CHAPTER II

THEOLOGICAL VOLUNTARISM

In the last chapter, it was suggested that ethical voluntarism can profitably be regarded as a transference to the sphere of human action of views with respect to the nature of value that were first put forward as theses about the relation of intellect to will within the moral personality of God. In the light of the close historical relationship between moral ideas and systems of religious belief, there is nothing surprising about this order of progression. Indeed, one would expect that just as the intellectualistic view of St. Thomas was stated in the form of a theory about the composition of God's moral personality, so a competing view would assume the form of a revision of that theory. Historically, the first stage in the development of ethical voluntarism was in fact predominantly theological in character. In this chapter, an attempt will be made to bring out some of the more important features of a voluntaristic moral theology, and to suggest ways in which such a position in theology may influence our understanding of evaluation and choice as human functions.

I

Theories that make the will of God the ultimate basis of morality are often classified by philosophers under the rubric of "theological naturalism." In the sense which the term "naturalism" bears in current ethical theory, and in this particular use, it designates all interpretations of moral predicates like "good" and

"right" which make them logically equivalent to a set of predicates whose applicability can be determined by some procedure of verification. Thus, a hedonistic theory is naturalistic if it asserts that “good” and “tending to maximize pleasure” are synonymous and interchangeable expressions, and if there is some generally acceptable method for determining what actions in fact produce the greatest amount of pleasure. The only peculiarity of the theological variant of naturalism, from this standpoint, would be the fact that the criterial properties that stand in this relation of mutual entailment with “good” or “right” are not natural in any sense that implies amenability to empirical verification, and require instead another mode of apprehension. Nevertheless, if this difficulty is passed over—and it has no importance for our purposes—the only difference between an ethical theory based on the will of God and a paradigmatic case of naturalism such as hedonism, lies in the criterial properties that establish goodness or rightness. In both cases, a “fact”—whether it be “x is pleasant” or “x is willed by God” makes no difference—has as a necessary consequence, that “x is good.” Viewed in this light, “will of God” theories of ethics might not seem to be very different from the intellectualistic views discussed in the last chapter, since they recognize a mode of cognition that provides conclusive answers to moral questions.

While this analysis of theological voluntarism is perfectly accurate as far as it goes, it completely misses what is truly distinctive and interesting in such theories. It does so because it confines itself rigidly to the point of view of those beings, human and otherwise, who are morally subordinate to God and for whom God’s having willed x is in fact a necessary and sufficient condition of x’s being good. Because the similarity between the situations of subordinate moral beings as understood by intellectualism and by this theological version of voluntarism is allowed to dominate our view of these theories, we miss the much more important difference between them which has to do with their conception of the moral personality of God. While the intellectualist recognizes the existence of an immense gap separating God and man in point of knowledge and goodness, he conceives God’s nature as a moral being to be a perfected form of what is present in man in
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an imperfect and fragmentary state. Both man and God thus have an essentially cognitive relation to their own essences and to the goodness that is implicit in these natures. The innovation of the voluntarist is to introduce the conception of a moral personality—God's—that cannot be described in intellectualistic terms at all. The voluntarist's God does not stand in a cognitive relationship to moral essences. His will is not coerced by what he knows, and what he knows does not provide a morally relevant standard by which the rightness of what he wills can be established. To be sure, what he wills constitutes a norm to which all subordinate beings must conform their wills since God is the moral being par excellence. But for just this reason, the voluntaristic reinterpretation of his nature is all the more significant. It amounts to saying that while superficially, from the standpoint of subordinate moral beings, morality is a matter of knowing, its ultimate basis is in the will of God and this is a will that is subject to no causal or logical constraints. On the voluntaristic view, morality is not a matter of "knowing" at all in the case of God, except in the trivial sense that God necessarily knows, reflexively, what he wills. For human beings, of course, it is a matter of knowing (i.e., knowing what God wills); but it is impossible in principle for them to know what is right in the sense of grasping the rational necessities on which God's commands rest, since these do not exist.

