I. Introduction:

The aim of my thesis is mainly to give a critical exposition of Schelling's System of Transcendental Idealism. While we seem to know a lot more of Kant and Hegel, and Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* has also been considerably dealt with, Schelling's philosophical systems have remained comparatively obscure, and yet it seems to me reasonable to contend not only that without his transcendental philosophy there would remain a chasm between Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* and Hegel's stupendous *Phenomenology of Spirit*, but also that traits of his transcendentalism are remarkably present in the philosophies of our century.

We shall begin with an exposition of Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism*, and this will be followed by a critical discussion where we shall raise the following issues:

(A) What is involved in the notion of transcendental philosophy itself?

(b) What is Schelling's philosophic standpoint?

Then we shall go on to explain some of the important notions in his *Transcendental Idealism* itself. And we shall end our discussion with a comparative study of Schelling's *Idealism* with Fichte's philosophy with a purpose to ask, how far the latter influenced the former.

II. Biographical Notes:

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling was born at Leonberg in the Duchy of Württemberg on the 27th January, 1775. During the years 1790 - 95 he attended the seminary at Tübingen, where he
studied the philosophies of Kant and Fichte. It is here that he met the tragic-lyric poet Hölderlin and philosopher Hegel. Schelling, it is known, shared a study with them. Schelling's extraordinary genius found its expression in his early writings. At seventeen he published a dissertation on "Fall of Man" and a year later an essay on "Religious Myth". His first philosophical paper, "Über die Möglichkeit einer Form der Philosophie überhaupt" was written in 1794, when he was only nineteen. After his Tübingen seminary he went over to Leipzig as a tutor and there he spent the years 1796–98. His important articles in these years were, "Vom Ich als Prinzip der Philosophie", 1795; "Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kritizismus", 1795; "Abhandlungen zur Erläuterungen des Idealismus der Wissenschaftslehre", 1796/97; "Aus der Allgemeine Übersicht der neuesten philosophischen Literatur", A. "Über die Preisfrage der Berliner Akademic für 1795", 1797; B. "Über die Frage, ob eine Philosophie der Erfahrung, insbesondere ob eine Philosophie der Geschichte möglich sei", 1798; "Neue Deduktion der Naturrechts", 1796; "Einleitung zu einer Philosophie der Natur", 1797; "Über Offenbarung und Volksunterricht", 1798; "Rezension von Schloffers Schreiben", 1798.

In the year 1798 Schelling was called to Jena, where the chair of the professor was given him. During his professorship at Jena Schelling mainly devoted his time to writing his two significant works, Philosophy of Nature and System of Transcendental Idealism. We may add here a list of his writings after he had come to Jena in the summer of 1798; Erster Entwurf
The System of Transcendental Idealism was completed in January 1800, with its foreword written in the same year and it was published at Tübingen by I.G.Cotta.

It was in Jena that Schelling had met the brilliant wife of August Wilhelm Schlegel, Caroline nee' Michaelis (1763-1809), also the former widow of Böhmer. Schelling later married Caroline and his letters to her have been edited by G.Waitz and published in 1871 entitled as "Karoline".

Schelling became professor at Würzburg during the years 1803-1806, that is after his stay in Jena. And thereafter he lived in München for fourteen years, then seven years in Erlangen, and he returned to München again where he spent another fourteen years.

During these later years Schelling had achieved much fame. He became the member of the Academy of Sciences. In 1807 he delivered on King's birthday one of his significant addresses, "The Relation of the Plastic Arts to Nature" and this earned him the position of General Secretary of the Academy of the Plastic Arts.

Caroline died in 1809 and Schelling married again Pauline Gotter in 1812.

We should also mention some of the less important writings of Schelling. Of them two treatises are significant,
"Darlegung des wahren Verhältnisses der Naturphilosophie zu der verbesserten Fichteschen Lehre" in 1806, in which he charged Fichte with plagiarism. The other is "Denkmal der Schrift von den Göttlichen Dingen des Herrn Jacobi -- ", 1812, where he reviewed Jacobi's views. We may also note that Schelling's writings were appearing in these journals; Zeitschrift für spekulative Physik in 1800, Kritisches Journal der Philosophie, where he was writing with Hegel during 1802-03, Jahrbücher der Medizin als Wissenschaft, where he was writing with Marcus during 1806-08. In 1813 he was writing in Allgemeine Zeitschrift von Deutschen für Deutsche.

Schelling in his later life was called to the Berlin Academy (1841) by Friedrich Wilhelm IV. There he lectured on Mythology and Revelation. But he declined from lecturing when his hearers printed his notes, which were taken from his lecture without his consent.

Career of this philosophic genius came to its end in 1854. Schelling had died on the 20th August in Bad Ragaz in Switzerland and two years later his collected works began to be published and it continued till 1861. It was his son E.A. Schelling who had undertaken the stupendous task of publishing his works in fourteen volumes during 1856-61.

