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'From Time Into Eternity': Schelling on Intellectual Intuition

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Abstract

Throughout his career, Schelling assigns knowledge of the absolute first principle of philosophy to intellectual intuition. Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition raises two important questions for interpreters. First, given that his doctrine undergoes several changes before and after his identity philosophy, to what extent can he be said to "hold onto" the same "sense" of it by the 1830s, as he claims? Second, given that his doctrine of intellectual intuition restricts absolute idealism to what he calls a "science of reason", which he says cannot prove the absolute's existence, what other doctrine does he require in order to prove this? I will answer these questions by tracing the shifts in Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition from the 1790s to the 1830s and drawing out its evolving methodological role within his science of intelligibility.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The first generation of post-Kantian idealists accepts the conclusion of Immanuel Kant's systematic account or science of the *a priori* conditions of intelligibility, viz., that experience does not conform to the object, but rather depends for its possibility on space and time as forms of sensibility, as transcendental aesthetic shows, and the categories of the understanding, as transcendental logic shows. However, the idealists reject the presupposition of Kant's two-stem science, viz., that space, time, and the categories are brute facts about our subjective constitution, i.e., radically contingent or groundless conditions. Hence K.L. Reinhold describes 1790's *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy* as his "attempt to present [Kant's] results independently of the Kantian premises",[1] J.G. Fichte tells Heinrich Stephani in a letter, mid-December 1793, that "Kant's philosophy, as such, is correct—but only in its results and not in its reasons",[2]

and F.W.J. Schelling tells G.W.F. Hegel in a letter, 6 January 1795, that "[p]hilosophy has not yet reached its end. Kant has given the results: the premises are still lacking. And who can understand results without the premises?".[3] The post-Kantian objection is that the conclusions of Kant's science of intelligibility lack rigour unless they are derived from premises that are not brutely subjective, but are rather absolutely necessary.

Schelling develops his criticism of Kant in 1795's "Of the I as Principle of Philosophy or On the Unconditioned in Human Knowledge" by saying that he must "depict the results of critical philosophy in their regression to the last principles of all knowledge" because "the *Critique of Pure Reason* cannot possibly be the way of philosophy as a science". His evidence is that the first *Critique* "names the only possible forms of sensible intuition, space and time, without having examined them according to a principle", while "[t]he categories are set up according to the table of the functions of judgment, but the latter are not set up according to any principle". For Schelling, one has an "interest in truth" only if one is "interested in the question of the highest principle of all knowledge", i.e., the origin from which one can derive space, time, the categories, and the functions of judgment and thereby ensure that they are not merely brute facts about humans.[4] He therefore seeks a first principle to render Kant's science of intelligibility truly rigourous. Moreover, in order to avoid both the pre-Kantian presupposition that experience conforms to the object and the Kantian presupposition that it conforms to the subject, Schelling aims to cognize this principle as the identity of subject and object, i.e., of thought and being. Throughout his career, Schelling defines this cognition as absolute knowledge and assigns it to intellectual intuition.

Various doctrines of intellectual intuition mark the inception of post-Kantian idealism and soon draw harsh criticism. Fichte's doctrine provokes Kant and F.H. Jacobi to publicly denounce it in 1799 as "indefensible" and "nihilis[tic]", respectively.[5] In the Preface to 1807's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel appears to attack Schelling implicitly for espousing intellectual intuition during the identity philosophy at the turn of the 19th century when he says that the "coming-to-be of *science as such*" will "least of all […] be like the rapturous enthusiasm that, like a shot from a pistol, begins straight away with absolute knowledge", since "[t]o pit this single insight, that in the absolute everything is the same, against the full body of articulated cognition, which at least seeks and demands such fulfilment, to palm off its absolute as the night in which, as the saying goes, all cows are black—this is cognition naively reduced to vacuity".[6] Intellectual intuition is guilty of "enthusiasm", according to Hegel, if it reduces philosophy to a "vacu[ous]" assertion of the identity of thought and being. On the one hand, the assertion's indeterminability by either thought or being precludes any justifying condition that is not "the same" as their identity. On the other hand, the assertion's certainty "naively" eschews the scientific labour of determining the "body of articulated cognition" whose result would precisely be a justified claim to the identity of thought and being.

In a letter to Schelling, 1 May 1807, Hegel implies that his attack merely targets the former's acolytes, which implication Schelling acknowledges in his final letter to Hegel, 2 November 1807.[7] But despite the assurance of their last correspondence, Hegel reiterates his attack on enthusiasm in his 1825/26 Berlin lectures on the history of philosophy and explicitly directs it at Schelling. Hegel claims that "Schelling's philosophy makes its beginning from immediate knowing, from intellectual intuition", which "appears as an artistic talent or genius in individuals that comes only to 'Sunday's children'. By its very nature, however, philosophy can become universal, for its soil is thinking, the universal, and that is the very thing that makes us all human". He adds that, for Schelling, "philosophizing", i.e., the "objectivity of intellectual intuition", requires the "genius-character" of the artist, whereas, by contrast, "*we* soon recognize" that art "is only a subordinate and subjective standpoint, and so this [ultimate] point itself is not the absolute identity of subjective and objective; art is not yet the totality itself. […] Pure thought and its development or process is the soul of nature as well as of the subject. But the consideration of the logical is what Schelling never gets to in his presentation".[8]

Schelling provides a three-step rebuttal of Hegel's attack in his 1833/34 Munich lectures, shortly after Hegel's death.

