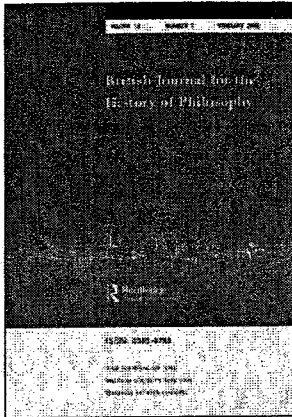


This article was downloaded by:[Swets Content Distribution]
On: 2 November 2007
Access Details: [subscription number 768307933]
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



British Journal for the History of Philosophy

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713694220>

Book Reviews

Online Publication Date: 01 November 2007

To cite this Article: (2007) 'Book Reviews', British Journal for the History of Philosophy, 15:4, 785 - 831

To link to this article: DOI: 10.1080/09608780701605051

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09608780701605051>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

21 Nov 2007

800 BOOK REVIEWS

or multitude of Christian men now living, or that being dead, are to rise again at the last day.²⁹

Repeatedly, however, his opponents turned his own rhetorical weapons back on him, as when his most dogged foe, Bishop Bramhall, in aiming his 'The Catching of Leviathan, the Great Whale' at Hobbes, hoped that it would put an end to the career not only of the book but of its author. Excoriating his unorthodox doctrine of the Trinity, Bramhall faults his opponent's boldness in persevering in error, stating, 'Such bold presumption requireth another manner of confutation'.³⁰

In conclusion, Farneti has written a large, even sprawling, book, pursuing many avenues of investigation and showing a surprising command of many literatures in many languages. It raises essential questions and engages in important debates. The 'historical turn' in political thought and the difficulties it poses for theory make his inquiry all the more important.

George Wright
University of Wisconsin, Superior
© 2007, George Wright

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling: *System des transscendentalen Idealismus (1800) Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*. Werke, 9, 1 and 9, 2. Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 2005. pp. xv + 344 (pb.), vii + 260 (hb), €580. ISBN 3-7728-1903-6 (In zwei Teilbände I 9, 1 und I 9, 2)

In certain regions of Germany there is a saying: 'ein braves Mittelkind', referring to 'a well behaved middle child', but what it really means is the middle child who does not receive the attention and the affection that the older and the younger siblings do. Such is the attitude of many scholars regarding Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, who is the 'braves Mittelkind' of the Fichte-Schelling-Hegel 'family' of German Idealism. Much of this lack of attention stems from Schelling's own *philosophy*, or, in many critics' views, *philosophies*. Critics like to note that he had numerous philosophies – including philosophy of nature, philosophy of identity, philosophy of world ages, and philosophy of mythology. They like to suggest that Schelling offered no coherent philosophy; only a hodge-podge of various ideas of modest interest. Furthermore, critics can suggest that while there are

²⁹Farnet, 166ff. See *Leviathan*, ch. 44, para. 4.

³⁰See Bramhall, *The Catching of Leviathan or the Great Whale* part iii, discourse iii (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1844), vol. 4, pp. 526–7 (= *EW IV*, 315, with some changes). The threat implicit in the last line of this quotation was not lost on Hobbes, who remarked at 'His Lordship's Scholastic charity' and replied that Bramhall would have been at home seated among the bishops of Queen Mary's day, condemning to the flames those with opinions opposed to their own.

Hegelians and even Fichteans, there are not many philosophers who would regard themselves as Schellingians. However, scholars such as Goethe and Heidegger, Kuno Fischer and Dieter Henrich, have regarded Schelling as a serious philosopher in his own right. This two-volume edition of *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* should help Schelling gain more attention as well as more respect.³¹

Schelling published his *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* in 1800. He was only twenty-five years old but had already made a considerable name for himself. As a result of his publishing a number of works on the philosophy of nature and on a recommendation from Goethe, Schelling was already an 'außerordentlicher Professor' at Jena. He was already involved with the Schlegels and with Fichte and soon he would be friends with Hegel. However, the remaining fifty-four years of his life were a mixture of triumphs and disasters. He married Caroline Schlegel in 1803 but she died just six years later; and, some people suspected Schelling's own study of medicine was a contributing factor. In 1812 he married Pauline Gotter, who was a friend of Goethe and had been a close friend of Caroline. However, Schelling got into quarrels with many of his close friends; he became alienated from Novalis, Fichte, and even Hegel. His philosophical fights resulted in his not teaching from 1806 until 1820 and when he did, it was at Erlangen. In 1827 he was called to Munich where he stayed until 1841. Hegel had died some ten years earlier, and as his influence at Berlin waned, Schelling was called there. He lectured and wrote until a year or two before his death in 1854. While he enjoyed a good reputation, he continued to be involved in controversy.

