Schelling and Onto-theology

I. Leask

The Schelling revival[1] has never quite reconciled itself to the Swabian's religious anima. Schelling's Hegel-critique may now be recognized as something like a proto-deconstruction of Idealism's 'paroxysmal' self-assertion; but, we are told, this 'anti-logocentric' kernel has usually to be extricated from a mystical-theosophical shell. Likewise, there may be vast, fruitful depths to Schelling's stricture that Being is irreducible to thought; nonetheless, Schelling's "apparently dead theology"[2] is best either forgotten or else 'translated' into the lexicon of Lacanian psycho-analysis, Derridean deconstruction, Rortyian postmodern pragmatism, etc. The religious concerns of Schelling's later work are, it seems, little more than an embarrassment for those driving the revival.

Despite profound gratitude towards those (principally Bowie) who have done so much to instigate the current Schelling renaissance, I want to suggest here that we should not be so quick to brush aside, or 'translate', Schelling's theologico-religious interests—for such a dismissal leaves us not just decontextualizing Schelling's Hegel-critique, but, as well, missing out on a crucial Schellingian contribution to contemporary debate about the question of onto-theology. Schelling's continuing relevance is more than his blowing open the Hegelian Identity of Thought and Being; it is also his concomitant reinstatement—not merely incidental to but fundamental for his critique of Idealism's auto-apotheosis—of the ancient Platonic conviction that the divinity 'is' *epekeina tes ousias*, *beyond* Being or any metaphysical construction.

i Onto-theology and Apophaticism

First, what is meant by 'onto-theology'? For Heidegger, as we know, the term refers to attempts to render 'God' a univocal *concept* both contained within and grounding metaphysical speculation: onto-theology treats 'God' as the efficient and knowable foundation, both *Begründung* and *Ergründung*, the means by which thinking lays claim to the All, the whole. Onto-theology assumes Being as manifest (to beings) *via* thought; it assumes Being's 'self-grounding' as accessible (to beings) *via logos*. Thinking, in accounting for itself, is 'thus' a systematic account of the ultimate *Ratio*; philosophy *qua* onto-theology is the Science of God — which, for Heidegger, means that onto-theology fails to think the

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ontological difference between Being and beings and, correspondingly, presumes to assimilate into thought our divine 'ground'. In rationalizing the Deity, in making God a containable metaphysical concept, philosophy thereby ensures that "[the] Being of beings is represented fundamentally, in the sense of the ground, only as *causa sui*".[3]

My argument here is certainly not directed against the application of this Heideggerian critique to that Hegelian gigantism which absolutizes and apotheosizes wilful Self-Certainty. However, *contra* Heidegger, I do not accept that "from beginning to end" philosophy has treated the question of the *theos* as "conceived 'logically'—logically in the sense of speculative thinking".[4] For, with this Procrustean (even totalizing) assertion, Heidegger seems to ignore the pre-modern stress on an apophatic 'other' of onto-theology, the Platonic awareness of a divinity transcending all metaphysical speculation, all *Ratio*. This, in itself, seems a considerable oversight. But, what is more, Heidegger also misses a distinctly modern manifestation of this same apophaticism — in Schelling's later writings — and this mistakes Schellingian thought for a culminating element within modern onto-theology.

Given that it is Schelling's thought which most concerns us here, my treatment of pre-modern apophaticism is restricted to the following necessarily adumbrated observation: that, whether in classical or Christian formation,[5] Platonic apophaticism is always underpinned by what we might term a 'principle of constitutive incompletion'.[6] Classical apophaticism, that is, consistently aims at an *overcoming* of both ontology and theology: from Plato's Good beyond Being to Damasicus's One beyond negation—between which points we also find: the One beyond both Being and the Good (Speusippus and Xenocrates); ineffable *Nous* (Albinus); the neo-Pythagorean 'Father' (Numenius); the 'Supreme Father' (*Chaldean Oracles*); the unknowable God and non-being Being (the Gnostic *Apocrypha of John* and *Allogenes*); and, of course, the ineffable One (Plotinus)—there is a consistent undermining of any attempt at rendering rationally transparent the Divine-Beyond. Similarly Christian apophaticism: whether we consider Clement and Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, the Pseudo-Dionysius or John Scotus Eriugena, we should treat with great scepticism any suggestion that, for the early Christians, 'God' is somehow contained within our thought and speech. Instead, the Deity is *always* deemed beyond correlational, discursive reasoning, inaccessible to any systematizing or Science. Ancient apophaticism—in and for which Being is never absolutized—is neither implicit nor explicit onto-theology; rather, as Reiner Schürmann has shown, it is more like an *overcoming* of metaphysics.[6]

