

Voegelin and Schelling on Freedom and the Order of Existence

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Do you ask to be conscious of this freedom? But do you also consider that all your consciousness is only possible via your freedom and the condition cannot be contained in what is conditioned?i [1]

Introduction

Unlike some of the other thinkers in the modern tradition of philosophy, Eric Voegelin had relatively good things to say about the philosophy of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling. In fact, late in his career, Voegelin attributed the breakdown of his History of Political Ideas to his work on Schelling. As he recalls in his Autobiographical Reflections, it was "While working on the chapter on Schelling, [that] it dawned on me that the conception of a history of ideas was an ideological deformation of reality. There were no ideas unless there were symbols of immediate *experiences*.❖ii [2] Thus, Voegelin himself claims that his work on Schelling occasioned one of his most important insights and contributed to a reconceptualization of his project that would eventually result in its appearance as Order and History, his magnum opus. The positive impact that Schelling's philosophy had on Voegelin's work is further illustrated by Voegelin's praise for Schelling in his early chapter on him. Voegelin writes that Schelling's philosophy is "one of the most important points of orientation for a modern philosophy of human existence❖ and he credits Schelling with establishing a philosophy of

order amidst the disorder of his time on a "new level of consciousness."ⁱⁱⁱ [3] At another point, Voegelin refers to Schelling's Potenzenlehre, his doctrine of potencies, as "perhaps the profoundest piece of philosophical thought ever elaborated."^{iv} [4] It should not be surprising, then, that an awareness of the importance of Schelling for Voegelin has begun to attract attention in the literature.^v [5]

Yet, one would be hard-pressed to show that Voegelin carried on a life-long dialogue with Schelling. For one, as Jerry Day notes, most of Voegelin's published remarks on Schelling are highly critical: Voegelin often categorizes him as one of the modern intellectual Gnostics contributing to the derailment of modernity. Moreover, although Voegelin recognizes the influence of Schelling on his own development, there is little to suggest (to my knowledge) that Voegelin ever returned to Schelling in order to reconsider his work. There is evidence that he had intended to include his early chapter on Schelling in the final volume of Order and History without significant revision, but, for whatever reason, he never did.^{vi} [6] In any event, such an inclusion would not have amounted to a reengagement with Schelling's philosophy. Thus, despite his high praise for Schelling, Voegelin seems to have abandoned him as a conversation partner during his most productive decades.

Although Voegelin acknowledged the importance of Schelling later in his life, it would seem too cynical to suggest that Voegelin never returned to Schelling because he was aware of the extent to which such a move would require him to alter his philosophical course. His reasons for excluding Schelling from Order and History may well always remain unknown. But I want to suggest in this essay that a philosophical change of course is exactly what would have been the result if Voegelin had returned to Schelling. In other words, it is my contention that a critical

study of Voegelin and Schelling side-by-side reveals that a reconsideration of Schelling's philosophy may have helped Voegelin to overcome certain difficulties in his own philosophy that remained until the very end. In particular, I want to argue that Schelling's philosophy is better able to deal with a constellation of issues surrounding how we are aware of a reality that transcends consciousness. I will attempt to show that Schelling's philosophy is: (a) less susceptible than Voegelin's to the charge of subjectivism that has often been directed against the latter; (b) better able to answer certain questions that arise from Voegelin's philosophy of consciousness (e.g., How do we know the Beyond as beyond? How do we recognize truth as truth?); and, (c) better inoculated against the tendency of consciousness to reduce that which is beyond it to an object.vii [7] Schelling's philosophy can make these contributions because he recognizes that, just like the source of order in reality, our participation in the order of reality is beyond consciousness. He recognizes that while an absolute grasp of the truth of existence permanently eludes us, we nevertheless live within the truth as that which constitutes our existence. In a sense, we always already know truth before we experience it. Voegelin, on the other hand, while himself moving in a similar direction, struggles to establish the truth of his account of the history of order because his use of terms such as "experience" and "consciousness" leave his account open to the charge that it is merely his subjective opinion. As Schelling shows, a philosophy of order cannot be a philosophy of consciousness only: it must be a metaphysics of the existence that contains consciousness, which means, for Schelling, that it must be a philosophy of freedom.

In spite of these contrasts, it must be kept in mind that Voegelin and Schelling are fellow travelers. The goal of this paper is not to critique the purpose of Voegelin's philosophy, i.e., to establish that there is a knowable order in reality and that we are obliged to live within it. This is

Schelling's goal as well. Moreover, I do not mean to suggest that Voegelin was unaware of the issues under discussion here, such as the need to overcome the Cartesian view of subjectivity. Quite the opposite: Voegelin is clearly aware of these issues and he attempts to deal with them. Instead, the question is whether Voegelin's philosophy of consciousness gets him where he wants to go. I will argue that it does not because his continued recourse to "consciousness" and "experience" leaves him with the kinds of difficulties mentioned above, since, as David Walsh has argued, once Voegelin begins with consciousness, he has no way of getting beyond it.viii [8] In the end, I will suggest that Voegelin was himself aware of these difficulties and that he may have started to move towards Schelling's position--whether consciously or not--when he introduced the notion of reflective distance into his philosophy of consciousness. Thus, Voegelin himself indirectly illustrates how a return to Schelling might have indeed have furthered Voegelin's own philosophy.

Subjectivity in Voegelin's Philosophy of Consciousness

Voegelin attempts to overcome the Cartesian understanding of the self by arguing that human consciousness is paradoxically structured in two different ways.ix [9] The first structure of consciousness, the one which is most familiar to us, is the subject-object model. According to this model, consciousness belongs to particular human beings who experience a world of things that are external to them. Voegelin labels this structure of conscious "intentionality" and argues that it corresponds to what he calls "thing-reality," i.e., reality considered in its "thingness."x [10] In a second sense, however, Voegelin argues that consciousness must be understood as belonging to the reality of which human beings are a part. In this structure of consciousness, reality becomes the "subject" and "the consciousness of the human subject intending objects

moves to the positions of a predicative event in the subject 'reality' as it becomes luminous for its truth.^{xi} [11] Voegelin refers to this as the "luminosity" of consciousness and suggests the term "It-reality" for the "comprehending reality" in which it is located.^{xii} [12] By way of summary, Voegelin concludes that "Consciousness" is a subject intending reality as its object, but at the same time a something in a comprehending reality; and reality is the object of consciousness, but at the same time the subject of which consciousness is to be predicated.^{xiii} [13]

