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F. W. J. SCHELLING: FURTHER PRESENTATIONS FROM THE SYSTEM OF PHILOSOPHY (1802)

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Soon after publishing the "Presentation of My System of Philosophy," Schelling set to work on the eight essays that comprise the "Further Presentations." Their publication was delayed, even though their venue was Schelling's own organ, the Journal for Speculative Philosophy. *The two essays translated here, one on intellectual intuition, the other on construction in philosophy, appeared in August and October 1802 respectively, even though their composition was complete a year earlier. These two essays elucidate the methodology of identity philosophy, a task that the author of "My System" had postponed. The reader will note that Schelling considers 'intellectual intuition' and 'philosophical construction' as separate topics and does not explicit say how they fit together, although presumably one who has the former can do the latter. Neither of the two is identified with (or distinguished from) the "reason that no one has" mentioned at the beginning of the "Presentation."*

Schelling's competitors were Reinhold, who insisted on the importance of putting philosophy within the range of a single overarching principle, and Fichte, whose published versions of Theory of Science showed a strong foundationalist bent to encompass philosophizing within one or several such principles. With Spinoza's Ethics *as his stylebook, the author of "My System" looked like a stalwart foundationalist, ready to deduce the whole world from a thick version of the principle of identity. As it worked out, however, Schelling's first presentation of identity philosophy was logically soft, dependent on preliminary clarifications and stipulations given in the first seven "theorems"*[1] *—materials introduced discursively, lacking even the defined logical status of*

[1] I am indebted to Christoph Asmuth for this insight. See Christoph Asmuth, "*Der Anfang und das Eine: Die Systemgestalt bei Fichte, Schelling, und Hegel*," in Schelling: *Zwischen Fichte und Hegel*, ed. Asmuth, Denker, and Vater (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Grüner, 2000), 410.

assumptions or postulates. Without a discussion of methodology, then, and prefaced only by cryptic remarks about philosophy working in the territory of a "reason" that no human had, Schelling's first effort seems to support the mature Hegel's unkind (but correct) remark that Schelling pursued his philosophical education in public.

What of Schelling's procedure in these essays? The first essay, on intellectual intuition, argues rather casually at first that all cognition involves a convergence or interpenetration of factors that can be distinguished in analysis, but are real only when working together, unified in the immediate confluence of intuition. Whether one speaks like Kant of cognition being a spontaneously effected synthesis of concept and sensation, or, like a dogmatic metaphysician attempting an ontological proof for the divine being, of an immediate connection between essence and existence in that (objectified) being, all philosophical analyses of knowing rest on a (real or postulated, present or deferred) immediate unification of two items: sensible and intellectual, or particular and universal. Without such a point, argues Schelling, knowing will lack certainty, or at best combine truth with indefinitely mortgaged justification.

This living point of convergence is "intellectual intuition." The favored way of talking about it, if one is referring to things one knows—as in the case of the botanist examining the plant—is as an identity of universality and particularity, or the ability to see the universal in the particular. If one is referring to the ultimate or foundational case of knowing, one intuits the inclusive identity (or indifference) of the single essence of the absolute and its multiple ways of manifesting, or 'form'.

Schelling claims that philosophy—absolute philosophy, that is—connects to form in such a way that form's way of both manifesting and cognizing the single essence or reality is wholly laid open for it. It is not clear to me whether Schelling argues for this—and explains how it is possible—or whether he merely wishes for it, or perhaps just decrees that it is achieved. Foundationalism seems attractive, but so would almost any mirage in the desert of skepticism. What he claims, in a more careful fashion, at 4:370, is (a) that philosophy possesses such a "formally absolute cognition," (b) that it is aware of its possession, and presumably of its difference from ordinary knowledge, and (c) that such cognition has one and only one object, the absolute. The difficulty, of course, lies in the first claim; if one knew about the third, it could be used to support the first. Schelling, however, seems to use (claims to) the first to argue to the third. And he cuts off all recourse to the finite, or to ordinary knowing, to support his absolute claims. Either there is an unsupported dogmatic claim that philosophy, or at least one philosopher, has this "formally absolute cognition," or else there must be an element on the side of thinking, seeing, or the self-awareness that backgrounds such activity that can provide access to the postulated point of

interweaving or cognitive convergence. The Cartesian cogito *is too subjective and finite to get one there, and the ontological argument objectifies the point of convergence it argues to.*

In the second essay, Schelling pursues the issue of systematicity, not of certainty and justification, under the title of "philosophical construction." His key insight there is that in the 'imaginative' integration of philosophical knowing, a taxonomical space is generated in which every particular phenomena or kind of knowing can find berth. Taken up into the universality of the philosophical system, every particular, every phenomenon, every order of research and explanation is vindicated or justified, and every isolated thing connected to everything else. It is not clear to me how this merely taxonomical space—more plausibly explained as the machinations of human architectonic—becomes articulated wholeness or organic inclusion, the living universe that absolute philosophy (immodestly) proposes to capture. The animate organism is in fact the only thing Schelling can point to that embodies the logical ideas he articulated: inclusion of the particular within the universe to the extent that particularity itself drops away and each item manifests the universal.

Despite these difficulties, the essay on construction contains the elements for a happier solution to these difficulties than Schelling was able to provide in 1801. A way of reasoning to his desired conclusion that is both more rigorous and more suggestive is offered by talk of form's (or cognition's) function of Ineinsbildung. *Kant taught that there was no logical unity nor epistemic focus to cognition without the work of imagination,* Einbildungskraft, *the capacity to unify an indefinite multiplicity. It is precisely the logical function of cognition, then, to map unity onto multiplicity, to form indefinitely multiple 'stuff' into cognizable unities, to impart intelligibility by weaving the one and the many together. Schelling seems to suggest we must project such a logical and expressive function onto reality as such, which would then have to be one and multiple in its basic structure, rather than indefinite and plural.*

Though it would be plainly anthropomorphic to attribute something like subjectivity, selfhood, or even logical egoity to the absolute—no transcendent unity of apperception, then—Schelling seems to want to attribute logical 'imagination' to it, viz., this propensity to express reality in form, unity in multiplicity, and cognitively to reintegrate the products of that expression and multiplication. At this stage of his thinking, however, Schelling seems incapable of expressing this hint in non-Platonizing ways, or even if that is done through the Platonic calculus of the one and the many, to address fundamental metaphysical problems that remain, like the relation between the absolute and its phenomenal expressions.[2]

[2] For further remarks on Schelling's attempt to turn intellectual intuition into a secure method, see my "Intellectual Intuition in Schelling's Philosophy of Identity, 1801–1804," in *Schelling: Zwischen Fichte und Hegel*, 213–34. Ultimately Schelling postulates some sort of self-intuition within the absolute (now called God) and a sharing of that transparency with reason.