Before we consider Schelling's historicized re-instatement of this pre-

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modern 'negative' spirituality apophaticism, however, we should first remind ourselves of the more celebrated aspects of later Schellingian thought.

ii Schelling *contra* Hegel

The mature Schelling deflates the Idealist empowerment of subjectivity and 'concealment' of Being; where Hegel presents the Absolute triumph of unconditioned Self-Certainty, Schelling insists that no philosophical system can contain its own basis, its *Urgrund*. Schelling emphasizes—*contra* Hegel—the ontological difference between Thought and Being: the *quod*, Schelling tells us, is in no sense the attribute or predicate of the *quid*.

Hegel had maintained that everything must be viewed as mediated:[7] just as there can be no Identity without Difference,[8] so even the category of immediacy (*Unmittelbarkeit*) can only be defined in relation to the mediated. Although Being, in its immediacy, appears as independent, *massif*, 'simply there', this immediacy is itself, according to Hegelian logic, the product of thought: the *apparent* immediacy is, for Hegel, only apparent and 'actually' mediated (in the Concept, which represents the 'truth' of Being). Thus, Being *depends on* thought; it is not, after all, independent. Where Being may seem 'simply there', and where Thought (*qua* Essence) may seem to rely on existence, Being itself turns out to rely on Thought. The 'truth' of the initial and apparent immediacy is, for Hegel, the mediating work of the Concept.

That is, the immediacy of Being is only achieved (or, rather, perceived) through reflection, and is thus not 'pure' or independent immediacy: it is the 'product', so to speak, of Essence. Thought (or Essence), meanwhile, cannot *be* of its own accord: it 'relies' on Being. Each is thus a necessary reciprocal other—Thought is the necessary other of Being, Being the necessary other of Thought. Hegel has achieved, it seems, the identity of the apparently disparate (Being and Essence).

What is problematic here—as Henrich[9] and Frank[10] have brought out (by following Schellingian lines)—is not Hegel's suggestion that in order to *know* Being there must be thought, but his presupposition of symmetrical structure: from a Schellingian point of view, immediate Being *is*, before any reflection, and thus the 'merger' of the two is not a merger at all. Being may depend on Thought, in order to be known; and Thought may depend on Being, in order to *be*, to exist. But the 'dependency' in each case is quite different: while Essence is the epistemological ground of Being, Being, by contrast, is the ontological ground of Essence.[11] To depend on Essence in order to be known is not tantamount to depending on Essence in order to exist. As Schelling

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observes, "[t]he nature of mere being is just to be, independent of every idea".[12]

This conflation, or confusion, of Thought and Being, Schelling suggests, points us towards a fundamental failing of post-Cartesian thought: its *subjectification of Being*. A century before Heidegger's similar verdict, therefore, Schelling shows us the keynote (*der Grundton*) of modern philosophy, the fundamental concern which links Descartes to Hegel: "Like a spell", Schelling realizes, "philosophy was caught in the realm of the subjective... the solely subjective consciousness" (8;45). Placing Thought before Being is by necessity placing the thought of a 'hidden' subject before Being:[13] the movement of the logic is not objective but thoroughly subjective ("For whom should the Idea prove itself?", Schelling asks. "For itself?" (153;154)) The alleged self-movement, the 'autonomous' development of the process, is a fiction. It is always the philosophical subject who guides the system to its 'goal':[14]

> One can understand that the subject does not remain still... But an empty concept, which Hegel declares even being to be, does not yet, because it is empty, have any compulsion to fill itself. It is not the concept which fills itself but rather the thought, i.e. that I, the philosopher, can feel a need to progress from the empty to the full (138;143).

The 'necessity' is mere appearance. Hegel's 'objective' Concept is no more than a concealed anthropomorphism (132;138-9).

That is to say, the development of the Logic is not internal, objective, or organic, but imposed by the hidden subject; the apparent objectivity is a subjective construction. The 'real' impetus for dialectical movement is always the covert subject; the development is not autonomous but instead the product of the concealed 'I'. Hegel "sought to breathe a life, an inner compulsion to progress" (139;144)—but the 'internal dynamic' remained nothing other than the (concealed) philosophizing subject, masquerading as the Deity. For Schelling, Hegel has not shown the structure of God's thought—he has shown, albeit in covert fashion, the structure of *Hegel's* thought.

