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Schelling and the Background of American Pragmatism:

Franz Josef Wetz, *Friedrich W.J. Schelling, zur Einführung*,
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[1] Franz Josef Wetz studied philosophy, German, and theology, first in Mainz and later in Giessen. He is currently Professor of Philosophy at the Pedagogic College (*Hochschule*) in Schwäbisch Gmünd, and he also works in collaboration with the Thüringen Institute for Teacher Development, Curriculum Development, and Planning. Wetz has a number of books to his credit including *Das nackte Dass, zur Frage der Faktizität* (1990); *Tübinger Triads, Zum Werk von Walter Schulz* (1990); *Hans Blumenberg, zur Einführung* (1993); *Lebenswelt und Weltall, Hermeneutik der unabweislichen Fragen* (1994); *Hans Jonas, zur Einführung* (1994); *Die Gleichgültigkeit der Welt* (1994); and *Edmund Husserl*, (1995).

[2] The short cover-description of the present book tells that "Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854) was one of the formative philosophers of German idealism, whose great service was in the areas of the philosophy of nature, art, and religion." Those having some familiarity with Schelling, and his influence on American philosophy, indirectly via Coleridge and Carlyle and more directly via Emerson and C. S. Peirce, will perhaps not be surprised to learn that German idealism itself looks somewhat different, understanding Schelling's differences with Kant, Fichte, and Hegel; and while the work under review shows no awareness of the distant American influence of Schelling, or American developments in general (except perhaps in some citations of Arthur Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being*), I will take the present opportunity to emphasize connections and possible connections to American philosophy, as allowed by the author's account of Schelling and some further citations.

[3] "The center of gravity" of Schelling's work, "over six decades of untiring creation," shifted or developed "so that the work overall can be viewed as focused on the relation of the Absolute and the finite," according to the cover-description. In this very readable introduction, Wetz "points to the entire development of the thought of this difficult philosopher," and he "shows how the late Schelling overcame the absolutism of the idealist metaphysics of reason," in his account of "the dark will in nature," and "the puzzle of existence." Wetz also clarifies Schelling's influence by tracking "numerous instances where Schelling's ideas lived on as an undercurrent in 19th and 20th century movements of thought--whether in the philosophy of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, in Freudian psychoanalysis, in the '*Lebensphilosophie*,' and in existentialism." Wetz's approach to Schelling and German idealism draws on work of Eduard von Hartmann and Walter Schulz, concluding that "the late Schelling and the late Fichte, had both gone well beyond Hegel in philosophical reflection, in that they emphasized the finite facticity of absolute reason." According to Schelling, Wetz says, "reality cannot be derived from reason, and chaos, lack of order, impulse and desire partly dominate in reality; these are, in short, unreasoning or irrational powers, which Schelling summarized under his concept of the dark will" (p. 237).

[4] The book consists of 8 numbered chapters plus end notes, a bibliography and a short chronology of Schelling's life and writings. Schelling's *sämtliche Werke*, published shortly after his death, consists of 14 volumes, but this has been supplemented with other works, and many individual works and collections of letters have been published or republished in recent years.

Currently a critical-historical edition is underway which has so far produced 5 volumes. Six volumes of selected works, reprints of early editions, were published by Suhrkamp in 1985. Noteworthy from the secondary literature is mention of Habermas' 1954 dissertation, *Das Absolute und die Geschichte, Von der Zweispaltigkeit in Schellings Denken*, and works by Thomas Buchheim, *Eins von Allem*, and Arnold Gehlen, Heidegger's commentary, *Schellings Abhandlung über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit* (recently translated into English by Joan Stambaugh, and said by some to be a key document in Heidegger's "turn." See Baumgartner and Korten, 1996, p. 223), and work of Walter Schulz.

[5] Chapter 1 is a short introduction, to which I shall later return. "The heliocentrism of the I," chapter 2, recounts the early influence of Kant and Fichte on Schelling. Chapter 3, "Consideration of Nature instead of Contempt for Nature," begins the account of Schelling's philosophy of nature, including sections devoted to "Speculative and empirical physics," "Goal-orientation, Organism and the World-Soul," "The Awakening of Spirit in Nature," and lastly "Man and Nature." According to Wetz, Schelling's early philosophy of nature can be understood in terms of Lovejoy's "great chain of being," and the three principles of plenitude, continuity, and hierarchy (p. 41ff.). Yet it departs from traditional Christian conceptions under the influence of Greek, neo-platonic, and Spinozistic concepts.