This translation uses Karl Schelling's edition of Schelling's Sämliche Werke, *vol. 4 for its text, as reproduced in Manfred Schröter's reordered* F. W. J. Schelling Werke *(Munich: Beck, 1962). The numbering of that edition appears in braces within the translation; corrections to that text are announced in the notes. Schelling uses both parentheses and brackets for punctuation; any words I have inserted to clarify phrases or sentences are found inside braces.*

The translation of some terms deserves comment. Schelling uses two different terms for knowledge: Wissen, *signifying objective, codified knowledge, as in a science; and* Erkenntniβ, *signifying live, personal, intuitive knowledge, or knowledge by acquaintance.* Wissen *is translated by 'knowledge',* Erkenntniβ *by 'cognition'. The being of the absolute is signified by* Seyn, *never* Daseyn, *so the present tense of 'to be' is used, however awkward it sounds.* Ineinsbildung*—imagination or forming into a unity—and a cognate verb,* einbilden*—literally, to 'in-form'—are rendered in a variety of ways, none of them entirely satisfactory: identification, informing, inbuilding, forming into a unity, etc. 'Construction' and 'demonstration' translate Schelling's English borrowings:* Construktion *and* Demonstration. Entzweiung *is rendered as 'doubling'.*

It is satisfying work to make these texts available to an English-speaking readership. I am grateful to Philosophical Forum *for providing the opportunity. I am solely responsibility for any errors in the translation.*

Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy (1802)

§ II.
Proof That There Is a Point Where Knowledge of the Absolute and the Absolute Itself Are One.

{4:361} A geometer immediately sets about his constructions without any further instruction about pure intuition; even his postulates are not requirements for this intuition {of space} as such, about which it is assumed there can be no doubt or ambiguity, but necessary conditions of determinate intuitions {such as lines and figures}.

In the same way, intellectual or rational intuition is something fixed and decided for the philosopher in rigorously scientific construction, something about which no doubt is allowed nor explanation found necessary. It is that which simply and without restriction is presupposed, and can in this respect not even be called the postulate of philosophy.

Perhaps one might ask of it the question that Plato asked of virtue: can it be learned or not, can it be attained through practice, or is it perhaps to be acquired

neither through instruction nor through industry, but is inborn in us by nature, or is it lent to humans by a heavenly gift?[3]

Clearly it is nothing that can be learned. All attempts to teach it, therefore, are entirely useless in rigorously scientific philosophy. Introductions to it should not be sought within strict science, since they necessarily serve as a threshold for philosophy and fashion preliminary expositions and the like. {4:362}

Nor is it comprehensible why philosophy should be charged with an incapacity in this respect. It is much more appropriate sharply to restrict access to philosophy, to isolate it on all sides from ordinary knowledge, until one can find no road or even footpath leading from it to philosophy. Philosophy begins here {with intellectual intuition}, and whoever is not already at this point or shrinks back from it remains distant from it, or even flees it.

The condition of the scientific spirit in general and in all the divisions of knowledge is not just a passing intellectual intuition, but one that remains as the unchangeable instrument of knowledge. For it is simply the capacity to see the universal in the particular, the infinite in the finite, the two combined into a living unity. The anatomist who dissects a plant or an animal body surely believes he immediately sees the plant or the animal organism, but strictly speaking he sees only the individual thing he designates plant or body. To see the plant in the plant, the organ in the organism, in a word to see the concept or indifference within difference is possible only through intellectual intuition.

For our present purpose we shall determine the nature and essence of intellectual intuition only to the extent necessary to understand what it is not, to separate it from what people have termed intellectual intuition, but either has nothing in common with it or is but a particular species of it.

The presence {*Daseyn*} even in its bare idea of philosophy in and for itself shows the necessity of assuming that the knowledge one obtains the usual ways is not true knowledge. Since philosophy strives to discover the grounds and conditions of the science to which certainty is ascribed in another respect, {viz.,} mathematics, this shows that with the postulation of philosophy {as absolute science} we also assume the merely conditioned truth of this other body of knowledge.

What follows is the general groundwork for the discovery of philosophy.

Of whatever sort our native capacity of knowledge may be, this {4:363} much is clear: it is posited in necessary connection to some merely finite existence and counts {only} as a knowledge reflected in the finite. In the end, however, (this too can be immediately appreciated) this finite existence *is* only for us, but in connection to and in contrast with an infinite factor. This infinite factor, which

[3] Reading, after Plato, *Geshenk for Geshick [Tr.]*.

we can also call *the ideal*, is neither limited nor capable of limitation, while the finite is forever, always, and unto infinity only a determinate something.

By this is posited in consciousness itself the universal opposition of the ideal and the real, the infinite and the finite. For it is necessary that concept and object be opposed to one another in being connected to each other. This is because more is always contained in the infinite, whose immediate expression is the concept, than in the finite, whose direct expression is the object.

Of every pretended philosophy that is not true philosophy one can say in advance that, no matter what form under which it appears, it remains fixed at this antithesis.

Geometry, however, and mathematics as a whole are entirely beyond this opposition. Here thought is always adequate to being, concept to object, and vice versa. The question whether what is correct and certain in thought also is real or in the object, or whether what being expresses attains to conceptual necessity, can never even arise. In a word, there is no difference here between subjective and objective truth; subjectivity and objectivity are absolutely one, and there is in this science no construction in which they are not one.

That mathematical certainty rests solely on this unity has already been shown (§ I). This unity is pure certainty itself, though it appears in geometry and in arithmetic in some determined subordination, in the first subordinated to being, in the second to thought. (This point will be comprehensible only to those who have generally come to understand how everything is contained in everything, and how what is expressed on the one side in being, and on the other in thought, {4:364} reflects the whole organism of reason). Now to see this certainty—or the unity of thought and being, not in this or that context but simply in and for itself, consequently, as the certainty in all certainty, the truth in all truth, the purely known in everything known—means to elevate oneself to the intuition of absolute unity and with that to intellectual intuition as such.

The person who is outside this unity of thought and being or of the subjective and objective, is simply, entirely, and from the very start outside all certainty. With this unity, the principle of identity used in demonstration is abandoned or remains at best a principle of the understanding; ‘proof’ is progression inside {mere} logical identity, inside the conceptual unity of reflection, without truth or purchase.

Reason, even in its more imperfect efforts, has always associated the greatest and most immediate certainty with this unity of thought and being. Even for the dogmatist who viewed this opposition between thought and being interwoven through all the concepts and forms of finite cognition, the antithesis was merely subjectively unsurpassable. Even he recognized as the highest objectivity of cognition a unity in which being immediately followed from and was joined to concept, and reality to ideality. Associated with this is the so-called ontological

proof of the existence of God, which the systems of reflection rightly regarded as the point of purest philosophical certainty. Reflection did not lack the idea of the absolute, only its mode of cognition was the wrong one. Reflection relies in its very nature on the antithesis of thought and being. This unity of thought and being {to which we point as the highest principle} was for these systems only just another case of being [something objective]. Only in this {objective} unity were thought and being united, and God was absolute insofar as the antithesis was unified in him, insofar as relative to God, being or actuality followed directly from idea or possibility. But thought remained outside this unity and in subjective opposition to it; the antithesis was abolished in God, but not in cognizing God. In this way, accordingly, the identity {4:365} of thought and being in the absolute itself was downgraded to a mere case of being, related to the philosopher's thinking as the real to the ideal, or as objective item to subjective item. The being of God no longer followed from the idea in God himself, but from the philosopher's thinking {about God}. Thus the very idea of the absolute, to be the identity of thought and being, was as good as lost.[4]

Since (from the fact that reality of a golden mountain does not follow from my ability to imagine it, or, to put it in a quite Kantian way, one's cash balance is not increased by imagining one hundred dollars) Criticism has introduced a deep and consequent uniformity of opinion on this matter, the view {that the reality of the absolute in no way follows from the mere *thought* of it} has grown into a universal prohibition against all positive, categorical cognition of the absolute. Unless one decides entirely to renounce thinking of the absolute, one is at least forced to begin philosophizing hypothetically, with pure thought or the understanding's {abstract} principle of identity, and then to see if one might discover being elsewhere.