Now, among the doctrines that are classifiable as forms of theological voluntarism it is in fact possible to distinguish between those that place their principal emphasis on the moral personality of God, and those that are mainly concerned with the situation of subordinate moral beings under a God whose will is subject to no rational controls. As an example of the former, one can cite the conception of God's moral nature that was worked out by William of Ockham as not only the most radical and ruthlessly consistent view of its kind, but also as one that has the added interest of being a direct counter-statement to the Thomistic doctrine already considered. As an example of the second, man-centered kind of theological voluntarism, the thought of Sören Kierkegaard is probably without a peer. Together these two very different thinkers offer paradigms of the two aspects of theologi-
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critical voluntarism that illustrate rather clearly both the internal dialectic and the final limitations of this mode of thought.

II

The crucial difference between Ockham's God and the God of St. Thomas is that the former does not have a nature in the sense of a real essence composed of universal attributes that can be apprehended by the intellect. This is simply an application to God of Ockham's general thesis that only particulars exist and that such traditional distinctions of reason as that between God's essence and his existence, or between his will and his knowledge, are conceptual distinctions for which there is no counterpart distinction in God himself or in any object at all. God's nature, like that of all individuals, is absolutely simple and unitary; and the force of this thesis, as shown by the use Ockham makes of it, is to deny the possibility of any order of priority of intellect over will within the divine personality. The object of God's knowledge is particular things, not universal essences. The conception of a mediation and control of God's will in relation to particular things by the ideas contained in his intellect is rejected by Ockham as is also the cognate view that the being of a thing comprises a natural end which it strives to realize. The result is that God's acts of will are subject to no controls, whether logical or causal, be-

2 Although a complete edition of Ockham's works is planned, there has been no modern edition of his Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard in which his views on ethics are most extensively stated. Extensive selections from this work are presented in S. U. Zuidema, De Philosophie van Occam in zijn Commentaar op de Sententiën (Hilversum: Schipper, 1936); briefer excerpts are presented in translation in S. Tornay (ed.), Ockham: Studies and Selections (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing Co., 1938), and in P. Boehner (ed.), Ockham: Philosophical Writings (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1957). The most important recent work dealing with Ockham's moral philosophy is Georges de Lagarde, Ockham: La morale et le droit, Vol. 6 of the author's La naissance de l'esprit laïque au déclin du moyen âge (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1948). For the developments in medieval ethical theory that led up to Ockham, see Jean Rohmer's excellent study, La finalité morale chez les théologiens de St. Augustin à Duns Scot (Paris: J. Vrin, 1938), and also E. Gilson, Jean Duns Scot (Paris: 1952), especially ch. 9, "La volonté."
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cause there is no moral order antecedent to the exercise of his will. The content of the latter is not derivable from his essence, nor from the essence of created beings, because God's will and his essence are one and the same thing. The divine will is thus constitutive of what is good and right; while God knows what he makes right and good by willing it, this knowledge is inseparable from the act of will itself, and is in no sense something in the mind of God by which the will is guided. The only limit set to the divine will by Ockham is that it cannot involve an internal contradiction; and he makes it very clear that this does not mean that God cannot change his will and make an action right that was previously wrong. By this very significant interpretation of the principle of non-contradiction as it applies to ethical predicates, which incidentally anticipates certain developments in contemporary ethical theory, Ockham in effect commits himself to the view that these predicates do not denote "qualities" in any normal sense of the term, and that their applicability is not susceptible of any normal epistemic certification.

While God enjoys this total autonomy, he is the only "moral

3 This point is made in A. Garvens, "Die Grundlagen der Ethik Wilhelm's von Ockham," Franziskanische Studien, Vol. 21 (3-4), pp. 243-73 and pp. 360–408. As Garvens points out, "ein innerwesentlicher realer Zusammenhang zwischen ontologischem und moralischem Sein besteht in Ockham's Weltbild nicht," (p. 267). The author also quotes the following passage from Ockham's Commentary IV, q. 9, 8: "dico quod peccatum nee est ens reale nec rationis sed sicut alias dictum est de bono, vero et aliiis connotativis conceptibus quod habent quid nominis et non quid rei nec rationis." This analysis of ethical predicates as "connotative concepts" to which no fixed "ens reale" attaches, rather clearly foreshadows modern views that deny descriptive meaning to ethical predicates and focus attention on the operation of the ethical words themselves. (See for example C. L. Stevenson, Ethics and Language (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 20 ff; and A. Hägerström, Inquiries into the Nature of Law and Morals (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1953), pp. 142–64.) Quite consistently, Ockham associates with this interpretation of moral predicates the psychological doctrine that the will is not bound to any natural end, and that it can in fact make anything its end. Thus, in Sent. IV, q. 14 D, Ockham argues that "voluntas pro statu isto potest nolle ultimum finem, sive ostenditur in generali sive in particulari—dico quod intellectu indicante hoc esse finem ultimum potest voluntas illum finem nolle. Voluntas tamquam potentia libera est receptiva nolle et velle respectu cuiuscumque objecti." This passage recalls Kant's statement that human beings "can will anything," and it is worth noting that Ockham and Kant also agree that only acts of will can be good or bad.