What Hegel presents us with is thus the inversion of philosophy and its ground—which is tantamount to the absolutizing of the *cogito*.[15] Modern thought—from Descartes to Hegel—is exposed as not only 'stuck on the What' but also, correspondingly, as intransigently self-centred, self-grounding. Where Hegel sees Descartes as instituting "the most interesting idea of modern times"[16]—"Thought as Being and Being as Thought", inseparably bound together in the *cogito*[17]—Schelling sees only the instigation of modernity's absolutizing of subjectivity, and hence the further concealment of our ontological ground. It is not the case, Schelling

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maintains, that the *sum* is enclosed within the *cogito*; what is enclosed is only the *sum qua cogitans*, the *I in a particular mode*, the I "in that way of being which one calls thinking" (10;47). For Schelling,

> [t]he *Sum* which is contained in the *Cogito* does not, then, have the significance of an absolute I am, but only the significance of an 'I am *in one way or another*'..(10;47).

The subject is not the absolute ground; far from 'containing' Being, self-consciousness is only a particular *manifestation* of Being. Without seeing itself as a *mode* of Being (and not 'Being itself'),[18] Hegel's thought was bound to succumb to the fallacious hypostatization Schelling exposes.

iii God Beyond Being

A crucial point for Schelling, then, is the primacy of Being over Thought (and thus over the thinking subject). We must make a distinction between Being *per se* and the particular *modes* of Being: thought is a mode of Being, not Being itself; Being is more than 'simply' a determination of essence (W13,163). So Being is not 'thinking thinking itself', but is *prior* to thought—and "this insight is sealed *in the very* failure of the immanent attempt of autonomous self-foundation".[19] The 'negative' speculation of Hegelianism has forgotten that the nature of Being is: to be, independent of and prior to any conceptualization. As a result, it has forgotten its own existence:

> Pure or infinite potency (the beginning of negative philosophy) is the content which is *identical* with thinking and, therefore, because it does not go *towards* thinking (for it is identical with it) can come only out of thinking. On the other hand, *mere* being is the content which is not identical with thinking, and in fact, at first excludes it... In the fact that this has been overlooked lies the great misunderstanding of our time.[20]

Ontological difference—insurmountable and irreducible—is thus articulated within what is so often taken to be the culmination of metaphysics.[21] Schellingian thought may have seemed to Heidegger the high-water mark of 'onto-theo-logic'[22] and "the knowing conquest of Being";[23] but—as Frank has pointed out—that condition where "the subject of modern philosophy experiences itself as not-being-ground-of-its-own-subsistence has never been more clearly articulated in modern times than in... the philosophy of Schelling", a thinker for whom "self-consciousness presented itself from the very beginning as a relation that comes about only on the precondition of a grounding identity that escapes the play of relations as such".[24] Being is now seen as the *limit* of

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reflection—and "to pursue this consequence does not lead to the completion of idealism, but to its abolition".[25] Reason undoes itself, it demonstrates its own inadequacy: "Reason unfolds the inner structure of self-determination, but can never penetrate behind the primary existence of the self which does the determining."[26] Discursive thought ultimately shows itself to have its basis in pre-discursive, pre-conceptual reality. Ideas presuppose a more 'fundamental' existence.

Nonetheless, Schelling's importance lies not just in his insistence on a pre-conceptual ground to thinking (vital as this may be for ushering in the multiform philosophies of finitude which follow on from Idealism). Schelling goes further: he perceives that the recognition of this ontological ground is *itself* an idea—albeit an *inverted* idea (*die umgekehrte Idee* (W13,162))—and is thus a recognition which remains at the conceptual level. (Schelling's point, that is to say, is not merely to argue for the ontological priority of Being *qua* the presupposition of Thought; he is also urging against a purely conceptual critique of the priority of the conceptual.) Only an 'ek-static' leap *beyond* reason lifts us to the Absolute *Prius*, the source of All (both potency and actuality), the *Überseiendes*.[45] The I, the subject, "cannot stop at what is enclosed in thought" (W11,569). Pure That-ness, sheer positive existence, can be reached only by reason going 'outside itself', becoming ek-static; the mere *concept* of existence can never attain anything other than the *thought* of the pure That. Reason reaches "the point where it must dismiss the contemplative life" (W11,566), the point where conceptualization ends and sheer awe takes over (W10,230). The critique of Hegel's hyperbolic claims for Thought is thus more than an academic dispute: it is about a 'spiritual' commitment.