First, Schelling distinguishes his doctrine of intellectual intuition from that of Fichte. Although intellectual intuition "derives from Kant", the "application of it to the beginning of philosophy derives from Fichte", who "demand[s]" for this beginning "something immediately certain", i.e., something that can ground the pre-Kantian object and the

Kantian subject. Whereas Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* calls this beginning "the I", Schelling notes that the identity philosophy calls it "the absolute subject-object", of which the I is merely "a particular form".[9]

Second, Schelling delimits his doctrine's proper scope. Hegel infers that "because Fichte proved the existence of the I with intellectual intuition", Schelling's identity philosophy "also wanted to prove the existence of the universal subject-object" with this intuition, the "inadequate manner" of which proof being that it is "nothing scientific", but rather is "subjective", "individual", and "mystical". Schelling rejects this inference by claiming that "it is a question of *that which is*: but precisely this is first supposed to be sought. One does not yet even have it as something which is actually thought, i.e., as something which has been logically realized; it is rather from the very beginning merely what is *wanted*; 'the pistol from which it is fired' is the mere wanting of that which is".[10] Existence, i.e., "*that which is*", is not "actually thought" in intellectual intuition and therefore must be "sought" otherwise. *Pace* Hegel, intellectual intuition is only comparable to a pistol insofar as it takes aim at "what is *wanted*", viz., the existence that this intuition cannot itself "realiz[e]". Hence, in a footnote Schelling explains that "[b]ecause the identity philosophy concerned itself with the pure *what* of things, without saying anything about actual existence, it could only in this sense call itself *absolute idealism*", i.e., a "science of reason".[11] Absolute idealism, as it is presented in the identity philosophy, does not exhaust a rigourous science of intelligibility because it is confined to intellectual intuition of the "absolute subject-object", whose "actual existence" this intuition lacks and so must be proven by some other means.

Third, Schelling asserts the continuity of his doctrine. He states: "in rejecting intellectual intuition in the sense in which Hegel wants to attribute it to me, it does not follow that it did not have another sense for me, and that I do now still hold onto it in this sense".[12] Whereas Hegel incorrectly attributes to Schelling a doctrine of intellectual intuition that mocks scientific labour by enthusiastically asserting the existence of the absolute, Schelling espouses a different doctrine of intellectual intuition that makes no such assertion as early as the identity philosophy, i.e., prior to Hegel's misattribution, and as late as the Munich lectures over three decades later.

Schelling's rebuttal raises two important questions. First, given that his doctrine of intellectual intuition undergoes several changes before and after the identity philosophy, to what extent can he be said to "hold onto" the same "sense" of it by the 1830s? Second, given that the doctrine of intellectual intuition that he espouses restricts absolute idealism to a science of reason that cannot prove the absolute's existence, what other doctrine does philosophy require in order to prove this and thereby constitute a truly rigourous science?

I will answer these questions by tracing the shifts in Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition from the 1790s to the 1830s and drawing out its evolving methodological role within his science of intelligibility.[13] We will see that insofar as this doctrine concerns merely the "*what[ness]* of things", i.e., their concept, its limitation in this respect necessitates a complimentary doctrine that concerns the thatness of things, i.e., their existence. I will show that the mutual dependence of these doctrines reflects Schelling's emerging distinction between negative philosophy and positive philosophy. The methodologically evolving doctrine of intellectual intuition consequently contributes to the rehabilitation, although not the reiteration, of the very project to which it initially responds, viz., Kant's two-stem science of intelligibility.

In Section 2, I introduce Schelling's earliest formulations of his doctrine of intellectual intuition. I show that, in quick succession, it signifies the I's "absolute reality outside of all time" in "Of the I",[14] the unlivable act of going "from time into eternity" in 1795/96's "Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism",[15] and the absolute identity that is temporally realizable only by the artist in 1800's *System of Transcendental Idealism*.

In Section 3, I track the doctrine's stabilized meaning across the identity philosophy. I draw on 1801's *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*, 1802's *Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy*, and the 1803/04 Würzburg lectures posthumously published as *System of Philosophy in General and of the Philosophy of Nature in Particular* in order to explicate intellectual intuition as the cognition of reason, i.e., of the existence of the absolute identity of thought and being, without which Schelling regards philosophy as impossible. Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition during the identity philosophy is consequently incompatible with his characterization of this doctrine's limitation in the 1830s, the inaccuracy of which characterization I leave aside.

In Section 4, I demonstrate the doctrine's restricted scientific role following the identity philosophy. I detail Schelling's claim in 1804's *Philosophy and Religion* that the "essence" of intellectual intuition "is not *real* at all", but rather "only *ideal*",[16] and his claim in the Munich lectures that intellectual intuition expresses a "mere wanting of that which is". The fulfilment of this "wanting" falls outside reason, viz., to the brute givenness of existence as such or what the 1841/42 Berlin lectures call "*completely transcendent being*".[17] By limiting the proper scope of the doctrine of intellectual intuition, existence thus becomes, for Schelling, a successor presupposition to the pre-Kantian object and the Kantian subject.

2 | TIME AND ARTISTIC CREATION

Three problems motivate Schelling in "Of the I" to articulate intellectual intuition as the absolute knowledge of the I as first principle. Each problem exemplifies at least one of the following Agrippan threats, viz., that the conditions of intelligibility are circular, arbitrary, or regressive, i.e., that they fall into "an eternal cycle", rest on an arbitrary condition that "dissolv[es] in its opposite", or compose a regress in which no condition "crystallize[s]".[18]

What I call the rhapsody problem exemplifies arbitrariness. It states that conditions of intelligibility cannot be rhapsodically derived from an arbitrary origin. As we saw, since Kant does not derive the conditions of intelligibility, i.e., space, time, the categories, and the functions of judgment, from "any principle", his critical philosophy offers its "results" haphazardly and thereby abandons the "way" of a science. Hence Schelling demands a first principle to serve as the absolutely necessary origin from which "all form of our knowledge springs".[19]

What I call the ontic problem exemplifies all three threats. It states that conditions of intelligibility cannot be derived from a thing. As Schelling explains, "a thing [*Ding*]" is "conditioned [*bedingt*]", i.e., literally made a thing, by its "condition [*Bedingung*]", which latter, if we ontically construe it as yet another thing, must have its own condition. A set of conditions that is ontically construed thereby forms a circle of things, ends with an arbitrary thing, or produces a regress of things. This is why an "unconditioned thing [*unbedingtes Ding*] is a contradiction" and why the "unconditioned" or first principle "cannot at all become a thing".[20]

What I call the determinism problem exemplifies arbitrariness. It states that conditions of intelligibility cannot be derived from an unconditioned thing. If we were to suppose that an unconditioned thing were not contradictory, viz., by positing the "*thing in itself*" as first principle, there would no longer be "any freedom".[21] This is because putatively free acts would ultimately be causally determined by this thing. Moreover, this thing would itself be conditionable, viz., by its arbitrary presence as a brutely given substrate. This is why the unconditioned principle must additionally be "*unconditionable* [*unbedingbar*]" and thus why it must be "that which is real through freedom".[22] Schelling accordingly calls the unconditionable first principle the "absolute I".[23]