The basis for reflection's effort to take the absolute as absolute but nonetheless fix it as something objective lies in its ignorance of the absolute mode of cognizing. But this ignorance is not more, or more evidently, responsible than is the mere apparently opposed tendency of Criticism. Criticism can point out what is contradictory in reflection's effort, but is unable on its own to point to anything that surpasses this sphere of contradiction. Compared to the true philosophy, Criticism is but an impoverished skepticism; itself entirely deformed by reflection, it thinks it has also gotten hold of philosophy itself and negated it as speculation. True skepticism is entirely directed against reflection's mode of cognizing, and it is so directed by the principle of true speculation—except that

[4] We do not differ from dogmatism in that we assert an identity of thought and being in the absolute, but that we assert an absolute unity of thought and of being in *knowing*, and thereby, that we assert the being of the absolute inside knowing and of knowing inside the absolute. *Author's note.*

it {4:366} cannot express this position categorically, since it would then cease to be skepticism. One can be sure, however, that skepticism will never find any weapons against speculation or absolute cognition except those derived from common-sense or relative knowledge. It must itself impugn the reality of those weapons, since they are not only objects of its doubt but are unconditionally rejected by it. Related in this way, skepticism and philosophy can never coincide. The former stands to the latter as its absolute privation, almost the way darkness stands to light: for the light, darkness simply does not exist and is immediately[5] abolished by it.

The absolute kind of cognition, like the truth that subsists within it, has no true opposite outside itself. And if it cannot be proved to someone, just as light cannot {be shown} those born blind, or space to someone who lacks spatial intuition (were it possible that an intelligent being lacked it), on the other hand, it cannot be contradicted by anything. It is the appearing light that is itself the day and knows no darkness.

Whoever sets foot in the territory of philosophy is compelled by every circumstance to incorporate the living sense of this absolute cognition, which of course can neither be given him nor forced upon him. Yet from acknowledging this preliminary, merely formal kind of absolute cognition, it is but a small step to the insight that this {formal} cognition is immediately a cognition of the absolute itself, and is accompanied by the abolition of all differences that contrast the absolute as cognized to the subject that cognizes it.

With a few strokes we complete the proof that for consciousness there is a point where the absolute itself and knowledge of the absolute are simply one.

That thought as such—since it has a necessary opposite in being—neither is nor can become absolute cognition is a matter sufficiently clear, and one placed totally beyond doubt by the preceding remarks. Thus on the whole an absolute cognition can only be conceived as one in which thought and being {4:367} are not opposed, {a unity} in which they are completely equivalent forms, separated only in reflection or the understanding, but in themselves absolutely inseparable.

Furthermore, it is immediately clear to anyone who in some sense has the idea of the absolute—whether he ascribes reality to it or not is a totally different thing—that by this idea he conceives one identical absolute unity of ideality and reality, of thought and being.

Here at the start, we do not wish to understand anything about the absolute's essence, about which we say nothing here. We speak solely of the idea of the absolute, and set down the following for the sake of explanation:

[5] Reading *unmittelbar for mittelbar [Tr.]*.

What is united in every being is the universal and the particular; the former corresponds to thought, the latter to being. Now in no finite or individual thing does the particular follow from the universal. The fact that some one individual human exists, or that right now, e.g., just so many humans exist, not more and not less, cannot be understood from the concept of a human being. Here being in no way follows from essence; no individual thing is determined to existence through its concept, but through something *that is not its concept*.

The essence of all things is one, and considered by itself there is in it no ground of the particular. Form is that by which things are separated and distinguished; it is the difference of the universal and the particular, and is expressed in things by their existence.

In order not to repeat what is well known to all: that with respect to the absolute, being immediately follows from essence, we propose to more closely define this {relation of the universal and particular}. In the case of what is absolute, universal and the particular are simply one. Its concept (to absolutely *be*) is also its particularity. It is, of course, absolute in both respects; consequently, it is neither like any other thing (through some universal concept) nor unlike it (through its particularity). It is absolutely and essentially one, and simply self-identical. —[Now] *since* it is form by which {4:368} the particular entity is a particular, {and} the finite item a finite, so *too form is one with essence*, each of course absolute, since in the absolute the particular and the universal are absolutely one. Here in this *absolute unity or identical absoluteness of essence and form lies the proof of our above-stated principle*, the disclosure of how it is possible that the absolute itself and knowledge of the absolute can be one, of the possibility, therefore, of an immediate cognition of the absolute.

Since, according to our assumption that there is a formally absolute cognition in intellectual consciousness, the absolute *is* in the formal aspect of cognition, so, because the absolute indifference of essence and form belongs to its idea, it also *is* in the essential aspect of cognition. The absolute unity of thought and being, of the ideal and the real, not differentiated from its essence, is the absolute's eternal form, the absolute itself. For, since the difference of the ideal and the real also posits the difference of essence and form, and since the latter are one in the absolute, it follows that the unity of the ideal and the real is necessarily the form of the absolute, and equally that in it form is itself absolute and identical to *essence*.

Now there is in absolute cognition just such an absolute unity of thought and being (as was shown). The sole opposition that might remain is that cognition, *formally* defined and as such, might be opposed to the *absolute itself*. But form is the absolute itself; unity of essence and form pertains to its idea. *Consequently, formally absolute cognition is necessarily a knowing of the absolute itself.* Thus there is an immediate cognition of the absolute (and *only* of the

absolute, since only in its case is this condition of immediate certainty possible: unity of essence and form) and this is the first speculative cognition, the principle and the ground of possibility of all philosophy.