(This said, Schelling also urges that, once we have experienced the non-conceptual awe of the *Das*, we call upon reason to help schematize the *Was* of this *Das*: 'negative' philosophy determines possible formal structures; 'positive' philosophy, beginning from immediate experience, furnishes 'examples' of the former's conclusions, *via* what Schelling terms "metaphysical empiricism", *metaphysisches Empirismus* (W13,114). The combination of logical and quasi-mystical experience is to work in such a way that, from the experience of supreme awe, the religious mind can then piece together historical instantiations and 'effects' of divine Providence—awe in the face of direct, non-rational experience of the impredicable leads to partial *a posteriori* schematization and thus to a 'positive' relationship between the Absolute and reason (W13,171). For Schelling, reason and its 'Other' are both vital: it is only through reason that we can test the validity of religious and theological hypotheses (W12,122ff); conversely, it is only by pushing reason to its

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very limits that we have any hope of trans-rational insight into the 'ecstasy' beyond subject-object dualism, into the *Uberseiendes*, the source of all. Negative philosophy, that is, can demonstrate its own dependence upon the prior freedom of God. Indeed, reason, for Schelling, *must* postulate the undifferentiated *Gottheit* beyond essences and predicates. Once we have arrived at this Other of reason, we return to rationality: it is this non-rational awareness of the *Das* which can imbue our thinking about the *effects* of the *Das* with the necessary guard against pure idealism. The mind can now see beyond its own play; it can recognize or intuit a volition other than its own.)[28]

The key point is as follows. Schelling's 'un-saying' of Idealism does not only mean the primacy of Being over Thought— for, by insisting that the critique of Idealism be more than some *umgekehrte Idee*, and by thus gesturing towards the very basis of any *conception* of Being, Schelling also restates the ancient conviction that the highest point of all 'is' *beyond* Being, *Überseiendes*. God, Schelling suggests, cannot be contained by *any* predicate—even Being;[29] eternal Freedom must, of necessity, be able both to *be* and to *be otherwise* (if it can be pinned down to a single predicate it is no longer free.) The Absolute is beyond conception; its perpetual movement evades thought's structures.[30] God's absolute Freedom, that is, is never subordinate to a process which leaves the Divine "not free of this world, but burdened with it instead" (159;159) and which means God *sacrificing* Freedom (160;160); no grandiose Ontological Argument is primary (13-29&63-68;49-56&87-9). (Ontological arguments prove only the existence of the essence in pure thought (*reinen Denken*)—pure being-in-reason, "God enclosed [*eingeschlossen*] inside the concept" (W11,273)). Schelling's Absolute—an Absolute whose essence is the freedom to be what it chooses—is Beyond-Thought;[31] we can only know it in its manifestations. If it could be known, it would not be the Absolute *Prius*; if it is Absolute, it cannot be reduced to a single predicate. The only definitive statement we can make of it is that it is Freedom—and, as such, it is free to be either P or non-P. Eternal Freedom is, ultimately, unthinkable. *Qua* absolute freedom, God is beyond both essence and Being: "God... in himself is not being but the pure freedom of being or not being and thus *over* being, as former thinkers have called him";[32] "God is outside of being, above being, but he is not only by himself free from being, that is, he is also a pure freedom to be or not to be, to accept being or not to accept it";[33] "The perfect spirit transcends every kind of being".[34] The Schellingian God 'is', to borrow Levinas's phrases, "a surplus always exterior to the totality",[35] "a God not contaminated by Being".[63] The Schellingian God 'is' beyond onto-theological containment.

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What Schelling articulates, then, is the movement from *a*) a suspicion about the possibility of thought containing Being to *b*) a deeper suspicion about the thought of Being-before-thought, a thought which remains (however negatively) inscribed within and prescribed by metaphysics. 'Being', in other words, is itself under suspicion; it is not to be represented fundamentally, "in the sense of ground".[37] Rather, 'Being' is refused onto-theological primacy: the *Gottheit* is *beyond* Being. (Schelling, we can be sure, would concur with Jean-Luc Marion that "to be no longer able to think, when it is a question of God, indicates neither absurdity nor impropriety, as soon as God himself, in order to be thought, must be thought as... that which surpasses, detours, and distracts all thought, even nonrepresentational."[38])