[6] "The world is described as a well-ordered organism" in Schelling's early work, and "the genuine departure from prior conceptions is that he assumes a power within nature which brings about the phenomena of nature—the heretofore unnamed 'world-soul'" (p. 42). Similar conceptions can be found in Coleridge and Carlyle, in their attractions (and resistance) to Schellingesque, quasi-pantheist ideas, the doctrine of "emendations" in particular, and in the Emersonian discourse of the revelation of the "Over-Soul" in nature and in mankind. Schelling's emphasis on nature, and the study of nature, are obviously congenial to Emerson's similar focus. "It is not to be wondered," Wetz remarks, "that Schelling has sometimes been scolded as a naturalist, for whom nature is all, since in his philosophy of nature there is, in fact, no world-transcendent, personal God who could have brought forth the world from nothing" (pp. 43-44). Schelling's God is equated with "an original force dwelling in nature," but the complaint of naturalism is "ungrounded," in a wider perspective, since Schelling "subjects the entire universe to a all-besouling, divine power" (p. 44).

[7] By adapting Spinoza's distinction between *Natura naturans* and *Natura naturata*, Schelling attributes to nature "unconditional reality," in Wetz's words "absolute independence;" and nature is not to be thought of as merely product but also as productive. "The concept of nature encompasses both, nature as product or object, *Natura naturata*, and nature as productivity or subject, *Natura naturans*," and this Schelling calls his "Spinozism of physics," "speculative physics" or "philosophy of nature" (p. 46). In contrast with Spinoza, however, Schelling rejects the conception of nature as a mechanism, and he insists, following Giordano Bruno, on the idea of nature as a living organism. In contrast with Kant, Schelling assigns to purposefully ordered nature being-in-itself, and not mere appearance, though such purposefulness can only come to be in the understanding, "on the basis of a purposeful and effective spirit" (p. 50).

[8] The spirit in nature, cannot be equated with Fichte's general "I" from the *Wissenschaftslehre*, since "the basic force" to which the universe owes its original cause and structure differs by its "lack of consciousness;" though "it is really nothing but Fichte's absolute 'I,' projected into nature and robbed of its consciousness" (p. 51). What is basic is an activity, and not something like Spinoza's substance.

[9] Hence it follows that in Schelling's conception, God develops in nature from an original

potentiality. Schelling also calls this basic force 'the pure subject-object,' or the objective subject-object, which means the same as *Natura naturans* or the world-soul" (p. 51). In his address "On the Relation of the Creative Arts to Nature," Schelling says, that nature is "to the spirited researcher alone, the holy, the eternally creative original force of the world which produces all things out of itself and brings forth faithfully" (Schelling 1807, p. 5).

[10] Compare Emerson, "The Over-Soul," (1841): "And this deep power in which we exist, and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one." This passage also bears comparison to Dewey's early idealist writings, as in "The Psychological Standpoint" (1886) where he maintains that consciousness is "the unity of subject and object" (Dewey, *Early Works* 1, p. 137), and "the unity of the individual and the universal" (EW1, p. 140). This conception of the unity of the "subject-object," in Schelling, is closely related to the concept of truth.

[11] Of course, these and similar comparisons between Schelling and Emerson must attend to the fact that Emerson rarely aims to state his exactly relation to predecessors. "The Bacon, the Spinoza, the Hume, Schelling, Kant, or whosoever propounds to you a philosophy of the mind," says Emerson in "Intellect" (1841), "is only a more or less awkward translator of things in your consciousness, which you have also your way of seeing, perhaps of denominating." Emerson developed his own way, not caring too greatly whether he agreed or disagreed with others in details. Moreover, Emerson's claim that the Over-Soul, "is all accessible to us," is essentially modified in his essay 1844 "Nominalist and Realist," since "the divine Providence,... conceals all the furniture and all the persons that do not concern a particular soul, from the senses of that individual." Emerson's identity (or continuity) of subject and object is thus compatible with considerable pluralism and discontinuity and this in spite of all influence of the neo-platonic doctrine of emanations. It is important to note that Emerson also developed his own version of fallibilism.