III. Classification of Schelling's philosophic works:

It is important for us that we devote ourselves to the study of Schelling's works in brief. Schelling's philosophical career may be divided into four periods. This classification is not to be taken too seriously, for it is entirely arbitrary and one could
avoid it altogether and yet study Schelling's writings. We need some sort of classification, for this will help us to arrange conveniently Schelling's prolific writings and also to study them as related to each other. It may also help us to say that it is one and the same system that emerges through his various writings at different times of his life. Our classification may be taken as follows:

The early writings of Schelling.
The period of Philosophy of Nature.
The period of Transcendental Idealism.
The period of System of Identity.

We shall discuss in brief Schelling's other writings only in so far as they may be taken as related to his Transcendental Idealism.

Following remarks may be in order before we deal with Schelling's works.

We shall take Schelling's early writings as constituting the first phase of his philosophic career. We are interested in these writings only in so far as they may be seen as related to the Transcendental Idealism. We may further add that Fichtean ideas and methods are prominent in Schelling's early writings. He may be said to write under an influence of the ideas and methods of the Wissenschaftslehre.

After his early writings Schelling took an interest in the Philosophy of Nature. This system may be looked upon as counter-balancing the System of Transcendental Idealism in that it is meant to adopt an approach to its 'problems' opposite that of the Transcendental Idealism. Schelling calls the former the philosophy of the objective, and the latter the philosophy of the
subjective. By this we may understand that the Philosophy of Nature deals with the possibility of an outer nature and the Transcendental Idealism deals with the possibility of our conscious activities. Thus the object as such or nature is the central notion in the Philosophy of Nature, and the central notion in the Transcendental Idealism is the notion of an absolute subject.

It is arguable to say that although the two systems have different problems to deal with, yet they supplement each other in that we do not fully appreciate Schelling's subjective philosophy if we have not dealt with the objective philosophy. It is in the Philosophy of Nature that Schelling will be found to propound notions which lead us up to the System of Transcendental Idealism.

As regards the System of Transcendental Idealism itself we shall not discuss it here at any length for we intend giving a complete exposition of it.

Our interest in the System of Identity lies in this, that it truly combines the Philosophy of Nature and the Transcendental Idealism. These two systems, says Schelling, conflict with each others' standpoint and their synthesis is possible in a higher philosophy, which is the System of Identity. If nature and intelligence should combine, if conscious and the unconscious should join, a deeper identity must be presumed as underlying the two. This is what Schelling proposes to show in his System of Identity.

It is a matter of considerable interest to see also how other philosophers have classified Schelling's works and
studied them accordingly. We may refer to Windelband's classification of Schelling's works in his A History of Philosophy and Metzger's classification of it in his Die Epochen der Schellingschen Philosophie.

Windelband has not given importance to Schelling's early writings as constituting a distinct period of his philosophical career. He has accepted the Philosophy of Nature as constituting the first period of Schelling's independent philosophical development. Windelband also regards Schelling's System of Identity as a system of absolute Idealism. Between the first period of Philosophy of Nature and the period of absolute Idealism, Windelband recognises another period which he calls the epoch of aesthetic Idealism. This includes Schelling's System of Transcendental Idealism and the philosophy of Art. He adds two more periods to classify Schelling's other writings. We need not refer to them.1

We may now turn to Metzger's classification of Schelling's works. Metzger takes into account Schelling's philosophical works during the years 1795 to 1802; and he does not include System of Identity in his study of Schelling. He discusses, in what he calls the erste Epoche, Schelling's papers "Vom Ich" and the "Philosophischen Briefe". Metzger's zweite Epoche is constituted of the paper "Allgemeine Übersicht des neuesten Literatur", published in philosophical journals and which later came to be known as "Abhandlungen zur Erläuterungen des Idealismus der Wissenschaftslehre", and the papers "Ideen einer Philosophie

We do not propose to deal with these writings in Metzger's or Windelband's manner of discussion. These scholars have studied Schelling in a way of their own which is entirely different from what we propose to do. Our intention is to give a critical exposition of Schelling's System of Transcendental Idealism, and we are interested in his other writings only in so far as they are in some way or other related to the Transcendental Idealism. For our purpose therefore our own classification is fit and convenient.

**IV. Schelling's Early Writings:**

The most important of Schelling's early writings are these:

(a) "Vom Ich als Prinzip der Philosophie oder das Unbedingte im Menschlichen Wissen".

(b) "Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kritizismus".

(c) "Abhandlungen zur Erläuterungen des Idealismus der Wissenschaftslehre".

Although there are other writings of Schelling during this period yet we may choose to discuss only these three papers, for they are relevant to our study of the Transcendental Idealism. At the end of our discussion of these papers we shall find that the ideas contained in them largely anticipate those of the Transcendental Idealism.
We shall first deal with the paper "Vom Ich", for in it Schelling introduces the central notion of his thought, that is the notion of the ego; and he will also give us some rough idea of its nature and character.