Schelling's apophaticism, I would thus suggest, represents a major challenge to the onto-theology of what we might term 'Scotist modernity' (the insistence, that is, on the primacy of the *summum ens*, rather than the (Platonic) Divine-Beyond). Whether or not we *can* think otherwise than Being, he at least alerts us to the (negative) thought that, even accepting the limitations of thought about Being, God is no more contained by 'Being' than Being is by Thought. What was apparently a closed issue—after the reversal of the Areopagite's Platonic distinction—is burst open: Schelling gestures toward a god who is not the *Qui est* or the god of philosophy, neither an alter-ego nor a re-edition of the self. After an impasse of half a millennium, the question of the Divine *epekeina tes ousias* is re-instated.[39]

iv The *Process* of God Beyond Being

One further point needs consideration, however: if Schelling is now to be viewed as re-instating a *Platonic* apophaticism, does this not—by implication—serve to *confirm* Hegelianism? That is, if Schelling's Omega is now viewed as transposable with Plato's Alpha, is Hegelian circularity not just unbroken but somehow complete? Is Schelling, in other words, 'trapped in the spell of *anamnesis*'? To answer this—in the negative—we need to consider, finally, how Schelling's reinstated apophaticism is fused with a (distinctly modern) temporal-historical awareness.

When he comes to 'address' the God *epekeina tes ousias*, Schelling, as we have seen, deems 'Being' too constrictive of that which is free to either be or not be. As we have also seen, this refusal of any primacy for Being aligns Schelling, quite self-consciously, with the negative theology of ancient Platonism. However, this ancient alignment does not involve his rejecting the 'process-thinking' and 'genetic philosophy' developed by the *Glaubensphilosophen* and further refined in his own

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earlier work:[40] because 'Being' is too constrictive, so Schelling is more inclined to talk of the free *process* of God[41] rather than God's static 'is-ness'; God's *becoming* takes precedence over God's Being.[42] In one sense, such 'temporalized' spirituality is typical of its age: it is precisely the process of God, after all, which Hegel claims to have understood and to have seen to its completion; the circle, for Hegel, is now 'complete', *muthos* overcome by *logos*. But what differentiates Schelling's notion of divine process is that the Platonic Beyond *remains* beyond: it is not sublated by the system; rather, *qua* future-directed, free process, it undermines any conceptual claim upon it. For Schelling, God's process is ongoing; the *causa sui* is as much a future hope as a present reality.[43] There is no conception here of an Hegelian (circular) Return to the Same: "For consciousness the true God is not a God who *is* but who is always becoming" (W11,177). As a result, "[t]he knowledge of the true God remains a challenge" (W11,177).[44]

So, *contra* Hegel (once more), there is no attempt to produce a 'completed' subjective ousiology; rather, Schelling portrays a kind of cosmic protention, a messianic history oriented toward the future, toward the *Noch-Nicht* (to employ Bloch's Schelling-inspired term[45]). God's complete self-revelation comes only at the end of time, not at the end of the philosopher's system (W7,404); even to say 'God exists' is, for Schelling, as much an *anticipation* as a description.[46] The work of positive philosophy—"the continuing demonstration [*Erweis*], ever growing and becoming stronger with each step, of the actual existing God [*des wirklich existierenden Gottes*]"—will go on for all time: "the realm of actuality is not a finished one, but is rather one continually approaching its completion (W13,13)".[47] God is becoming real (W8,308); God is "that which *shall be*" (W12,33). (God's free process is beyond what Marion has termed "the idolatrous primacy of a human point of view".[48]) Where an 'ontologized understanding' would reduce the future to the present ("The present alone dominates. There is no real future!"[49]), the Schellingian 'system' is shaped by 'futurity', die *Zukunftigkeit*. *Telos* becomes *eschaton*; salvation is an event yet to happen. There is no onto-theological closure here; the dream of a completed process remains just that: a dream. And there is no primacy of the Now, or of 'origin'; rather, we have a radical *openness*. If Hegelian historicism claims to overcome Platonic *aporiai*, to 'complete the circle' and apotheosize man, Schelling applies his version of cosmic historicism, his 'effraction of circulation', to precisely the opposite effect—namely, to underline our finitude, and to re-inforce the 'beyondness' of the divine.