[12] In Schelling's relation to Spinoza as recounted by Wetz, we can see how Spinoza's dual attributes are converted into an ambiguity or tension between realism and idealism, not entirely unlike the conflicting reputation of Spinoza as both "atheist" and a "God-intoxicated man." But in place of Spinoza's two "attributes," Schelling argues for two co-equal "basic sciences," the philosophy of nature on the one hand, and transcendental idealism on the other. The related tension in Schelling we can perhaps think of as past on to Peirce as that between his realism and the "Schelling-fashioned idealism," claimed in "The Law of Mind" (1892), "which holds matter to be mere specialized and partially deadened mind" (Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 6.102). Peirce was aware of the work of Eduard von Hartmann (cf.. CP 2.38, 7.364, 7.366, 7.395), who has come to be seen as an important interpreter of Schelling.

[13] In addition, one should consider Peirce's relationship to Emerson, also mentioned in "The Law of Mind." "I was born and reared in the neighborhood of Concord," says Peirce, "...at the time when Emerson, Hedge, and their friends were disseminating the ideas that they had caught from Schelling, and Schelling from Plotinus, from Boehm,..." and though "the atmosphere of Cambridge held many an antiseptic against Concord transcendentalism; ... Nevertheless, it is probable that some cultured bacilli, some benignant form of the disease was implanted in my soul, unawares, and that now, after long incubation, it comes to the surface, modified by mathematical conceptions and by training in physical investigations" (CP 6.102).

[14] There is perhaps also something we can come to see as ultimately past on to Dewey's naturalism, in the form of Schellingesque task of overcoming dualisms. The "highest point of the whole inquiry," in Schelling's *Freiheitsschrift*, is that "there must be a being before ...any duality at

all" (Schelling, in James Gutmann, translator, Schelling, *Philosophical Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom*, p. 87). This is Schelling's denial of "absolute dualism," and a point which Emerson shared with Schelling, belief in "unity in nature and consciousness." Emerson says the following on prayer in "Self-reliance," (1841):

Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends (Emerson 1841, p. 157).

If there is "unity in nature and consciousness," as Emerson claims, then prayer cannot be for merely private goods, but must take "the highest point of view." Thus the apparent "idealism" of Emerson's Over-soul is both an ontological claim, rejecting dualism, and a moral claim rejecting the tendency to seek private gain at the expense of what is better. The prayer of the farmer and of the rower are "cheap goods" and not "theft," however, if the good they seek is the best they know.

[15] In later Dewey, "naturalism" is defined in terms of Peircean continuity. "The term 'naturalistic' has many meanings," says Dewey in his 1938 *Logic*. "As it is here employed it means, on one side, that there is no breach of continuity between operations of inquiry and biological operations and physical operations" ³/₄inquiry, too is a process in nature, developing from intermediary forms. Dewey explains: "'Continuity,' on the other side, means that rational operations grow out of organic activities, without being identical with that from which they emerge" (Dewey, 1938, LW12, p. 26). Though the emphasis on continuity in German idealism goes back at least as far as Leibniz, Peirce's claims for a "Schelling-fashioned" idealism and his criticisms of Hegel, and Dewey's use of the concept suggest the need to explore the relationship between the concept of continuity in the pragmatist tradition and Schelling's philosophy of identity.

[16] Chapter 4 is titled "In pursuit of true Unity," and in his defense of his philosophy of nature against Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), on Wetz's account, "seems to return to the system of Fichte, without stepping back from his positions in the philosophy of nature." For, "the early Schelling was obviously convinced that the overall system of philosophy 'will be first perfected by means of two basic sciences (*Grundwissenschaften*),' namely transcendental philosophy and the philosophy of nature" (p. 73). This theme contrasts sharply with Fichte's views, who wrote in a letter to Schelling in 1801, "There is no special... realism or philosophy of nature, or anything similar, no truth there, as it were; instead there is in general only One Science, and this is the *Wissenschaftslehre*" (quoted, p. 71).