Schelling may be best recognized for his works on natural philosophy, such as *Ideen zu einer philosophie der Nature* (1797) or *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* (1799), or his writings on freedom, such as *Neue Deduction des Naturrechts* (1796–1797), or his lectures on philosophy of mythology and religion, such as *Philosophie der Mythologie* and *Philosophie der Offenbarung*. However, a case could be made that the *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* is Schelling's most genuine philosophical work.

This edition of Schelling's work is part of the projected forty-volume *Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*. The *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* is composed of two volumes: the first contains a short introduction that is an editorial overview followed by the text of the *System* itself, while the second has a much longer introduction in which the Editors place the *System* between the earlier 'Naturphilosophie' and the slightly later 'Identitätsphilosophie'. The Editors also set out the historical development of the text as well as its early reception by Schellings' friends and critics. There are also helpful Indices for names, places, and subjects and a good bibliography.

³¹The Editors retain most if not all of Schelling's spelling. Hence 'transscendentalen', 'Freyheit', 'seyn', 'Zwey', and so on.

However, what are most helpful are the almost 140 pages of clarifying remarks. These place Schelling in context and provide sources and explanations of people and works that an ordinary reader would probably not know.

As an early work, *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* is both based upon Kant and Fichte and yet goes beyond them (II: 3).³² Schelling shares with Kant and Fichte many of the same philosophical questions and uses much of the same terminology. However, Schelling contends that he goes beyond Kant in part because he intends to provide a complete system whereas Kant never really did that. He goes beyond Fichte by ensuring that his system treats theoretical, practical and aesthetic issues.

In the Preface, Schelling takes pains to distinguish his work from that of Kant and Fichte. Regarding the first, he emphasizes that his primary goal is to provide a complete system of the totality of knowledge, something that Kant never did. Regarding the second, Schelling's secondary goal is to provide a 'readable and understandable' account, something that Fichte failed to do (I: 24, 27).

In the Introduction, Schelling sets out the two regions for knowledge: that which we regard as an object, meaning nature, and that which we consider subject, meaning ourselves. Furthermore, there appear to be two types of knowledge corresponding to these two types of 'objects' of knowledge. In the first, the object is taken to be primary and the problem is to see how the subject 'agrees' with it; in the second, the subject is considered to be primary and the difficulty to overcome is to show how the 'object' conforms to it (I: 29–33). Or, to say this differently, Schelling looks to Kant's various treatments of the problem of the external world; namely, his discussions of 'things outside us' in the 'Paralogisms' sections of the First Edition of the *Critique der reinen Vernunft* and the 'Refutation of Idealism' of the Second Edition. For the issue of the certainty of the 'I am', it is not so much to Kant that Schelling looks, but to Descartes's 'Second Meditation' (I: 34).

The work proper is divided into six chapters of widely differing lengths. The first is 25 pages long and the second is ten; the fifth is only five pages and the sixth is 22. However, the third is 150 and the fourth is 60 pages. This disparity makes one wonder why Schelling felt it necessary to have so many chapters when some were so short.

In Chapter One, Schelling suggests that he wants to answer the question: what are the conditions of reality (I: 43), but his main objective is to question what that could be. He does so by appealing to the Principle of Identity: $A = A$ (I: 52, 63). His concern is not so much with the principles of logic than with the notion of the 'I'; specifically 'I = I' (62, 63). The 'I' is not a 'thing'; it is no 'object' (I: 58, 59). It is also not an object of knowledge; however, it is the principle of all knowledge (58). Referring to Kant,

³²References to the work will be by volume and page numbers.

Schelling notes that when a child first speaks using 'I', a whole new world opens (I: 64).

Schelling begins Chapter Two by repeating his claim that 'I am' is the principle of all philosophy (I: 68). It is not simply 'I' but it is 'self-consciousness'. It is through the 'act' of self-consciousness that the 'I' becomes an object (I: 69–70). Schelling clarifies that this is an 'object' for itself, but not as an external object. Since it is not an external object, it has no limitations, thus it is 'infinite for itself'. However, there are limitations based on the 'I' being both 'real' and 'ideal'. This means that it is 'independent' from itself because there are no externally imposed limits, but that it is dependent because it has internally imposed limits (I: 76). Thus, there is both idealism and realism; the first is covered by 'theoretical' philosophy and the second by 'practical' philosophy (I: 78).

