

*Please cite the published version of this article:

Chandler D. Rogers. 2016b. "Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, and the Problem of First Immediacy." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 80(3), pp. 259-278.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11153-016-9576-z>

Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, and the Problem of First Immediacy

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Abstract: Manifold expressions of a particular critique appear throughout Søren Kierkegaard's pseudonymous corpus: for Kierkegaard and his pseudonyms faith is categorically not a first immediacy, and it is certainly not *the first immediate*, the annulment of which concludes the first movement of Hegelian philosophy. Kierkegaard's pseudonyms make it clear that he holds the Hegelian dogmatists responsible for the promulgation of this misconception, but when Kierkegaard's journals and papers are consulted another transgressor emerges: the renowned anti-idealist F.D.E. Schleiermacher. I address the extent to which this particular indictment is justified; over-against Gerhard Schreiber, I argue that this characterization of Schleiermacher's view of religion is indeed a *de facto* critique. I begin by presenting and demonstrating the ubiquity of the phenomenon at the heart of Schleiermacher's conception of perfect *God-consciousness*, then proceed to apply criticisms raised by Kierkegaardian pseudonyms Judge William, Vigilius Haufniensis, Johannes Climacus, and Anti-Climacus, supplemented with concerns raised by Kierkegaard himself, in order to demonstrate that these criticisms do indeed apply to and problematize Schleiermacher's view.

Keywords: Gefühl, German romanticism, The present, Experiential expressivism

A wave of scholarship within the Schleiermacher-Kierkegaard discussion has persuasively demonstrated that Schleiermacher's work influenced Kierkegaard to a much greater extent than has traditionally been acknowledged. One key reason that Kierkegaard's debt to Schleiermacher has been overlooked, however, is a criticism in which Kierkegaard incriminates Schleiermacher along with a group whom he attacks most vehemently throughout his authorship: the Hegelian philosopher-theologians who conflate "faith" with "the immediate." Over the past few decades, scholars like Crouter (1994, 2006, 2007) have argued that the bonds that bind Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard together remain firm despite Kierkegaard's occasional reproofs—presumably including this one.¹

Gerhard Schreiber (2011) has addressed this critique directly. His response, one of the first efforts to bring the immediacy/second immediacy distinction to bear on the relationship between

¹ I have discussed these bonds in "Schleiermacher in the Kierkegaardian Project: Between Socratic Ignorance and Second Immediacy" (Rogers 2016), and the current article is a continuation of the argument developed there. Here I further articulate and substantiate the problem that leads to Kierkegaard's unexpected turn against Schleiermacher.

Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard, is an argument seeking to vindicate Schleiermacher altogether from this criticism.² Schreiber maintains that the characterization of Schleiermacher's view of religion as *first immediacy* is not a *de facto* critique—that despite Kierkegaard's claim, Schleiermacher's religion is not in actuality a first immediacy. Before pinpointing a pair of Hegelian dogmaticians as the *de facto* targets of Kierkegaard's recurring attacks, Schreiber concludes his foundational sections with the following: "Thanks to a simple mistake in translation, this passage (and thereby also Schleiermacher's intention) was granted a whole new meaning, which at least gives us one possible explanation for Kierkegaard's unjustified critique of Schleiermacher" (Schreiber 2011, p. 146).³ In what follows, I contend that despite Schreiber's insistence, Kierkegaard's characterization of Schleiermacher's view of religion is indeed a justified, *de facto* critique.

As Crouter (2007) carefully argues, Kierkegaard's attitude toward Schleiermacher ranges from uneasy appreciation (1837) to highest praise and appropriation (1841-1844) to inexplicable hostility (1850). I aim to address Kierkegaard's enduring frustration: in 1837, at age twenty-four, he implicates Schleiermacher most clearly, and this implication is the critique in question. The definition that Kierkegaard here provides is, for our purposes, a working definition of *the first immediate*: "That which Schleiermacher calls 'religion' and the Hegelian dogmaticians call 'faith,' is at heart nothing other than the first immediate, the condition for everything—the *vitale fluidum*—the atmosphere that we, in spiritual sense, breathe in—and which, therefore, cannot be properly be indicated me with these words" (Schreiber 2011, p. 139, footnote 10).⁴ Here, in contrast to the more generally applied term *first immediacy*, *the first immediate* possesses an explicitly religious connotation. *First immediacy* is used in a generally "ontological-existential" sense, e.g. in the case of "dying to" the immediate mode of existence, but *the first immediate* is used in a more generally ontological sense, i.e. as the "the condition for everything" and "the atmosphere that we, in spiritual sense, breathe in."⁵