Knowledge of the order of reality emerges within this paradoxical complex through the imaginative symbolization of experiences of order. In other words, the experiences of order that emerge within consciousness are articulated (although never adequately) in language. Voegelin refers to the process that accomplishes this articulation as "imagination."^{xiv} [14] He explains that "the event [of symbolizing the emerging content of consciousness], we may say, is imaginative in the sense that man can find the way from his participatory experience of reality to its expression through symbols."^{xv} [15] Voegelin stresses that, although the process of articulation is accomplished by individuals, imagination is also involved in the irreducible paradox of consciousness: it is at once the imagination of a particular individual and the imagination of the reality of which consciousness is a predicate. Voegelin summarily refers to the complex of "consciousness-reality-language" as the process in which truth emerges, or, as Voegelin puts it, in which "reality becomes luminous for its truth."^{xvi} [16]

In his later works on the philosophy of consciousness, Voegelin begins to recognize "a third dimension of consciousness," which he refers to as "reflective distance."^{xvii} [17] This "reflective distance of consciousness to its own participation in thing-reality and It-reality"^{xviii}

[18] signifies our capacity to step back from the paradoxical structure of consciousness and reflect upon it. It indicates that consciousness is "structured not only by the paradox of intentionality and luminosity, but also by an awareness of the paradox, by a dimension to be characterized as a reflectively distancing remembrance.❖xix [19] Thus, the philosopher is aware of the luminous structure of his consciousness for what it is and is thereby able to compare and evaluate different symbolizations of the truth of order emerging in consciousness. Voegelin notes that Plato was dimly aware of this dimension of consciousness and that he labeled it "anamnesis❖--a hint at the fact that the dimension of reflective distance is something that, as Michael P. Morrissey notes, "has been present throughout [Voegelin's] work but that he only now develops explicitly.❖xx [20] Voegelin has always been operating from this perspective; it is just that he only now identifies it.

Thus, for Voegelin, the philosopher is able to reflect upon and study the process of consciousness becoming luminous for its truth within his own consciousness. But this does not give us access to the full truth of reality because our consciousness is a predicate of that reality, that is, contained by it. In fact, consciousness is, according to Voegelin, structured by the divine-human tension between a transcendent Beyond and immanent human existence. Knowledge of the order of existence emerges in our experience of that order from within the tension of consciousness and is articulated symbolically. Voegelin often refers to this tension in consciousness as the metaxy, a word for "in-between❖ that he borrows from Plato. He uses it to stress the fact that we cannot achieve an Archimedean point from which we could grasp the order of reality as a whole. Instead, we must struggle to reach the limited understanding of order that is vouchsafed to us through our conscious participation as parts within the whole.

The explanatory power of Voegelin's philosophy of consciousness is remarkable, yet it is not completely without difficulties. One important obstacle in Voegelin's philosophy of consciousness pertains to the question of how we come to have knowledge of the order of reality. It is not clear that Voegelin can establish how we can know that our experiences of order actually correspond to reality as it is in itself. As David Walsh suggests, Voegelin's position is open to the objection that our "experience cannot authenticate its own truth, that there is no way of establishing the transition from what is within to a reality that lies beyond the subject. How do I know that a correspondence holds?"^{xxi} [21] As a result of this difficulty, Voegelin's theory of consciousness leaves claims to knowledge of order open to the charge that they are merely someone's subjective opinion. Voegelin himself recognizes that such questions will arise, but he believes he can answer them. Consider, for instance, the following passage from In Search of Order: "But how does the listener recognize the story to be true"? Why should he believe the story to be true rather than consider it somebody's private opinion concerning the order of his preference? To questions of this class only one answer is possible: If the story is to evoke authoritatively the order of a social field, the word must be spoken with an authority recognizable as such by the men to whom the appeal is addressed; the appeal will have no authority of truth unless it speaks with an authority commonly present in everybody's consciousness, however inarticulate, deformed, or suppressed the consciousness in the concrete case may be."^{xxii} [22] It is not clear that Voegelin's response here answers the charge of subjectivism, and, moreover, it opens another set of fundamental questions: How are we able to recognize what is true at all? How is it that we ever come to recognize any story as authoritative? It is not enough to say, as Voegelin does, that "The character of truth attaches to the story by virtue of its paradoxical structure of being both a narrative and an event."^{xxiii} [23]

In order to recognize truth at all, we must already in some sense know it even before we experience it.

Since Voegelin remains within a philosophy of consciousness, his philosophy cannot finally shake off the suspicion that it lacks universality. The language of experience cannot foreclose the possibility of questioning whether or not a correspondence holds between an individual's experience of order and the true order of reality. As a result, it is not clear how, as Glenn Hughes writes, "the ground of being has solidified, in the course of Voegelin's analysis [over the course of his career], from an *ontological hypothesis*' into the divine partner in the participatory tension of existence."^{xxiv} [24] Hughes is certainly correct in making this claim, but how does Voegelin justify this development? I would argue that he cannot from within the perspective of a philosophy of consciousness. Schelling, on the other hand, while beginning in a similar position, is able to make the transition by moving beyond a philosophy of consciousness to a metaphysics of freedom.

Schelling's Philosophy of Freedom

Consciousness is a central theme in Schelling's philosophy as it is in Voegelin's, yet it is not quite adequate to label Schelling a philosopher of consciousness. While Schelling may begin from consciousness, his philosophical investigations lead him beyond consciousness to that which can never be contained within it, what he calls at various points the unconditioned, the Absolute, or God. And it is on this subject that Schelling makes his most important contribution to the history of philosophy, since he comes to realize that the Absolute is what makes

consciousness possible and therefore can never be contained within it.xxv [25] Realizing, in other words, that being is prior to thinking, Schelling moves beyond a philosophy of consciousness to the recognition that we know truth because we always already exist within it, even before we begin to reflect upon it. Our very existence is constituted by truth. Voegelin, of course, would agree with this last assessment, but the problem is that he can never confirm it because his philosophy remains within the sphere of consciousness. Schelling, on the other hand, attempts to avoid this difficulty by developing a metaphysics of existence, that is, by arguing that it is through the movement of existence (i.e., the exercise of our freedom) that we participate in the order of reality. Thus, Schelling is, above all, a philosopher of freedom.

Schelling's path to the recognition of the Absolute as the reality that we live within but can never grasp begins with his critique of Fichte's transcendental idealism.xxvi [26] In his attempt to overcome the Kantian dualism between phenomenal and noumenal reality (and without falling back into Spinoza's philosophy of substance), Fichte argues that the realm of reflective consciousness (of subject-object relations) must ultimately be contained within a transcendental I that is the source of both the empirical I and the not-I, that is, of both the free subject and the objective realm of nature. Schelling argues, however, that if the transcendental I is the source of both subjectivity and nature then it can hardly be conceived of as a subject. Instead, it must already be the unity of subject and object and, therefore, neither--at least exclusively--for the Absolute is beyond the reflective mode of knowing that inheres in consciousness.xxvii [27] The Absolute, as the condition of consciousness, can never be contained within it, and, therefore, we can never know the Absolute as absolute. Schelling develops this insight in his identity philosophy by arguing for the Absolute as the unity that must

necessarily precede the subject-object dichotomy of the finite world. He would devote the rest of his career to unfolding the implications of this idea.