Schelling's argument in this paper is in brief as follows; since every mode of knowledge gives us knowledge of something real, there must be an Urgrund of all reality. There must be a final point of reality to which everything else is related and from which the form and content of knowledge should arise, that is, which would separate the elements, and which again describes the entire circle of the continued effect in the universe of knowledge. Or there must be something in which and through which everything that is, attains existence, everything that is thought of, attains reality, and the thought itself attains the form of unity. This something or Etwas, as Schelling calls it, must be the completeness of the entire system of knowledge; it must be, he says, above all, beyond where thought ultimately reaches. Schelling in other words, imagines that there is a basic ground of all reality.

1. "Es muß einen Punkt der Realität geben, an dem alles hängt, von dem aller Bestand und alle Form unser Wissens ausgeht, der die Elemente scheidet und jedem den Kreis seiner fortgehenden Wirkung in Universum des Wissens beschreibt.

Es muß etwas geben, in dem und durch welches alles, was da ist, zum Dasein, alles, was gedacht wird, zur Realität, und das Denken selbst zur Form der Einheit und Unwandelbarkeit gelangt."
By this Urgrund is meant knowledge in general, which cannot be derived through any other knowledge but that all other knowledge derives from it.

Schelling then goes on to argue that this fundamental or final knowledge must not look for its ground in something else; it is not only independent of something higher than itself but it must be conceived as what is the highest, or the principle of knowledge.

Schelling thus is inclined to believe in some sort of fundamental knowledge or first knowledge; and this is what he seems to be calling the Urgrund.

Dieses Etwas... müßte das Vollendende im ganzen System des menschlichen Wissens sein, es müßte überall, wo unser letztes Denken und Erkennen noch hinreicht ---- im ganzen... unseres Wissens ---- zugleich als Urgrund aller Realität herrschen". (Schelling, Werke-I, edited by M. Schröter, München: C.H. Beck, 1958, p. 86)

1. "Gibt es überhaupt ein Wissen, so muß es ein Wissen geben, in dem ich nicht wieder durch ein anderes Wissen gelange; und durch welches allein alles andere Wissen Wissen ist". (Ibid., p.86)

2. Dieses Letzte im menschlichen Wissen kann also seinem Realgrund nicht wieder in etwas anderem suchen müssen, es ist nicht nur selbst unabhängig von irgend etwas Höherem, sondern, da unser Wissen nur von der Folge zum Grund aufsteigt und umgekehrt vom Grund zur Folge fortschreitet, muß auch das, was das Höchste und für uns Prinzip alles Erkennens ist". (Ibid., p.87)
The Urgrund itself, Schelling goes on to say, cannot be conditioned by any other knowledge save itself. It must be seen as 'das Höchste' or the highest, it must necessarily be also the unconditioned. A knowledge which is attained through another knowledge is a conditioned knowledge. The series of knowledge goes from one conditioned knowledge to another, and one should think that this series never ends which would imply an infinite regress; or, to avoid this one should assume what Schelling calls the final point of knowledge which is not merely unconditioned but also unconditionable.

We may ask: what is the unconditioned in knowledge.
Do we know, the object immediately or is it the subject, i.e., we ourselves that we know first and our knowledge of object is only mediated?

This truly is a problem of immense philosophical interest. We should remember that there is always the possibility of the philosophical theory that our knowledge of objects is direct and immediate. We may for the present leave this issue aside and also the other subsidiary issues like, is it the object in itself that is immediately known to us or is it only the sense-data that we know.

1. Ein Wissen, zu dem ich nur durch ein anderes Wissen gelangen kann; heiße ich ein bedingtes Wissen. Die Kette unseres Wissens geht von einem Bedingten zum anderen; entweder muß nun das Ganze keine Haltung haben, oder man muß glauben können, daß es so ins Unendliche fortgehe, oder es muß irgend einen letzten Punkt geben, an dem das Ganze hängt, der aber eben deswegen allem, was noch in die Sphäre des Bedingten fällt, in Rücksicht auf das Princip seines Seins geradezu entgegengesetzt, d.h. nicht nur unbedingt, sondern schlechthin unbedingbar sein muß". (Ibid., pp.87,88).
immediately, and we may provisionally accept Schelling's Idealist point of view, viz., that our first knowledge is of the subject. For Schelling says that the unconditioned should realize itself through itself, the principle of its being and thought coincide. To arrive at the being of object, Schelling points out, we should go through the notion of the object.  

It is, therefore, the subject which Schelling regards as the genuinely unconditioned. It is also true that if an unconditioned Urgrund of knowledge is conceivable at all it must be represented as an absolute subject. Schelling further calls it the ego. The unconditioned for Schelling could neither be the thing itself nor what can become the thing, but is only the absolute ego which can never become the object.

Schelling thus introduces to us the central notion of his system, viz., that of the ego or an absolute as the unconditioned Urgrund of all reality.


2. "Das Unbedingte kann also weder im Ding überhaupt, noch auch in dem was zum Ding werden kann, im Subjekt, also nur in dem was gar kein Ding werden kann, d.h. wenn es ein absolutes ICH gibt, nur im absoluten Ich liegen. ................