[17] In contrast with Fichte, Schelling held that it was the "objective [of the philosophy of nature] to draw the subjective from the objective;" and the task of transcendental philosophy was to work "only in the opposite direction" (p. 73). "Drawing the subjective from the objective," we look for an explanation of the subjective within nature, which seems very naturalistic indeed. Going in the opposite direction, we would seek to explain our (true) representation of nature, on the basis of the "subjective." We want to understand how knowing arises, how it is possible. Notice too Schelling's substitution of the Deweyan sounding "intelligence" for the Fichtean or Kantian "I" (or transcendental ego) in the opening paragraphs of the introduction to his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800).

We can call the quintessence of everything merely objective in our knowledge *Nature*; the quintessence of everything subjective, on the other hand, is called the "I," or intelligence. The two concepts are set in opposition to one another. Intelligence is originally thought as the merely representing, Nature as the merely representable, the one as the conscious, the latter as without consciousness. There is, however, in all knowing a necessary interpenetrating meeting of both (of the conscious and of the in-itself non-conscious); the task is: to account for this coincidence.

The word translated is "*Intelligenz*." Schelling's opening opposition between the objective and the subjective thus becomes the contrast between "nature" on the one side and "intelligence" on the other. Schelling sets the problems to be addressed in his "philosophy of identity," as developmental problems: to explain how intelligence develops in nature and equally to explain how intelligence comes to represent the world. The suggestion is, of course, that these are somehow two sides of the same coin. It is important to note that transcendental idealism is only part of Schelling's philosophy. Rejecting any ultimate dualism, it must be possible, not only that nature should become intelligent, but also that intelligence can be "naturalized" ³/₄ knowing must be understandable as a natural process.

[18] In chapter 5, "The Divine All, and the Negativity of things," Wetz devotes one section to a discussion of "The Powerlessness and Super-power of the Transient," and included here the reader finds some discussion of the purported emptiness of Schelling's identity of the object and subject. The problem centers on the implausibility of taking "nature, history and art" as "mere forms of appearance of the absolute" (p. 130) in contrast with developments of it. What seems certain is that Schelling modified or developed his philosophy of identity. He complained of misinterpretations and distortion regarding his principle of identity (as indifference): "In the 'groundless' or the 'indifferent' there is indeed no personality; but is the point of origin the whole?" (See Schelling in Gutmann's translation of the *Freiheitsschrift*, p. 93.) Schelling takes the view that the origin of universal developmental process are identical and not the products of development, and he opposes this conception to any "dualistic" philosophy, "according to which there is assumed to be an evil basic being..." (*ibid.*). The point is suggestive of a jumping-off place for the themes of continuity, growth, and meliorism in American philosophy from Emerson through Peirce, James, and Dewey, though as Wetz emphasizes, later Schelling seems more existentialist than meliorist. That, surely, is a difference that makes a difference.

[19] Wetz sees Schelling as concerned, early on (1802-1804), with the reality of finitude as a problem, mentioning Schelling's doubts on "the assumed status as appearances of finite things" (p. 131). Interpreting Schelling, Wetz says, "Transience (*Vergänglichkeit*, 'fleetingness,' perhaps 'precariousness') of all things, and evil, the absurd, the darkness of the world are too powerful, and engaging of our efforts, to count as mere appearance" (p. 131). The theme has persisted in all critical approaches to Absolute Idealism. In consequence of this emphasis, Schelling came to focus more and more on the relation of the finite to the infinite Absolute. Wetz's story of this quest continues in chapter 6, "The Blind Will and the Darkness of 'Matter'," and in his conclusion.

[20] Returning to themes of the introductory first chapter, Wetz remarks there that Schelling was equally "system builder" and a "problem oriented thinker" (p. 7), and doubtlessly, the complexity of Schelling's thought partly explains Peirce's attraction and admiration, even knowing of Peirce's aversion to philosophy oriented to the seminary. "If one wanted to characterize Schelling in a few words, one would have to say," that "he had a speculative mind, with a highly developed sense for reality" (p. 8). Similarly, Peirce once wrote, in a letter to William James, acknowledging a debt to Schelling, that "one thing I admire about him is his freedom from the trammels of system,

and his holding himself uncommitted to any previous utterance." In his complexity, Schelling's work resembles that of Peirce himself, as Peirce put it, "in that he is like a scientific man."