The third Chapter is intended to set out the system of theoretical philosophy based upon the principles of transcendental idealism, but, in reality, it is much, much more than that. Schelling begins by stressing the importance of the 'I', but he also places importance on it as an 'absolute act' (I: 79). This is not very clear, but it seems to point toward the 'activity' of the 'I' in its real and ideal forms (I: 81, 85). This is an 'opposition' and needs a 'middle member' to mediate between the two. In conjunction with this it is interesting to note that Schelling specifically marks the movement from thesis to antithesis to synthesis (I: 86). Unfortunately, he seems to drop this notion. However, he does insist that 'Philosophy is the history of self-consciousness that has different episodes, and through which that single absolute synthesis is formed from that which is successively placed together' (I: 91). There are further problems in this chapter; Schelling seems to misread Kant when he insists that the 'I' and the 'thing in itself' (*Ding an sich*) can be held together in self-consciousness.³³ This chapter also includes Schelling's philosophy of nature. His point of departure is Descartes's claim that with the proper lever and placement the physicist could move the world; the transcendental idealist's claim is that we can best understand the infinite opposition that is nature by regarding it as 'becoming' (I: 122). This chapter is also filled with Schellings' views on bodies, forces and movement (I: 131, 133, 136, 138, 143). He also brings up magnetism, electricity, and chemical processes (I: 143–5). These discussions seem like excursions and he returns to his central problem of the 'I'. He insists that the entire object of investigation is only the explanation of self-consciousness. He now regards the 'I' as 'intelligence' (I: 151–2). And, he adds further confusion by indicating that there is activity in the *Ding an sich*, but passivity in the 'I' (I: 161). The object has extension, thus it must appear in space (I: 164–7). Objects also appear in succession, hence are causally linked as well as interchanging (I: 169–174). These are 'categories' (I: 175). Unfortunately,

³³(I: 117, 129, 161, 199). This is not the place to enter into that thorny problem of the *Ding an sich*. It is only that Kant considered that to be unknowable as it was outside space and time.

Schelling's treatment pales against Kant's rather considered treatment of these issues in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Furthermore, Schelling's contentions that 'organic nature leads to visible proof of transcendental idealism' and that 'every plant is a symbol of intelligence' are confusing (I: 187). This confusion is compounded by the claim of 'blind activity of intelligence' and that 'intelligence raises itself up through the absolute action over all that is objective' (I: 196, 223).

Chapter Four is Schelling's discussion of practical philosophy based upon the principles of transcendental idealism. What he means by practical is the same as moral philosophy and he begins the same way as he did with his discussion of theoretical philosophy by emphasizing the 'I' and the notion of self-consciousness (I: 230–1, 235). What differs here from the earlier chapter is his emphasis on willing and on action. While he stresses the freedom involved in action, he also underscores that this is not totally arbitrary (I: 247–8, 250). Instead, it is both free and conscious; it is what he calls 'voluntary will'.³⁴ The realm of human freedom differs from that of blind necessity (I: 285). However, necessity is not so much found in nature as it seems to appear in human history, or more specifically, prehistory (I: 288). It is not so much 'history' as 'mythology' that allowed the human race to take the first tentative steps out from the 'domination of instincts' towards the 'region of freedom' (I: 288). Schelling's sense of freedom is orderly and progressive. Progress manifests itself in many ways; in scientific progress and artistic progress. More importantly, it manifests itself in terms of moral progress and 'moralistic world-order' (I: 291, 295). Looking ahead to his 'ages of the world philosophy', Schelling identifies three ages. In the first, there is domination by 'fate', which is the 'totally blind, cold and unconscious power'. This is the tragic age of the Greeks. In the second, there is domination by 'nature', which is again revealed as a 'totally blind power' (I: 302). However, it is no longer cold and unconscious, for now there is nature's plan as well as the laws of nature. This is the age of the Romans (I: 303). It is in the third age that *providence* ('*Vorsehung*') develops and reveals itself. Schelling concludes this chapter by saying that no one really knows when this age began, but when it began God also began to be (I: 303). This chapter lacks the clarity of Kant's ethical philosophy and it does not match the political philosophies of either Fichte or Hegel. However, Schelling's philosophy seems a modest improvement over Kant's by his emphasis on the importance of freedom and history. It is hard to think of Fichte or Hegel without thinking of some of Schelling's various remarks, especially when it comes to the notion of purpose.

The theme common to both Chapters Five and Six is the notion of purpose. However, the purposefulness in nature seems to be blind and

³⁴I: 251, 258, 261–3, 274–8. The German term is '*Willkür*' and is often rendered by 'arbitrary will'. I think that Schelling's usage shows that he does believe that the will is blindly arbitrary, but instead he emphasizes the sense of choice.

unconscious as well as orderly. Schelling's contrast is not between the two ways of viewing nature but between nature and art; art is both intentional and conscious (I: 307). 'Man' seems to be something of both; that is a something in between. 'Man's' actions are necessary, hence, not free; or are free, hence, neither necessary nor according to laws (I: 308). However, it is nature that has the mechanical purposefulness in contrast to that which is artistic in us. Art reflects the 'identity' of the conscious and the unconscious; in opposition to the merely unconscious in nature (I: 319–20). Finally, art leads the reader back to the beginning of Schelling's system with his emphasis on the highest principle of philosophy – the absolute principle of the 'I' – that which is absolutely simple and completely identical (I: 325). But, in looking back to the beginning of his system, Schelling is also looking forward to the future destiny of the world – that which will be found in a 'new mythology'.