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agent" that does, according to Ockham; and the situation of subordinate moral beings is very different. The older view had been that since God’s action is a function of his ideas, a degree of imitation of the divine essence is possible for subordinate moral beings. A rejection of this view has the effect of making insight into God’s “reasons” impossible in principle. For inferior beings, “right” action means action that is commanded by God; and for them this formula also shows how they should set about discovering what they should do. (As previously noted, this equivalence would hold in a trivial sense for God, too, but it could not in his case provide a method for determining what to do.) The basis of morality is thus the potentia absoluta of God, his unfettered and continuing freedom to determine what actions are right and wrong. With this notion there have traditionally been associated disagreeable images of arbitrary personal despotism, which partly explain the unfavorable reaction that Ockham’s views have usually encountered. Correctly understood, however, the point he is making is simply that at its highest level—in God—morality does not belong to the order of knowing, but consists in a spontaneous creativity that expresses itself in commands by God through which his creation is to be ordered, and in which rational beings are to find the constitutive principles of right and wrong. No moral principle—not even the highest—can claim any sort of necessary truth. God might have ordered his world otherwise than he has, and the content of his will with respect to human beings might have been very different. All moral principles are therefore at best conditionally valid, and the condition is conveyed in the phrase, stante ordinatione divina quae nunc est. God is subject to no obligations, and any uniformity that may characterize his commands is self-imposed and can be terminated at his pleasure.

It is often argued that when all moral principles are treated as dependent upon an uncontrolled divine will, morality in any usual sense becomes impossible because the relative stability and predictability presupposed by a code of moral rules are missing. In considering this sort of argument, the example of Ockham may be instructive. Just as the ultimately arbitrary character of even the highest moral principles may be said to be symbolized
within his system by the idea of God's *potentia absoluta*, so the relative stability of these principles, which is a condition for the existence of a moral code in any familiar sense, finds its place through the notion of God's *potentia ordinata*. It is just a fact that God condescends to regulate his will so that what is right one day is not wrong the next; and it is upon this conditional uniformity of his will that human morality is based. Accordingly, Ockham is able to speak of a *recta ratio* that is the standard for human action and to continue to make use of a great deal of "intellectualistic" terminology in his account of human morality. He can even recognize a form of natural law, and declare its propositions to be necessarily true. But this necessity is itself conditional, being derived from the contingent premise that God wills such and such actions to be done, together with the rule that right action consists in obedience to the will of God. He can also insist that only those commands of God that are explicitly cast in universalized form constitute obligations for all human beings and thereby meet another objection that is frequently brought against voluntaristic ethical theories. What he cannot say, and what his whole theory in fact seems designed to deny, is that there can be any necessary truths in the sphere of morals that could be used to determine what one ought to do without any appeal to the will of God.

What emerges from this brief survey of Ockham's ethical theory is an extraordinary combination of the most absolute autonomy and an equally complete heteronomy of the will at different levels of the system. Looking up from the human level, the system is indeed a form of theological naturalism in which the human will has no share in determining what is right except, perhaps, in matters with respect to which there is no divine ordinance. Looking down from the top—from the God's-eye-view—there is no moral order at all that does not depend from moment to moment on the unrestrained will of God. De-

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pending on the level in question, Ockham's ethics represents extremes of arbitrary individual fiat and rigid deontologism. Ockham was able to maintain this antithesis because autonomy and heteronomy were, on his view, attributes of numerically distinct persons, i.e., God and human beings. In the long run, however, it has proved difficult to prevent such a conception of the moral personality of God from modifying our view of subordinate moral personalities as well. If only by virtue of being subject to a completely autonomous will, human wills come to participate vicariously in the very autonomy that is denied them; and, as I have already suggested, it is tempting to see in theological voluntarism a preliminary sketch of a conception of autonomous human personality which in good Hegelian fashion has to be stated in a projected or externalized form before it can be applied to the understanding of self. In any case, when these levels come to be thought of as internal to one individual or at least to a community composed of human beings, the tension between the autonomy characteristic of the one and the heteronomy of the other is more likely to be felt as an out-and-out contradiction than is the case when the different levels are represented by different persons.