Since the I is unconditionable, neither its thinkability nor its being can be conditioned, not even reciprocally. They must therefore be identical. Hence Schelling says that the I is "thinkable only through its being" and "must produce itself through its being thought".[24] The identity of thought and being is absent in both finite subjects and finite objects, which are "conditioned reciprocally" because neither is "thinkable" without the other's "existence".[25] Thus, whereas the I's "original form" is the "pure identity" of thought and being, the "existence of everything else", viz., subjects and objects, is determined by "something outside of it".[26]

Schelling specifies the proper mode of knowing the I, which he describes as "the ultimate in human knowledge".[27] The I is not known through a "*concept*", since it would be "conditioned" or "mediated" by a "higher" concept that brings "unity" to a "multiplicity" of which it is a member. Instead, the I is known immediately through an "intuition". However, since sensible intuition gives us objects and since the I "can never become an object", Schelling concludes that the I is known through "*intellectual* intuition".[28]

As the identity of thought and being, the I is not an "idea" the thought of which lacks reality. It is rather intellectually intuited as "absolute reality", outside which "there is nothing".[29] Moreover, since the I is not known through sensible intuition, whose inner form is time, intellectual intuition knows the I "as absolute reality outside of all time".[30]

Finally, since the I "contains *all being, all reality*", it alone can posit anything in opposition to it, viz., subjects and objects.[31] Schelling claims that the conditions of intelligibility by which the I posits such things, viz., the "forms of sensible intuition" and the "*categories*", must "originate" in, i.e., "be deduced from", the I itself.[32]

In the "Letters" the following year, however, Schelling denies that intellectual intuition affords knowledge of the I by arguing that such an intuition is unlivable. He says that "[w]e designate as alive an activity intent upon objects alone and as dead an activity losing itself in itself" and that "as long as intuition is intent upon objects, that is, as long as it is sensible intuition, there is no danger of losing oneself". From this, he infers: "[s]hould I maintain intellectual intuition I would cease to live; I would go 'from time into eternity'".[33] This is not the weaker claim from "Of the I" that, since "consciousness presupposes an object", intellectual intuition cannot "occur" there.[34] It is rather the stronger claim that an activity is unlivable if it "loses itself in itself", viz., through the subject's identification with the object, which is precisely the identity that intellectual intuition requires. By contrast, human experience is "alive" because it presupposes the difference between our subjectivity and the objects that sensible intuition delivers. Intellectual intuition is accordingly an unlivable cognitive act any claim to which, Schelling says, exhibits the "delusion" of "enthusiasm".[35]

If intellectual intuition is not a cognitive act, i.e., if, as Schelling says, it is "*groundless*" to assert "an absolute in human knowledge",[36] then a first principle is merely a "proleptic assertio[n]", i.e., an "*original insuperable prejudic[e]*". In other words, the I as first principle is not "valid in and by [itself]", but rather is only valid "by our freedom", i.e., by our "practical decision" to strive to embody the philosophical system that it grounds. The "subjective value" of positing the I thus consists, not in immediately grasping the absolute reality of I-hood, but rather in endlessly striving to realize I-hood in the world.[37]

Intellectual intuition's unlivability in the "Letters" is in tension with its livability in "Of the I". *Transcendental Idealism* resolves this tension four years later with its philosophy of art.

The Introduction claims that, in knowing, the "*objective*" and "*subjective*", viz., "*nature*" and "*the I*", are absolutely identical. To "*explain*" this identity is to "already have *done away with* it" insofar as it imposes a division whereby one "*give[s] priority*" to one of its terms in order to "derive" the other. By prioritizing nature and the I, respectively, "*nature philosophy*" and "*transcendental philosophy*", i.e., the "two basic sciences", "supplement" each other's explanations of absolute identity and thereby jointly compose "the entire system of philosophy".[38] Each science accordingly begins with a relative or counterpart identity.[39] Whereas nature is the "*identity*" of "*productivity*" and "*product*", as Schelling says in 1799's *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*,[40] as he says in Part One of *Transcendental Idealism*, the I is the "*identity*" of "*thinking*" and "thought", i.e., the unity of "*self-consciousness*".[41]

Evoking the concept of the unconditionable from "Of the I", Schelling says that, in transcendental philosophy, the I must be "sought" in an "*act of freedom*", not a "*thing*".[42] He reiterates that text's argument that since the I is known neither through "concepts", through which knowledge is conditioned and thus "*not free*", nor through sensible intuition, insofar as the I is not given to and thus "not *independent*" of the knowledge of it, it is known through "*intellectual intuition*", which he calls the "organ" of transcendental philosophy. Moreover, since intellectual intuition is not given its object, but rather "*produc[es]*" it, Schelling infers that the I "is nothing else but the very *knowledge of itself*" in intellectual intuition.[43] In other words, 'intellectual intuition of the I' exhibits a simultaneously subjective and objective genitive.

Since transcendental philosophy's organ is the intellectual intuition of a counterpart identity, viz., the I as opposed to nature, it falls short of the "universal organ" of the "entire system of philosophy", viz., the intellectual intuition of the absolute identity that is "already divided" in both transcendental philosophy and nature philosophy. Schelling deduces this universal organ in Part Six in a "deduction of the art product", according to which art alone can "unite" the I and nature, viz., as the "*identity of the conscious* and the *unconscious*".[44] In artistic creation, "our free action realizes, without our knowledge and even against our will, goals *that we did not envisage*", i.e., the artist, "however deliberate", is "governed" by a "power" that "compels" them "to say or depict things" that they do not "fully understand" and "whose meaning is infinite".[45] Freely active yet "involuntarily driven to create their works" and thereby "satisfy an irresistible urge", artists display "*the ultimate*" in them, viz., "the absolute" that "ground[s]"

the "pre-established harmony between the conscious and the unconscious".[46] Since artistic creation is consciously deliberate yet unconsciously driven, it alone exhibits absolute identity.