We call this cognition *intellectual intuition*. *Intuition*, because all intuition is an identification of thought and being {4:369} and because only in intuition as such is reality. In the case under consideration, the mere *thought* of the absolute —granted that this is determined in its idea as that which *is* immediately through its concept—is in no way yet a true cognition of the absolute. This is found only in an intuition that absolutely identifies thought and being, which because it formally expresses the absolute also becomes the expression of its essence. We call this intuition *intellectual* because it is reason-intuition, and because, *as* cognition, it is absolutely one with the object of knowing.[6]

Philosophy rests [a] on this point of coincidence between formal absolute cognition and the absolute itself, [b] on its cognizing the mode of this coincidence, and [c] on insight into the uniqueness of the point where cognition can be absolutely one with its object—(this is of course conceivable only in with respect to the absolute). All philosophical certainty follows from this point; it is itself the ultimate certainty. {4:370}

The requirement on which every science bases its reality is that what is absolutely cognized by it: the idea, also be the real itself. In geometrical construction this coincidence of idea and reality shows up directly, since it is granted to geometry to display the archetypes, as it were, in outer intuition. In philosophical construction this point of coincidence is simple, absolute, context-free intellectual intuition. In it, absolute cognition along with the preeminently real, the

[6] Most people understand by 'intellectual intuition' something incomprehensible, mysterious, but with no more reason than one would have in thinking the intuition of pure space something mysterious, disregarding the fact that all outer intuition is possible only *in* and through this intuition. —Both space and time are the unity of being and thought, fallen into different forms only in the sensible world. The reflected world is precisely this one, where the infinite and the finite appear separated. Consequently, to the extent that it falls within the sensible world itself, the unity of the two can only be reflected *either* in the infinite or in *the finite*. These two reflections are what we call time and space (the relation of the two = subjective : objective). The unity of the two—not, once more, what it may be in the infinite or in the finite, but—intuited *in itself*, is just the principle of absolute science; it is the object of pure intellectual intuition and also intellectual intuition itself, since here intuition and object are identical. Now that in which the infinite and the finite are one is the eternal. Absolute science is consequently a science of *the eternal, in its very self.* Absolute science has to display its constructions within the eternal, just as geometry has to display its constructions within the universal image of the eternal, space. Since space itself falls within the sensible world, and, accordingly, the intuition of space is in one respect still a sensible intuition, so geometry exhibits, e.g., its archetypes in what is in one respect still a sensible *intuition*—or it presents them in *reflected* intellectual intuition. The eternal as such lies entirely outside the world of sense. *Author's note.*

absolute itself, are recognized as the uniquely true and real things; so too therefore are the modifications of this cognition.

In this indifference of form and essence lies also the uniquely possible and necessary point of union for idealism and realism.

Idealism entirely reduces philosophy to form, to knowledge, to cognition. If this knowledge or cognition is itself absolute knowledge, absolute cognition, then what is needed to correct the view that it is antithetical to realism is merely reflection on the proposition that absolute form [absolute knowledge] is also absolute essence, being, substance. But cognition is not yet cognized as absolute if one views it in antithesis to being and does not also recognize it as absolute reality.

Realism alleges that it starts from an absolute being, but if this being is really absolute, it directly follows that it is a being located in the ideas, and as simply absolute, in the idea of all ideas, in absolute cognition.[7] This relationship is what we have called the relation of indifference [not some inane synthesis, as many have represented it].

The absolute mode of cognition, since it is the principle of *all* rational comprehension, is also the principle of its own comprehension. The living principle of philosophy and of every faculty by which the finite and the infinite are identified is absolute cognition itself insofar as it is the idea and essence of the soul. {4:371} It is the eternal concept by which soul *is* in the absolute. Neither originated nor transitory, it is simply eternal, without temporal dimension; it identifies the finite and the infinite inside cognition, and is at once absolute cognition and the unique true being and substance.[8]

Moreover from this one can conclude that any intuition—in other respects arbitrarily defined—in which the opposition of the finite and the infinite is not absolutely destroyed is not intellectual intuition. Therefore an intuition can never be called intellectual intuition in which something of the empirical subject, or of the I in some sense other than that in which it is universal form (or pure subject-object) remains outside this form. The same goes for any sort of intuition that in the act of *intuiting itself reaches* only to the identity of the subjective subject-object; (in this case intellectual intuition would be distinguished from all sorts of empirical intuition only in this respect: in the latter something different from the

[7] Or: Thus it is one with the absolutely ideal, with archetypal knowledge, and coincides with it in cognition. *Author's note.*

[8] In this very feature, that it proceeds from absolute cognition, philosophy also pursues its self-demonstration (since it is absolute science, it can only prove itself). It leads us to the point where this absolute knowledge, which = the absolute itself, is *informed in us* as the idea and the essence of our soul. *Author's note.*

subject is intuited, while in the former what intuits and what is intuited are identical).

Moreover, since knowing was completely specified as the domain of the formal, it is surprising that the necessary *idea* of the absolute—that with respect to it there should be no difference of essence and form—has been insufficient to show that exactly and only the absolute is a possible object of an absolute and immediate cognition. It is also surprising that this idea—the most certain of all things, whose very nature makes possible an absolute union of cognition with itself as what is cognized, and is thus ground of all certainty and itself the purest case of certainty—could not prevent its being {mistakenly} viewed as a another kind of cognition, the final result of other cognitive acts, themselves supposedly immediately certain. Or it is viewed as something whose whole reality must first be proved in some other {4:372} reality,[9] or else explored by analysis, or even, in other contexts, believed on moral grounds. Whatever else the particular form {of error} may be, when one overlooks or ignores the absolute indifference of cognition and being, or of form and essence, intellectual intuition is lost and with it philosophy itself.

§ IV.[10]

On Philosophical Construction, or the Way to Exhibit All Things in the Absolute.

{4:391} Since we now go forward to the other part of our inquiry that considers science and the way it is generated from the unity of first cognition {or intellectual intuition}, we do not doubt that there are some who will think its realization intrinsically impossible, while others will at the very least not clearly recognize its possibility.[11] {4:392}

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[9] E.g., in *nature* or in the ethical world, whence 'faith'. *Author's note.*

[10] This continuation appeared in the *New Journal for Speculative Physics*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1802), under the specific title: "Other Part of the Further Presentations from the System of Philosophy." [*Ed.*]

[11] *Recapitulation.* —Our previous discussion has furnished us with the following items of cognition as material for the whole of the subsequent construction; their development and proof was the goal of all our previous inquiry.

1. Absolute knowing is also the absolute itself. *Proof*: Absolute knowing = unity of thought and being. But this necessary form or mode of being {holds} with respect to the absolute, and this form or mode of being and the absolute itself are again one by virtue of the idea itself. Therefore, the form or mode of being the absolute subsists along with absolute knowing, and so too the absolute itself.

2. Of the absolute {itself} there is no thought and no being, hence also no subject and no object. Instead the absolute is exactly and only what is absolute, without any further determination. But this very absolute, by virtue of the necessary form of its essence, which is absolute ideality, posits itself *objectively*, i.e., it posits its own proper substance which in contrast to the object now takes on the character of the subject, of *the infinite*. It posits its own substance as infinite within the finite, but, conversely, for this very reason, it posits the finite within itself as infinite—and both positings are *one* act.