[21] One is reminded of Emerson's somewhat similar and quasi-fallibilistic attitude, according to which "foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds," those "adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines" ("Self-Reliance," 1841). As Stephan Whicher remarked, Emerson's "guiding conviction" was "that the unfettered action of the whole mind bears truth as naturally as a tree bears fruit," which led him to "a radically organic method of thought whose modernity is still not adequately recognized;" and his apparent lack of system is thus the consequence of his refusal "to violate his living multiplicity with an imposed unity" (Whicher 1957, xviii). As with Peirce, and apparently Schelling too, system may emerge from the "living multiplicity" but it is not to be imposed by logical artifice.

[22] What is perhaps an even more significant relation arises from Emerson's reference to Schelling in connection with the themes of freedom and fate. Schelling is mentioned in Emerson's Essay "Fate" (1860). "I find," he says, "the coincidence of the extremes of eastern and western speculation in the daring statement of Schelling, 'there is in every man a certain feeling, that he has been what he is from all eternity, and by no means became such in time.' To say it less sublimely,—in the history of the individual is always an account of his condition, and he knows himself to be a party to his present estate" (Emerson 1860, "Fate," p. 352) The corresponding passage in Schelling *Freiheitsschrift*, reads as follows:

In original creation, as has been shown, man is an undetermined entity (which may be mythologically presented as a condition antecedent to his life, a state of innocence and of initial bliss). He alone can determine himself. But this determination cannot occur in time; it occurs outside of time altogether and hence it coincides with the first creation even though as an act differentiated from it. Man, even though born in time, is nonetheless a creature of creation's beginning (the centrum). The act which determines man's life in time does not itself belong in time but in eternity. Moreover, it does not proceed life in time but occurs throughout time (untouched by it) as an act eternal by its own nature. Through it man's life extends to the beginning of creation, since by means of it he is also more than creature, free and himself eternally beginning. Though this idea may seem beyond the grasp of common ways of thought, there is in every man a feeling which is in accord with it, as if each man felt that he has been what he is from all eternity... (Schelling, 1809, in Gutmann, 1936, p. 64).

Freedom here is viewed as a consequence of a original self-determination, a kind of derivative co-creation, consequence of God's creation of man. This takes place outside of time, though we view the consequence in time. Whatever interaction there may be in Schelling's scheme, freedom is to be thought of as a matter of something like authentic "unwinding" of the original self-determination. The idea is that freedom consists in a kind of authenticity, expressing the original self-determination. The ideal is to be something in particular, as contrasted with the thought that what we most truly are, and want to be, may arise from our accidental interactions. In contrast to Emerson's departure from Schelling, Baumgartner and Korten interpret the passage from Schelling's *Freiheitsschrift* as a matter "of a predestination through one's own will, from eternity" (p. 125).

[23] The following Emersonian treatment of fate and freedom or creativity may fairly be viewed as partly reacting to Schelling's treatments of related themes. "The Circumstance is Nature," says Emerson, "Nature is, what you may do." Of course, accounting what we may do also implies limitations: "There is much you may not." In consequence, "We have two things,—the circumstance, and the life," (corresponding in degree to Schelling's "Nature" and "Intelligence").

Emersonian self-reliance learned to take circumstances into consideration: "Once we thought, positive power was all. Now we learn, that negative power, or circumstance, is half " (Emerson, "Fate"). "If the light come to our eyes, we see; else not," Emerson argues, connecting circumstances with human powers. "And if truth come to our mind, we suddenly expand to its dimensions, as if we grew to worlds. We are as lawgivers; we speak for Nature; we prophesy and divine" (Emerson, "Fate").

[24] Take away the poetic language, and we have surely lost something of Emerson's power as a writer, yet put in plainer words, Emerson says here that we attain new powers over nature through our insights and understanding of it. Circumstances only control so long as we do not understand our own circumstances as relevant to what we try to do. Thus for Emerson, freedom is not due to an original self-determination, it is far more a matter of thought which allows us to master the circumstances, at any given time. Our powers expand with our understanding of the world around us.