This final claim underscores a problem that occurs throughout the *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* – the problem of opposites. It is evident in the later parts of the work with the identities and oppositions between freedom and necessity as well as consciousness and unconsciousness.³⁵ It is also found in the later and earlier parts with the oppositions between subjective and objective as well as logic and feeling. It seems as if Schelling is moving from the 'objective' philosophy found in Kant and Fichte to a far more 'subjective' type of thinking; only this work is a midway point in this process. It is not really 'science' but neither is it 'art' – Schelling, it seems – wants both.

The second volume of the *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* is a very helpful commentary. With it, the editors provide a wealth of information by placing Schelling in context. As expected, the volume offers bibliographic details about those works that we would expect Schelling to have used: those by Kant and Fichte, Herder and Hölderlin. Equally important, the volume also provides references to those writers that we might not have expected. Not only was Schelling making use of Plato and Aristotle but also Berkeley and Hume. It comes as no surprise how often Schelling is addressing Fichte, and less so, Kant; but it is surprising how often he is responding to Jacobi and Reinhold. Perhaps the most surprising is how often Schelling's reference is to Leibniz. Schelling responds to more than a dozen of Leibniz's writings: including the *Nouveaux Essais* and the *Principes de la Nature & de la Grace* as well as the *Monadologie* and the *Theodizee*. The point is that Schelling was rather well versed in the history of philosophy – more like Hegel than like Kant. While Schelling may have been looking to build a philosophy for the future, he was ready to use the philosophy of the past.

³⁵A particularly troubling passage is Schelling's claim that 'Freedom should be necessity, necessity should be freedom'. ('*Freyheit soll Nothwendigkeit, Nothwendigkeit Freyheit seyn*'. I: 293).

806 BOOK REVIEWS

In his Introduction to Peter Heath's translation of *System des transscendentalen Idealismus*, Michael Vater claimed that this book was Schelling's 'most polished and complete of the works that he published during his lifetime'. He suggested that Schelling's importance was not just as a successor to Kant and Fichte, but was a precursor to the future with his emphasis on the unconscious.³⁶ This would include both Eduard von Hartmann as well as Freud.³⁷ In his *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, Andrew Bowie noted that Schelling's influence is not limited to Schopenhauer, Feuerbach, Nietzsche, and Heidegger, but can be found in contemporary European philosophers.³⁸ Regardless of how influential he was, this two-volume edition of *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* shows why Schelling should be regarded far more seriously than merely as a 'braves Mittelkind'.

Christopher Adair-Toteff
Charlottesville, Virginia and Traunstein, Deutschland
© 2007, Christopher Adair-Toteff

G. W. F. Hegel: *Philosophy of Mind*, translated by William Wallace and A. V. Miller, revised with introduction and commentary by Michael Inwood. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. xxvii + 680. £85.00. ISBN 0-19-929951-X

Within the course of Hegel's *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, the reputation of his major mature writings have undergone curious ups and downs: for example, to the British Idealists at the turn of the nineteenth century, the *Logic* was the key work, while to the French commentators in the period after the Second World War, the crucial text was the *Phenomenology*. At various times, attempts have been made to treat the *Philosophy of Right* as independent of the rest, and so as intelligible in its own terms, while at other times it has been treated as a subordinate part of 'the system'. At some remove from this process of constant re-evaluation, two texts have remained stubbornly stuck on a low ebb: the second book of the *Encyclopaedia of the*

³⁶*System of Transcendental Idealism*, translated by Peter Heath, introduced by Michael Vater, third edition (Charlottesville, VA.: University of Virginia Press, 1993) xi and xxvii-xxx.

³⁷The Neo-Kantian philosopher and historian of philosophy Kuno Fischer noted Schelling's influence on Hegel as well as Schopenhauer. He also mentions von Hartmann but he was writing before Freud's fame. While Kuno Fischer concentrates more on the 'Naturphilosophie', the 'Identitätsphilosophie' and the 'Mythologiephilosophie' than on the 'Idealismus', his 800-page book on Schelling's life and philosophy is still valuable. Kuno Fischer, *Schellings Leben, Werke und Lehre. Geschichte der neuern Philosophie*. Band 7. Zweite durchgesehene und vermehrte Auflage (Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1899).

³⁸Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy. An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1994) vol. 4, p. 6.