We have left behind everything on which finite understanding is accustomed to insist. We have even cut off all return to the realm of the conditioned by our declaration that philosophy *is* entirely and completely in the absolute. After all this, it is hardly our intention to allow anything to remain behind which we might use to come back to the conditioned. Since this is so, {we face a double difficulty}: most people will comprehend neither, in general, how we can see so clearly into the absolute that we can ground a science in it—although its possibility surely resides in what we have proved before—nor, specifically, how we intend to draw material for a science from the simply identical and thoroughly simple essence of the absolute. For it will be argued that no science is possible of something that is simply one and ever the same, that something else is required which is not identical, but multiple and differentiated. It will also be argued that even if *what* is demonstrated be forever and necessarily one and the same, by contrast, that *in which* unity is demonstrated is necessarily not one, but many—as happens in geometry, where the identical form and absolute unity of space is expressed in the different units of triangles, squares, circles, etc.

Clearly with this objection we find ourselves situated again inside the first opposition of unity and multiplicity, and the pictorial image of a production of the latter from the former. Though we might imagine these thoughts canceled once and for all in the cognition of *such* a unity in whose scope the contrast of unity and multiplicity had utterly no meaning—where instead multiplicity subsisted within unity, without prejudice to the higher unity that includes them both—we must expect to see them forever recur. This is because the idea of an *absolute* unity: a unity that *immediately*, without going through multiplicity {4:393} is *also totality*, can be assumed to be the possession only of those who have really mastered the supreme point of philosophy.

So to put this idea in the brightest possible light and still stay with this contrast between *what* is proved and that *in which* it is proved (the former of which is supposed to be ever and always one, the latter not-one and multiple), I say this: *what* is proved, which we assume is ever the same, is the absolute unity of

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This is the way the infinite and the finite originate *from* the absolute, namely through its own subject-objectification (not an origination in time, however, but an eternal one). In this respect, the absolute is determined as that which is in itself neither thought nor being, but which, for that very reason, is absolute. Since reason is challenged to conceive the absolute neither as thought nor as being but still to think it, a contradiction arises for reflection, since it conceives the absolute *as* either* a case of thinking or one of being. But intellectual intuition enters into even this contradiction and produces the absolute. {4:392n} In this breakthrough lies the luminous point where the absolute is positively intuited. (Intellectual intuition is therefore merely negative within reflection.) Through this positive intuition, philosophical construction as such is first made possible, or exhibition in the absolute, which is the same thing; this is the topic of § IV. *Author's note.* *[Reading *als* for *alles*. *Tr.*]

the finite and the infinite; for the present purpose I call it the *universal*. That *in which* it is proved is a determinate unity, and is accordingly called the *particular.* Now demonstration is absolute identification of the universal and the particular, that {universal} which is proved and that {particular} in which it is so. These are necessarily and simply one in every construction, and only where this is the case can a construction of philosophy be termed absolute. Now since the former, the universal, is by supposition absolutely and eternally one, but both members are equal in the construction, it follows that the particular is also absolutely one in every construction. Hence neither of the two is one or many in contrast to the other, but each is for itself one and many in absolute unity. Both are therefore the identical unity of the finite and the infinite, and the unity *between* them is a real and essential one.[12]

With this it is clear how in every construction, if it is true and genuine, the particular is abolished as particular in its antithesis to the universal. The particular is itself exhibited within the absolute only insofar as it contains the *entire absolute* exhibited within itself; it is only ideally different from the absolute as universal, viz., as a copy is different from an original, while intrinsically or really it is {4:394} wholly identical to it. But to that extent, the *particular* itself is also nothing that could ever be multiple or be counted, for it includes all aspects of number: both what enumerates (the unit-concept) and what is numbered (the particular).

In this identity or equal absoluteness of the unities that we distinguish as particular and universal resides and is found the innermost mystery of creation: the divine identification (imaging) of original and copy that is the true root of every being. For neither the particular nor the universal would have a reality for itself if the two were not formed into one within the absolute, i.e., unless both were absolute.

With this is also illustrated the mode or possibility of exhibiting all unities within the absolute; for the different unities have no substance in themselves as different, but are merely ideal forms and figures under which the whole is minted, and because the whole *is* in them, they are the whole world itself and have nothing outside themselves to which they could be compared or contrasted. —The whole universe *is* in the absolute as plant, as animal, as human being, but since the whole is in every part, it *is* therein not as plant, not as animal, not as

[12] The recurring antithesis of the universal and particular thus resolves itself in that each of them is posited, the universal and the particular, and with the first identity is posited the second. Every particular within the absolute is itself this (the absolute), i.e., the unity of the infinite and the finite, only intuited in a particular form. The particular forms are = possibilities within the universal identity of the finite and the infinite. These possibilities are to be explained in their infinite ramifications. *Author's note.*

human being or as the particular unity, but as absolute unity. It is first within appearances, where it ceases to be the *whole*, where the form pretends to be something for itself and steps out of indifference with essence, that each becomes the particular and the determinate unity.

No aspect of the particular entity, therefore, not even its species or natural kind, *is* within the absolute. There is no plant in itself or animal in itself; what we call plant is [not essence, substance, but] mere concept, mere ideal determination. All forms obtain reality only because they receive the divine image of unity, but, owing to that, they themselves become universes and are designated ideas; each ceases to be a particular entity in that it enjoys the double unity in which absoluteness consists.

Therefore the philosopher does not know distinct beings, but {4:395} only one being in all the original schematisms of world-intuition; he does not construct the plant or animal, but [the absolute form, i.e.,] the universe in the figure of a plant, the universe in the shape of an animal. These schematisms are possible only in virtue of their ability to receive the undivided fullness of unity. Thus, they are negated as particular. For as particular, they would limit absolute essence, since they exclude other forms from themselves. Yet because every one of them grasps the absolute, and in each all recur and all in each, they show themselves to be the forms of divine in-forming {or imagination}. These schematisms are truly or uniquely real since they are possible in view of the absolute, because in it no difference stands between possibility and actuality.

In this way absolute knowing grasps all forms within itself, every one of them in perfect absoluteness, so that within its scope [each is absolute for itself] everything is contained within each [since it is absolute], and for just this reason nothing is included (as particular) in any one. From this it is clear to what extent one can say that absolute knowing contains everything precisely because it contains nothing, and further, how in a manner similar to the absolute itself, every idea is both *identity and totality*, not each separately, but each in the same way, in the same undivided essence.

It is also evident, on the other hand, how every particular *as such* is immediately and necessarily also an *individual*. For by its essence each thing is like every other and in this capacity expresses the whole. So when its form becomes *particular* form, it becomes inadequate to essence and is in contradiction with it, and the contradiction of form and essence makes the thing be individual and finite (§ II).

Consequently all the things of appearances are copies of the [original] whole, even if highly imperfect, and strive in particular form, as particular to express the universe in themselves. The being of the particular thing resides in the *particular schematism*, which is nothing substantial. Even if each thing accepts as much universality as possible into its particularity {4:396} and as finite

endeavors to be infinite, still due to its imperfection in reaching this goal, it is partially subjected to {external} law as its universal. It does not attain the full perfection that only the ideas truly can enjoy and, to a greater or lesser degree, those creatures most like the ideas, in that they include a wider range of other beings within themselves—to wit, the perfection of being law themselves and of comprehending the universal in their particularity and the particular in their universality. Everything lives and moves because of this twofold striving, and this striving springs from the first forming-into-one {identification} or from the fact that the undivided essence of the absolute is stamped identically upon the real and the ideal, and that substance *is* only in this way.