In his footnote on this citation, Schreiber cites an immediately relevant comment that Kierkegaard had likely written in 1833, in response to a sermon by the Danish dogmatician N.F.S. Grundtvig. In this note Kierkegaard contrasts "the immediate faith, which can be called forth by suffering" with "an intensified faith," and argues that when the Hegelian dogmaticians provide new meanings for traditional theological concepts, "...faith becomes the immediate consciousness, which is at heart nothing other than the *vitale fluidum* of the mental life, its atmosphere" (Schreiber 2011, p.139, footnote 10).⁶ As early as 1833, therefore, Kierkegaard eschews the conflation of "faith" with "the immediate," a conception that permeated the Danish intellectual atmosphere of his time. The 1837 indictment of Schleiermacher and the Hegelian dogmaticians reiterates this early

² Schreiber cites the other two accounts, both published in German: see Anz (1985) and Schröer (1985).

³ Schreiber's contention is made on the basis of evidence that Kierkegaard's copy of Schleiermacher's *magnum opus*, *The Christian Faith*, contained a translation error that led Kierkegaard to believe that Schleiermacher himself characterizes *the feeling of absolute dependence* as "the first level of immediate self-consciousness," whereas the passage in question actually communicates that the feeling of absolute dependence is "the highest level of immediate self-consciousness" (Schreiber 2011, p. 146).

⁴ I have used Schreiber's own translation of this passage, as he argues that "*det første umidd.*" has wrongfully been translated "first immediacy" [*det første umidd(elbarhed)*] rather than "the first immediate" [*det første umidd(elbare)*]. Compare with Kierkegaard (1970, no. 1096).

⁵ Elsewhere Schreiber (2013) categorizes types of immediacy in Kierkegaard.

⁶ Compare with (Kierkegaard 1978, no. 5056).

criticism almost verbatim, establishing that Kierkegaard does indeed hold Schleiermacher responsible for promulgating this selfsame misapprehension of faith.

Schreiber's contention is, of course, that Kierkegaard is not *justified* in implicating Schleiermacher along with the Hegelian theologians—not that he does not do so. I aim to justify Kierkegaard's characterization as a *de facto* critique, attesting to both the verity of the experiences upon which Schleiermacher's view rests, and to the verity of the problems that come about as a result of these experiences.

In the first section I place American author Annie Dillard in conversation with Schleiermacher, citing specific examples to illustrate what I take Schleiermacher to mean when he employs the terms *God-consciousness* and *the feeling of absolute dependence*—in doing so I seek to demonstrate the ubiquity of the phenomenon at the heart of his thought. In the second section I draw upon the discussion of time in Kierkegaard's *Concept of Anxiety*, establishing that Kierkegaard recognizes and appreciates the realities undergirding Schleiermacher's perfect God-consciousness. I conclude, however, by appealing to a quotation from Kierkegaard himself, and to *The Sickness Unto Death*, thereby introducing an important divergence from Schleiermacher's view.

In the third section I employ Judge William's comparison between first love and marriage, found in *Either/Or*, gleaned from the insights he affords to illustrate a key problem with religious immediacy, the problem of passivity. I then look to *Works of Love* in order to expose the foundation that differentiates erotic love from heightened, transformed love. In the fourth and final section I invoke Johannes Climacus's correlation, found in Kierkegaard's *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, which links indirect communication with divine hiddenness, arguing that for Kierkegaard a break with the passivity of religious immediacy must occur before a higher religiousness can emerge.