The deduction of the art product resolves the tension in Schelling's early essays because it shows that the philosophy of art's role within "the entire system of philosophy" consists in proving precisely what these essays deny, viz., that the absolute can be "called up to consciousness", i.e., "posited objectively". As he says, "aesthetic intuition simply is the intellectual intuition become objective".[47] The artist overcomes the atemporality and hence the unlivability of mere intellectual intuition by drawing absolute identity into experience, thereby going from eternity into time. Art temporally "opens" us to the "original unity" of that which is "rent asunder" by "life and action" and by "nature and history", i.e., by the respective topics of transcendental philosophy and nature philosophy.[48] Art thereby solicits "*the whole*" person, whereas philosophy's two basic sciences solicit only a "fraction" of the person.[49] It is because art "speak[s] to us of what philosophy cannot depict in external form" that it is philosophy's "only true and eternal organ".[50]

We will now see that Schelling restores intellectual intuition to the status of universal organ two years later in the identity philosophy.

3 | IDENTITY AND THE SCIENCE OF REASON

The doctrine of intellectual intuition is consistent across the identity philosophy.[51] The *Presentation* claims to follow Spinoza's geometric method[52] in articulating from "the standpoint of reason" the "system" whose "early presentations" in transcendental philosophy and nature philosophy are merely "one-sided".[53] Schelling defines reason's standpoint as the absolute identity or "total indifference" of subject and object, i.e., of the I and nature.[54] While the term is absent in the *Presentation*, the concept of intellectual intuition informs the claim there that the cognition of reason belongs to reason's "being", i.e., that reason cognizes itself.[55] This claim transposes to reason the claim in *Transcendental Idealism* that intellectual intuition is the I's self-cognition. Unlike subjects and objects, reason, since it is their identity, excludes "*nothing*" and thus contains "*everything*". From this, Schelling infers that philosophy's "most basic mistake" is to "assume" and to "attempt to make intelligible" that reason has "egressed beyond itself", viz., into that which, *per impossibile*, exists outside of it as "differentiated or multiple", i.e., into "finitude".[56] The concept of intellectual intuition that is at work here accordingly entails that the cognition of reason does not lack existence and consequently does not require any, e.g., aesthetic, objectification. As we saw, however, Schelling denies precisely this entailment after the identity philosophy, viz., in his Munich lectures.

Anticipating Hegel's attack on enthusiasm in the *Phenomenology*, Schelling reports in *Further Presentations*: "most people see in the essence of the absolute nothing but empty night and can discern nothing in it. It disappears for them into the mere negation of difference and is for itself entirely a privative entity; therefore they prudently make it the end of their philosophy. […] I wish to show here in a more detailed way how for cognition the night of the absolute is changed into day".[57] Insofar as intellectual intuition cognizes "the absolute", i.e., the identity of thought and being, it is only the beginning of a philosophical illumination of the conditions of intelligibility.[58] In order to convert the absolute from an undifferentiated "night" into a maximally determinate "day", Schelling distinguishes between intellectual intuition, which cognizes reason *qua* absolute identity, and philosophical construction, which exhibits the particular within this identity. Intellectual intuition is the "first cognition" on which "exhibition in the absolute" is "first made possible" and from which the "science" of constructions is "generated".[59]

On the one hand, the "intellectual or rational intuition" of reason is the "unchangeable organ of knowledge" because philosophy can "doubt" it as little as geometry can doubt the intuition of space.[60] Just as geometric constructions presuppose the intuition of a whole, viz., space, so philosophical constructions presuppose the intuition of a whole, viz., reason *qua* absolute identity. Schelling ascribes doubt about intellectual intuition to "systems of reflection", which fall into the "contradict[ion]" of treating the absolute identity of thought and being as relative, viz., as a "being" that lies "outside" our "thinking" about it. Moreover, he attributes to Kant the "impoverished skepticism"

that diagnoses yet fails to "surpas[s]" this contradiction, to which he contrasts "[t]rue skepticism", which obeys the "principle of true speculation" by rejecting the very "opposition" between thought and being on which reflection's contradiction depends.[61]

On the other hand, philosophical construction "exhibit[s]" the particular "within the absolute" by showing that a particular is "only ideally different" from the absolute, "namely, as a copy is different from an original".[62] In other words, despite the appearance that a particular exemplifies either thought or being, in itself a particular reiterates their identity. As Schelling says, it is because a particular "expresses the whole" that "the philosopher does not know distinct beings, but only one being", e.g., they construct, not the plant, but rather "the universe in the figure of a plant".[63] Against those who skeptically deny that we can "draw material" in this way from that which is "simply one", he argues that, for those who have "mastered the supreme point of philosophy", it is contradictory to suppose that, for a "science" of that whose identity is absolute, "something else is required" beyond this identity.[64] Moreover, Schelling evokes the concept of intellectual intuition that is at work in the *Presentation* when he attributes "absurdity" and "unreason" to those who, "in order to arrive at actuality", demand "something particular outside" the absolute, our intuition of which excludes nothing at all and therefore nothing actual.[65]

Intellectual intuition "generate[s]" a science of construction alone. Since philosophy concerns "only what everything is in itself", viz., expressions of absolute identity, it needs no "deduction" of the categorial conditions of a "*real*, appearing world". Indeed, the categories express only the "nothingness" of things, for things have "no true being" if, as 'substance' signifies, their attributes are always fleeting and if, as 'causality' signifies, their existence is externally determined.[66] Hence Schelling says that philosophy has "but one method", viz., construction.[67] By exhibiting particulars within the absolute, construction "discerns" in the latter its endless self-reiteration, i.e., its infinite self-particularization, thereby sparing philosophy from the "empt[iness]" of intuiting an undifferentiated night.[68]

The identity philosophy peaks in the Würzburg lectures, which argue that knowledge is "inconceivable" without the "*presupposition*" of the identity of "*knower*" and "*known*". Denying this identity entails that the known is never known "in itself", since either the knower determines it "*absolutely*", i.e., one-sidedly, or it is known "strictly by *virtue of its effect*" on the knower, i.e., not in its essence.[69] Schelling concludes that, "in knowledge", neither knower nor known "exist as *such*", i.e., independently, but rather are "*in general*" identical. A corollary to this conclusion is that knower and known are identical "in each particular instance of knowledge", including the knowledge of their very identity. A further corollary is that this identity *qua* known knows itself. Hence Schelling says that knowledge of the identity of knower and known is knowledge in which "*the eternal self-identity cognizes itself*", which self-cognizing identity he calls "*reason*", "the absolute", or "God".[70]