Just as the preceding remarks clearly illuminate this feature of knowledge: that philosophy *is* in the absolute, so too they bring to light the whole business and enterprise of philosophy. This lets us see the error of those pictures of philosophy that locate its task : [a)] in a *derivation*, whether from the absolute or from another principle in its place, or [b)] in some deduction of the *real*, appearing world, *as such*, or of the possibility of experience.

For, in the first place, how could philosophy know something derivative or which can be derived, since only the absolute *is without qualification?* Everything we can know is a fragment of the absolute essence of the eternal principle, only cast in the form of appearance. But philosophy considers only what everything is in itself, i.e., in the eternal.

Yet how could it be a derivation of the *real* world as such, since in this world there are not ideas, not, e.g., the idea of triangle or the idea of human being, but always individual triangles, individual humans? If one wanted to say that philosophy still has to exhibit the real world in its immediate possibility: viz., in the necessary and universal laws that determine appearances like the law of cause and effect, I {4:397} answer, first, that all these laws, far from expressing some true possibility of the things of appearances, are instead truly expressions of their absolute nothingness and insubstantiality. The law, e.g., that substance endures while accidents change, expresses the notion that in things there is no unity of form and essence, therefore no true being, no self-derived being. This is further shown in the rule that each thing is determined to existence and action through another, which in turn is determined by yet another, and so forth without end.

A merely relative unity is expressed in all these laws, and consequently a being *outside* absolute unity, a being that is in itself nothing. Not-being-in-absolute-identity directly entails being determined *by another being*, and, consequently, not-being-in-itself. So too, what is determined in the thing by the law of cause and effect, and generally by the law of relative opposition, is forever and necessarily the negation of reality in it, or that element by which it really is not. —One nonentity seeks its reality in another, which again has none and seeks it in

another. The endless dependence of things on one another through cause and effect is itself the expression and, as it were, the consciousness of the futility to which they are subjected, and a counterstriving toward the unity in which alone everything is real.

But, in the second place, I reply that these laws—insofar as they are determinations of reflected knowledge—belong to appearance, no less than do the things determined by them. Though philosophy, to be sure, has to exhibit these laws, it has to do so only in the *in-itself, whose* appearance they are, namely in the absolute unity of form and essence, or of possibility and actuality.

Among people who otherwise have some insight into the nature of construction, the mistaken view has arisen that philosophy's construction is deduction, therefore a thoroughly conditioned activity. What may have produced the misunderstanding is that they took {4:398} ideal determinations, {introduced to further explanation and} produced only to be submerged again by construction into absolute unity, for the essential matter. In order to exhibit unity as real unity one must necessarily be acquainted with the totality and entire possibility of forms; they are not to be regarded, however, as if these had substance in themselves, even less as if they were for themselves just ideal sketches that first obtain substantiality by an in-forming of the whole, for on this view they would cease to be specific determinations. On the whole, the fact that the relation of a body of science and its first principle is pictured as a deduction of the former from the latter could have only the following meaning: either one assumes that the deduced totality *is* in the principle that serves as its unity; what is important here is not so much to deduce the totality from the principle as to exhibit the totality in the principle which is its unity. Or it is assumed that the principle from which totality is deduced is not absolute unity, but some sort of unity torn out of totality, like any other particular, conditioned part.[13] This latter unity can certainly claim priority in the subjective context of *knowing*, where it is the extreme point of separation or transition of the forms from unity. When what is mere condition, however, is made the essential matter itself, when the means gains predominance over the end to such an extent that it becomes the end, only a thoroughly conditioned finite philosophy can arise. This finite philosophy no longer penetrates to absolute unity and the restoration of the universe in its divine harmony and to immediate knowing of the absolute, but ends in doubling and conflict.

At this point I think it useful to discuss the distinction between analytic and synthetic method that has been clumsily imported into philosophy from mathematics. Now we wish to leave to the reader the task of understanding how the former of these two methods is possible; it can be understood from what we

[13] Which has priority only in a certain context, e.g., selfhood as relative unity. *Author's note.*

have said about the difference in mode of cognition between arithmetic and geometry (§ I), {4:399}, the former of which expresses the unity of the finite and the infinite in the infinite, or the unity of pure identity, the latter the same unity in the finite, or the unity of difference. Philosophy, however, can have but one method, since it expresses its constructions neither in the one nor in the other {potency} but only in the eternal, in unity considered in and for itself.

What has recently been called synthetic method is surely a true image of this absolute method, but one pulled apart in reflection. This is because what reflection represents as a process with thesis, antithesis, and synthesis lying outside one another, is unitary and internally related in the true method and in every genuine construction of philosophy. The thesis or categorical element is unity, the antithesis or the hypothetical is multiplicity, but what is pictured as synthesis is not the third element, but the first, absolute unity, of which unity and plurality in their very opposition are merely different forms. In just this way philosophy's every construction is a universe for itself and comprehends in itself—because its particular element can separate itself as form from essence and can intrinsically be doubled—both unity and multiplicity, without itself being one or many in this sense.

But what others usually contrast as analytic and synthetic methods are equally insignificant things. For whether the conditions of a given something are sought forwards or backwards, further, whether this conditioned thought expresses itself objectively or subjectively, as in, e.g., "I have assumed A, but do not know how to begin with it without B, therefore B must be assumed too"—which is, by the way, the greatest absurdity that can be—all this is entirely arbitrary and pertains to the same empirical and analytic manner of philosophizing.

This conditioned sort of philosophizing we described above has made itself so influential that some of this school are brought to the point of utterly despising form, behaving with respect to philosophy more like cloud-specialists toward a fog or like naturalists toward some chance irruption. These people are in as deep a state of ignorance about the nature of construction {4:400} as the others {who regard the business of philosophy as the derivation of phenomena from a partial principle}. But what construction might be, and the absolute character of science as well, can be displayed for everyone in geometry. —In geometry can you pick out one item of knowledge that is not intrinsically absolute and the whole of geometry? Does not every truth stand out as a particular world, or can you draw a line from one to the other and display mechanical continuity? —Pick from the universe whatever fragment you will and know that it is infinitely fruitful and is impregnated with the possibilities of all things. —Can you put {all} the forms of nature on a line, or does not every one of them remind your understanding, which reflects and knows through conditions, of their absoluteness? —Can you command a metal to appear at the point where it lies in the order your

understanding produces, or the plant to bloom where you rank it in a classification, or any being at all to distinguish itself the way you mentally separate it? Does not everything instead lie before you in divine confusion and complexity? Does not everything that in your attitude of separation flies light-years apart press toward unity and live peacefully together, everything joyful in its own way? This unity causes each of them to form an image of the totality and with this to mirror the other within itself. Thus it happens in the same way and for the same reason that everything is one and yet each item is separated. . . .[14]

{4:403} In view of this {difficulty that philosophy as yet lacks a universal form}, but equally because, now that everybody talks about philosophy as absolute science and construction has been imported into it, I believed I saw so many people busying themselves with endless talk of philosophy while so few had the right idea of it, I resolved to set out this discussion as a preface to this second part and to make it the gateway, as it were, to the heart of the teaching. In the preceding pages I think I have shown the unity and totality of philosophy, both in its principle and in each of its constructions. Since this is so, I shall now discuss, still on the general scale, absolute form as the agent that discloses essence and that universally mediates between knowing and the absolute.