Inner fire

For Schleiermacher, religion consists not primarily in knowledge of the divine or in actions that spring from duty, but in and through *Gefühl* (*feeling*), the domain of pre-reflective, immediate experience. Schleiermacher writes that the substance of religion is “to know and have life in immediate *feeling*,” and employs the terms *feeling of absolute dependence* and *God-consciousness* to describe this occurrence (Schleiermacher 1958, p. 36).⁷ Walter E. Wyman, Jr. clarifies further: “It is, of course, in this realm of immediate, unreflective consciousness, a consciousness that is prior to thinking or doing, that Schleiermacher finds the famous ‘feeling of absolute dependence’ or God-consciousness: the ‘consciousness that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us’” (Wyman 1994, p. 204). The very awareness of exteriority assumes minimal awareness of oneself as a self, and for Schleiermacher God-consciousness operates within the realm of self-consciousness.

⁷ Schleiermacher employs *feeling of absolute dependence* primarily in *On Religion* (1799) and has nearly replaced it with *God-consciousness* by the publication of the first edition of *The Christian Faith* (1821).

It is crucial, however, to recognize that by *self-consciousness* he does not mean *self-contemplation*: “To the term ‘self-consciousness’ is added the epithet ‘immediate,’ lest anyone should think of a kind of self-consciousness which is not *feeling* at all” (Schleiermacher 1963, p. 6). Indeed, the “self-consciousness which is not immediate” is “more like an objective consciousness, being a representation of oneself, and thus mediated by self-contemplation” (Schleiermacher 1963, p. 6).

Annie Dillard provides an account in *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* that I take to be a paradigm case of the transcendence informing Schleiermacher’s terms *feeling of absolute dependence* and *God-consciousness*. By way of introduction: the occurrence that Dillard presents is the experience of captivation that occurs when a subject finds herself enraptured in an experience of transcendence occurring in and through the natural world. As does Schleiermacher, Dillard distinguishes between the self-consciousness that facilitates moments of transcendence and the self-contemplation that hinders them, drawing a connection between experiencing immediacy and experiencing *the present*: “Consciousness itself does not hinder living in the present. In fact, it is only to a heightened awareness that the great door to the present opens at all. Even a certain amount of interior verbalization is helpful to enforce the memory of whatever it is that is taking place” (Dillard 1974, p. 82). Thus immediacy is not simply the *modus operandi* of the underdeveloped consciousness. Mature self-consciousness helps to facilitate experiences of the present.

By contrast, self-contemplation fractures the moment of captivation: “So long as I lose myself in a tree, say, I can scent its leafy breath or estimate its board feet of lumber, I can draw its fruits or boil tea on its branches, and the tree stays tree. But the second I become aware of myself at any of these activities... the tree vanishes, uprooted from the spot and flung out of sight as if it had never grown” (Dillard 1974, p. 82). So long as the experiencing subject is transfixed, immediacy ensues. When self-contemplation breaks in, temporality resumes.

Dillard’s description of *the present* corresponds to Schleiermacher’s description of perfect God-consciousness, and both agree that the person captivated in immediacy lapses into a state that simulates the timelessness of eternity. In the Dillardian account, the perceiver experiences the present as perfectly present, such that the dissolution of moments is no longer ostensible. Schleiermacher’s depiction of perfect God-consciousness, occurring in a section of the *Glaubenslehre* entitled “The Original Perfection of Man,” describes a corresponding, immediate continuity: “So we account it part of the original perfection of man that in our clear and waking life a continuous God-consciousness as such is possible; and on the contrary, we should have to regard it as an essential imperfection if the emergence of the feeling of absolute dependence... were confined as such to separate and scattered moments” (Schleiermacher 1928, p. 245). Separate and scattered moments of the feeling of absolute dependence, or God-consciousness, signify an essential imperfection—but to return to a state of immediacy unhindered by the succession of moments is to return to the state of original perfection. Such a return is, for Schleiermacher, the height of self-consciousness and of God-consciousness.⁸

⁸ This particular point, that the height of self-consciousness is the height of God-consciousness, is precisely the point that the keystone of Schreiber’s argument brings to our attention. Schreiber argues that because Kierkegaard’s copy of the *Glaubenslehre* contained a translation error that characterizes *the feeling of absolute dependence* as “the first level of immediate self-consciousness” rather than “the highest level of immediate self-consciousness,” Kierkegaard was wrongfully persuaded to conclude that Schleiermacher’s feeling of absolute dependence is—according to Schleiermacher’s own view, presumably—merely *the first immediate*. I argue that regardless of this mistranslation’s possible influence on Kierkegaard—that is, granting that the height of self-consciousness is indeed the height of God-