In Schelling's early work it appears that we must merely presuppose or assume the existence of the Absolute, since any attempt to know it already precludes the possibility.xxviii [28] But Schelling comes to realize in his later philosophy, beginning in particular with his Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom (Freiheitsschrift), that the Absolute, now more often spoken of as God, is more than a mere assumption. He comes to see that our freedom--our participation in the living order of the divine that continually transcends the web of necessity and abstract thought--is the principle by which we gain access to the order of reality. This marks the beginning of Schelling's historical turn, since he now recognizes that the truth of what actually exists only emerges in the actual process of life (and not in thought, since thought cannot capture the living reality of the world). The Absolute, then, becomes more than a mere presupposition: it is the divine order of reality that freely manifests itself to us through the exercise of our own freedom. This transition is sometimes overlooked or rejected by even Schelling's better interpreters, for it requires us to change our accustomed ways of thinking. Schelling himself struggles with it for the rest of his career. Nevertheless, in the Freiheitsschrift and thereafter, a decisive shift has taken place. Schelling now thinks of freedom as both that which makes existence possible and the principle by which we recognize the order of that which we live within. Our freedom is a participation in God's freedom and it is what Schelling refers to when he announces the ancient principle of "like is known to like" as our point of access to the order of existence.xxix [29]

Thus, Schelling emphasizes that our participation in the order of existence is ontologically prior to our attempts to understand that participation in consciousness. Whether we come to reflect on what is true or not, we already exist within truth. Our existence itself is a revelation of the order of being and we know this in a way that thought can never establish. Schelling crystallizes the point in his later works when he distinguishes between negative and positive philosophy.^{xxx} [30] The distinction corresponds to the difference between the essence of things and their existence. Negative philosophy is purely abstract and conceptual and it deals with the essence or "whatness" of things. As such, it does not go beyond the realm of mere possibility. Positive philosophy, on the other hand, seeks the actual existence or "thatness" of things--the raw facticity of existence--and, consequently, it is empirical and historical. Positive philosophy begins from that which simply is and tries to prove, by sifting through the historical materials, that what is in fact corresponds to what has been established in thought, that is, by the negative philosophy.

The distinction between the negative and positive philosophies is rendered necessary by Schelling's recognition, inchoately conceded in the Freiheitsschrift, that being takes priority to thinking. Schelling now fully embraces the radical inability of thought to contain existence, since he comes to accept that thought cannot account for its own existence, or as he would put it, thought cannot ground itself. Schelling often expresses this incapacity of reason in the question: Why is there something and not nothing? Ultimately, reason cannot explain why there is a world at all. In order to answer this question (insofar as it can be answered at all), Schelling turns to the positive philosophy as the philosophy of existence. Through the positive he attempts to show that the realm of history (of freedom) reveals our participation in an order of reality that cannot be comprehended within the negative philosophy. He tries to show, in other words, that despite

our ability to develop a reflective understanding of order, we nevertheless know the order that we live within.

It is a point that goes back to Fichte, who observed that in order to see my own reflection in a mirror as my reflection I must already have a pre-existing awareness of myself. Otherwise, I would not recognize myself. The insight is more profoundly illustrated by Kant and Schelling in their respective philosophies of religion. In his Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, Kant observes that we are only able to recognize Christ as Christ because we already inwardly know him: "the required prototype [i.e., Christ as representative of our moral perfection] always resides only in reason, since outer experience yields no example adequate to the idea; as outer, it does not disclose the inwardness of the disposition but only allows inference to it, thought not with strict certainty.❖xxxi [31] The appearance of Christ in the external world can point to but not confirm the inner perfection of his nature; we can only recognize the latter because we already know it from within. Schelling arrives at the same insight when he asks, "How did this country Rabbi come to be the subject of such a glorification?❖ The answer is that we must, as David Walsh argues, already have a "pre-existing awareness of Christ before we encounter him. In other words Christ must already be Christ in some sense before he enters history as Jesus of Nazareth. We already are potentially in relationship with him, otherwise there would be no way to move into one.❖xxxii [32] As Schelling writes, it is not that the stories of the Gospels are "necessary in order to recognize the sovereignty of Christ, but to the contrary, the sovereignty of Christ❖is necessary to comprehend the stories.❖xxxiii [33] The luminosity of our consciousness is always preceded by the luminosity of our existence.

Thus, for Schelling, consciousness is never the starting point for arriving at truth, as he makes clear in the following passage from the System of Transcendental Idealism: "The question as to how our concepts conform to objects has no meaning from a transcendental viewpoint, inasmuch as this question presupposes an original difference between the two. In the absence of consciousness, the object and its concept, and conversely, concept and object, are one and the same, and the separation of the two first occurs with the emergence of consciousness. A philosophy which starts from consciousness will therefore never be able to explain this conformity, nor is it explicable at all without an original identity, whose principle necessarily lies beyond consciousness."xxxiv [34] For Schelling, philosophy must begin from that which is beyond consciousness, that which is the eternal freedom in which we participate. As we will see in the next section, Voegelin does not appear to have quite grasped the significance of this principle for Schelling's philosophy.

Voegelin's Interpretation of Schelling

As noted in the introduction, Voegelin's only sustained treatment of Schelling's philosophy is found near the end of the History of Political Ideas, the work which he abandoned in favor of the project that would become his magnum opus, Order and History. Voegelin never published his chapter on Schelling himself, but there is no evidence that he ever returned to Schelling in order to reconsider his interpretation. Thus, while we must recognize that it is an early unpublished work, we must also accept it as representative of Voegelin's understanding of Schelling.xxxv [35] The chapter is both incisive and illuminating, but, as the following analysis will show, it also demonstrates a certain lack of clarity concerning Schelling's most essential

insight, his recognition that existence cannot be contained within thought. In the next section, I will suggest that Voegelin continues to struggle with this issue in a more general fashion in his own late philosophy of consciousness. But first we turn to an examination of Voegelin's Schelling interpretation.