[25] To see an approach to a similar point in Schelling, we must consider that freedom belongs to spirit and necessity to nature, in both Kant and in Spinoza. Yet, the identity philosophy tells us that there is an inner connection between spirit and nature. In Spinoza's system, human freedom is an illusion, though God or Substance is free in the sense of being self-determined. Still, of course, all finite modes are determined as part of the whole. If we are to avoid Spinoza's determinism and Kant's restriction of freedom to the noumenal realm, then such a development requires some new reconciliation of necessity and freedom. Freedom must arise in nature, in such a way that what we are able to do has some (relative) independent of circumstances, nature, God, or the Absolute. It was this problem in Schelling which Emerson responded to, in his own distinctive way. It is as though Schelling makes the Spinozistic "modes" of the one substance into original co-creating and self-determining entities. Freedom for Schelling is a matter of a distinctive origin. Emerson's concept places freedom in self-development, not something fully determined by origins. Authenticity appears to contrast with melioration. "Fate involves the melioration. No statement of the Universe can have any soundness, which does not admit its ascending effort," wrote Emerson (1860, p. 365).

[26] Thomas Carlyle's Schellingsque "Signs of the Times" (1829) with its criticism of contemporary culture as captured by "mechanical principles," "atheism," and "fatalism," would have underscored the Emersonian conviction that "our happiness depends on the mind which is within us, and not on the circumstances" (Carlyle, 1829). Though as transformed by Emerson, this theme need not strike us as suggesting stoic or epicurean withdraw. On the contrary, some recent interpretations of Emerson see his late work, *The Conduct of Life* (1860) in particular, as leading up to the pragmatist focus on action. (Cf. Robinson 1993).

[27] Emerson argued as follows in a Lecture of 1838, "if I have come into the port of some pretending dogmatism, some new church or old church, some Schelling or Cousin, I have died to all use of these new events," and if anyone does so, "He has just foreclosed his freedom, locked himself up and given the key to another to keep" (Emerson, "The School"). Thus, Emerson's explanation of the riddle of the sphinx is that those who cannot answer the demands of facts by a superior wisdom are bound to "serve them." But if we are true to our "higher instincts," we refuse the dominion of facts; and seeing the principle, "the facts fall aptly and supple into their places" (*ibid.*).

[28] Similar points abound in the pragmatist tradition, since Emerson's answer to the riddle is essentially melioristic. Emerson's point seems to be reflected in Peirce's metaphysical account of the interaction of mind and matter:

It may be well here to reflect that if matter has no existence except as a specialization of mind, it follows that whatever affects matter according to regular laws is itself matter. But all mind is directly or indirectly connected with all matter, and acts in a more or less regular way; so that all mind more or less partakes of the nature of matter (CP 6.268).

According to Peirce, matter is "a specialization of mind," since it is mind hidebound with "habitual" regularity. (It seems we might equally say that mind is matter which has attained to flexibility, in the taking up of habits.) Mind in the normal sense "affects matter according to regular laws," which is to say, among much else, that it gives rise to new regularities in nature, dependent on the recognition of conditioning factors. That "all mind" "partakes of the nature of matter," means that mind itself tends to take up habits. Peirce continues:

Hence, it would be a mistake to conceive of the psychical and the physical aspects of matter as two aspects absolutely distinct (*ibid.*).

Rather than being two aspects, or "attributes" of some underlying reality, mind and matter are developmentally related in the ways that spontaneity and regularity are related. It is within the context of particular laws or regularities that chance or coincidental events normally arise, yet once we understand the conditions which influence the coincidental events, we are able to regulate what had been accidental and create new regularities. "Viewing a thing from the outside, considering its relations of action and reaction with other things, it appears as matter. Viewing it from the inside, looking at its immediate character as feeling, it appears as consciousness." "Viewing from the inside" seems to mean "viewing," that is, encountering things from our own perspectives and in terms of our own funded experience, and this, being more or less unique, gives rise to new coincidences in interaction with a wider world: feeling or consciousness. But what has happened once can be made to happen again. Peirce appears to count himself as an idealist chiefly because chance is "First," which, of course, involves no denial of the reality of matter or physical regularity. (See also Baumgartner and Korten who make a further point relevant to Peirce and Schelling's metaphysics, viz., the latter's "largely unrecognized anticipation of themes such as those of a 'original singularity,' and 'the big bang'..." p. 225.)

[29] Peirce continues his "idealist" treatment of matter:

These two views are combined when we remember that mechanical laws are nothing but acquired habits, like all the regularities of mind, including the tendency to take habits, itself; and that this action of habit is nothing but generalization, and generalization is nothing but the spreading of feelings (*ibid.*).