In the first half of *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, Dillard recounts and examines a few select moments of transcendence, and at the end of her second chapter she presents us with a window into one such experience. Her account illustrates the type of experience that I take Schleiermacher to be drawing from when he employs the terms *God-consciousness* or *the feeling of absolute dependence*:

I saw the backyard cedar where the mourning doves roost changed and transfigured, each cell buzzing with flame. I stood on the grass with the lights in it, grass that was wholly fire, utterly focused and utterly dreamed. It was less like seeing than like being for the first time seen, knocked breathless by a powerful glance. The flood of fire abated, but I'm still spending the power. Gradually the lights went out in the cedar, the colors died, the cells unflamed and disappeared. I was still ringing. I had been my whole life a bell, and never knew it until that moment I was lifted and struck. I have since only very rarely seen the tree with the lights in it. The vision comes and goes, mostly goes, but I live for it, for the moment when the mountains open and a new light roars in spite through the crack, and the mountains slam (Dillard 1974, p. 36).

Undergirding the transcendence that Dillard describes in particular and that Schleiermacher describes in general is, for both, a single fount from which *all* religious experiences flow.

Dillard references two events to illustrate the ubiquity of the transcendence that she herself has experienced—the moment wherein Xerxes halts his entire army after experiencing the divine as refracted through rays of light in the branches of a tree, and Pascal's 'night of fire' conversion, after which he sewed a scrap of paper into his coat, on which was written a single word: *feu*, or fire (Dillard 1974, pp. 88-89).⁹

Schleiermacher addresses the origin of such experiences in greater detail than Dillard. In *On Religion*, he challenges his reader to inquire into the origin of the various religious traditions: "I invite you to study every faith professed by man, every religion that has a name and a character. Though it may long ago have degenerated into a long series of empty customs, into a system of abstract ideas and theories, will you not, when you examine the original elements at the source, find that this dead dross was once the molten out-pourings of the inner fire?" (Schleiermacher

consciousness—the characterization of Schleiermacher's view of religion as *the first immediate* is indeed a *de facto* critique.

⁹ It is important to note that Kierkegaard was himself no stranger to religious experience. One such experience, reminiscent of Pascal's *night of fire*, is recorded as follows: "There is an *indescribable joy* that glows all through us just as inexplicably as the apostle's exclamation breaks forth for no apparent reason: 'Rejoice, and again I say, Rejoice.' –Not a joy over this or that, but the soul's full outcry 'with tongue and mouth and from the bottom of the heart': 'I rejoice for my joy, by, in, with, about, over, for, and with my joy'—a heavenly refrain which, as it were, suddenly interrupts our other singing, a joy which cools and refreshes like a breath of air, a breeze from the trade winds which blow across the plains of Mamre to the everlasting mansions" (Kierkegaard 1978, no. 5324). Lowrie notes in his discussion of this entry—"which with unaccustomed precision [Kierkegaard] dated May 19, [1838] 10:30 A.M."—that "The reference to Gen. 18:1 has a significance we should not overlook: 'The Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day'" (Lowrie 1942, p. 124). I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for bringing this connection to my attention.

1958, p. 216).¹⁰ If we take Schleiermacher at his word on this point, we must acknowledge that according to Schleiermacher's own view the experiences of Xerxes, Pascal, and Dillard are indeed outpourings of the inner fire, immediate experiences the divine occurring in and through God-consciousness.¹¹

Remarkably, Kierkegaard also upholds a variation of this version of experiential expressivism, but with a key qualification: whereas the various religious traditions begin with immediate, transcendent experience, *faith* has as its domain a higher immediacy. Thus Heiko Schulz writes that Kierkegaard “holds that every [religious] faith is a form of immediacy, but not every—but only the post or transreflexive—form of immediacy is faith” (quoted in Schreiber 2011, p. 34). Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard agree that immediate religious experience is the lifeblood of the various religions, but, for Kierkegaard, faith is a higher immediacy.¹²

The present

In the third chapter of *The Concept of Anxiety*, Kierkegaardian pseudonym Vigilius Haufniensis engages in a discussion of time that illuminates Dillard's account of *the present* and Schleiermacher's description of God-consciousness as unceasing immediacy. Haufniensis's treatment builds from the mundane to the extraordinary, and he begins by contrasting the colloquial conception of the present—which is, in fact, the “present” that we experience in actuality—with the eternal-present.