For most people see in the essence of the absolute nothing but empty night and can discern nothing in it. It disappears for them into the mere negation of difference and is for itself entirely a privative entity; therefore they prudently make it the end of their philosophy. Although, as a defense against those who lack primary {4:404} cognition {or intellectual intuition} and do not know the gateway into true science, and so falsify it with finite concepts and limiting conditions, I have in the first part of this essay sufficiently considered the unitary relation between the absolute and cognition (§ II), I wish to show here in a more detailed way how for cognition the night of the absolute is changed into day.

Only in the form of all forms is the *positive* essence of unity cognized. But this [absolute form] is embodied in us as the living idea of the absolute, so that our cognition *is* in it and it subsists in our cognition. And in it, we can see as clearly as we see into ourselves and view everything in one light, in comparison to which every other sort of cognition, but especially sensible cognition, is profound darkness.

There is not absolute knowledge and outside of this an absolute, but the two are one. The essence of philosophy lies in this identity. Outside it too there is an

[14] Four paragraphs are omitted which reproduce Schelling's discussion in *Bruno* of a universal form for Identity Philosophy, its anticipations in the history of philosophy, and its distortion by reflection. See F. W. J. Schelling, *Werke*, ed. Manfred Schröter (Munich: Beck, 1965), vol. 4, 307–10; *Bruno, or On the Divine and Natural Principle of Things*, tr. Michael Vater (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 203–05.

absolute knowledge {located} in another sort of cognition {and it identifies itself with it}—except in philosophy this cognition is not simultaneously the substance and reality of the absolute itself, as in absolute knowledge. Philosophy's first cognition depends on identifying the two, on the insight that there is no other absolute except in form [in absolute certainty itself] and no other access to the absolute than this form, that what follows from this form follows also from the absolute itself, and what *is* in the former *is* also in the latter.

Identification of form with essence in absolute intellectual intuition[15] snatches the ultimate doubling {of the real and ideal} away from the dualism it inhabits and establishes *absolute idealism* for the partial idealism of the world of appearances.

The essence of the absolute in and for itself says nothing to us; it fills us with images of an infinite enclosure, of an impenetrable stillness and concealment, the way the oldest forms of philosophy pictured the state of the universe before He who is life stepped forth *in his own shape* {4:405} in the act of his self-intuitive cognition. This eternal form, equal to the absolute itself, is the day in which we comprehend that night and the wonders hidden in it, the light in which we clearly discern the absolute, the eternal mediator, the all-seeing and all-disclosing eye of the world, the source of all wisdom and cognition.

For it is within this form and through it that the *ideas* are known; they furnish the unique possibility of comprehending absolute profusion within absolute unity, the particular in the universal, and precisely by that also the absolute in the particular—blessed beings, as some designate the first creatures who live in the immediate sight of God, which we shall more accurately say are gods themselves, since each is for itself absolute, and yet each is included in the absolute form.

For everything that is a unity composed of the universal and the particular *is* in the absolute form, and only the unity, *as unity*, is the form and is identical to essence. The universal and the particular subsist as opposites for precisely this reason: they are mere factors of form, and to the extent they are real, each is again for itself the unity of the universal and particular; they are also just ideally differentiable, and opposed to one another not in an essential (qualitative), but only in an inessential way. The *idea*, therefore, is always and necessarily absolute, since in it the universal and the particular are necessarily identified; then, too, it cannot cease to be absolute by, e.g., being related to an object, for as absolute form it includes absolute substance in itself and is itself the absolute object.[16]

[15] Or the insight that absolute knowledge is also a knowledge of the absolute. *Author's note.*

[16] Its universal factor is the absolute, but so is its particular, since it receives the entire absolute into itself and even in uttermost particularity it becomes entirely absolute again. —One might object that the idea is finite, since it necessarily refers to a particular object. But the objection considers a concept that is opposed to the object; this is not the case in the idea. Every particular object is in its absolute status idea, and accordingly the idea is also the absolute object itself, just as the absolutely ideal is the absolutely real. *Author's note.*

So too it cannot be claimed that in the ideas we grasp only the possibility of things but cognize no real thing. {4:406} For absolute form is contrasted with particular form in just this: the latter is separated from essence—therefore from reality as well—and is not in itself, while the former includes absolute reality within itself, just as the absolute comprehends in itself the categorical form that posits thought and being as identical. —The triangle that the geometer constructs is certainly not an actual, i.e., individual triangle, but it is the absolute, simply real one, in contrast to the actual or appearing triangle to whose share falls no substantiality.

By this is seen the profound absurdity and deep-rooted unreason of those people who require that there be something particular outside the idea of absolute unity in order to arrive at actuality, who wish to fix individuality, which as such is the absolute negation of universality or complete suspension of idea, in a universal that they designate stuff or matter. For matter, insofar as it is absolute, i.e., real, and is essence, *is* within absolute form itself and is equivalent to it, for this latter requires for reality nothing outside itself.

Moreover, since absolute form is absolute essence too, and therefore there is *nothing* outside it, if anything is posited as real under the form of nonidentity that contradicts it, it is immediately abolished in thought. On the other hand, though, when this form is posited as absolute, everything resistant to and incompatible with it is directly established as insubstantial.

But by this relation of absolute form to essence, it is easy to comprehend what procedure can be the sole true method of philosophy, i.e., the one under which everything is absolute and nothing is the absolute.

For if you want to understand the particular through philosophy, i.e., to comprehend it in the absolute as its principle, you no doubt wish you could understand in the same act of comprehension two distinct things, how everything is one in principle and how within this unity every form is absolutely distinct from the others. You cannot attain either of these goals without including the other with it, since you cannot absolutely isolate one form from the others without making it into absolute unity or into the universe {4:407} in and for itself. For only the universe is truly and absolutely definite, since there is nothing outside it that it could be like or unlike. Conversely, you cannot grasp the particular form as a universe for itself or conceive it *absolutely* without in the very process submerging it as particular within *the absolute.*