Daß es ein absolutes Ich gebe, das läßt sich schlechterdings nicht objektiv, ........ " (Ibid. pp. 90, 91).
Now we may turn to show what the ego’s absoluteness consists in.

(a) Schelling argues that for the unconditioned, the principle of its being and the principle of its thought should coincide. It is merely because it is, and it is thought, merely because it is thought. The Absolute can be given only through the Absolute alone.

(b) The ego has a being, Schelling tells us, which precedes all thought and representations. It is, says Schelling, while it would be thought, and it would be thought because it is. It is, because it thinks of itself, and it thinks of itself, because it is. It produces itself through its own thought.

We may note further that Schelling has not only introduced to us the notion of the ego and has characterised it as the absolute subject or Urgrund of all reality but he will also give us some rough idea of its nature. What he now says, therefore, is this:

1. (a) "Beim Unbedingten muß das Prinzip seines Seins und das Prinzip seines Denkens zusammenfallen. Es ist, bloß weil es ist, es wird gedacht, bloß weil es gedacht wird. Das Absolute kann nur durch das Absolute gegeben sein".

(b) "Mein Ich enthält ein Sein, das allem Denken und Vorstellen vorhergeht. Es ist, indem es gedacht wird, und es wird gedacht, weil es ist; deswegen, weil es nur insofern ist und nur insofern gedacht wird, als es sich selbst denkt. Es ist also, weil es nur selbst denkt, und es denkt sich nur selbst, weil es ist. Es bringt sich durch sein Denken selbst – aus absoluter Causalität hervor". (Ibid., p.91).
(a) The essence of the ego is freedom, that is, it is not conceivable as anything other than the absolute ego.  

(b) The ego cannot be given through any notion. For the notions are of objects whose knowledge is thus conditioned. The ego determines itself as such in intellectual intuition.  

(c) The ego is a unity. If it were multiplicity it would divide itself through outer reality and not through itself. It would then be conditioned through all the multiple individuals. Thus Schelling argues to say that the ego is unity.  

(d) The ego further contains all being and all reality, that is all reality is determined through its unconditionality.  

1. (a) "Das Wesen des Ichs ist Freiheit, d.h. es ist nicht anders denkbar, denn nur insofern es aus absoluter Selbstmacht sich, nicht als irgend Etwas, sondern als bloßes Ich setzt." (Ibid., p.103)  

2. (b) "Das Ich kann durch keinen bloßen Begriff gegeben sein. Denn Begriffe sind nur in der Sphäre des Bedingten nur von Objekten möglich................. Das Ich also ist für sich selbst als bloßes Ich in intellektualer Anschauung bestimmt". (Ibid., p.105)  

3. (c) "Das Ich ist schlechthin Einheit. Denn, wäre es Vielheit, so wäre es nicht durch sein bloßes Sein, sondern durch die Wirklichkeit seiner Theile"................. "Wo Unbedingtheit durch Freiheit bestimmt, ist Ich". (Ibid., p.106)  

4. (d) "Das Ich enthält alles Sein, alle Realität, außerhalb des Ichs geben, so würde sie mit der im Ich gesetzten entweder übereinstimmen oder nicht. Nun ist alle Realität des Ichs bestimmt durch seine Unbedingtheit", (Ibid., p.110)
(e) If the ego is said to contain all reality, argues Schelling, then it may be taken as infinite.1

(f) The ego may be seen as what includes all reality which it contains and which are mere accidents of it. There is no reality outside the ego.2

We should look upon these remarks as important in regard to the notion of the ego. It now remains for us to consider what is meant by them. The indications clearly are that Schelling conceives of an absolute unity and regards it as the principle of all knowledge. He also suggests that if we must have knowledge of the ego it must be quite different from our ordinary experience of objects. Object, Schelling tells us, is apprehended in sense-intuition, while the ego is known in an intellectual intuition.3 Our knowledge of the ego therefore is possible in an intellectual intuition. And only if it is intuited, is it then seen in its pure being.

1. (e) "Enthält das Ich alle Realität, so ist es unendlich". (Ibid.,p.116)

2. (f) "Also ist alles im Ich. — Ohne Realität ist nichts, nun ist keine Realität, außer dem Ich, also ist, nichts außer dem Ich. Ist das Ich die einzige Substanz, so ist alles, bloßes Accidens des Ichs". (Ibid.,pp.116,117)

3. "Wo Objekt ist, da ist sinnliche Anschauung, und umgekehrt. Wo also kein Objekt ist, d.i.im absoluten Ich, da ist keine sinnliche Anschauung, also entweder gar keine, oder intellektuelle Anschauung". (Ibid.,p.105). "We propose to deal with Schelling's notion of intellectual intuition later on. For this, see p. 197 f."
We may thus sum up by saying that Schelling, in his paper "Vom Ich", has introduced to us a principle of knowledge where thought and being unconditionally unite. Once we have arrived at the fact, that there is an Urgrund of reality, we may then ask how is the Urgrund related to the world of objects. It amounts to our asking how is objective experience possible? Schelling goes on to deal with this in his paper "Philosophische Briefe".