Drawing upon Hegel's classification of time as an infinite succession, Haufniensis argues that the categories of past, present, and future do not actually exist in time. In fact, it is only with reference to the eternal that such a distinction becomes possible: “If in the infinite succession of time a foothold could be found, i.e., a present, which was the dividing point, the division would be quite correct. However, precisely because every moment, as well as the sum of the moments, is a process (a passing by)... there is in time neither present, nor past, nor future” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 85). Each attempt to pin down the present moment—“now!”—fails, as that particular moment has already slipped away, as has the next, and the next, *ad infinitum*. “The life that is in time has no present,” and we are as passengers on a train barreling on without end, hoping that each “next” stop might be ours. Our hopes are continually dashed, but each approaching station imparts a new taste of the equilibrium that we so desperately long for—for relief from the disorienting, unceasing forward-movement that stops for no person.

¹⁰ Schleiermacher scholar Jacqueline Mariña proceeds from this quotation to argue that “Schleiermacher's theory offers a generally coherent account of how it is possible that differing religious traditions are all based on the same experience of the absolute” (Mariña 2004).

¹¹ Defending Schleiermacher's *experiential expressivism*—the view that religious doctrine and teachings are outward expressions of inward *experiences* of the divine—against the criticisms of other views that attempt to explain the diversity of religious traditions, Mariña writes: “This means, then, that the foundational religious experience remains pure, that is, it is unaffected by cultural and linguistic categories. These come into play when the experience is being *expressed*. This is the fundamental point of difference between Schleiermacher's model of religion and the cultural-linguistic model. On the latter view, *all* experience is subject to the work of consciousness and, as such, is interpreted” (Mariña 2004, p. 130).

¹² Johannes de Silentio makes this especially clear: “Faith is not the first immediacy but a later immediacy. The first immediacy is the esthetic, and here the Hegelian philosophy certainly may very well be right. But faith is not the esthetic, or else faith has never existed because it has always existed” (Kierkegaard 1983a, p. 82).

Haufniensis maintains that the colloquial description of the sensuous life as a life lived “in the moment,” i.e. in the present, is predicated upon the “abstraction from the eternal that, if it is to be the present, is a parody of it” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 85). The colloquial conception of “the present moment” is an abstraction that finds a pseudo-foothold only insofar as speculation removes itself from existence, thus providing an illusion of timelessness. Our common experiences of the “present,” however, are of the “infinitely contentless present” and not the “infinitely contentful present” that is eternity. Whereas the pseudo-present is marked by its lack of content and its infinite succession, fullness of content and an annulment of succession distinguish the eternal-present (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 86).

Having established a division between the pseudo-present and the eternal present, Haufniensis narrows the scope of his inquiry to distinguish between “the moment,” conceived in terms of the sensuous life, and *the moment*, i.e. the point at which the eternal enters temporality. He writes, “The moment signifies the present as that which has no past and no future, and precisely in this lies the imperfection of the sensuous life. The eternal also signifies the present as that which has no past and no future, and this is the perfection of the eternal” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 87). The pseudo-moment, another parody of the eternal, only dimly hints at the effulgence of *the moment*, and thus has no place in our discussion. However, the moment—die *Augenblick*—in which the eternal enters into temporality relates essentially to our discussion.

Mirroring our understanding of the way that self-contemplation shatters moments of transcendence, Haufniensis notes, “Nothing is as swift as the blink of an eye, and yet it is commensurable with the content of the eternal” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 87). The Danish and German words for *moment*, as I have hinted, etymologically communicate *the blink of an eye*, i.e. brevity and impermanence. Haufniensis conveys the unhallowed transiency of the *Augenblick*, writing, “A blink is therefore a designation of time, but mark well, of time in fateful conflict when it is touched by eternity” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 87). The very prospect of human eternity—or, at least, the secondary awareness that bars the human individual from what Rilke, drawing from Hölderlin, describes as the blessedness of animal existence—ensures the conflict that arises in the individual who receives a taste of eternity but is forced to settle for the temporal.¹³