Voegelin's chapter begins with an account of Schelling's place in the history of modern philosophy. It is evident from this account that Voegelin sees Schelling as a fellow traveler in the search for order amidst the disorder of the modern age. Voegelin's positive view of Schelling is further confirmed by the fact that he puts Schelling in the company of Plato, Augustine, and Aquinas, grouping him with these "spiritual realists," who attempt to balance the tensional forces within their civilization before they erupt into open conflict. Thus, Voegelin sees Schelling's philosophy as the final point of orientation before the explosion of forces that would lead to the morass of ideology and destruction characteristic of the 20th century. In characterizing Schelling in this way, Voegelin relies to a certain degree on Schelling's own self-interpretation, since, as Voegelin notes, Schelling gives several accounts of the role he plays in the history of philosophy in his corpus.^{xxxvi} [36] Schelling was clearly concerned with his own position in the trajectory of modern thought, and he was also, as Voegelin also brings out, aware of the cultural and political ramifications of philosophy, a facet of Schelling's writings that it often neglected.^{xxxvii} [37] One definitely gets the sense in reading Schelling that he was aware of the epochal trajectory of his philosophizing.

But Schelling's concerns are above all philosophical, and he understands himself as striving to overcome one fundamental problem: the dualism between mind and matter that has beset modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant. Overcoming this dualism means, for

Schelling, recognizing the ontological unity of reality and developing a complementary epistemology that transcends the subject-object (Cartesian) paradigm of knowledge. Voegelin illustrates Schelling's position by reference to a series of aphorisms that Schelling published in 1806: "Not we, not you or I, know about God. For reason, insofar as it affirms God, can affirm nothing else, and in this act it annihilates itself as a particularity, as something that is outside God." "The 'I think,' 'I am,' is since Descartes the fundamental error of all knowledge (Erkenntnis); thinking is not my thinking, and being is not my being, for all is only of God, or of the All." "Reason is not a faculty, or tool, and it cannot be used: indeed there is no reason that we have, there is only a reason that has us." xxxviii [38] Voegelin quotes several more of the aphorisms, but the point is clear: for Schelling, the Cartesian subject has been overcome and thus Voegelin concludes that Schelling's "aphorisms are the full stop after the Age of Enlightenment and Reason." xxxix [39] With Schelling it is finally realized that "The ego is not an ultimate entity with faculties of reasoning but a medium through which the substance of the universe is operating in its processes." xl [40]

Turning to Schelling's own philosophical system, developed in response to modern dualism, Voegelin identifies the "general principle of Schelling's speculation" as the "immersion of the morphological differentiation of the realms of being, as well as of cognitive relations, into the identity of the universal or divine process." xli [41] In other words, Voegelin sees Schelling's great accomplishment in his ability to sustain the unity of existence while recognizing the differentiated realms within it at the same time. Voegelin argues that Schelling is here attempting to advance beyond the speculation of Bruno xlii [42] and he claims that Schelling finally achieves this with his Potenzenlehre, his doctrine of potencies, which allows him to account for the coexistence of identity and difference in the process of reality. The

potenzenlehre posits a series of powers that interact with one another in the production of the world. They all belong to the same source and yet it is the ever-repeating conflict and resolution between them that echoes throughout all the levels of being. Schelling is thus able to claim that everything is of one source, while at the same time maintaining that there is difference and movement within the source.xliii [43] As Voegelin writes, "By using this formalized terminology and designating the stages in the process of the One as A¹, A², A³, Schelling escapes the difficulty of having to identify terminologically the fundamental substance with any of the partial phases into which the process of the whole is articulated. The fundamental substance is, therefore, neither matter nor spirit, neither a transcendent God nor an immanent nature, but the identity of the process in which the One becomes the articulated universe.❖xliv [44]

Having established what he takes to be the general principle of Schelling's philosophy, Voegelin then turns to the question of how knowledge of the order of reality emerges in the universal process. As will become evident, the account he gives is strikingly similar to his own theory of consciousness. Voegelin argues that Schelling comes to recognize that "Anthropology is❖the key to speculation.❖xlv [45] The human soul itself is the key to unlocking the meaning of history and universe because it is coextensive with the universal process: through reflection upon itself, the soul radiates meaning into history and the universe. "This knowledge of the soul, however, does not lie open as a realm of objects that could be known by a subject. Rather, the soul is polarized into a principle of freedom by which it can understand everything and a principles of darkness and oblivion in which the archetype of all things slumbers obscured and forgotten.❖xlvi [46] The unconscious is the "past❖ of the soul and knowledge is anamnetically recovered from it by the conscious or free principle of the soul. In order to further elaborate this process, Voegelin coins the term "protodialectic experience❖ to "designate the

experience of the emergence of a content from the unconscious, still in the state of flux and vagueness before its solidification into language symbols, together with the dynamic "tones" of the soul that accompany the emerging. xlvii [47] Voegelin argues that "the experience of transition from unconsciousness to consciousness and reflection is Schelling's model for the interpretation of the universal process. xlviii [48] Even more strongly, he adds that "Schelling considers this experience as revealing the character of the universal process in general. xlix [49]

Students of Voegelin's philosophy of consciousness will recognize the similarities between this account of Schelling's philosophy and Voegelin's account of how consciousness becomes luminous for its truth in his own theory of consciousness. The description of protodialectic experience, in particular, seems to correspond to Voegelin's own description of how pre-articulate meaning emerges in the luminous dimension of consciousness, and the attempt to articulate the meaning of these experience appears to mirror Voegelin's description of the imaginative process of symbolization. The similarities may suggest that Voegelin's work on Schelling played a decisive role in the development of his philosophy. Yet Voegelin had already begun to develop his own theory of consciousness before he wrote the chapter on Schelling, so the similarities could indicate either the great influence that Schelling's work had on Voegelin or the degree to which Voegelin assimilated Schelling's philosophy to his own position. l [50] We should not rush to one conclusion or the other. There is no doubt that Voegelin's philosophy is similar to Schelling's in many ways, but the possible influence should not be overstated. While Voegelin was clearly influenced by his reading of Schelling, this does not necessarily support the thesis that his philosophy is essentially Schellingian, since Voegelin does not evince a comprehensive understanding of Schelling's work.

The trouble is that Voegelin does not refer to any of Schelling's theoretical statements from the later part of career. Instead, Voegelin relies quite heavily on the Weltalter, which, as Voegelin notes, Schelling left incomplete and unpublished. (In fact, Schelling never published another significant work after the 1809 Freiheitsschrift.) Rather than explore the possible philosophical reasons for Schelling's abandonment of the Weltalter (a work which he attempted to write many times during the course of many years) and his decision not to publish again, Voegelin offers the following explanation: "Schelling's qualities as a philosopher were hardly recognized by his contemporaries, and when Jacobi attacked him in 1811 and charged him with pantheism, he confined his publication for the rest of his life to a few minor articles.❖li [51]

Voegelin then claims that Schelling "considered [the Weltalter to be] the representative formulation of his philosophy.❖lii [52]

But this claim is almost certainly too strong, for the Weltalter does not yet explicitly include Schelling's positive philosophy, which is perhaps his greatest achievement (Schelling would have at least considered it so). The Weltalter certainly contains many elements of Schelling's late philosophy, but it also a work in which Schelling has not wholeheartedly embraced his reluctant recognition that being precedes thinking and, therefore, can never be grasped within it. Only in his later lectures did Schelling really begin to explore this insight, and Voegelin's inattention to these works points to the limitations of his interpretation of Schelling.