(b) "Philosophische Briefe": In the paper "Philosophische Briefe" Schelling raises the problem that is of immense interest to philosophers of all ages, viz., how is the ego related to the world, how does the one enter into a relation with the many, how is the infinite related to the finite.

Let us further examine this question. Before we deal with this question itself we may ask why does the question of relating the ego to the world arise at all.

Our answer to this lies in this that Schelling introduces to us in his papers "Vom Ich" and the "Philosophische Briefe" problems that seem to contrast with each other. In the former he deals with the notion of the ego as absolute and unconditioned, in the latter he takes up the problem of the real being of the world or Dasein der Welt. For this reason Metzger looks upon Schelling as having adopted two different points of view in these two papers. Metzger also suggests that Schelling in his paper "Vom Ich" may be regarded as entertaining the ideas of a monist, and that he may be said to adopt in the "Philosophische Briefe" the views of a pluralist. In the former the
Absolute has been characterised by Schelling as the unity and the totality of reality and now he feels that it ought to be characterised in an opposite way, viz., as phenomenality or multiplicity. And Schelling means to say at the end that all "Dasein" of objects, separate and distinct as they are, may be regarded as derived from the being of the Absolute.

If we assume that the two worlds are separate, we may argue that there seems to be no transition from one to the other, from the infinite to the finite, from the eternal to the temporal. And we are justified if we ask, how are the two worlds related. Schelling therefore asks, how could the Absolute depart from itself and hold itself in opposition to a world.  

Metzger's remarks are important. He further argues that to ask this involves us in raising a basic metaphysical issue. Schelling, he says, raises here not a logical problem, viz., how many predicates coordinate with one subject, but a metaphysical one, viz., how one becomes many. This is where we may notice originality in Schelling's philosophy of 1795. Metzger rightly points out that although Kant's problem, 'how is synthetic judgments a priori possible?'

1. Metzger, Die Epochen der Schellingschen Philosophie von 1795 bis 1802, Heidelberg, 1911, pp.33,34.
2. "...wie kommt das absolute Ich dazu, aus sich selbst herausgehen und sich ein Nicht-Ich schlechthin entgegenzusetzen?" (Schelling, Werke I, p.99).
is taken over by Schelling, yet he formulates it as a speculative problem, viz., 'how does the Absolute leave itself, and posit what contradicts it, or enter into relation with an outer world?'

We have thus got the conditions under which we ask 'how is the ego related to the world?', and our task will be to deal with the problem itself.

Schelling regards this relation as one of opposition. We are to ask, what is involved in this idea of opposition.

To say that the ego and the world are related in that they oppose each other, entails that the ego enters into a relation with the world of objects in so far as it limits itself as an outside world which in its turn opposes it. Thus the one becomes many or the many arise out of the one. If we conceive an opposition between the world of objects and the absolute subject it must be taken as due merely to the subject's self-limitation.

The relation of opposition therefore involves this, that in its opposition Schelling regards the world as not infinitely set apart from the ego but as approximating itself to the Absolute. The finite, Schelling believes, purposes the infinite and seeks the infinite. By this is implied that, in our experience of objects we always return to ourselves. In other words, we look for the one in many.

1. Metzger, loc.cit., p.35.
The relation of opposition which holds between the ego and the world therefore involves two ideas: (1) that of the ego's self-limitation to become the world and (2) that of an approximation of the finite to the infinite. It is in this sense meaningful to say that the two spheres are related to each other.

Now it may be asked, how does the finite oppose the infinite and yet approximate itself to it. Schelling deals with this issue in his paper "Abhandlungen zur Erläuterungen des Idealismus der Wissenschaftslehre".

(c) "Abhandlungen": Schelling here tells us that there is a deeper unity underlying the finite world and the infinite.

Let us examine this position more closely. The ego has been characterised as the absolute subject and as the Urgrund of all reality. The objects that are varied and finite are said to oppose the notion of an absolute subject. And there is also a way to overcome this opposition, because it is the ego itself which Schelling believes as positing a world other than itself. This again is conceivable if we presuppose, as Schelling does, a unity underlying both worlds. If the ego and the world or the infinite and the finite or the one and the many should oppose each other and also come to a compromise, they must necessarily presuppose a unity.

What is implied by saying that a deeper unity underlies the two worlds, finite and the infinite, is this: the ego itself may be regarded as including both the world. Schelling
has told us so far that the infinite and the finite oppose each other. This contradiction is resolved, Schelling further holds, only if we regard the world as arising out of the ego. It is thus plausible that the ego includes both itself and the finite world so that the latter may arise out of the former. Schelling therefore believes that the ego apart from its being infinite also becomes finite and thus enters into a relation with the world of finite objects. Thus for Schelling it is possible that there are not two notions, the ego and the world, set apart from each other. For the life of the ego is sustained by the fact that it comes to enter into a relation with the world consisting of many definite objects. Schelling says that the ego becomes its own object by limiting itself or that it becomes finite. Thus the ego, he goes on to say, is not infinite for itself unless it were also finite. The ego, says Schelling, may be looked upon not as merely infinite, nor merely as finite, but as the original unity of the infinity and the finiteness. ¹