Peircean intelligence works by the acquisition of habits which allow us to control initial conditions or situations in such a way as to reproduce heretofore chance or accidental events, transforming them into new regularities; and one central element of Peirce's answer to the riddle of the sphinx can be put in one characteristic word, consistent with Emerson's answer: inquiry.

[30] Dewey transforms the point into a plea for communication, as required for inquiry. In *Experience and Nature*, he says "Of all affairs, communication is the most wonderful. That things should be able to pass from the plane of external pushing and pulling to that of revealing themselves to man, and thereby to themselves; and that the fruit of communication should be participation, sharing, is a wonder by the side of which transubstantiation pales." Here we need to see the social environment of inquiry as a crucial aspect of the general circumstances. This "revealing of things" in communication also promises new powers:

When communication occurs, all natural events are subject to reconsideration and revision; ... Events turn into objects, things with a meaning. ... Brute efficiencies and inarticulate consummations as soon as they can be spoken of are liberated from local and accidental contexts, and are eager for naturalization in any non- insulated, communicating, part of the world" (Dewey, L. W. 1, p. 132).

This "naturalization" of "inarticulate consummations," things heretofore only enjoyed and not understood, "liberates" them from "accidental contexts," and what had been merely accidental and precarious becomes subject to control and regularization as a common good.

[31] These points from Emerson, Peirce, and Dewey certainly bear comparison to Schelling's philosophy of history, which goes through three stages, corresponding to Fichte's triadic logic: 1) a primitive stage dominated by fate, 2) a reaction against this which emphasizes the voluntary and active, and 3) a third stage in which a synthesis will occur to balance life in a blending of the actual and the ideal (Cf. Reese 1980, p. 511). Correspondingly in Schelling's account of "the three epochs of self-consciousness," "there is first a stage of sensation, second a stage of self-feeling, and finally a stage of reflection" (p. 76). The three stages correspond roughly to the Peircean categories.

[32] Wetz allows that the "the question of the significance of Schelling for contemporary philosophy is extremely difficult to answer" (p. 12), and he is content to wait and see as contemporary explorations go on. Nor is he silent about the defects often attributed to similar philosophical systems. He stipulates that "the speculative systems of the past never accorded with reality," instead they contained "the dangers of over simplifying complexities and unifying diversity in a violent manner" (*ibid.*) Beyond that, these systems also made false promises of "absolute conclusiveness" and "apodictic certainty," and "Schelling failed to resist this seduction as well" (*ibid.*). These points of critical perspective should help make the exploration of Schelling's thought even more inviting from the standpoint of the pluralism and fallibilism of the pragmatist tradition.

[33] Wetz follows von Hartmann and Walter Schultz in rejecting the traditional picture of Schelling as a transitional figure between Kant and Fichte on the one side and leading on to Hegel. Instead he places Schelling between Hegel and Schopenhauer, "at the height of German idealism" (p. 237). "Hegel is a pure panlogist whose dissolves all being and willing into reason, beyond which there is nothing; Schopenhauer on the contrary is a radical voluntarist, for whom reason and thinking are only powerless, marginal appearances of a spiritless, compulsive will, representing the entire reality of the world. In the middle, between the two stands the late Schelling" (p. 237). Generally, contemporary approaches to Schelling also puts him closer to the emphasis on thought and action in the pragmatist tradition. (Cf. Royce on Schelling in Royce 1919, 115ff.)

[34] Schelling's background role first and chiefly enters American philosophy through Emerson and later through Peirce. It is past on from there, leastwise as Emersonian meliorism, to William James, and to Dewey. We tend to think of these three founding figures of the pragmatist tradition as standing in a temporal order: Peirce, James, Dewey. Yet, they were contemporaries until the death of James (1910) and Peirce (1917), all working out their various versions of pragmatism, say, from the mid-1890's to the time of James's death in 1910. (See, in this connection James's late criticism of the "monistic type of *all-einheit*," in contrast with his pluralistic conception of "synechism," James 1909, p. 325). There is good reason to think that Schelling's work is a common background influence, along with that of the other German idealists, some of whom have over-shadowed Schelling. This background needs to be attended to in some depth, since it

mostly worked without explicit references. Wetz's book helps by way of an introduction to Schelling and to new developments in Schelling scholarship.

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