This is not to say that Voegelin is completely oblivious to Schelling's central insight. Although Voegelin never explores this aspect of Schelling's philosophy thematically, there is little doubt that Voegelin is in some sense aware of Schelling's point. In his discussion of the historical dimension of existence, for instance, Voegelin notes that "Schelling is beyond Enlightenment insofar as man has become an unexhausted historical existence.❖liii [53]

But

Voegelin shows his imperfect grasp of the issue just as he points toward it. The comment is true, but incomplete, since Voegelin leaves us with the impression that the historical process could, at least theoretically, be completed. The truth of the matter--at least to Schelling's mind--is that man's existence is an inexhaustible historical existence. Rather than recognize the ultimate impossibility of a conscious understanding of the order of reality, Voegelin suggests that the "anamnesis is neither completed nor will it be completed soon, and we do not know, therefore, the meaning of history as a whole; the future is still open.❖ Schelling's point, however, is that, for us, the future will always remain open because it is this openness that makes our existence possible. In part, the lack of precision might result from Voegelin's reliance on the Weltalter, since in it Schelling still flirts with the possibility a "reflective self-understanding❖ could be achieved.liv [54] Had Voegelin given more careful consideration to Schelling's later formulations, however, he might have realized that Schelling comes to fully embrace the consequences of his insight into the radical impossibility of conceptualizing the absolute. The absolute is beyond proof: it is the condition of all proofs.lv [55] It is what we live within, and our only access to it is through our existence in freedom. As it is, Voegelin only inchoately moves toward Schelling's recognition that thought is radically incapable of containing being.

Voegelin's lack of clarity on this issue is evident at several points in his reading of Schelling. It can be seen, for instance, in some of Voegelin's formulations concerning the human soul as the source of speculation. As noted above, Voegelin claims that in Schelling's work "Anthropology is now systematically made the key to speculation; nothing must enter into the content of speculation that cannot be found in human nature.❖lvi [56] The claim is true insofar as we human beings have the capacity to understand the process of creation from "within,❖ but the textual evidence on which Voegelin's claim rests (taken from the Weltalter)lvii [57] should

be balanced with Schelling's later lament that "far from man and his endeavors making the world comprehensible, it is man himself that is the most incomprehensible and who inexorably drives me to the belief in the wretchedness of all being❖. It is precisely man that drives me to the final desperate question: Why is there anything at all? Why is there not nothing?❖lviii [58] The human being cannot finally be defined, for at the heart of our existence is our participation in the divine freedom, which alone is responsible for revealing a realm of meaning. Thus, it is not quite adequate to claim, as Voegelin does, that Schelling operates according to the "assumption❖of human nature as the basis of speculation.❖lix [59] Such claims betrays a lack of clarity on Voegelin's part, since it suggests that the human subject is the origin of our knowledge about reality. This is partly true, but it is only so because our soul is derivative of the divine reality that is responsible for our existence. Thus, for Schelling, it is true that "a principle❖outside and above the world must be granted to the person,❖ but this principle is our free participation in the divine being that constitutes the world, and it is by virtue of our existence in freedom that we are always already aware of the living order of reality in which we partake. Thus, anthropology is not the ultimate source of our knowledge of order, since everything that we know about ourselves comes from our participation within the order of being of which we are a part. We have an internal access to the order of being, but its status as truth does not derive from our self-knowledge.

The tension between Schelling's philosophy and Voegelin's attempt to account for it as a philosophy of consciousness can also be sensed in Voegelin's treatment of freedom in Schelling's thought. It is immediately suspicious that, although contemporary Schelling scholarship now points to Schelling's "philosophy of freedom❖ as the thread that holds the various phases in his thought together, Voegelin devotes very little space to what Schelling has to say about

freedom.^{ix} [60] Moreover, Voegelin tends to interpret Schelling's remarks on freedom from the perspective of his own theory of consciousness, whereas for Schelling freedom is precisely that which cannot be contained within consciousness. Consider, for example, that while describing Schelling's Potenzenlehre Voegelin notes that "Schelling speaks of it in terms of the tensions of a psyche^{ix} and includes the tension between "freedom and necessity^{ix} as one such tension. For a second instance, remember that in his account of the anamnestic dialogue that Schelling claims for the philosopher in the WA, Voegelin notes that "the soul is polarized into a principle of freedom by which it can understand everything and a principle of darkness and oblivion in which the archetype of all things slumbers obscured and forgotten.^{ix} [61] While in the first quote freedom is a tension within consciousness, here freedom is essentially equal to consciousness. These quotes illustrate the tension in Voegelin's interpretation of freedom in Schelling's philosophy insofar as they suggest that freedom is both a tension within consciousness and a constitutive principle of the soul. Consider also the following passage from Voegelin's treatment: "Freedom and necessity, therefore, must be understood as structures of the soul that extend in the direction of an origin in the unconscious. And since the unconscious, the nature of the soul, is embedded in the nature of the universe that is posited from eternity, freedom and necessity are the structure of the eternal in the soul. Guilt and harmony are the experiential gates to the understanding of the ^{ix}double life': man has spirit and selfhood and by their virtue can separate as a particular will from the divine will in which necessity and freedom are in eternal identity.^{ix} [62] Here Voegelin seems closer to recognizing that our freedom is constitutive of our existence, yet he still does not recognize the central importance of freedom for Schelling's philosophy.

Although Voegelin does seem to gravitate toward acknowledging that freedom is more than a tension in consciousness for Schelling, there is still something missing in his treatment of the matter. In all of these accounts, Voegelin does not do justice to Schelling's understanding of human freedom as that part of our existence which escapes determination. For Schelling, our freedom means that we are always more than we appear to be. It is that part of us that can never be brought to consciousness. Thus freedom is so much more than a mere tension within the human soul for Schelling. It is our capacity for participation in the eternal freedom of the Absolute that can never be grasped in thought. The point emerges in Schelling's argument in the Freiheitsschrift that freedom is the "capacity for good and evil."❖lxiii [63] Evil, according to Schelling, is a perversion of the order of being that is effected by attempting to make that which is merely the ground of our existence (our individuality) into the purpose of our existence. But the ultimate goal of evil--complete control over one's own existence--is ultimately futile, for we can never render our existence fully transparent to ourselves: our existence cannot be known reflectively. As Andrew Bowie explains, "By trying to hang on to the identity of my individual consciousness, which is constituted by its experiences, I turn it into an object for itself and thus lose what is most fundamental about it, its freedom from being determined as a knowable identity, as an object."❖lxiv [64] Our freedom is, for Schelling, not merely a tension within consciousness, but the principle by which we live within the order of reality. As such, it is the central principle of Schelling's philosophy.