The important notion in this context is that

of freedom. Schelling says in the paper "Vom Ich", that the essence

¹ "... er für sich selbst Objekt, d.h. insofern er endlich wird. Also ist er weder unendlich ohne endlich zu werden, noch kann er endlich werden (für sich selbst) ohne unendlich zu sein. Er ist also keines von beiden, weder unendlich noch endlich, allein, sondern in ihm ist die ursprünglichste Vereinigung von Unendlichkeit und Endlichkeit"... (Schelling, Werke I, p.291)
(Wesen) of the ego is freedom, for the notion of freedom (as Metzger rightly shows) coincides with the notion of the unconditioned, and this freedom must be identified with absolute necessity.

Schelling himself argues that the notion of freedom implies that the ego chooses of its own to determine itself as entering into a relation with the finite world. He thus says that the ego itself is the unconditioned, so if outer reality is posited it is posited by the ego itself out of its free will.

We may now summarise the above exposition. Schelling has first of all introduced to us the notion of the ego as the ground of the possibility of all experiences. He calls it the basic ground of all reality. He has also characterised the ego as the Identity, the Freedom, the Unity, the Reality, The Uniqueness, the Infinitude, the Indivisibility, the Unchangeability, the Cause, the Power, the Eternity. Thus Metzger summed up these twelve systemless categories in terms of which we may conceive the essence of the Absolute as we find in the paper "Vom Ich". The entire transcendental dimension may be said to be included within the range of these categories.

Now it may be argued that the theory of an

1. Metzger, *loc.cit.*, p.27.
absolute subject rules out the possibility of objective experience. One may ask, how is experience of objects possible? Schelling formulates the question thus: "What is the common medium where spirit and object coincide?"¹

Schelling has solved this problem thus: the world of objects, he believes, is derived from the absolute subject or the ego. The ego thus includes at once itself and the objective world. The ego may be imagined as both subjective and objective, and the possibility of our experience of the real world rests on the fact that it may be ideally represented in us.

Schelling then goes on to say that though the real world seemingly opposes the mental or ideal world, this opposition may be overcome if we assume that the two worlds are at bottom one. Schelling thus says that the object is nothing but our knowledge itself. The object is originally nothing but a definite construction of the spirit or a definite mode of our conscious activity. The world of objects for Schelling is nothing but our original sensibility and understanding and there would be no sense in separating the object from its understanding.²

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¹ ".... was ist wohl das gemeinschaftliche Medium, in welchem... der Geist und das Objekt zusammentreffen?" (Schelling, Werke I, p.302).

² ".... das Objekt ursprünglich gar nichts anders ist als eine bestimmte Handlungsweise (Construction) unseres Geistes". (Ibid., p.346)

".... die Welt der Objekte ist selbst nichts anderes als
The main outcome of our discussion is this, that whenever we know an object, our self-awareness is always involved in it. And we may then presume that the two worlds, the objective and the subjective, should not be held apart. Although they seem to oppose each other, their opposition is only on the surface, while at bottom they are united in the absolute ego. If we assume this we could also point out that the real world may be derived from the ego itself.

These, we may note, will be Schelling's problems in the System of Transcendental Idealism where he will discuss them at a greater detail. We may therefore suggest here that the notions and problems that Schelling introduces in his early writings truly anticipate those of the Transcendental Idealism. Metzger has remarkably summed up Schelling's views so far mentioned, that the essence of this object-positing of the spirit is nature itself, and it consists in the continued activity of the infinite spirit in which the self-consciousness itself arises.

1. Metzger, loc. cit., p. 56.

unsere ursprüngliche Sinnlichkeit und unser ursprünglicher Verstand. Der Verstand setzt weder das Objekt, noch das Objekt den Verstand ..... voraus. Der Verstand ..... und das Objekt sind eins und dasselbe, und unzertrennlich.

(Ibid., pp. 333, 334).
V. The period of Philosophy of Nature:

With this view in mind we are led to Schelling's Philosophy of Nature. Before we deal with the Philosophy of Nature we should ask in what sense is philosophy of nature possible. Walsh, for instance, offers us three senses in which we may talk of a philosophy of nature. First, philosophy of nature may be said to consist in analysing and clarifying the concepts used by the natural scientist. This truly is the empiricists' idea of philosophy of nature. Secondly, philosophy of nature may be taken to mean what is concerned with setting out the a priori presuppositions of the natural sciences; it may thus be said to discuss the basic concepts and principles on which scientific knowledge is based and perhaps offer criticism and justification of these. This is how Kant understood philosophy of nature. In the third sense, philosophy of nature seems to have a far more positive role and claims to supersede the empirical study of nature by producing from its own resources necessary truths about nature. This claim, Walsh reminds us, must rest on an insight into the structure of the facts, which the sciences deal with.

