Fichte’s *System of Ethics*

The *System of Ethics* was published at the height of Fichte’s academic career and marks the culmination of his philosophical development in Jena. Much more than a treatise on ethics narrowly construed, the *System of Ethics* presents a unified synthesis of Fichte’s core philosophical ideas, including the principle I-hood, self-activity and self-consciousness, and also contains his most detailed treatment of action and agency. This volume brings together an international group of leading scholars on Fichte, and is the first of its kind in English to offer critical and interpretive perspectives on this work, covering topics such as normativity, belief, justification, desire, duty, and the ethical life. It will be an essential guide for scholars wanting to deepen their understanding of Fichte’s ethical thought, as well as for those interested in the history of ethics more broadly.

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FICHTE’S
System of Ethics
A Critical Guide

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Most chapters of this volume were discussed at a meeting held at the University of Milan on June 20–21, 2019, and we would like to thank the Department of Philosophy “Piero Martinetti” and its director, Luca Bianchi, for financial and organizational support. We would like to thank Katherine Crone for her work in compiling the bibliography. We are pleased to acknowledge the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Finally, we are grateful to Hilary Gaskin from Cambridge University Press for providing outstanding editorial guidance and encouragement. The editors also thank the Kiel University Library for kindly giving permission to use an image from their copy of the first edition of Fichte’s *System of Ethics* for the cover of our volume.
Abbreviations and Translations


FICHTE

A

1790: Aphorismen über Religion und Deismus (Aphorisms Concerning Religion and Deism)

AP

1799: "Appellation an das Publikum" ("Appeal to the Public"), in Bowman and Estes (2010)

BdG

1794: Einige Vorlesungen über die Bestimmung des Gelehrten (Some Lectures Concerning the Scholar’s Vocation), in Breazeale (1988)

BEIW

1795: "Über Belebung und Erhöhung des reinen Interesse für Wahrheit" ("On Stimulating and Raising the Pure Interest Truth"), in Breazeale (1988)

BdM

1800: Die Bestimmung des Menschen (The Vocation of Human Beings), in Preuss (1988)

EPW

Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings, in Breazeale (1988)

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ErE 1797: “Erste Einleitung in die Wissenschaftslehre” (“First Introduction to the Wissenschaftslehre”), in Breazeale (1994)

GA J. G. Fichte-Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Reihe/Band: Seite)

GEWL 1795: Grundriß des Eigenthümlichen der Wissenschaftslehre in Rücksicht auf das theoretische Vermögen (Outline of the Distinctive Character of the Wissenschaftslehre with Respect to the Theoretical Faculty), in Breazeale (1988)


GR 1793: “Recension Gebhard” (“Review of Gebhard”), in Breazeale (2001a)

GWL 1794/95: Grundlage der gesammten Wissenschaftslehre (Foundation of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre), in Heath and Lachs (1982)


SW Johann Gottlieb Fichtes sämtliche Werke (Band: Seite)

VBG 1794: Einige Vorlesungen über die Bestimmung des Gelehrten (Some Lectures Concerning the Scholar’s Vocation), in Breazeale (1988)

VKO 1792/93: Versuch einer Critik aller Offenbarung (Attempt at a Critique of All Revelation), in Green (2010)

WLnm 1796/99: Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo (Foundations of Transcendental Philosophy), in Breazeale (1992)

WLnm(H) 1797/98: Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo, Halle Nachschrift
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List of Abbreviations

WLnm(K) 1798/99: *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo*, Krause Nachschrift
VM 1796: Vorlesung über die Moral, Kollegnachschrift

KANT

G 1785: *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (*Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*). Translation in Gregor and Timmermann (2012)
MS 1797: *Die Metaphysik der Sitten* (*The Metaphysics of Morals*). Translated by Mary J. Gregor (1996)