So it appears that Schelling's philosophy cannot be held within the framework of Voegelin's theory of consciousness. If Voegelin had returned to Schelling and given more consideration to some of his later theoretical statements, he may have focused more intensely on Schelling's key insight into the precedence of being over thinking. Voegelin might have

recognized the Weltalter for what it is: an important turning point in Schelling's career that ultimately led to the distinction between negative and positive but did not yet grasp it explicitly. As it stands in the History of Political Ideas, Voegelin's dialogue with Schelling remains incomplete.

Voegelin and Schelling on the Beyond

Of course, the preceding should not be taken to suggest that Voegelin is unaware of or unconcerned with what Schelling calls the Absolute. On the contrary, the Beyond or the Ground of consciousness holds a central place in his philosophy. The point is, rather, that there is a certain lack of clarity in Voegelin's early reading of Schelling concerning how it is that we can claim to know that which is beyond our present experience, and that this lack of clarity seems to persist right through to Voegelin's mature philosophy of consciousness. The trouble for Voegelin is that, as indicated above, there is no way from within a philosophy of consciousness to guarantee that my experience of the Beyond corresponds in any way to what is actually beyond my experience. Schelling avoids this problem by moving beyond a philosophy of consciousness toward a metaphysics of freedom. For Schelling, this is a necessary move because the Absolute is precisely that which we cannot experience; as the being that precedes our thinking, it cannot be contained within consciousness. Schelling claims that our very existence is a participation in the Beyond when he recognizes that our freedom is a participation in the divine freedom that constitutes reality. This means that before we even attempt to articulate truth in consciousness--an attempt that is always bound to distort it--we already exist within truth. Voegelin, on the other hand, while wanting to make a similar claim, remains susceptible to the

critique that he cannot actually establish a correspondence between his experiences and what lies beyond them.

At the heart of the issue is a disagreement concerning the meaning of consciousness. In the struggle to grasp how we can know that which can never be contained in thought, Voegelin, as outlined above, argues that consciousness is paradoxically structured both intentionally and luminously. Schelling, on the other hand, continues to understand consciousness as inherently reflective and stresses that our attempts to know the Absolute always distort it for it is precisely that which cannot be contained within consciousness. Voegelin recognizes the problem as well, and he constantly warns against the tendency to objectify experiences of order, but these constant warnings might lead us to question whether Voegelin's argument for the paradoxical structure of consciousness is the best way toward an explanation of our relationship to the Beyond. It may be that in order to deal with the pre-reflective reality of the Beyond we must leave the language of consciousness behind, for there is an inherent tension in the effort to attribute a non-propositional structure to consciousness. Even Voegelin himself writes that "consciousness is always consciousness-of-something." ^{lxv} [65] Rather than attempt to redefine consciousness, we might be better to follow Schelling's arguments for our existential participation in an order that transcends consciousness.

For one, Schelling's philosophy might be better equipped for maintaining an awareness of the radical transcendence of the Beyond. Although Voegelin speaks of the Beyond as precisely that which cannot be known in its entirety, speaking of the Beyond in terms of experience has the unintended consequence of suggesting that it is something immanent to consciousness. Consider, for instance, the following passage from In Search of Order: "Precisely because this

divine Beyond, ♦this God' as it is called in the Laws, is not one of the being things, it is, then, experienced as present in all of them (pareinai) as their creatively formative force. The Beyond is not a thing beyond the things, but the experienced presence, the Parousia, of the formative It-reality in all things. That Parousia of the Beyond, experienced in the present of the quest, thus, imposes on external time, with its past, present, and future, the dimension of divine presence. ♦lxvi [66] Yet, just before this passage, Voegelin refers to the Beyond as that which "certainly do[es] not lie within ♦present experience. ♦lxvii [67] How can the Beyond, then, become that which is "experienced in the present of the quest ♦? Such tensions in language may be inherent to the effort to express the inexpressible, but they are certainly not assuaged by Voegelin's reliance on the language of experience and consciousness. By remaining within a philosophy of consciousness, Voegelin is not quite able to do justice to the transcendence of the Beyond. A better alternative might be to recognize that the Absolute is always just past the horizon of our knowing, and, therefore, that the order of reality is not experienced, for it is precisely that which cannot be experienced. This is not to say that we cannot know manifestations of order for what they are, but that we can only recognize them as such because we already participate in that order. It is not our experiences that confirm our knowledge of order, but rather our pre-reflexive participation in that order. This realization at once confirms that we can know the order of reality and protects the source of that order against the tendency to represent it as something that can be represented.

Schelling's approach might also afford us greater insight into another class of questions that arise from Voegelin's work, such as how we recognize truth at all, or how we know the Beyond as beyond. Voegelin speaks of the Beyond as something we experience, but is it adequate to account for a non-experiential reality in terms of experience? The tension in

Voegelin's approach can be detected, for instance, when he asks the question quoted from above: "how does the questioner experience a Beginning and an End that, wherever they lie, certainly do not lie within his present experience?"[❖]lxviii [68] How can we experience that which is beyond "present experience?"[❖] When Voegelin is forced to speak of "the experience of the non-experientiable reality,"[❖] we might consider that a new approach is required. A passage from Michael P. Morrissey's Consciousness and Transcendence that is meant to explain Voegelin's position illustrates the problem as well: "The beyond can only be experienced through its parousia, its presence. This presence of the beyond is a formative presence that pervades the whole of reality in the form of things. In itself this beyond is non-experientiable, but since experience somehow reveals the beyond of experience mysteriously present in experience, this beyond needs to be evoked. But in conjuring this beyond, consciousness must inevitably image it in the ambiguous and limited form of being-things, that is, "objectively"[❖] through symbols and concepts, even though these symbols and concepts refer to no object."[❖]lxix [69] Such an explanation leaves open the question, however, of how I recognize that my experience of the Beyond does not capture the Beyond in itself, or, as Schelling puts it, that my knowledge of the Absolute is never absolute. It is not enough to say that I experience the Beyond as beyond, for this answer does not explain how such an answer is even possible. Schelling, on the other hand, overcomes this difficulty because he recognizes that we already know the Absolute through our free participation in it. We can recognize the Beyond as beyond because we are already beyond the experience.