III

Ockham's radically voluntaristic conception of God's moral personality was never to be stated in its full rigor again. There is, of course, much in the thought of the Protestant Reformers of the sixteenth century and particularly in their theory of justification that depends upon a contrast between God's potentia absoluta and potentia ordinata. For Luther, as for Calvin, there is no

6 Except by Descartes, who held that even the truths of mathematics are dependent on God's will. For a discussion of Descartes' voluntarism, see the most interesting essay by Jean-Paul Sartre, "La liberté cartésienne," in Situations I (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), pp. 314–35. This essay is particularly valuable for the light it casts on Sartre's own views.

7 Detailed accounts of the ethical views of Luther, Calvin, and Melanchthon are given in O. Dittrich, Geschichte der Ethik (Leipzig: Meiner, 1926–32), Vol. 4. This work is also valuable for its discussions of the history of ethical thought during the medieval period.
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statable set of conditions such that to satisfy them guarantees salvation. God's will is therefore a "hidden" will, in the sense that it cannot be bound by any body of rules by which human beings might orient themselves. But it is not altogether clear whether this hidden will has a rationale that human beings are hopelessly incapable of understanding, or whether Luther subscribes to the full Ockhamistic doctrine of a divine will that is subject only to the restraints it condescends to accept and is therefore not even comprehensible in principle. In practice, there is little difference between these views when the intellectual incapacity of man in a state of sin is as complete as Luther and Calvin conceive it to be. Nevertheless, because the Reformers fail to expound a clear doctrine of the relationship of God's will to his intellect, they cannot be classified as radical voluntarists. Their focus of interest is on the problem of finding a proper relation to an autonomous and omnipotent person—God—rather than on the problem of what it is to be such a person.

At the same time, however, this very preoccupation with the situation of subordinate moral beings who must attempt to conform their wills to that of an incomprehensible God has made a rich contribution to the development of the ethical tradition we are studying. When the focus of attention is shifted from God to the description of human action, and when the human will is conceived, as it is by the Reformers, to be the passive instrument of God's will, any characterization of the latter will tend to color the coordinate concept of the wills that are subordinate to it. More specifically, the discontinuities and freedom from rational restraints that are peculiar to God's will, whether or not these are thought to be a function of our limited understanding, tend to pass over into the account that is given of human action. The significance of this evolution lies in its implications for the philosophical treatment of human action even after the theological assumptions that underlie it are dropped.

8 This doctrine of God's hidden will is most clearly expressed in Luther's The Bondage of the Will. For a good discussion of this aspect of Luther's thought and of the subsequent interpretations of it, see J. Dillenberger, God Hidden and Revealed (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953). B. Gerrish, Grace and Reason (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962) gives a general account of Luther's view of the power and scope of human reason.
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Nowhere is the effect of a voluntaristic conception of God's personality upon the description of human action as clear as it is in the case of Kierkegaard.⁹ He is, to be sure, a voluntarist not in the sense of holding some doctrine of the relationship of intellect to will in God, but in the sense (just noted in the case of the Reformers) of rejecting all traditional claims that the content of God's will can be "known" by human beings in the form of universal principles. At the same time, there can be no question but that for Kierkegaard conformity to the will of God is still the proper end of man. Necessarily, therefore, the human response to God's commands will run the risk of appearing as anomalous and unjustifiable by the standard of a universalistic rule-ethic, as do these commands themselves. Since God is not bound by even the highest moral rule, the knight of faith who would do his will may, according to Kierkegaard, be called upon to violate generally valid moral rules as Abraham was in fact prepared to do. Kierkegaard speaks of this as passing beyond the sphere of the ethical, but by that he means beyond the sphere of the general moral rules by which men justify particular actions to one another. The familiar phrase Kierkegaard uses to describe Abraham's case—the "teleological suspension of the ethical"—can be somewhat misleading if it is not understood that the ethical that is transcended or suspended is the morality of general rules, and that the real effect of Kierkegaard's views is to expand the sphere of morality to include the requirement of obedience to God's particular commands. Kierkegaard is saying that it can be our duty (to God) to do what we cannot justify to other human beings by subsumption under a general principle. There is nothing Abraham can say in defense of the action which is nevertheless his duty, as Kierkegaard points out;¹⁰ and it follows that our duties