If reason is "the self-knowledge of the eternal identity", i.e., the self-knowledge of the identity that pervades all knowledge, then the distinction between knower and known must be "erroneous". Schelling attributes this error to "our subjectivity", which, by positing the "*proton pseudos*" of this distinction, tempts us to regard the known as determined by the knower and hence to regard knowledge as merely ours. However, the erroneous distinction must "disappear" in "the course of philosophy", for our knowledge is always already reason's own self-knowledge. Hence Schelling says that, in reason, "all subjectivity ceases", and that, insofar as reason "cognizes itself", "I am merely its organ".[71]

Schelling classifies the cognition of reason as "an *intellectual intuition*". It is intuitive because intuition is an "immediate cognition" and this cognition is not mediated, since in it "reason is that which cognizes". It is intellectual because whereas sensible intuition is "*coerced*" insofar as it passively receives its object in space and time, this cognition is "*absolutely free*" insofar as it actively is its object everywhere and eternally.[72] Transposing to reason the characterization of the I in *Transcendental Idealism*, we can say that 'intellectual intuition of reason' exhibits a genitive that is simultaneously subjective and objective.

Unlike Schelling's early essays, the identity philosophy finds no tension in need of resolution regarding the atemporality of intellectual intuition. The temporality of particulars, ourselves included, is merely apparent, for in themselves particulars are iterations of the eternal identity of thought and being that is reason. As Schelling says, on the basis of intellectual intuition, the "strict task of our further construction" is to "*present identity eternally as identity*. [...]

All that is, to the extent that it is, is one, namely, it is the eternally self-same identity, the one that alone exists and that therefore is all that can be known".[73] We will now see that while the doctrine of intellectual intuition defines a science of reason, Schelling soon denies that it captures existence and hence denies that it constitutes a truly rigourous science of intelligibility. This will mark his gradual turn toward what he calls 'positive philosophy'.

4 | EXISTENCE AND THE SCIENCE OF EXPERIENCE

Across five decades, Schelling confronts various permutations of the question of why there is something rather than nothing, including why there is experience, why there is meaning, and why there is existence.[74] In the "Letters", he describes "the riddle of the world" as "the question of how the absolute could come out of itself and oppose itself to a world". This riddle concerns why there is something determinate, viz., a world, rather than nothing determinate, i.e., absolute identity. Since the riddle concerns the transition from the realm in which "no laws are observed except the law of identity" and hence "none but analytic propositions are valid" to the realm in which "we can determine anything beyond this law" and hence "synthetic propositions" are "possible", Schelling paraphrases it as concerning "why [there is] a realm of experience".[75] Since "[e]very reply" to this question presupposes experience, he locates the answer beyond the "limit" of experience, viz., where reason is not "theoretical" and thus given reality sensibly, but rather "practical" and thus "capable of *giving* reality to [its] propositions", i.e., capable of realizing I-hood in the world.[76]

In the ensuing identity philosophy, instead of answering the why-question, Schelling dismisses it. As we saw, the *Presentation* regards posing and attempting to answer the question of why reason *qua* absolute "egresse[s] beyond itself" into finitude, i.e., why there is finite existence, as philosophy's "most basic mistake" on the grounds that intellectual intuition cognizes reason as lacking no existence.[77] It is precisely by discovering the proper bounds of intellectual intuition in *Philosophy and Religion* that Schelling revives the why-question.

Philosophy and Religion responds to A.K.A. Eschenmayer's 1803 *Philosophy in its Transition to Non-Philosophy*, which answers the egression permutation of the why-question by appeal to faith. Eschenmayer claims that reason "cannot egress from itself without dividing itself" and observes that its "self-differentiation" is "essential for speculation". As we saw in the identity philosophy, speculation rejects the difference between thought and being on which reflection rests. Nevertheless, Eschenmayer observes, speculation "cannot circumvent the unconditionality of difference", viz., between reason and its self-differentiation. He infers that the "higher act" that "embraces" reason and its self-differentiation is "faith", which "alone closes the whole field of speculation" and which warrants the "transition from philosophy to non-philosophy", i.e., to "a pure theology freed from all speculation".[78]

In order to maintain philosophy's exclusivity as the science of intelligibility, Schelling ranks faith "beneath philosophy".[79] *Contra* Eschenmayer, he claims that one cannot identify a "speculative" doctrine with philosophy and "declare it in need of being complemented by faith". This is because speculative doctrines, including "nature philosophy", are "isolated from the whole of philosophy", "[a]part" from which doctrines lies the "sole content" of philosophy's "true mysteries", viz., the "eternal birth of all things and their relationship to God".[80] In other words, the egression permutation of the why-question is a problem for philosophy as a "whole", not for mere speculation. This rebuttal provides important context for a surprising discussion of intellectual intuition that shortly follows.

After stating that intellectual intuition apprehends "*pure absoluteness, without any determination*", Schelling claims that the "essence" of this intuition is "not *real* at all; rather, it is in itself only *ideal*".[81] This claim strikingly departs from the identity philosophy, according to which intellectual intuition is the self-cognition of that which contains all reality, viz., reason *qua* absolute. In an apparent crisis of faith, Schelling now describes the absolute's self-cognition as "an eternal transformation of pure ideality into reality", i.e., a process through which the absolute becomes "objectified" in "a counter-image that is itself a *truly other absolute*".[82] He identifies this "*other absolute*" with the "actual world", whose "origin" he argues is "conceivable only as a complete falling-away from absoluteness", i.e., as a brute fact. Since the absolute contains no differentiation, it contains no "positive cause" for the world's falling-away,[83] which latter therefore cannot be "*explained*". From this, Schelling infers that the world's falling-away is "as eternal (outside

all time) as the absolute".[84] In other words, reason and the world are equiprimordial counter-images. *Contra* the identity philosophy, particularly the *Presentation*'s claim that the absolute "is the supreme existence" outside which "there is nothing" and any "separation" from which "simply does not happen",[85] this inference entails that we cannot simply dismiss the philosophical "myster[y]" of the "eternal birth of all things", i.e., the question of why there is a world. Since intellectual intuition is "not *real*", it cannot cognize reason as including the world's existence, in which case the why-question must be faced rather than dismissed. Why, then, does reason "transfor[m]" from "ideality into reality", i.e., why does it become "objectified"?