The backward-looking movement in Rilke and Hölderlin harkens back to a seemingly *timeless* existence, free from reflexivity and the guilt that arises in conjunction.¹⁴ The transition from innocence to guilt that is central to *The Concept of Anxiety* is the basis upon which Haufniensis’s later deliberations on time are constructed, and one of Kierkegaard’s own reveries magnifies the desire to *return*—to Eden, to childhood, to timelessness—and live in innocence once again:

When I stand so and look over Røyen’s old place deep into Hestehaven, and the forest thickens deeply in the background, the shadow and secrecy accentuated even more with the isolated trunks on which only crowns have grown—then I seem vividly to see myself as a little boy running off in my green jacket and gray pants—but, alas, I have grown older

¹³ I have in mind Bailly’s appropriation of Rilke’s eighth elegy in *Le versant animal* (Bailly 2011).

¹⁴ I have discussed the divergence between the backward-looking movement of Schleiermacher and the forward-looking movement of Kierkegaard at length in a manner that sets up and connects integrally to the current discussion (Rogers 2016).

and cannot catch up *with myself*. Grasping childhood is like grasping a beautiful region as one rides in a carriage looking backward; one only becomes properly aware of the beauty at that moment, at that every instant when it begins to disappear, and all I have left of that happy time is *crying like a child* (Kierkegaard 2007, p. 248).¹⁵

This is the backward-looking movement that characterizes Schleiermacher's view of religious experience, the longing for immediacy that arises in the writings of so many of the Romantic philosophers and poets.

Establishing further this connection, drawing upon a source that Kierkegaard also holds dear, Annie Dillard expresses this poignancy with even greater potency. She writes of our disjointed experiences of immediacy, “[The] second of shattering is an *augenblick*, a particular configuration, a slant of light shot in the open eye. Goethe's Faust risks all if he should cry to the moment, the *augenblick*, ‘*Verweile doch!*’ ‘Last forever!’ Who hasn't prayed that prayer? But the *augenblick* isn't going to *verweile*” (Dillard 1974, p. 84).

It seems to me that the experiences of the present that find expression in the work of Dillard and of Schleiermacher collide with the boundary that marks the closest proximity to the eternal-present to which the individual can attain, in time—and I suspect that Kierkegaard would agree with me on this point. After establishing of his robust conception of the moment, Haufniensis advances the following: “Thus understood, the moment is not properly an atom of time but an atom of eternity. It is the first reflection of eternity in time, its first attempt, as it were, at stopping time” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 88). Based on the aforementioned divisions between pseudo-present and present, pseudo-moment and moment, which he has carefully delineated for the sake of presenting the concept in question, I presume that Haufniensis does not have in mind the pseudo-moment, with its lack of content, but rather *the moment* wherein the eternal touches the temporal—the moment as an atom of eternity.

If this is the case, then Haufniensis's deliberations on time lend credence to Dillard's experiences of the present and to Schleiermacher's description of perfect God-consciousness. The momentary experiences of transcendence that Schleiermacher describes as *the outpourings of the inner fire* are

¹⁵ In 1848 Kierkegaard pens a lengthy, beautiful and revelatory reflection, which echoes the religious experience cited above (footnote 9) and provides further evidence of the link between the attack on Christendom and the attack on Schleiermacher which both occur during this final period of his life (Rogers 2016). The 1838 experience occurred in close proximity both to the death of his father and to Easter; ten years later he remarks upon the inward transformation that the 1838 experience had initiated: “For now I see so clearly (again unto new joy in God, a new occasion to give thanks) that my life has been planned. My life began without spontaneity or immediacy, with a frightful melancholy, basically disturbed from earliest childhood...Then my father's death really stopped me. I did not dare to believe that this, the fundamental wretchedness of my being, could be lifted; so I grasped the eternal blessedly assured that God is love indeed, even though I should have to suffer in this way all my life, yes, blessedly assured of this.” His admission that at this point he dared not believe that the fundamental wretchedness of his being could be lifted, but nonetheless he held fast to the thought that God is love, further substantiates my argument that *de Silentio* represents an early stage of the individual's religious development (Rogers 2015). After reflecting on the broken engagement, Kierkegaard continues, “And now, now when in many ways I have been brought to the breaking point, now (since Easter, although with intermissions), a hope has awakened in my soul that it may still be God's will to lift this elementary misery of my being. That is, I now believe in the deepest sense. Faith is spontaneity after reflection” (Kierkegaard 1978, no. 6135).

atoms of eternity, the first reflections of eternity in time and eternity's first attempt at stopping time.