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v Conclusion

Schelling's religiosity is not a mere optional extra, an arcane addendum which bears no central importance to his rightly-celebrated Hegel-critique.[85] Rather, the dynamic driving this critique is, ultimately, Schelling's profoundly religious concerns regarding *a*) the idealized dissolution of God into 'mere thought', and *b*) the resultant *divinization* of the modern subject. And Schelling's apophaticism is not 'merely' the logical outcome of his Hegel-critique: it is implicit throughout, underpinning his assault on Hegel's Absolute claims. Schelling's critique of Hegelianism is at one and the same time an undermining of onto-theology: where Hegel presents the 'full development' of subjectivity as the completion of God's march through history and return to Himself, Schelling sees only the hypostatization of finite, situated thought. Far from completing the onto-theological circular process which overcomes all otherness and 'thus' achieves the ultimate Identity, the Schellingian subject is now aware of a profound *difference* between itself and its *unfinished* divine 'Ground'. Furthermore, although this awareness (of what we might term the *Difference* of Identity and Difference) is, as I have suggested, a re-instatement of Platonic negative theology, it is also a re-invigoration: because Schellingian apophaticism is unbound by static categories and instead temporalized, orientated by and toward the future, so it avoids pure nostalgia for some ancient 'epoch of truth'.

The cost of forgetting this re-instated yet re-invigorated *maior dissimilitudo* is not just that Schelling's critique of Hegelianism is torn from its wider, religious context. It is also that Schelling's profound challenge to onto-theology—a challenge which represents the central thrust of his Hegel-critique—remains an untapped resource for contemporary thought.

NB: Unless otherwise stated, all quotations of Schelling are from his *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. K.F.A. Schelling, 14 vols, Stuttgart & Augsburg: J.G. Cotta, 1856–61. Numbers in brackets in the text refer either to Andrew Bowie's translation of vol. 10 of this *Werke*, *On the History of Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge UP, 1994) or, where they are preceded by W, to one of the other 13 volumes. With the former, the first number refers to the original, the second to the translation. The latter refers to a given volume, and then to the appropriate page.

1 Strictly speaking, the Schelling revival begins with Walter Schulz's *Die Vollendung des Deutschen Idealismus in der Spätphilosophie Schellings*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1955. My concern here is with the more recent English-language renaissance, chiefly attributable to Bowie, but also to Dews , Zizek, Pfau, Clark, Sallis and Krell.

2 Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1993), p.146.

3 Heidegger, *Identity and Difference* (trans. Joan Stambaugh; New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p.60.

4 Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (trans. Parvis Emad & Kenneth May;

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Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1988), p.98.

5 See Deirdre Carabine, *The Unknown God. Negative Theology in the Platonic Tradition: Plato to Eriugena,* Louvain: Peeters Press (no date given), Louvain Theological & Pastoral Monographs, 19.

6 See his 'Neoplatonic Henology as an Overcoming of Metaphysics', *Research in Phenomenology*, 13, 1983, pp 25–41.

7 See, for example, *Enzyklopädie der Philosophischen Wissenschaften I, Erster Teil: Wissenschaft der Logik, Hegel Werke 8*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970 (trans. by Wm Wallace as *The Logic of Hegel*, Oxford UP, 1975), ss 11–12 and ss 61–78.

8 See, for example, *Enzyklopädie Logik*, ss 115–121.

9 See Dieter Henrich's 'Anfang und Methode der Logik', in *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), pp 73–94.

10 See Frank, *What is Neostructuralism?* (trans. S. Wilke & R. Gray; Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1989), pp 276–8.

11 See Frank, 'Schelling's Critique of Hegel and the Beginnings of Marxian Dialectics' (*Idealistic Studies*, 9, pp 251–268), p.260.

12 Schelling, 'From *The Berlin Lectures*, 1841–42', in J. T.Wilde & W. Kimmel, eds. & trans., *The Search for Being. Essays from Kierkegaard to Sartre on the Problem of Existence* (New York: Twayne, 1962), p.36.

13 See Joseph P. Lawrence, 'Schelling as Post-Hegelian and as Aristotelian' (*International Philosophical Quarterly*, 26, 1986, pp 315–30, p.322. :

14 See Alan White, *Absolute Knowledge: Hegel and the Problem of Metaphysics* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 1983) pp 17–18.

15 See Alan White, *Schelling: An Introduction to the system of Freedom* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1983), p.156: "Since the Logic purports to be complete in itself, the motivation for the move to nature must be extrasystematic...The move is made by the human being, not by the absolute..."

16 G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol.2, (trans. E.S. Haldane & F. Simpson; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), p.229.