While reason and the world are equiprimordially opposed, Schelling claims that the "final purpose of history" is their "reconciliation", i.e., "the point where the fallen world restores itself to the original". He describes the reconciliation process as one in which "those otherworldly powers, the ideas, [...] descend into temporality through science, art, and the moral actions of humans".[86] We saw that, respectively, the "Letters" and *Transcendental Idealism* assign action and art with objectifying the absolute identity of thought and being, i.e., with drawing an atemporal identity into time, viz., through the practical realization of I-hood in the world and through the consciously deliberate yet unconsciously driven production of art. Each mode of objectification contributes toward demonstrating the egress of reason into the world and so toward reconciling the two. In *Philosophy and Religion*, Schelling includes "science" among art and action as modes of objectifying reason. Although he does not define the relevant science, the shift in the doctrine of intellectual intuition that precedes this science's inclusion anticipates the core feature of that doctrine's presentation in the Munich lectures, viz., the doctrine's demotion from reality to ideality. Returning to these lectures, we will see that they indicate what the relevant science cannot be.

Recall that, according to the Munich lectures, intellectual intuition thinks of existence logically, not "actually", i.e., it conceptualizes, but does not "realiz[e]", existence, which latter must be "sought" otherwise. As Schelling puts it, the "beginning" of the identity philosophy lacks "being (that which is) as being", since it is "only the concept of all being as something which is to come".[87] It follows from this that the identity philosophy concerns only the "*what[ness]*", not the thatness, of things, i.e., only their concept, not their existence. This is why Schelling says that the identity philosophy is a "science of reason", which "does not take up the question of existence at all".[88] Such a science cannot itself effect intellectual intuition's transition from ideality to reality, i.e., from "ideas [...] into temporality". The science that can effect this transition is therefore not a science of reason. In order to see what the science that objectifies reason must be, we must turn to the Berlin lectures.

While a detailed account of the Berlin lectures belongs elsewhere,[89] we can see that their distinction between negative philosophy and positive philosophy relies on a critique of the science of reason and a consequent demand for a science of experience.

Negative philosophy is the science of the conditions of intelligibility, including their first principle, whether the latter is pursued as a Fichtean beginning or a Hegelian result. This science is meant to render existence systematically intelligible, i.e., rational without remainder. However, existence itself is this science's remainder, since "there could very well be nothing".[90] In other words, a first principle cannot guarantee that there is any existence to render intelligible. Hence Schelling announces that philosophy's "astonishing challenge" is to prove that the "ultimate principle of the negative science [...] is not merely the highest idea, but is that which *actually exists*".[91] In order to meet this "astonishing challenge", Schelling enlists positive philosophy, which is the science that begins with the fact of existence, to which it progressively proves the application of negative philosophy's first principle.[92] However, this proof faces the "extra-logical nature" of existence,[93] i.e., the brute fact that there is "anything at all".[94] In other words, existence cannot guarantee its own intelligibility. Hence Schelling concludes that "both philosophies are demanded", viz., as irreducible, co-dependent sciences.[95] This conclusion suggests a modification of Kant's slogan regarding concepts and intuitions as the irreducible, co-dependent elements of cognition, viz., that a first principle without existence is empty and existence without a first principle is blind. This conclusion also rehabilitates, although it does not reiterate, Kant's two-stem science of intelligibility, i.e., the very project to which Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition initially responds.

Although the Berlin lectures do not mention intellectual intuition, they credit Fichte with inaugurating negative philosophy's method of positing a first principle from which to derive the conditions of intelligibility, which method

Schelling assigns to the "*science of reason*". While this science shows "what will exist, if anything at all exists", that anything exists "does not follow from [it], for there could very well be nothing at all".[96] It is "experience" alone, i.e., our sheer openness to the givenness of existence, whereby we know that anything exists.[97] A science of experience must therefore supplement the science of reason, viz., by "submit[ting] to the authority of the senses"[98] and bearing witness to the existence that alone can fulfil reason's "wanting of that which is". Positive philosophy is this supplementary science.

We can now properly grasp Schelling's late rebuttal of Hegel. The sense of intellectual intuition that survives doctrinal shifts before and after the identity philosophy is the sense of a concept of absolute identity that defines negative philosophy *qua* science of reason. The existence at which this concept aims like a pistol is the brute fact whose doctrine falls to positive philosophy *qua* science of experience.

Schelling matches his claim in Munich to the four-decade persistence of his doctrine of intellectual intuition, notwithstanding the claim's mischaracterization of this persistence, with a claim in Berlin to the five-decade persistence of his doctrine of existence, although textually it is insufficiently specific: "Some have wanted to explain my proposition of a positive philosophy as a change of mind. But since my studies of the Kantian philosophy, it has been clear to me that the latter could not be the whole of philosophy. I wrote in my *Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism* that a mightier, more majestic dogmatism would rise up against Kant's criticism, and this was the positive philosophy. Thus, *the notion of a positive philosophy* has been inscribed in me for a long time".[99] Like action and art, the science of experience draws the absolute from eternity into time, i.e., it proves the objectivity of reason. In Berlin, Schelling observes that this "proof" is "*never* finished", since the "experience toward which positive philosophy proceeds is not just of a *particular kind*", but rather is of existence as such and thus "is the entirety of all experience from beginning to end". From this, he makes the anti-Hegelian conclusion that the science of intelligibility "is only a *philo-sophie*", i.e., an unconsummated love of wisdom.[100] Equipped with intellectual intuition, philosophy is a wanting never fulfilled.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Reinhold (2011), p. 23.

[2] Fichte (1988), p. 371.

[3] Hegel (1984), p. 29.

[4] Schelling SW,I/1:152-5.

[5] See Kant AA,12:370-1, Jacobi (1994), pp. 502-4, 519. For a defense of Fichte's doctrine against these charges, see Bruno (2022).

