

4-1-1987

Review of *The Philosophy of F. W. J. Schelling. History, System and Freedom* by Werner Marx and *Schelling: An Introduction to the System of Freedom* by Alan White

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which Hume withdrew after 1760, and which he in 1753 described as "too frivolous" to be included with the rest of his essays? And what of his deletion, after ten editions (not three, as Livingston says), of all but three paragraphs of the first *Enquiry* discussion of the association of ideas, another textual segment on which the present interpretation depends? Whether we read Hume narratively or conventionally these alterations in the corpus are too significant to be ignored or dismissed as merely stylistic.

I raise these questions because I hope that Livingston will in due course respond to them. He has provided us with an interpretive study of great scope and, as I believe time will show, fecundity. But the interpretation is not finished; as it stands it raises issues which Livingston himself must address if his readers are to be able to build on his work. That this should be so is not surprising given the scope and originality of this work, but based on this beginning I look forward to Livingston's further explications of Hume's philosophy of common life.

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Werner Marx. *The Philosophy of F. W. J. Schelling. History, System and Freedom*. Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. Pp. xvi + 202. \$24.95.

Alan White. *Schelling: An Introduction to the System of Freedom*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. Pp. xi + 201. \$20.00.

Alan White notes that Schelling is a philosopher who has become obscure, one no longer included in our operative consciousness of the history of philosophy. And even were he in our living memory, the metaphysical categories and constructions Schelling pursued would seem questionable and of questionable pertinence to our situation. But as Werner Marx reminds us, "the old questions present themselves ever anew," and among them are certainly questions about the possibility of human freedom and about the nature and meaning of history. Each of these concise studies is devoted to removing the obscurity and to the portrayal of the intriguing fifty-year career of the 'Last Metaphysician', who was ever challenged by the tension he experienced between the demands of system and those of freedom. And each of them achieves its goal with remarkable clarity and philosophical vigor.

There are no deep differences in Marx's and White's interpretation of Schelling. The starting point of his philosophy is an ideological commitment to defend human freedom precisely by reconciling the natural and the moral worlds which Kant had left sundered. But the transcendental construction of human experience as a totality (the absolute, if you will) brings with it its own difficulties. When the philosopher descends from the indeterminacy of the absolute to the determinate knowing self, the intermediate structures of limitation and finitude take on the cast of law and physical necessitation, and freedom disappears. Then there is the other problem of

whether the philosopher can systematically deduce determinacy out of indeterminacy, the finite from the absolute. These two problems bedevil Schelling his whole life long, the dialectic of freedom and necessity and the dialectic of the absolute and the individual. White is correct in seeing Schelling's significance as negative. He tried, and publically failed, to resurrect metaphysics first as ontology, then as theology, but in doing so he introduced a new generation of thinkers, among them Kierkegaard and Engels, to anthropological or existential themes. The very frankness of his anthropomorphic attempts to think God would seem to move his audience rather readily into admitting that we really do have only ourselves to think about.

Marx chooses limited systematic topics in the three essays collected here, but by confining his attention to the 1800 *System of Transcendental Idealism* and the 1809 *Essay on Human Freedom*, he is able to underline Schelling's significant themes and problems. It is interesting to note that White chooses to emphasize the same two works. His first essay contrasts the explicitly teleological, indeed theological, foundations of the theory of history enunciated in the 1800 system with the problematic, apparently unfounded teleology of Habermas's vision of history as voiced in *Erkenntnis und Interesse*. Schelling viewed history as the highest objectification of the will, the plane wherein its rationality was no longer obscured by the arbitrary nature of individuals' acts and choices. Here freedom is embodied in and supported by a mechanical order which Schelling calls "a second and higher nature." Freedom and necessity conflict. Schelling postulates a "highest synthesis" that binds together freedom and necessity and integrates the will of individual agents into a world-historical teleological process. Marx notes that this synthesis is beyond the reach of individual consciousness, and that with this necessitarian denial of the rationality of human agency, Schelling's whole system falls into contradiction, for the system was supposed to be founded on freedom and be nothing other than the outworking of freedom's deeds. Alas, the contradiction is not confined to one book; it vitiates the philosopher's whole career which seems to be a perpetually unsuccessful dialogue between Kant and Spinoza on human freedom. Schelling never sorted out the terminology and defined what 'freedom' meant. Spontaneity, caprice, volitional indifference, self-determination, self-rule, Kant's autonomy, deliberation, ability to resist desire, ability to change desirability—these are only some of the candidates. Kantian freedom made into a system principle is unlikely to deliver the freedom moral agents impute to themselves.

