

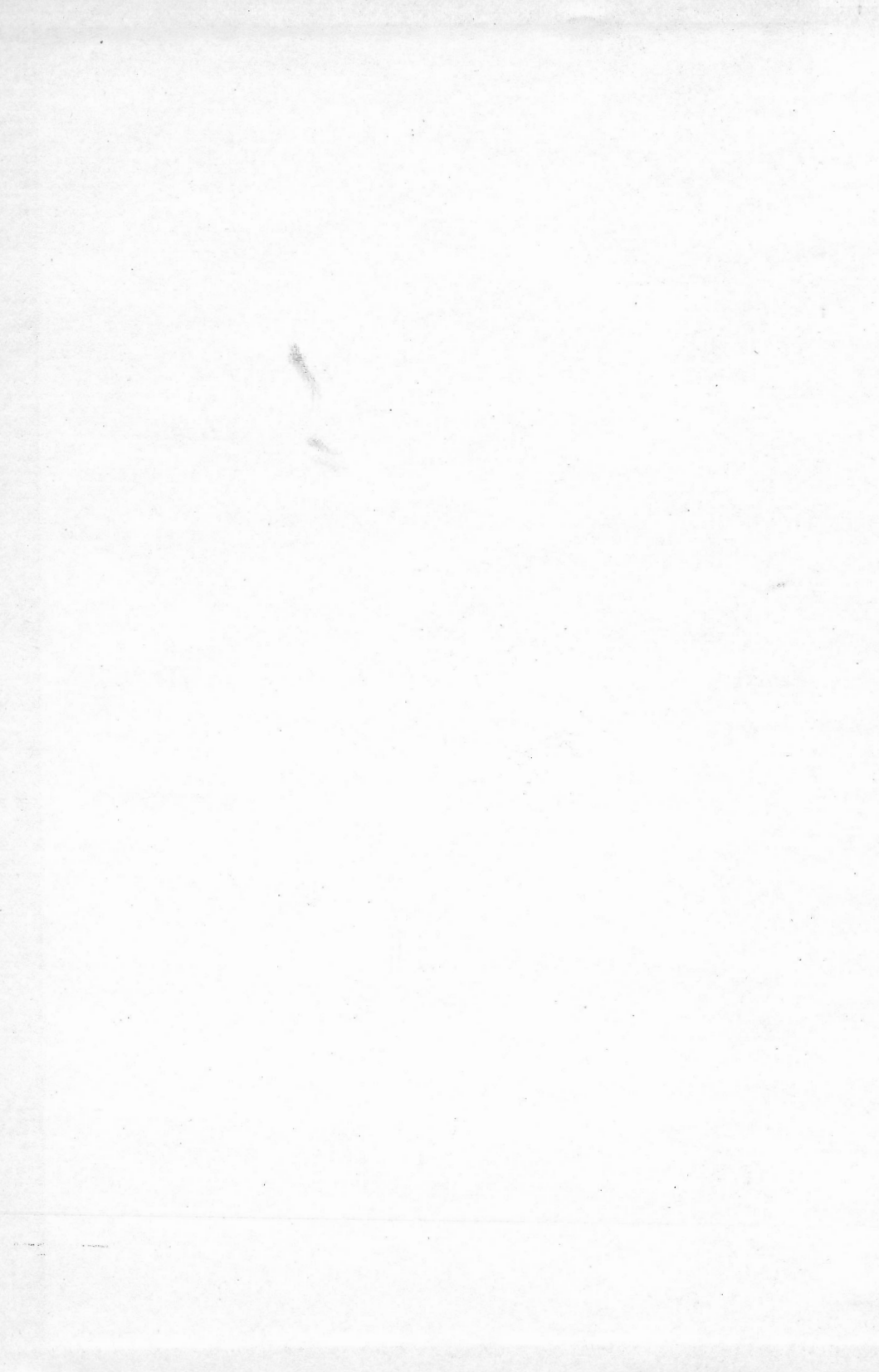
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Schelling's
Philosophy of
Mythology
and
Revelation

VICTOR C HAYES





Schelling's
Philosophy of
Mythology and
Revelation

Journal of
Philosophy of
Mythology and
Religion

Schelling's Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation

Three of Seven Books
Translated and Reduced
with General Introduction

by Victor C. Hayes



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for the Study of Religions

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To my Family

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Preface

The translations, abridgments, introductory materials and critical notes found in this volume, were written in the late fifties and in the sixties (and now updated in the mid-nineties). In 1970 the work was accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Columbia University, New York. Over the 25 years since then, University Microfilms Inc., (Ann Arbor, Michigan), has "published on demand" (in microfilm or photocopied hardback) one or two copies a year. The pace has picked up a little in the past few years, a tiny reflection of the wider renewal of interest in Schelling's Last Philosophy - in German, certainly, but now in English too. It seems the opportune moment to update and publish this work, limited though it is, in this more accessible form.

I belatedly express my gratitude to scholars of a by-gone generation, especially to my examining Committee for their patience and encouragement. On the Committee were Professors Horace Friess (Supervisor), John Herman Randall Jr., James Gutmann, J. A. Martin (Chair, Department of Religion), Joseph P. Bauke (Head, German Department) all from Columbia and Professor John Macquarrie from Union Seminary. Thanks also to Cyril Richardson who was "pleased with the project", Paul Tillich who assured me that Schelling's Positive Philosophy was "a good thing to work on" and Bob Horn who thought it should be published "as soon as possible"!

Nevertheless, it was hard in the late fifties to find anyone in North America who knew Schelling's works, or who wanted to talk about them, least of all about his Last Philosophy.

To be sure, I had discussions with James Gutmann (translator of *Of Human Freedom*), an afternoon with Frederick de W Bolman (translator of *Ages of the World*) and (just before his death) a conversation with Paul Tillich whose two Dissertations on Schelling had been done a half century earlier and were still untranslated. But it seemed to me that the interests of these scholars had moved elsewhere. Tillich especially seemed to have dim memories. When I asked him to comment on Schelling's views about Mythology and the Birth of Nations, he had forgotten that Schelling had discussed the matter. Even more disconcerting was Tillich's response when I asked him what he meant by the phrase "kreitton tou logou". "Ah," he replied with emphasis, "this is my abyss" - so my diary entry on July 29, 1965. (How, I asked my diary, should I relate to someone who has an Abyss?)

In 1957 I told a German church historian in New York that I planned to work on Schelling and asked what he thought of the idea. He laughed: "Schelling? He's a mystery boy. I wish you luck." Eighteen years later, and back in Australia, I asked a Historian of Ideas for his opinion of Schelling and his work. "I find him uncongenial," he said. And in saying so, he seemed to be expressing a widespread scholarly consensus.

But over the last quarter century the situation has changed significantly. In my General Introduction, and in the updated (1970-1995) Select Bibliography of books and articles in English, I will point briefly to the new estimate of Schelling and his works - an estimate which does not necessarily replace previous opinion but does restore a balance.

John Hermann Randall Jr. was accustomed to exhort his philosophy students to read primary rather than secondary sources. Schelling, as will be seen, has some words of warning for all who would venture to read his work.

Finally, my thanks and love to my family - Marjorie, Vicki, Helen and Christine - who graciously shared me with Schelling [perhaps more often than they knew].

VICTOR C. HAYES
Adelaide 1995