From this, one can immediately perceive that the true method of philosophy can only be the ‘demonstrative’ one. Since it is unusual to encounter even a general idea of demonstrative method, I shall explain this more particularly. Demonstration does not precede construction, but the two are one and inseparable. In construction the particular (the determined unity) is exhibited as absolute, namely, as absolute *unity of the ideal and the real* for itself. For, since as unity it

is the unity that cannot be canceled in anything or in any manner, in none of philosophy's constructions could any particular, hence a purely finite or infinite entity, be expressed as such without the identical unity and undivided perfection of the absolute being expressed. Only because this is the case does philosophy not step outside the absolute. Within form the finite stands related to the infinite as the real to the ideal, but form as such is always and necessarily their unity. Therefore *each of them*, the finite and the infinite, insofar as it is really, i.e., absolutely posited, *is the entire unity of the finite and the infinite*, neither of them finite nor infinite viewed apart from its ideal determination, but absolute and eternal. —From this, it is self-evident that this unity of the finite and the infinite, which *is* in the absolute and is the essence of the absolute, is a *real* unity and also an identity of identity, as we have previously shown *(Journal for Speculative Physics*, vol. 2, no. 2).[17] For considered in itself, the finite and the infinite contain, *each of them, the same* (formal) *identity of the finite and the infinite*. Therefore we had to understand the former, real unity before we understood the latter, formal one (§ III, 5). {4:408}

If all this is granted, *construction* is, first and in general, exhibition of the particular inside absolute form, and *philosophical construction in particular,* the exhibition of the particular within form considered without qualification—not as itself ideal or real, as in the two branches of mathematics—but form as intuited in itself or intellectually. To understand on this basis how absolute form is not abolished in any construction—the particular, by the way, is either finite or infinite (for ideal determination)—we must especially consider this: because of the complete relativity of this contrast (since neither a finite entity nor an infinite one *is* in itself, but only in relation) every particular being insofar as it accepts the entire absolute into itself is negated as a particular (finite or infinite) entity and merely reunites the finite and the infinite within itself.

The other {thing that needs explanation} is demonstration itself. It is the positing as equal of form and of essence within a structure such that, from what is constructed in absolute form (or whose absolute ideality is certain) its absolute reality is also immediately proved.

For since absolute form immediately includes absolute substance, its indifference as form (or knowing) with essence (or object) follows with respect to every construction, i.e., absolute certainty.

This will suffice to distinguish the nature of demonstration, which is entirely grounded in the fact that every particular *subsists in the absolute* precisely because it *is absolute*, and vice versa; we cannot conceive the former without the latter nor the latter without the former. Accordingly, all science depends on

[17] See vol. 4, 114 ff. Ed. {*Presentation of My System*, §§ 1—17, but especially § 17, Corollary 2. *Tr.*}

cognizing and identifying a twofold unity, one by means of which a being *is* in itself, and another by means of which it *is* in the absolute.

Construction is thus, from start to finish, an absolute kind of cognition and [for just this reason] it has nothing to do with the actual world as such but is in its very nature idealism [if idealism means the doctrine of the *ideas*].[18] For it is precisely this world that is {4:409} commonly called actual that is abolished by construction. You call the appearing world 'real' only because for you form has become something for-itself. You call the particular form, e.g., the plant or animal, etc., actual. Precisely this is abolished within construction, for (according to what was proved earlier) the construction contains no more than the possibility of, e.g., the plant, *as form of the universe.* This is precisely what the actual plant is not, and, were it this and did it not separate itself from its essence, it would not be actual *[as a plant]*. Hence the converse too: none of the things called actual can *be* in the absolute,[19] for in the absolute, no form is divorced from its essence, everything is internally related as one being, one stuff. From this one root all ideas are produced as divine shoots, since each is fashioned from the entire essence of the absolute. For that reason, the essence [the *in-itself*] of a thing cannot be this *thing itself.* Therefore, if you seek the actuality of a being of appearance in the absolute world, you will not find it there; what there stands in absolute reality, you will not find here. The actuality of the appearing world *as such* cannot be acknowledged, therefore, not even insofar as its essence subsists in the absolute, but only its absolute unreality.

Our assertion, however, that philosophy's every construction and cognition is equally absolute might seem to contradict {our previous claim} that under the form of demonstrative method, one cognition serves as a means to another, and each demonstration in the complex of the whole is possible only through others.

We resolve this seeming contradiction the same way we solved the earlier one.

That which makes every construction absolute is identical or one and the same with what serves as the principle of connection for philosophical demonstration. {4:410}

This is so because the identical absoluteness of all constructions in philosophy rests on the fact that the features of finitude or infinitude are nothing, while their unity is everything and the same in everything. But this very same pervasive real unity is the reason that what is in-itself or absolute according to form can be finite or infinite inside the relative opposition and have, as finite or infinite, its ideal opposite in the other, while at the same time since the identical is expressed according to essence in both opposites, the two combine into a real

[18] It is not yet idealism to say that the world of sense is nothing. *Author's note.*

[19] For the actual is originated precisely through this separation of form from essence, from the in-itself, from the universe. *Author's note.*

unity. Thus everything returns to and takes root again in the same absolute identity and the same abyss of divine unity.

Therefore within every construction only the ideal element provides opposition and with it connection to the other; but this purely ideal determinacy is in turn negated in the construction, since in every one of them the same absolute unity is exhibited in and for itself.

This coexistence of the ideal dependence of one cognition upon another and of the identical absoluteness of each for itself belongs to the form of philosophy as science. Since this is so, it is clearly important that each person make sure, all in the same manner, that no necessary intermediate member is skipped over. My *System of {Transcendental} Idealism* was especially precise in this regard; though its purpose was to present but one side of philosophy, namely the subjective and ideal, in it was sketched out the general framework of construction whose schematism must also be the foundation of the completed system.[20] For since the I in the terminology of this idealism (which is only one side of philosophy) is none other than the ultimate and, as it were, culminating point of separation from the absolute—the point of being-for-itself, of acting-from-and-upon-oneself, of form—it is necessary that all ideal determinations be conjoined in this one point and be produced along with it, so that in the totality they return to *absolute identity.* {4:411}

That we might be deemed worthy of this pervasive real unity that we have asserted it is essential that we understand it in its strongest and genuine sense. As anyone who has followed us to this point with some attention could note on his own, our view is not just that opposites are generally brought to unity in some universal concept, for such a unity would again be of a merely formal sort, but that *substance* is one in all things that are ideally opposed, and that everything is identical, not by the external bond of the concept, but in inner substance and content, as it were. What you cognize, e.g., in nature as a totality aggregated in an enclosed space, and in history, on the other hand, as a totality pulled apart into endless time, are things not just figuratively one or one in concept, but truly *the same thing*, however different they may seem in that the one is placed under the seal of finitude, the other under the determination and law of infinitude. And just as eternal form, absolute cognition (which philosophy in its very name terms the object of its aspiration) is the absolute's innate reflection of its essence, in which it prefigures its full perfection in the wonders of eternity, just so inside the profusion of the whole each thing that might appear different from the other is again an image and emblem of another. And the first identity of essence and of

[20] On this matter compare the comment [Schelling made] later in *Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology* {F. W. J. Schelling, *Werke*, vol. 11,} 370, n. 1. *Ed*.

form propagates itself in the doubling that shapes the oppositions within form, which again propagates itself in the infinitude of all beings, so that there is nothing that is not in turn related to another being, either as copy or as model.

Yet all of this, also how this essential identity, the one-in-all and all-in-one, enters science and through form comes to living cognition, will become evident in the full working out of science, and, at first, in the sketching out of the full picture of philosophy as the science that comprehends everything.