Certainly the first and the second senses of philosophy of nature, as Walsh offers us, do not hold good of Schelling's view of the same. It therefore remains for us to ask if the third sense may be taken to apply to Schelling's Philosophy of Nature. This, however, is questionable and it is hard to decide here. For Schelling, as said before, introduces

to us the Philosophy of Nature as a parallel system to the Transcendental Idealism and proposes to say that the laws of understanding nature are to be derived from the intelligence itself. If Walsh means by our insight into the structure of the facts of the sciences our intelligent conception of the forms of natural processes then one'd accept Schelling's idea of a Philosophy of Nature in the third sense in which Walsh discusses its possibility.

An enquiry into Schelling's Philosophy of Nature ought to be preceded by this question; viz., is the Philosophy of Nature an part of Schelling's philosophical scheme or does it constitute a separate phase in his career. Opinions among his interpreters differ. Some consider it as essentially related to his system of Idealistic philosophy, while others regard it as a separate philosophy altogether.

Metzger, for instance, belongs to the latter group. He looks upon Schelling at this stage as a positivist. Metzger is inclined to believe that Schelling grew tired of his speculation and his study of the natural sciences in Leipzig during 1796–98 encouraged him to seek refuge in positivism.

Schulz, on the contrary, regards the Philosophy of Nature as an integral part of Schelling's entire philosophical

Philosophy of Nature and Transcendental Idealism
are most intimately connected with each other in that we do not fully appreciate what Schelling says in the Transcendental Idealism if we are not acquainted with his Philosophy of Nature.

Schelling says that if we reckon something like an object of knowledge in general it may be referred as 'nature'. This is the absolute object over and above an absolute subject (which Schelling calls intelligence). The two worlds are for Schelling the real world and the ideal world, or nature and self respectively. The problems that arise are: (a) how to reduce the real to the ideal, and (b) how to derive the real from the ideal? To deal with them Schelling introduces the Philosophy of Nature and the System of Transcendental Idealism. How exactly are the two systems related?

What Schelling says is this: in the paper "Einleitung zu dem Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie"
Schelling says that intelligence must be conceived as being productive in two ways. It may be unconsciously productive as nature is, or it may be consciously productive as spirit is. To determine their relation Schelling says that since philosophy is meant to identify the unconscious with the conscious, or the real with the ideal, its tendency then is to reduce the real to the ideal, and this takes

1. Schulz, F.W.J. Schelling—System des Tranzenentalen Idealismus,
One to the transcendental philosophy. ¹ The relation of nature and spirit is this; that nature may be taken as a symbol of spirit, which intuits itself in outer nature, or nature is the necessary medium in which alone the spirit may see itself in its objective appearance.² In other words, nature may be looked upon as the medium of recording the development of spirit and this enables the spirit to show itself in its objective appearance. The soul, says Schelling, intuits nothing but its own nature and its developments and in this it leads the way to self-consciousness. And the outer world lies ready for us to find in it the history of spirit.³

¹ "Da die Philosophie die bewußtlose, oder, wie sie auch genannt werden kann, reelle Thätigkeit als identisch setzt mit bewußten oder ideellen, so wird ihre Tendenz ursprünglich darauf gehen, das Reelle überall auf das Ideelle zurückzuführen, wodurch das entsteht, was man Transcendentalphilosophie nennt." (Schelling, Werke II, p.271).

² Schulz, loc.cit., Einleitung XXI.

³ "Was aber die Seele anschaut, ist immer ihre eigene, sich entwickelnde Natur...........So bezeichnet sie durch ihre eignen Produkte, für gemeine Augen unmerklich, für den Philosophen deutlich und bestimmt, den Weg, auf welchem sie allmäßchlich zum Selbstbewußtsein gelangt. Die äußere Welt liegt vor uns aufgeschlagen, um in ihr die Geschichte unseres Geistes wieder zu finden." (Schelling, Werke I, p.307).
Transcendental Idealism and Philosophy of Nature are concerned at once with the real world and ideal world. Only, the Transcendental Idealism subordinates the real to the ideal and derives the former from the latter, while the Philosophy of Nature subordinates the ideal to the real and shows how we reach the ideal world from the real world, or spirit from nature itself. Schelling thus sets out to show in the Philosophy of Nature how nature develops itself into the self-conscious spirit, and in his Transcendental Idealism he tells us how spirit is represented in nature.

Now we may go on to ask, what does it mean that nature develops into spirit and that spirit is represented in nature? What is involved in saying that the real world is derived from the ideal world that we reach the ideal world in the real world?