17 Ibid, p.228.

18 See Vincent McCarthy, *Quest for a Philosophical Jesus. Christianity and Philosophy in Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and Schelling* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer UP, 1986) p.192.

19 Frank, *What is Neostructuralism?*, p.277.

20 Schelling, 'Berlin Lectures', Wilde & Kimmel, p.45.

21 For Heidegger's comments on Schelling as the culmination of metaphysics, see, esp., *Schelling's Treatise On the Essence of Human Freedom* (trans. Joan Stambaugh; Athens: Ohio UP, 1985) pp 48–51, p.175 and p.181, and *Hegel's Concept of Experience* (trans. J. Glenn Gray; New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p.143.

22 See Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise*, p.51: "Philosophy is *Ontotheology*. The more originally it is both in one, the more truly it is philosophy. And Schelling's treatise is thus one of the most profound works of philosophy because it is in a unique sense ontological and theological *at the same time*".

23 Ibid, p.32.

24 Frank, *What is Neostructuralism?*, pp 192–3.

25 Frank, 'Schelling's Critique of Hegel', p.263.

26 Lawrence, 'Schelling as Post-Hegelian and as Aristotelian', p.322.

27 *Werke* vol.12, p.58; cf. vol.8 (*Weltalter*) p.240 & p.256; trans. (by F.Bolman, as *The Ages of the World,* New York: AMS Press, 1967), p.128 & p.144.

28 I should point out that, although it is not my main concern here, the recondite nature of the relationship between positive and negative philosophy has been an obvious point of departure for criticisms of Schelling. See, for example: Edward Beach, *Potencies of God(s). Schelling's Philosophy of Mythology* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), p.162; Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, p.159; Joseph Bracken, 'Freedom and Causality in the Philosophy of Schelling' (*New Scholasticism*, 50, 1976, pp 164–82), p.173.

29 See *Werke* vol.11, pp 565–70 on the difference between God and *idea* of God. And note

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that Schelling had articulated this as early as the *Human Freedom* essay. See *Werke* vol.7, p.406 (trans., p.87): "[The Divine Ground] has no predicates except lack of predicates, without its being naught or a non-entity... [It is] the 'groundless' which precedes all basis".

30 It is because God is supremely free, "the most free being of all", that He is not the preserve of any single religion, but is revealed in *all* religions: "Christianity", Schelling writes, "is only a phenomenon which I am trying to explain" (*Werke* vol. 14, p.201).

31 Cf. *Werke* vol. 12, p.100, and vol.13, p.338.

32 *Werke* vol. 12, p.58: "das Gott... der an sich nicht gehend, sondern der lauter Freiheit zu seyn oder nicht zu seyn ist, der Ueberseyende, wie ihn auch Aeltere schon genannt haben".

33 Ibid, p.33: "Gott ist in diesem Sinne außer dem Seyn, über dem Seyn, aber er ist nicht bloß an sich selbst frei von dem Seyn, reines Wesen, sondern er ist auch frei gegen das Seyn, d.h. eine lauter Freiheit zu seyn oder nicht zu seyn, ein Seyn anzunehmen oder nicht anzunehmen."

34 Ibid, vol.13, p.256: "Der vollkommene Geist ist über allen Arten des Seyns".

35 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity. An Essay on Exteriority* (trans. A. Lingis; Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1969), p.22.

36 Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* (trans. A. Lingis; The Hague: Nijhoff, 1981), p.xlii.

37 Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.98.

38 Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being. Hors-Texte* (trans. T. Carlson, Chicago UP, 1991), p.45. Marion acknowledges his debt to Schelling: "Under the title *God Without Being* we do not mean to insinuate that God is not, or that God is not truly God. We attempt to meditate on what F.W.Schelling called 'the freedom of God with regard to his own existence'" (p.2). Nonetheless, answering my questions at a public seminar at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, in February 1997, Marion—although praising Schelling as "one of the few who were brave enough to disentangle God and Being"—maintained that Schelling's "heavy metaphysical language" (*Grund* or *Abgrund*, for example) was "the real impeachment to imagine that this [Schellingian] God is free of Being". I suspect that, in this regard, Marion may overlook Schelling's auto-undermining of such "heavy metaphysical language": consider, for example, the change from: *Urform* (*Werke*, vol.1, p.87), to 'excluded' ground (vol.3, p.408) to 'included' (vol.4, pp 253–4), to how we should think of the *groundless*, rather than primal ground or basis (*Of Human Freedom*, vol.7, p. 406). .. All this before we reach the later, positive philosophy.