In a way, Voegelin might have been moving toward this recognition himself when he introduced the notion of reflective distance into his philosophy of consciousness. In terms of the Schelling connection, it is interesting to note Voegelin's remark that reflective distance is

"formulated in opposition to, and as a corrective of, the symbolism of reflective identity' developed by the German idealistic philosophers.❖lxx [70] As Jerry Day notes, Schelling is strangely absent from this discussion, which might suggest that Voegelin was at least aware that Schelling did not fit the pattern, that Schelling's inclusion in the story would break the dichotomy that Voegelin wished to draw between his philosophy and the Idealist tradition. Voegelin himself might have recognized that Schelling was closer to the solution than he was to the problem. In any event, Voegelin's notion of reflective distance might represent a move toward something like Schelling's philosophy of freedom insofar as it seems to suggest that philosophical reflection is already beyond the noetic and pneumatic articulations of order that emerge in consciousness. Does not my ability to stand back, reflect upon, and evaluate the emerging symbols of order in the metaxy already suggest that I am in some sense beyond the symbols? From where does my ability to analyze the structure of consciousness come if I am not already more than my consciousness? Although Voegelin introduces it as another dimension within consciousness, the logic of reflective distance seems to point toward our freedom, our ability to transcend thought as the true source of our knowledge of order. One wonders if questions of this type would have pushed Voegelin to the recognition that truth is something we already know, even before we experience it.

Conclusion

As Ellis Sandoz notes in his introduction to In Search of Order, "the fact that the quest of order is an unfinished story as told by Voegelin is most fitting.❖lxxi [71] Voegelin would have been the first to admit that his search was incomplete. In this essay I have tried to suggest that

Schelling's philosophy can help us to understand one of the ways in which it is. Both Voegelin and Schelling aim to establish that we exist within an order of being of which we are not the authors and that we are incapable of knowing in its entirety. But Voegelin pursues this aim via a philosophy of consciousness, while Schelling develops a philosophy of freedom that attempts to show that we are always already in touch with order before we experience it. I have argued that, although Voegelin seems to be aware of the problems that Schelling is trying to overcome, he nevertheless does not quite seem to realize the centrality of Schelling's insight into the ontological precedence of being to thinking. If he had followed Schelling down this path, however, he might have found the philosophical means to go beyond some of the difficulties that arise in relation to his own philosophy. Voegelin argued that a philosophy of order must be a philosophy of history and that a philosophy of history depends upon a philosophy of consciousness. As he writes in his early chapter on Schelling, "philosophy becomes identical with history and history with the science of the soul.❖lxxii [72] The next step would have been to recognize that the search for order must move beyond a science of the soul to a metaphysics of freedom.

i [1] F.W.J. Schelling, quoted in Andrew Bowie, Schelling and Modern European Philosophy: An Introduction (Routledge, 1993), 24.

ii [2] Voegelin, CW, 34: 90.

iii [3] Voegelin, CW, 25: 236.

iv [4] Voegelin, CW, 25: 208.

v [5] Jerry Day, Voegelin, Schelling and the Philosophy of Historical Existence (Columbia & London : University of Missouri Press, 2003). See also Barry Cooper, Eric Voegelin and the Foundations of Modern Political Science (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 383-432.

vi [6] As Day notes, Voegelin had originally intended to include the chapter on Schelling in OH 5. Day, Voegelin, Schelling and the Philosophy of Historical Existence, 47. See the Appendix in Voegelin, CW, 28: 233-43.

vii [7] Bernard Lonergan, for instance, said of Voegelin's philosophy that "it is just he knowing himself. ♦ Quoted in Eugene Webb, Philosophers of Consciousness (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1988), 95.

viii [8] David Walsh, "Voegelin's Place in Modern Philosophy, ♦ Modern Age Winter 2007, 12-23, 21.

ix [9] Voegelin's theory of consciousness has been well-treated in the secondary literature. For a few examples, see the following: Glenn Hughes, Mystery and Myth in the Philosophy of Eric Voegelin (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 1993); Michael P. Morrissey, Consciousness and Transcendence: The Theology of Eric Voegelin (Notre Dame & London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994); Webb, Philosophers of Consciousness.

x [10] Voegelin, CW, 18: 29.

xi [11] Voegelin, CW, 18: 30.

xii [12] Voegelin, CW, 18: 29-30.

xiii [13] Voegelin, CW, 18: 30-31.

xiv [14] Voegelin, CW, 18: 51-54.

xv [15] Voegelin, CW, 18: 52.

xvi [16] Voegelin, CW, 18:

xvii [17] Voegelin, CW, 18: 58.

xviii [18] Voegelin, CW, 18: 55.

xix [19] Voegelin, CW, 18: 55.

xx [20] Morrissey, Consciousness and Transcendence, 123

xxi [21] David Walsh, "Voegelin's Place in Modern Philosophy, ♦ 21.

xxii [22] Voegelin, CW, 18: 40.

xxiii [23] Voegelin, CW, 18: 40. Voegelin adds that "The participatory structure of the event and the account given of it in the referential structure of the narrative are inseparably one in the paradoxical structure of the story. ♦ Voegelin, CW, 18: 41.

xxiv [24] Glenn Hughes, Mystery and Myth, 38.

xxv [25] The best arguments in English for this position are found in Bowie, Schelling and Modern European Philosophy; and David Walsh, The Modern Philosophical Revolution: The Luminosity of Existence (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2008 [forthcoming]). Bowie relies quite heavily on the work of Manfred Frank. See his Der unendliche Mangel an Sein (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1975) and Eine Einfuehrung in Schellings Philosophie (Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1985). Voegelin, of course, speaks of the Beyond as well, but, as I will explain below, for Voegelin our awareness of it is always due to an experience within consciousness, whereas Schelling tries to grasp how our awareness of it transcends consciousness.

xxvi [26] As Manfred Frank and, following him, Andrew Bowie, have argued, Schelling's critique of Fichte was indebted to the influence of his friend, Friedrich Hölderlin, and Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi. Andrew Bowie, Schelling and Modern European Philosophy; Manfred Frank, Eine Einfuehrung in Schellings Philosophie.

xxvii [27] As I will discuss below, this is a key point of disagreement between Voegelin and Schelling, for Schelling reserves the term consciousness for the reflective (or intentional) relationship between subject and object. Voegelin, on the other hand (and as has been discussed above), applies the term, consciousness, to the luminous dimension of reality as well.

xxviii [28] Andrew Bowie claims that the Absolute can only be "presupposed" ("Translators Introduction," in F. W. J. Schelling, On the History of Modern Philosophy, trans. Andrew Bowie [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994], 17), and Schelling himself refers to it as an "assumption" in his early works. See for example, Schelling's On University Studies, trans E. S. Morgan, ed. Norbert Guterman (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1966), .

xxix [29] F. W. J. Schelling, Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom, trans. Jeff Love & Johannes Schmidt (Albany : SUNY, 2006), 10.