Marx devotes a second essay to a comparison between Schelling's 1800 *System* and Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. His supposition is that the two works are parallel and differ only in the way they seek to solve a commonly held vision of the task of philosophy, enunciated by Hegel in 1801 as "*die Aufhebung der Entzweiung*"—the resolution of dichotomies common to ordinary consciousness and to traditional philosophy alike, oppositions between subjectivity and objectivity, between reason and action, between intelligence and nature. Marx is peculiarly concerned to vindicate Schelling's methodological principle, intellectual intuition. With the third essay Marx returns to the freedom theme, noting that in the 1809 *Essay on Human Freedom* Schelling attributes a sort of moral freedom to the absolute. Schelling pictures the developed godhead as a personal God standing over against an independent world, a

world which is a product of his freedom and self-development. Marx distinguishes three moments in this moral freedom: (1) freedom as the ability to begin, productivity, or spontaneity (as in the 1800 system), (2) freedom as voluntary binding of oneself to a necessity, self-determination or Spinozistic freedom, (3) the freedom Kant ascribed to pure will, autonomy, or 'personality'.

White's account of Schelling differs from Marx's in that he offers a chronological overview of the whole of Schelling's long career. He correctly sees that it is problems, not solutions, that predominate in Schelling's thought, that the problem of freedom is primary and abiding. He also appreciates how Schelling's early systems founder on the the problem of the derivation of the finite. If on some hyperempirical level, everything is deeply and marvelously one, how did we get here? That we in fact are here is not a good answer. The limitations involved in individuality and finitude must be systematically derived.

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- G. W. F. Hegel. *Vorlesungen über Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft*, Heidelberg 1817/18 mit Nachträgen aus der Vorlesung 1818/19. Nachgeschrieben von P. Wannemann. Herausgegeben von C. Becker, W. Bonsiepen, A. Gethmann-Siefert, F. Hogemann, W. Jaeschke, Ch. Jamme, H.-Ch. Lucas, K. R. Meist, H. Schneider, mit einer Einleitung von O. Pöggeler. *Ausgewählten Nachschriften und Manuskripte*, Band I. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1983. Pp. liii + 301.
- G. W. F. Hegel. *Die Philosophie des Rechts*. Die Mitschriften Wannemann (Heidelberg 1817/18) und Homeyer (Berlin 1818/19). Herausgegeben, eingeleitet und erläutert von Karl-Heinz Ilting. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1983. Pp. 399.
- G. W. F. Hegel. *Philosophie des Rechts*. Die Vorlesungen von 1819/20 in einer Nachschrift. Herausgegeben von Dieter Henrich. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1983. Pp. 389.

Ever since the first World War there have been those who have accused Hegel of fathering 'Prussianism',¹ and, since the second World War, even National Socialism,² in spite of arguments to the contrary of such writers as Bernard Bosanquet, John Muirhead, and Sir Malcolm Knox.³ He has also been accused of servility to the Prussian authorities of his time. But, to say nothing of the earlier writers I have

¹ Cf. F. Carritt, *Morals and Politics* (Oxford, 1935), 107, and *Proc. of Arist. Soc.* (1935-36): 230.

² Cf. S. Hook, *From Hegel to Marx* (London, 1936), 19; Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means* (London, 1938), 58, 171; E. A. Mowrer, *Germany Puts the Clock Back* (Harmondsworth, 1938), 38-39; Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (London, 1945-1966).

³ Cf. B. Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State* (London, 1930), 230ff; J. H. Muirhead, *German Philosophy and the War* (London, 1915); T. M. Knox, "Hegel and Prussianism," *Philosophy* 15 (1940): 51-63.