[6] Hegel W,3:22, 31. Cf.: "Of the absolute it must be said that it is essentially a *result*, that only in the end is it what it truly is; and that precisely in this consists its nature, viz., to be actual, subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself" (24). Cf. Hegel's *Science of Logic*: "the modern perplexity about a beginning proceeds from a further need which […] is outright denied by those who begin, like a shot from a pistol, from their inner revelation, from faith, intellectual intuition, etc., and who would be exempt from *method* and *logic*" (GW,21:53).

[7] Hegel (1984), p. 80. Drawing on the Preface of the *Phenomenology* and Hegel's 1803 fragmentary manuscript, in which he says "I know well enough that *Schelling's ideas* must be very clearly distinguished from the use *that his school makes of them*, and I honor *Schelling's* genuine service to philosophy just as much as I despise this formalism" (GW,6:185), Harris (1997) offers a "loose interpretation" of "Schelling's school" as including C.G. Bardili, J.J. Görres, Reinhold, and J.J. Wagner (51).

[8] Hegel V,9:180, 184. Hegel seems to target Schelling's 1800 *System of Transcendental Idealism*, according to which "many people actually lack" intellectual intuition, whose "objectivity" is "art itself" (SW,I/3:370, 625), or his 1803 *Lectures on the*

Method of Academic Study, according to which "[t]hose who do not have intellectual intuition cannot understand what is said of it" (1966:49). Cf. Hegel W,20:435-6.

[9] Schelling SW,I/10:147. Cf. Fichte's 1797/98 *Attempt at a New Presentation of the Wissenschaftslehre*: "The I should not be considered as a mere subject, which is how it has nearly always been considered until now; instead, it should be considered as a subject-object" (SW,I:529).

[10] Schelling SW,I/10:149.

[11] Schelling SW,I/10:148n1.

[12] Schelling SW,I/10:150.

[13] Scholars often focus on the early, middle, or late phases of Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition in the 1790s, 1800s, or 1830s, respectively, without articulating the doctrine's evolution. Frank (2004), pp. 77-96, Nassar (2012), Shaw (2010), and Tilliette (1979) focus on the early phase. Beiser 2022:580-8, Galland-Szymkowiak (2007), Vater (2000), and Whistler (2013) focus on the middle phase, the latter tracking its shift from the early phase. Gram (1981) and Estes (2010) address intellectual intuition's apparent continuity after Kant, but not within Schelling's corpus. García Romero (2020) defends the doctrine's unity by arguing that, in all phases, it cognizes absolute identity *qua* intelligible, not *qua* existent. However, this is inconsistent with the identity philosophy. In the *Presentation*, Schelling claims that "there is nothing outside" absolute identity, which "is the supreme existence", i.e., which "is itself everything that is", viz., "*the universe itself*", "outside" which "*[t]here is no individual being or individual thing in itself*", whose "separation" from identity would be "arbitrary" and "simply does not happen" (Schelling SW,I/4:118, 125, 126n22, 129). In *Further Presentations*, he claims that "no difference stands between possibility and actuality" in absolute identity and that this identity is "positively intuited" in intellectual intuition, in which we "view everything in one light", without which there is "profound darkness", and outside which it is a "profound absurdity" to seek "actuality" (Schelling SW,I/4:392n, 395, 400, 406).

[14] Schelling SW,I/1:206.

[15] Schelling SW,I/1:325.

[16] Schelling SW,I/6:30; translations of this text modified.

[17] Schelling SW,II/3:127.

[18] Schelling SW,I/1:162.

[19] Schelling SW,I/1:162.

[20] Schelling SW,I/1:166.

[21] Schelling SW,I/1:172-3.

[22] Schelling SW,I/1:164, 177. For an account of the role of Kant's concept of the unconditioned in Schelling's early development, see Watkins (2014).

[23] Schelling SW,I/1:167.

[24] Schelling SW,I/1:163.

[25] Schelling SW,I/1:165.

[26] Schelling SW,I/1:178.

[27] Schelling SW,I/1:163.

[28] Schelling SW,I/1:181, 184.

[29] Schelling SW,I/1:193, 208.

[30] Schelling SW,I/1:206.

[31] Schelling SW,I/1:186.

[32] Schelling SW,I/1:190, 210-1.

[33] Schelling SW,I/1:325.

[34] Schelling SW,I/1:181.

[35] Schelling SW,I/1:320-1, 326-7. For an account of Schelling's critique of intellectual intuition in the "Letters", see Bruno (2020b).

[36] Schelling SW,I/1:308.

[37] Schelling SW,I/1:312-3.

[38] Schelling SW,I/3:339-43.

[39] The title character of 1802's *Bruno or On the Natural and the Divine Principle of Things* says that "nature", i.e., "being", and "consciousness", i.e., "knowing", are each "a relative identity of the real and the ideal" (Schelling SW,I/4:255).

[40] Schelling HKA,I/7:284.

[41] Schelling SW,I/3:364.

[42] Schelling SW,I/3:368. Cf.: "there is assuredly a higher concept than that of a thing, namely, the concept of *doing*, or *activity*. […] Being in our system is merely *freedom suspended*" (376).

[43] Schelling SW,I/3:368-9.

[44] Schelling SW,I/3:612, 625.

[45] Schelling SW,I/3:613, 618.

[46] Schelling SW,I/3:615-6.

[47] Schelling SW,I/3:624-5.

[48] Schelling SW,I/3:628.

[49] Schelling SW,I/3:631.

[50] Schelling SW,I/3:628.

[51] On Schelling's identity philosophy, see Beiser (2002), pp. 551-76, Bowie (1993), pp. 55-90, Frank (2014), Vater (2000), Vater (2012), and Whistler (2013).

[52] Schelling SW,I/4:113. On the structural similarity between the *Presentation* and Spinoza's *Ethics*, see Melamed (2020).

[53] Schelling SW,I/4:107-8, 115. Cf. SW,I/4:410.

[54] Schelling SW,I/4:114.

[55] Schelling SW,I/4:122.

