innate nature” still carry too much weight over the view of a free cultivation of individuality. The concept of “gender characters” and the associated theory of marriage turn out to be the ideological culprits for the evident underperformance of Schleiermacher’s emancipatory agenda.

Schleiermacher’s reflections on gender difference, however, remain significant for today in particular in the instances of the text where a non-ontologizing, self-deconstructing line of thought prevails and the author implicitly acknowledges the irreducibility of gender difference.

Notes

1. Friedrich Schleiermacher in a letter to Charlotte von Kathen, August 4, 1804. Brief no. 1802, in KGA 7.
2. I would like to thank the members of our Dutch Schleiermacher reading group, in particular Dick Boer, Rinse Reeling Brouwer, and Nicolaas Groot, for their valuable comments to an early draft of this chapter.
3. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, trans. Richard Crouter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
4. Dick Boer, “Rethinking Schleiermacher. Warum wir ihn nicht verachten sollten,” *Texte und Kontexte* 150 (2016): 39–52.
5. Marilyn Chapin Massey, *Feminine Soul: The Fate of an Ideal* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985).
6. Katherine M. Padilla, *The Embodiment of the Absolute: Theories of the Feminine in the Works of Schleiermacher, Schlegel, and Novalis* (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1988).
7. Dawn De Vries, “Schleiermacher’s *Christmas Eve Dialogue*: Bourgeois Ideology or Feminist Theology?” *The Journal of Religion* 69 (1989): 169–183.
8. Ruth Drucilla Richardson, *The Role of Women in the Life and Thought of the Early Schleiermacher (1768–1806): An Historical Overview* (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991).
9. Patricia Guenther-Gleason, *On Schleiermacher and Gender Politics* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997).
10. Elisabeth Hartlieb, *Geschlechterdifferenz im Denken Friedrich Schleiermachers* (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2006).
11. Heleen Zorgdrager, *Theologie die verschil maakt: Taal en sekse-differentie als sleutels tot Schleiermachers denken* [Theology that makes a difference: Language and gender difference as keys to Schleiermacher’s thought] (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2003).

12. Other studies worth mentioning here are Thandeka, "Schleiermacher, Feminism, and Liberation Theologies: A Key," in *The Cambridge Companion to Friedrich Schleiermacher*, ed. Jacqueline Mariña (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 287–305; Julia A. Lamm, "Schleiermacher's *Christmas Dialogue* as Platonic Dialogue," *The Journal of Religion* 92, no. 3 (2012): 392–420; Shelli M. Poe, *Essential Trinitarianism: Schleiermacher as a Trinitarian Theologian* (London, New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017).
13. Hartlieb, *Geschlechterdifferenz*, 57, note 2, defines "gender coding" as the connotation of a concept or fact, in which this concept or fact is assigned to male or female within the frame of a binary gender model; the assignment results from the socially structuring and symbolically ordering function of the category of gender within a social system.
14. Hartlieb, *Geschlechterdifferenz*, 57–58.
15. For critical discussions of the gender theory in *Brouillon*, see Richardson, *The Role of Women*, 119–128; Zоргdrager, *Theologie die verschil maakt*, 100–122; Hartlieb, *Geschlechterdifferenz*, 138–155.
16. Paul Peucker, *A Time of Sifting: Mystical Marriage and the Crisis of Moravian Piety in the Eighteenth Century* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015). Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760) was a German nobleman, a religious and social reformer, founder of the Herrnhuter *Brüdergemeine*, and a pioneer in Christian mission. He provided shelter on his estate for German-speaking exiles from Moravia who had been forced to fled because of their Protestant faith. The settlement on Zinzendorf's estate was called Herrnhut, which means "the Lord's watchful care" or "the Lord's protection." Zinzendorf, influenced by Lutheran Pietism, began to reorganize the Moravian community into a form of communal Christian living, by establishing family-like "choirs" based on age, marital status, and gender. In his theology, he expressed the human longing for connection with the divine in the very physical terms of human marriage and sexuality.
17. See for the English translation Richardson, *The Role of Women*, 60–61.
18. F.H. Jacobi, *Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn* (Breslau: Gottl. Löwe, 1785).
19. My translation of: "... und so alles Einzelne als einen Theil des Ganzen, alles Beschränkte als eine Darstellung des Unendlichen hinnehmen, das ist Religion".
20. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); see Brent W. Sockness, "Schleiermacher and the Ethics of Authenticity: The *Monologen* of 1800," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 32, no. 3 (2004): 477–517.
21. "Das principium individui ist das Mystischste im Gebiet der Philosophie ...".
22. Cited in Theodore Vial, *Schleiermacher: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 56.
23. Frederick C. Beiser, "Schleiermacher's Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Friedrich Schleiermacher*, ed. Jacqueline Mariña (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 61.

