

## Translator's Preface

If the style of this book is found unattractive, it will show that I have done my work ill and not represented the author truly; but, if it is found odd, I beg that I may not bear all the blame. I have simply tried to reproduce the author's own mixture of colloquialisms and technicalities, and his preference for the precise expression of his thought rather than the word conventionally expected.

One especial feature of the style, however, gives the reason why this preface should exist. It is characteristic of Stirner's writing that the thread of thought is carried on largely by the repetition of the same word in a modified form or sense. That connection of ideas which has guided popular instinct in the formation of words is made to suggest the line of thought which the writer wishes to follow. If this echoing of words is missed, the bearing of statements on each other is in a measure lost; and, where the ideas are very new, one cannot afford to throw away any help in following their connection. Therefore, where a useful echo (and there are few useless ones in the book) could not be reproduced in English, I have generally called attention to it in a note. My notes are distinguished from the author's by being enclosed in parentheses.

One or two of such coincidents of language, occurring in words which are prominent throughout the book, should be borne constantly in mind as a sort of *Keri Perpetuum*; for instance, the identity in the original of the words "spirit" and "mind," and of the phrases "supreme being" and "highest essence." In such cases I have repeated the note where it seemed that such repetition might be absolutely necessary, but have trusted the reader to carry it in his head where a failure of his memory would not be ruinous or likely.

For the same reason – that is, in order not to miss any indication of the drift of the thought – I have followed the original in the very liberal use of italics, and in the occasional eccentric use of a punctuation mark, as I might not have done in translating a work of a different nature.

I have set my face as a flint against the temptation to add notes that were not part of the translation. There is no telling how much I

might have enlarged the book if I had put a note at every sentence which deserved to have its truth brought out by fuller elucidation – or even at every one which I thought needed correction. It might have been within my province, if I had been able, to explain all the allusions to contemporary events, but I doubt whether any one could do that properly without having access to the files of three or four well-chosen German newspapers of Stirner's time. The allusions are clear enough, without names and dates, to give a vivid picture of certain aspects of German life then. The tone of some of them is explained by the fact that the book was published under censorship.

I have usually preferred, for the sake of the connection, to translate Biblical quotations somewhat as they stand in the German, rather than conform them altogether to the English Bible. I am sometimes quite as near the original Greek as if I followed the current translation.

Where German books are referred to, the pages cited are those of the German editions even when (usually because of some allusions in the text) the titles of the books are translated.

**Steven T. Byington, 19**