xxx [30] The distinction emerges for Schelling sometime in the 1820's. An extensive discussion is available in English in F. W. J. Schelling, The Grounding of Positive Philosophy: The Berlin Lectures, trans. Bruce Matthews (Albany : SUNY Press, 2007).

xxxi [31] Immanuel Kant, Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, ed. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni with an introduction by Robert Merrihew Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 81-82.

xxxii [32] David Walsh, The Modern Philosophical Revolution.

xxxiii [33] Schelling's Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation, Three of Seven Books Trans. and Reduced by Victor C. Hayes (Armidale: Australian Association for the Study of Religions, 1995), 221.

xxxiv [34] F. W. J. Schelling, System of Transcendental Idealism, trans. Peter Heath with an introduction by Michael Vater (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 135. Quoted in Andrew Bowie, "Rethinking the History of the Subject: Jacobi, Schelling, and Heidegger," in Deconstructive Subjectivities, ed. Simon Critchley & Peter Dews (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), 119.

xxxv [35] Voegelin makes intermittent references to Schelling throughout his corpus, but the early chapter in the History of Political Ideas. For an overview, see Day, Voegelin, Schelling, and the Philosophy of Historical Existence, 18-49.

xxxvi [36] Voegelin relies on the accounts that Schelling gives in the Stuttgarter Privatvorlesungen (F. W. J. Schelling, "Stuttgart Private Lectures" in Idealism and the Endgame of Theory: Three Essays by F.W.J. Schelling, trans. & ed. with a critical intro. by Thomas Pfau [Albany: SUNY PRESS, 1994]) and the Weltalter (F.W.J. Schelling, Ages of the World, trans. Jason Wirth [Albany: SUNY Press, 2000]). For a more elaborate account, see Schelling, On the History of Modern Philosophy.

xxxvii [37] Although, see for instance Frederick Beiser, The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism (Cambridge, MA & London: Harvard University Press, 2003) where he elaborates on the political and cultural motivations of the early Romantics.

xxxviii [38] Schelling, Aphorismen zur Einleitung in die Naturphilosophie (1806), cited and translated in Voegelin, CW, 25: 204.

xxxix [39] Voegelin, CW, 25: 204.

xl [40] Voegelin, CW, 25: 206-207.

xli [41] Voegelin, CW, 25: 207.

xlII [42] Who, incidentally, does not get as much press in the Schelling literature as Voegelin gives him. Schelling is usually seen as attempting to unite and overcome Spinoza and Fichte. See Bowie, "Translator's Introduction," in Schelling, On the History of Modern Philosophy; and Bowie, Schelling and Modern European Philosophy.

xlIII [43] For a helpful discussion of the potencies, see Edward Allen Beach, The Potencies of God(s): Schelling's Philosophy of Mythology (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994).

xlIV [44] Voegelin, CW, 25: 208.

xlV [45] Voegelin, CW, 25: 210. Voegelin claims that "What is new in Schelling is the critical consciousness of the source of speculation." Voegelin, CW, 25: 239.

xlVI [46] Voegelin, CW, 25: 212.

xlVII [47] Voegelin, CW, 25: 214.

xlVIII [48] Voegelin, CW, 25: 214.

xlIX [49] Voegelin, CW, 25: 216.

I [50] Jerry Day argues for the former in Voegelin, Schelling, and the Philosophy of Historical Existence. I suspect that the truth of the matter probably lies somewhere between these two possibilities. While Voegelin had studied Schelling's works for many years before he wrote the chapter on Schelling, he also tries to interpret Schelling's philosophy as based on experiences of order. In any event, it is certainly Voegelin's reading of Schelling that was influential for Voegelin and, as I am trying to show, that does not completely correspond to Schelling's position.

II [51] Voegelin, CW, 25: 198-99.

IIi [52] Voegelin, CW, 25: 199.

IIiI [53] Voegelin, CW, 25: 213.

liv [54] As one might think when he writes, for instance, that "perhaps the one is still coming who will sing the greatest heroic poem, grasping in spirit something for which the seers of old were famous: what was, what is, what will be. But this time has not yet come." (Schelling, Ages of the World, xl)

lv [55] As Schelling writes, "not the absolute prius itself will be proved (this is above all proof, since it is the absolute and through itself indubitable beginning)." (Schelling, The Grounding of Positive Philosophy, 180.

lvi [56] Voegelin, CW, 25: 210.

lvii [57] Voegelin relies on the two following quotations: "There is a light in this darkness. Just as according to the old and almost hackneyed phrase that the person is the world writ small, so the events of human life, from the deepest to their highest consummation, must accord with the events of life in general. Certainly one who could write completely the history of their own life would also have, in a small epitome, concurrently grasped the history of the cosmos." (Schelling, Ages of the World, 3.) "A principle that is outside and above the world must be granted to the person. How else could the person, alone among all creatures, trace the long trail of developments from the present back into the deepest night of the past? How else could the person alone climb up to the beginning of the ages it there were not in the person a principle of the beginning of the ages? Created out of the source of things and the same as it, the human soul is conscientious [mitwissenschaft] of creation. In the soul lies the highest clarity of all things, and the soul is not so much knowing as knowledge itself." (Schelling, Ages of the World, xxxvi)

lviii [58] Schelling, The Grounding of Positive Philosophy, 94.

lix [59] Voegelin, CW, 25: 210.

lx [60] See, for instance, Holger Zaborowski, "Geschichte, Freiheit, Schöpfung und die Herrlichkeit Gottes. Das System der Freiheit' und die Ambivalenz der Philosophie Schellings," in: Holger Zaborowski and Alfred Denker, ed., System Freiheit Geschichte. Schellings Einleitung in die Philosophie (1830) im Kontext seines Werkes (Stuttgart : frommann-holzboog, 2004), 26-47.

lxi [61] Voegelin, CW, 25: 211-212.

lxii [62] Voegelin, CW, 25: 219. Voegelin's interpretation of Schelling's philosophy as Promethean is another point of contention that cannot receive the detail it deserves here. On this score, Voegelin is clearly indebted to Hans Urs von Balthasar's Prometheus.

lxiii [63] Schelling, Freiheitsschrift, 33.

lxiv [64] Andrew Bowie, Schelling and Modern European Philosophy, 25.

lxv [65] Voegelin, CW, 6: 365.

lxvi [66] Voegelin, CW, 18: 44.

lxvii [67] Voegelin CW, 18: 44 .

lxviii [68] Voegelin CW, 18: 44 .

lxix [69] Michael P. Morrissey, Consciousness and Transcendence, 119.

lxx [70] Voegelin CW, 18: 63.

lxxi [71] Ellis Sandoz, "Introduction," in CW, 18: 15.

lxxii [72] Voegelin, CW, 25: 212.