Further supporting my claim that Kierkegaard acknowledges and appreciates experiences of transcendence occurring in and through the natural world is a passage from a letter written by Jakob Knudson, who records a story told to him by his aunt, the wife of Kierkegaard's older brother Peter Christian Kierkegaard. Knudson narrates, secondhand, a conversation that occurred while the trio comprised of his aunt, her husband, and his younger brother, Søren, rode by carriage through the deer park north of Copenhagen. When Peter Kierkegaard praises the characteristically Scandinavian weather, Søren Kierkegaard responds in earnest:

The younger brother had replied that such weather was perfectly suited to conceal the Eternal. It was a temptation—he had said that many times—it tempted the mind to dream and to wander. Who could keep hold of a serious thought while enjoying that smooth, billowing grass? Either one had to let one's mind billow and dream like the grass, or one had to surrender one's thoughts, but in that case all this bright, transient lushness became painful. The whole thing was a quaking bog, he had said. Of course it looked as if that green, open plain was solid ground, but the entire thing was a bog, you know. It quaked and quaked, and Eternity lay beneath (Kirmmse 1996, p. 27).

Despite her initial thought that Kierkegaard may have said these words to scare her, Knudson's aunt concludes, based on the inwardness with which he spoke, that Kierkegaard very much believed this declaration.

Her account, recorded by her nephew, substantiates Kierkegaard's appreciation of what Schleiermacher might call *God-consciousness*—but whereas Schleiermacher would likely proclaim “*eternity lies beneath!*” with the fervor of one experiencing the height of religious immediacy, Kierkegaard asserts this proposition with the suspicion of a cynic. Searching for eternity within the realm of temporality, these two thinkers have fixed their gazes in opposing directions.

Schleiermacher presents perpetual God-consciousness as a return to the original perfection of humankind, but Kierkegaard maintains that higher religiousness necessitates a forward-looking movement. Haufniensis makes the difference explicit when he compares his view of the moment as an atom of eternity to the Ancient Greek view of the moment, arguing that “...Greek culture did not comprehend the moment, and even if it had comprehended the atom of eternity, it did not comprehend that it was the moment, did not define it with a forward direction but with a backward direction. Because for Greek culture the atom of eternity was essentially eternity, neither time nor eternity receive what was properly its due” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 88). The backward-looking movement of Platonic recollection, which Johannes Climacus recounts and then surmounts in *Philosophical Fragments*, mistakes the atom of eternity for eternity itself, thereby confounding the ephemeral moment with the contentful present (Kierkegaard 1985, pp. 9-11).

The backward-looking gaze of Plato and his successors sets a precedent for those Romantic thinkers who mourn the loss of Edenic existence and who advocate a return to the beauty and possibilities of the natural world, and Schleiermacher the preeminent Plato scholar envisions

human perfection as a return to an Eden-like state of perpetual immediacy.¹⁶ Kierkegaard proposes that a qualitative movement toward a new mode of existence is the essence of a still higher religiousness.

Assailed by majesty and splendor, trapped beneath a canopy of tall trees and thick fog, Kierkegaard circumvents his Romantic sensibilities and reveals his belief that the captivating veneer of beauty is temptation to the one who sees beyond appearances. Note that echoes of the Kierkegaardian musings recorded by Knudson resonate in Anti-Climacus's *Sickness Unto Death*:

The relation between ignorance and despair is similar to that between ignorance and anxiety; the anxiety that characterizes spiritlessness is recognized precisely by its spiritless sense of security. Nevertheless, anxiety lies underneath; likewise, despair also lies underneath, and when the enchantment of illusions is over, when existence begins to totter, then despair, too, immediately appears as that which lay underneath (Kierkegaard 1983b, p. 44).¹⁷

The captivation that characterizes religious immediacy, the *enchantment* that provides momentary security, halts the action of the self-relating relation that is the self—and the absence of self-relation signals the presence of despair, according to Anti-Climacus's account.