⁹ Kierkegaard's numerous treatments of ethical themes are scattered throughout his works, but the most important discussions are to be found in Fear and Trembling (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1941); in Either/Or (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1946), Vol. 2, pp. 133–278; and in Concluding Unscientific Postscript (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1941), Part II, chs. 1–3. Jean Wahl's Études Kierkegaardienes (2d. rev. ed.; Paris: J. Vrin, 1949) is still perhaps the most useful of the secondary works on Kierkegaard, and offers analyses of his relationship to Hegel that are particularly helpful.

¹⁰ Fear and Trembling, pp. 176 ff.
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and our moral lives as a whole are not coextensive with the sphere of the universalizable and the communicable. In the upper reaches of the moral life, "the individual as a particular is higher than the universal and is justified against it, is not subordinate but superior."\(^{11}\) As human action conforms itself to the \textit{potentia absoluta} of God, the ethic of universal principles sinks to the status of just one element in the moral life as a whole, and becomes at least as much of an obstacle in the way of the realization of our highest end as it is itself an advance on "life's way."

Kierkegaard's use of the concept of choice gives perhaps the best evidence of the way his whole conception of human action has been modified. The central feature of the account he gives is that choice is \textit{free} in the sense of being a self-transcending act by which the individual makes himself by choosing himself. This activity is conceived as going on outside the framework of any objective or public moral rationality. Kierkegaard was passionately convinced that to treat the moral life of the individual as simply the acting out of something that is already anticipated in the implicit logic of the world spirit was to make it too easy a thing. Indeed, he seems to have felt that the special quality of moral choice required that it be a kind of free and unsupported flight—a "leap"—that could not be subtended by any justificatory syllogism at all. Not only do we choose ourselves but we also choose to choose, i.e., to construe the world in terms of alternative courses of action that are really incompatible and to one of which we, as individuals, must commit ourselves. While the knight of faith who transcends the morality of general rules altogether acts on faith, as Kierkegaard says, that very faith is a kind of choice that is wholly unsupported by anything that would make it reasonable in the eyes of the world. To designate this non-cognitive, non-inferential movement of choice that is always particular and always logically gratuitous, Kierkegaard adopted the term "existence"; and just as he says of God that he "does not think (but) creates,"\(^{12}\) so he says of man that his existence is irreducible to thought or logic or to an essential nature. Whatever ambiguities his choice of this term may generate, "existence," as

\(^{11}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 82.

\(^{12}\) \textit{Concluding Unscientific Postscript}, p. 296.
Kierkegaard uses the word, is just the rationally unsupported moral creativity that is the core idea of the voluntaristic tradition.

It would be going too far, however, to claim that Kierkegaard abandons all the apparatus of intellectualism in his treatment of the moral and religious life. The influence of Hegel which he unmistakably shows for all his passionate resistance to the "System" was doubtless too strong to permit such a radical reorientation. Thus, we find Kierkegaard summarizing his views in the cryptic declaration that "truth is subjectivity," even though the whole point of his characterization of ethical subjectivity seems to rest on a contrast with every familiar form of knowledge, and by implication, with every familiar sense of "truth." But even here one may be permitted to conjecture whether Kierkegaard in saying that "truth is subjectivity" is not really stressing the transcendent human importance of what he calls "becoming subjective." This last notion is itself somewhat difficult to interpret since the relevant sense of the polar term "objective" is specifically Hegelian. Nevertheless, it seems clear that under the label of "objectivity" Kierkegaard is condemning every attempt to redescribe individual choice in an idiom that incorporates it into some independent metaphysical structure to which we are then supposed to stand in a cognitive or contemplative relationship. This interpretation is strongly supported by Kierkegaard's insistence that, while "the objective accent falls on what is said, the subjective accent is on how it is said," and that this 'how' "refers to the relationship sustained by the existing individual, in his own existence, to the content of his own utterance." Just to the extent that that relationship loses the character of an act—an individual act for which "I" alone am responsible—and is assimilated to the status of an element in some system of history or human nature, it no longer "carries its teleology within itself" and loses its distinctively ethical character. Conversely, if I do not know myself as a paragraph in the "System" but choose myself in and through my actions, I thereby achieve the truly ethical mode of life; but I also move into a sphere in which the notion of truth, if it survives at all, has been so fundamentally transformed

18 Ibid., p. 181.
as to render inapplicable all traditional conceptions of the justification of choice through subsumption under independently established and necessarily true principles.