24. Schleiermacher specifies it in the second edition of *Speeches*, 1806: “This indeed is the one and all of religion: to feel everything moving us in feeling in its highest unity as one and all, and to feel everything individual and particular as imparted through this, and therefore to feel our existence and life as an existence and life in and through God.” In *The Christmas Dialogue, The Second Speech, and Other Selections*, trans. and ed. Julia A. Lamm, 152–223 (New York, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2014), 181.
25. Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860. The Legacy of Idealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 153.
26. Italics by the author of this chapter.
27. The flute concert of Friedrich Ludwig Dülon on December 3, 1805, which inspired him to write the novella, caused him to cancel a lecture of ethics; in the margins of the manuscript of the 30th lesson Schleiermacher wrote: “Eine Stunde ausgesetzt wegen Dulons concert,” (Brou 51).
28. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Foundations of Natural Right*, trans. Michael Baur, ed. Frederick Neuhouser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); *System of Ethics*, trans. and ed. Stefano Bacin and Owen Ware (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021). See also the chapter by Christoph Binkelman and Marion Heinz in this volume.
29. See also the chapter by Friederike Kuster in this volume.
30. Schleiermacher opposes “the usual formulas of transcendental philosophy that abstracts universal objective knowledge from any individuality” (Brou 99).
31. Emphasis on this aspect in Leendert Oranje, *God en wereld. De vraag naar het transcendentale in Schleiermacher’s “Dialektik”* (Kampen: Kok, 1968); Zorgdrager, *Theologie die verschil maakt*; Shelli Poe, *Trinitarian Essentialism*; Ruth Jackson Ravenscroft, *The Veiled God: Friedrich Schleiermacher’s Theology of Finitude* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).
32. Albert L. Blackwell, *Schleiermacher’s Early Philosophy of Life: Determinism, Freedom, and Phantasy* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982), 90; Günther Scholtz, *Die Philosophie Schleiermachers* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1984), 118; Hans-Joachim Birkner, *Schleiermachers Christliche Sittenlehre im Zusammenhang seines philosophisch-theologischen Systems* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1964), 39.
33. “...die Art, wie das fremde Leben das unsrige ergreift”.
34. See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism. And Other Writings*, trans. and ed. Andrew Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutik und Kritik. Mit einem Anhang sprachphilosophischer Texte Schleiermachers*, ed. Manfred Frank (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1993); Manfred Frank, *Einführung in die frühromantische Ästhetik. Vorlesungen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989); Jacques Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1967); *L’Écriture et la différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1967); Zorgdrager, *Theologie die verschil maakt*, 139–147.
35. He calls divination also the “psychological” method, which has led to great misunderstanding, in the reception by influential authors such as Wilhelm Dilthey and Hans-Georg Gadamer, that it would be a kind of romantic hermeneutics

- striving towards congeniality with the author. See, for example, Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophen Hermeneutik* (Tuebingen: JCB Mohr, 2010), 267.
36. Julie Ellison, *Delicate Subjects: Romanticism, Gender, and the Ethics of Understanding*, 17–99 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990).
 37. Ellison, *Delicate Subjects*, 81.
 38. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (Amsterdam: Marc-Michel Rey, 1761); *Émile ou De l'éducation* (The Hague: Jean Néaulme, 1762).
 39. Next to Kant and Fichte, the concept has a prominent place in Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Über den Geschlechtsunterschied und dessen Einfluss auf die organische Natur* [1794], in Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Gesammelte Schriften, vol. 1*, ed. Albert Leitzmann, 311–335 (reprint Berlin: De Gruyter, 1968); *Über die männliche und weibliche Form* [1795], in Humboldt, *Gesammelte Schriften, vol. 1*, 335–369.
 40. In German: “*es wäre toll*,” which in modern German clearly has a different meaning than in Schleiermacher’s time.
 41. Plato, *Symposium: The Benjamin Jowett Translation* (New York: Modern Library, 1996), 105.
 42. “Wie in der Naturbetrachtung alles eins ist und harmonisch, so auch in der ethischen überspringen wir den Zwiespalt. Das Böse ist an sich nichts und kommt nur zum Vorschein mit dem Guten zugleich, inwiefern dies als ein werdendes gesetzt wird” (Brou 7).
 43. Thaneka, “Schleiermacher, Feminism, and Liberation Theologies,” 299.
 44. Hartlieb misses the full critical implications of these reflections on the child as a reproduction of the genus and on the brother-sister relationship. See Hartlieb, *Geschlechterdifferenz*, 147, note 305, and 120, note 210.
 45. I refer to the chapter on Hegel’s *Antigone* in this volume. For a deconstructive reading of Hegel’s *Antigone*, see Jacques Derrida, *Glas* (Paris: Galilée, 1974), who also includes Hegel’s letter to his sister Christiane from August 12, 1821. See also the chapters by Elena Tzelepis and Kimberly Hutchings in this volume.
 46. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, vol. I.1: 1768–1802 [1870], ed. Martin Redeker (Berlin: De Gruyter 1970), 543. The manuscript of this letter was still available to Dilthey but has since been lost.
 47. See Hartlieb, *Geschlechterdifferenz*, 149.
 48. See *ibid.*, 152–153.