[56] Schelling SW,I/4:115, 120. As Schelling says in *Bruno*, one "possess[es] intellectual intuition" of absolute identity only if one sees "finite things" as "displaced and disorganized images of absolute identity" (SW,I/4:256-7).

[57] Schelling SW,I/4:404.

[58] Cf. Schelling's 1810 *Stuttgart Private Lectures*: "all of philosophy is properly speaking the progressive demonstration of the absolute, which therefore cannot be demanded from the outset of philosophy" (SW,I/7:424). One might argue that whereas Hegel's logic is a method to which one can be led via an experience of natural consciousness whose inner necessity admits of systematic deduction, intellectual intuition is an origin to which "one can find no road" from "ordinary knowledge" and which yields no "deduction", as Schelling says in *Further Presentations* (SW,I/4:362, 397). However, Schelling adds that intellectual intuition of the absolute, viz., as the condition of all reality, is no more "mysterious" than the intuition of space, viz., as the condition of "all outer intuition", and he clarifies that, although no ordinary path leads to it, intellectual intuition is nevertheless "the gateway into true science" (369n6, 404), to which one cannot be led because one cannot but find oneself there.

[59] Schelling SW,I/4:391-91n11. On Schelling's conceptions of intuition and construction in the identity philosophy, see Breazeale (2014), Beiser (2002), pp. 585-8, Nassar (2014), pp. 227-51, and Vater (2000).

[60] Schelling SW,I/4:361-2; cf. SW,I/7:423. While this restores intellectual intuition to the status of universal organ, *Academic Study* complicates this by asserting "Without intellectual intuition, no philosophy!" while claiming that, for the philosopher, "art is a direct and necessary expression of the absolute, and only insofar as this can be demonstrated has it any reality to him" (1966:49, 144). Cf. Schelling's claim in the 1802/03 Jena lectures published posthumously as *The Philosophy of Art* that just as "reason", which intuits ideas "internally", is intellectual intuition in "*scientific* or *systematic thinking*", so too "fantasy", which intuits art products "externally", is "intellectual intuition within art" (SW,I/5:395).

[61] Schelling SW,I/4:364-5. Cf. Schelling's distinction between reflection and speculation with Hegel's own distinction in 1801's *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*.

[62] Schelling SW,I/4:393-4.

[63] Schelling SW,I/4:394-5.

[64] Schelling SW,I/4:391-3.

[65] Schelling SW,I/4:406.

[66] Schelling SW,I/4:396-7.

[67] Schelling SW,I/4:399.

[68] Schelling SW,I/4:403.

[69] Schelling SW,I/6:137-9.

[70] Schelling SW,I/6:141, 148.

[71] Schelling SW,I/6:140, 142-3.

[72] Schelling SW,I/6:153.

[73] Schelling SW,I/6:156.

[74] For an account of Schelling's career-long confrontation with the why-question, see Bruno (2020a), pp. 187-91.

[75] Schelling SW,I/1:308-10. Cf.: "the very transition from the non-finite to the finite is the problem of *all* philosophy" (313-4).

[76] Schelling SW,I/1:312. While this enshrines the practical character of the premise on which Schelling rests Kant's conclusions, the "Letters" casts the primacy of the practical, not in terms of reason, but rather in terms of brute decision. This anticipates Schelling's doctrine of the practical primacy of will in 1809's *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and Matters Connected Therewith*, on which, see Bruno (2021).

[77] Cf. Schelling: "the object of an intellectual intuition can only be something infinite, strictly unlimited, and inherently affirmative. […] By virtue of this affirmation, which is the essence of our soul, we recognize *the eternal impossibility of non-being* that can never be known nor comprehended; and that ultimate question posed by the vertiginous intellect hovering at the abyss of infinity: 'Why [is] something rather than nothing?', this question will be swept aside forever by the necessity of being, that is, by the absolute affirmation of being in knowledge" (SW,I/6:154-5). Schelling's 1805 "Aphorisms as an Introduction to Nature Philosophy" somewhat less dismissively state that the "full answer" to the why-question is "the all or God. The all is that for which it is strictly impossible not to be, just as it is strictly impossible for the nothing to be" (SW,I/7:174; my translation). For an account of the relation between Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition and his response to the why-question, see Bruno (2013).

[78] Eschenmayer 1803:ii, 70-1, 76; my translation.

[79] Schelling SW,I/6:20. Cf.: "Philosophy seeks to disperse the light of truth also in the boundless dark space that mythology and religion filled with poetic fabulations" (57).

[80] Schelling SW,I/6:17-8.

[81] Schelling SW,I/6:29-30.

[82] Schelling SW,I/6:34.

[83] Schelling SW,I/6:38.

[84] Schelling SW,I/6:41-2.

[85] Schelling SW,I/4:118, 126, 126n22.

[86] Schelling SW,I/6:43, 63.

[87] Schelling SW,I/10:150; cf.: "there is still in the world something other and something *more* than mere reason" (143-4). Cf. Schelling (2020b), p. 73.

[88] Schelling SW,I/10:148n1.

[89] For an account of Schelling's Berlin lectures, including their Kantian and Maimonian motivations, see Bruno (2015) and Frank (2007), pp. 312-414.

[90] Schelling SW,II/3:59.

[91] Schelling SW,II/3:150.

[92] McGrath (2016) argues that nature philosophy is not positive, since it concerns "an *ideal*, not an *existing*, nature" (123).

[93] Schelling SW,II/3:95.

[94] Schelling SW,II/3:7.

[95] Schelling SW,II/3:95. Cf.: "should it really surprise us if such a double-sided nature of philosophy presents itself, since […] it can be shown that both directions have been present in philosophy—the one right alongside the other—since time immemorial[?]" (95).

[96] Schelling SW,II/3:57-9.

[97] Schelling SW,II/3:61. Cf. 1820/21's Erlangen lectures, which "set" intellectual intuition "aside" for "ecstasy" as the name for the "wonder" of the subject's "self-abandonment" (HKA,II,10:39).

[98] Schelling SW,II/3:171.

[99] Schelling (2020b), p. 88.

[100] Schelling SW,II/3:130-1; cf. SW,I/1:307n. Contrast Hegel's claim that philosophy's "goal" is to "lay aside the title '*love* of *knowing*' and be *actual knowing*" (W,3:14).

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