IV

I have used Ockham's theology as an example of a voluntaristic conception of God, and Kierkegaard's account of the ethical life as an example of the way in which the situation of subordinate moral beings under such a God is likely to be conceived. Derivatively, i.e., by participation in the autonomous ethical activity of God through obedience to his will, the moral life of human beings comes to be described as a series of logically free choices to which an external standard of truth is irrelevant. By way of substantiating this claim, it may be pointed out that in Protestant "neo-orthodox" theology, an ethic of divine command that approaches Ockham's in its rigor has produced its counterpart in a theory of human action in which the central importance of choice is even more explicit than in Kierkegaard. In the work of Emil Brunner, for example, the gap between the "ought" and the "is" is interpreted as a result of original sin.\textsuperscript{14} Man's disobedience has destroyed the nature with which he was originally endowed, and from that broken nature it is impossible to read off ethical directives in the form of general principles that can guide conduct. Indeed, the attempt to erect a self-sufficient rational ethic is explicitly condemned as sinful. Only the will of God can span the gap between the "ought" and the "is"; and there can be no question of knowing beforehand what God will require. To turn the divine command into a law from which subordinate laws can be deduced breaks "the sense of responsibility for decision" and gives "a false sense of security to the moral decision."\textsuperscript{15} Everything, therefore, depends upon the reception of the divine command, for it is only by listening to it that I can find out "the one.

\textsuperscript{14}Brunner's most important work on theological ethics is \textit{The Divine Imperative}, trans. O. Wyon (Philadelphia, Pa.: Westminster Press, 1947). My summary of his views is based on Bk. II, sec. I of this work, in which Brunner analyzes the basis of ethics in the "divine command."

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 136.
and only one thing" that I am really bidden to do. Only the believer who acts "in God" escapes the heteronomy of the law and shares, as it were, in the autonomy of the divine personality. As Brunner says, action taken under these auspices is at once a discovery of what God bids me to do—a discovery I cannot anticipate by reason—and a decision for which I am responsible. The reverse or human side of the arbitrariness of the divine command is thus explicitly identified with individual moral decision.

It is in this strange fusion of activity and passivity within the concept of moral action that the difficulties of theological voluntarism come to a head. Is a decision that I cannot make unless God tells me what to decide really mine? In what sense am I responsible for what I do under the guidance of God? Alternatively, if I decide to do God's will, must I not share in the kind of autonomy he enjoys; and will I not in some sense escape the status of a subordinate moral being that theological voluntarism assigns to me? But then what becomes of the doctrine that the only "doer of good deeds" is God? These are the paradoxes which ultimately make it impossible to maintain an absolute separation of autonomy and heteronomy as attributes, respectively, of God's moral personality and of that of his creatures; and it is on this separation that theological voluntarism depends. Fortunately, there is no need to resolve these paradoxes here or even to show that they are in principle unresolvable. For our purposes, it is enough to have shown that a radical difference separates a thorough-going espousal of moral freedom from a doctrine that recognizes true autonomy only in one case, and treats the autonomy of other beings either as merely specious or as authentic only to the degree that the latter participate in the unique autonomy of God through a total submission of their individual wills to his. Many ethical theories that are currently described as existentialist are, in fact, of this type; but this classification obscures the fact that these theories differ from the more radical forms of voluntarism in ways that are even more important than those in which they resemble them. In a general way, these theories may be said to belong to the Kierkegaardian tradition of existentialism, and the more radical forms of voluntarism to the Nietzschean tradition. The latter, as I argued in the Introduction, represents the most
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thorough-going and consistent application of voluntarism to the analysis of *human* moral personality. The writers whose views will be considered in Part II are those that belong to that Nietzschean tradition, and an account of its philosophical origins must now be presented.