We may answer these issues in this manner: the absolute subject is the intelligence itself or the ego. There are two processes simultaneously existing in the ego, viz., its self-consciousness, or its relation to itself as itself, and its consciousness of the existence of the material world, or its relation to the outer world or nature. In the latter process what emerges is nature itself. Thus we may come to recognise an absolute object of knowledge or what is always the object. If we leave aside the former process, viz., self-consciousness for the present, we are left with the latter process, viz., the consciousness of the existence of outer objects. Let us look deeper into this process

1. Schulz, loc. cit., Einleitung XXIX.
and ask what is involved in it. This latter process takes into account not the ego of the self-consciousness but its derivative or what becomes the ego-as-entered-into-a-relation-with-the-world. This is where the intelligence is directed to the object of nature to deal with it essentially. The essence of object is none other than consciousness itself, i.e., the essence of the object is its conception that we have in our minds. It is in this sense that we find in the object itself a subject. In our consciousness itself there are again two processes, viz., the relation of the subject (derivative or the subject-as-related-to-the-object) to the object and the relation of the object to the subject (the subject-in-the-object). What is the relation between these two subjects? The former is the subject in its general relation to nature, the latter is the essence of the object itself. The latter is the limitation of the former and is to be derived from the former. The object therefore is the point of separation and of connection between the two subjects that we are dealing with now.

Transcendental Idealism, now we may say, is meant to deal with the former process; Philosophy of Nature is meant to deal with the latter process. And it is only in the former sense of the subject that Transcendental Idealism is said to begin with ego or the subject or intelligence and sees how real world or nature may be ideally represented in this ego or intelligence as related to nature. And it is in the sense of the latter process that Philosophy of Nature is said to begin with
the object and considers how do we find the ego in nature. It is in
reference to these two processes, as we have discussed here,
that we may understand the problems of the Transcendental Idealism,
 viz., one begins with the subject and derives the object from it,
and of the Philosophy of Nature, viz., one begins with the object
to see how does the subject emerges in it. It is also due in main
to this that the notion of nature is the central notion in the
Philosophy of Nature and that of intelligence is a later product
of development (of nature), while the central notion in the
Transcendental Idealism is that of the ego and nature is a less
important notion here.

We may further say that what is involved in the
consciousness of the world, is, (a) subject as in general related to
the world, (b) the object as the medium of the emergence of the
subject, and (c) the former subject as related to the latter subject.
If Transcendental Idealism deals with (a), and Philosophy of Nature
with (b), then what takes into account (c)? This is found in
Schelling's System of Identity where he proposes to show that
the identity of the two subjects; the conscious (subject) and
the unconscious (subject) is to be found in the absolute subject,
a notion that is fully taken into account in the System of Identity.

IV. The period of System of Identity:

If one considers Schelling's entire
philosophical development one finds that at the end of this period
Schelling adopts the notion of the absolute as above contradiction.
And all issues of correlation of the infinite and the finite, the
subject

and the object, or spirit and nature, must be taken in reference to this notion. Thus Schelling sets out to show the development of the absolute from nature to spirit and finally in the System of Identity (1801-1806) he takes up the issue, how does the absolute go emerge in this process. Schelling's answer will be that the absolute is the point of identity or of indifference of the subject and the object.

Thus we find it acceptable to say that Schelling sees nature and spirit first as separate notions and then combines them in a higher identity which is indifferent to both and yet includes both.

We may refer here to some other philosophical systems which bear a close affinity to Schelling's philosophical thought. These are: the absolutism of the Upanishads, of the Advaita Vedanta, and also of Spinoza. Although these Absolutist systems widely differ from one another, yet they share some important features with Schelling's absolutism.

It is not our purpose to go into details of the Upanishadic absolutism or the Advaitic absolutism. We may only mention this much that both in the Upanishads and in the Advaita Vedanta we find the parallel notions of Atman and Brahman or self and universe which are regarded as basically united in the Absolute which is the Identity of the two. ¹

Spinoza also conceives of an absolute unity, the Substance, and thought and extension are for him attributes of this Substance. Spinoza identifies his absolute Substance with nature as a whole and then with God.¹

There are, however, important differences between Schelling's absolutism and Spinozism. For Schelling, the being of the spirit is philosophically the most important, while for Spinoza the being of the world is philosophically more significant. To Spinoza the world was everything, to Schelling it was the ego. Spinoza, like Schelling, intended to begin his philosophical enquiry with the notion of an absolute, but he failed to see that it cannot be an object but must be the ego. The absolute truth for Spinoza is thus the absolute Substance; for Schelling it is the absolute ego. The Being is Spinoza's beginning point in philosophy, for Schelling it is knowledge, which philosophy should look upon as important. We, however, do not propose to pursue this point further, although it would surely be unfair to leave the matter here.

Our intention here was to give a biographical study of Schelling's philosophy. We have in this connection chosen to refer to three of his philosophical papers and two of his major philosophical works, because we have found that these essentially determine the place of Transcendental Idealism in his entire philosophical system. It may be noted that the treatment of these

writings of Schelling have been inadequate and far too brief. This is because our reference to them is only meant to show to what extent they are related to the Transcendental Idealism. We may conclude:

(a) that Schelling's early writings are related to the Transcendental Idealism in so far as they anticipate the basic concepts and problems of the latter; (b) that the relation of the Philosophy of Nature to the Transcendental Idealism is that they complement each other; and (c) that the relation of the System of Identity to the Transcendental Idealism is that, the former fully resolves the problems raised in the latter and thus completes the latter.