39 See, for further examples, *Werke* vol.8, p.343, or vol.11, p.566. See also vol.12, p.100, note 1, on God's fundamental difference: He is alone (*Einsame*) and unique (*Einzige*), separate from everyday, general being (*allgemeine Wesen*).

40 For example, *Werke* vol.2, p.39.

41 See, for example, *Werke* vol.11, p.7, on how Schelling seeks a *history* of the divine (*Göttergeschichte*), rather than a *theory* of the divine.

42 Notice, incidentally, that this notion of the divinity's own process was criticized by Schelling's erstwhile acolyte Staudenmaier, in his 1840 *Die Philosophie des Christentums*: the idea of God *becoming* God implied some kind of lack. Staudenmaier also criticized Schelling for allowing freedom to be negated by cosmic process, and for confusing finitude with sin and metaphysics with grace. In his earlier *Der Geist der göttlichen Offenbarung* (1837), Staudenmaier had already suggested that Schelling deemed revelation 'necessary', rather than God's free gift. See Thos. O'Meara, *Romanticism and Catholicism: Schelling and the Theologians* (Notre Dame UP, 1982), pp 143–6. O'Meara also outlines the critical reactions of a number of other Catholic theologians—initially inspired by yet later critics of Schelling—including Drey, Kuhn, Möhler and Deutinger.

43 See *Werke* vol.13, pp 204, 261, 270. (Cf. vol.7, p.432.) In Schelling's understanding of the theogenic process, the supreme importance of Christianity is that it disrupts the 'unblissfulness'—*Unseligkeit*—of pre-Christian 'circularity'; we advance from the

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rotary movement of Mythology (BC) to the rectilinear, eschatological movement of Revelation (AD). See, for example, *Werke* vol.13, pp 273–4. (See also vol.14, pp 81–86, on how pagan Mythology is a *simulacrum* of the eternal reconciliation which Christ will provide.) For Schelling, 'natural religion' (the shattering and scattering of God's image in polytheism) develops into 'supernatural religion' (Petrine and Pauline monotheistic Revelation) and will culminate, in the future, in Johannine freedom; the Schellingian *eschaton* will see mind and will united in *Geist*, Petrine (Catholic) and Pauline (Protestant) churches united in the Johannine (the church of the Holy Spirit, of love), and a completed Christology consummating the epochs of mythology *and* revelation. See *Werke* vol.14, pp 296–327 (esp. pp 303–10 and 326–7). See McCarthy, *Quest for a Philosophical Jesus*, pp 163–213, for an extended discussion of Schelling's Christology.

44 Ibid: "Die Erkenntniß des wahren Gottes bleibt daher immer eine Forderung." See also vol. 12, p.58.

45 For further discussion of Schelling's influence on Bloch, see Colin Harper, 'Dialectic in the Philosophy of Ernst Bloch', unpublished PhD thesis, Queen's University of Belfast, 1993, esp. pp 81–102.

46 Schelling's conviction that the 'world-process' was yet to be completed is made manifest as early as *Die Weltalter*, where he gives a Trinitarian conception of the Past as the Father, the Present as the Son, and the Future as the (yet-to-come) Spirit (*Werke* vol.8, pp 310–14). 80 *Werke* vol.13, p.13.

47 See also vol.11, p.139: "God is at every level in the process of becoming, and yet at every level there is a form of this becoming God. There is one God and yet a progressively developing God."

48 Marion, *God Without Being*, p.81.

49 Johannes Baptist Metz, *Theology of the World* (trans. Wm. Glen-Doepel; London: Burns & Oates, 1969), p.86.

The Meritorious Human Life of Jesus: Renaissance Humanist Tendencies in the Thomism of Cardinal Cajetan

Michael O'Connor

The Dominican theologian and cardinal, Tommaso de Vio (1469–1534), known as Cajetan after Gaeta, his birthplace, is best remembered for two things. Firstly, he is the expositor of Aquinas, whose monumental commentary on the *Summa* is included in the Leonine edition of Aquinas' works. As a consequence of this canonisation, Cajetan's commentary is either treasured or vilified, to the extent that it is judged to represent Aquinas accurately or not; meanwhile, more subtle developments, not to mention overt disagreements, tend to be overlooked. Secondly, and more widely. Cajetan is remembered as the Roman prelate who met with Martin

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