¹⁶ In anticipation of my next section, on first love: Judge William provides further evidence that Kierkegaard sees the backward-looking movement, against which he sets his own forward-looking movement, in connection with the tradition of German Romanticism. During his treatment of *first love*, which I quote throughout the latter part of the next section of this paper, Judge William references the young aesthete's thoughts on the "pre-established harmony" of romantic lovers. He connects the truth in the aesthete's view to truth found in the views of Goethe: "What we are speaking of here is what Goethe in the *Wahlverwandtschaften* has so artistically first intimated to us in the imagery of nature in order to make it real later in the world of spirit, except that Goethe endeavored to motivate this drawing power through a series of factors (perhaps in order to show the difference between the life of spirit and the life of nature)..." From here, he invokes biblical imagery of Eden: "And is it not beautiful to imagine that two beings are intended for each other! How often do we not have an urge to go beyond the historical consciousness, a longing, a homesickness for the primeval forest that lies behind us, and does not this longing acquire a double significance when it joins to itself the conception of another being whose home is also in that region? Therefore, every marriage, even the one that is entered into after sober consideration, has an urge, at least in particular moments, to imagine such a foreground" (Kierkegaard 1987, pp. 20-21). Thus with reference to the backward looking longing of Goethe, William makes an explicit connection to Eden; in the pages to follow, William references Byron (22), and further along in the discourse, he makes an admiring reference—"In one of the most brilliant stories from the Romantic school..."—to Schlegel's *Lucinde* (139). In the context of Kierkegaard's debt to Schleiermacher, Richard Crouter persuasively argues that *Either/Or* in its entirety mirrors Schleiermacher's *Confidential Letters Concerning Schlegel's "Lucinde,"* a response to Schlegel's *Lucinde* (Crouter 2007) which utilizes a type of indirect communication.

¹⁷ Compare also the following passage from *Works of Love*: "Consequently, *only when it is a duty to love, only then is love eternally secured.* This security of eternity casts out all anxiety and makes love perfect, perfectly secured. In that love which has only existence, however confident it is, there is an anxiety, an anxiety about the possibility of change. Such love does not understand that this is anxiety any more than the poet does, because the anxiety is hidden, and the only expression is the flaming craving, whereby it is known that the anxiety is hidden underneath" (Kierkegaard 1995, p. 32-33). The same point is reiterated with regard to despair a few pages later: "*Only when it is a duty to love, only then is love eternally and happily secured against despair.* Spontaneous love can become unhappy, can reach the point of despair" (ibid., 40). Kierkegaard reflects further, "Despair is a misrelation in a person's innermost being—no fate or event can penetrate so far and so deep; it can only make manifest that the misrelation—was there. For this reason there is only one security against despair: to undergo the change of eternity through duty's *shall*. Anyone who has not undergone this change *is* in despair" (ibid.).

The captivation that characterizes religious immediacy, the *enchantment* that provides momentary security, halts the action of the self-relating relation that is the self—and the absence of self-relation signals the presence of despair, according to Anti-Climacus’s account.

In the case of the despair he is here describing, i.e. despair characterized by ignorance, the individual is confidently ignorant of the misrelation that she perpetuates within her self. He employs the language of anxiety and/or despair *lying beneath* to argue that when an externally-derived occasion occurs, causing this individual’s world to totter, the despair that she had hitherto refused to acknowledge immediately reveals itself to have been rooted deeply within her all along, in spite of her lack of self-awareness.

Note also that Anti-Climacus’s point that “despair lies underneath,” written in 1848, is in part an explication of the point that Kierkegaard penned in 1833. Predicting his 1837 criticism of Schleiermacher and the Hegelian theologians almost verbatim, Kierkegaard argues that when the Hegelian dogmatists provide new meanings for traditional theological concepts, “...faith becomes the immediate consciousness, which is at heart nothing other than the *vitale fluidum* of the mental life, its atmosphere” (Schreiber 2011, p. 139, footnote 10). Introducing this comment is a contrast between “the *immediate faith*, which can be *called forth by suffering*” with “an intensified faith”—a warning that immediate faith, which may appear in response to a despair that has been revealed on the basis of an external occasion, or which may arise when “the enchantment of illusion is over,” is not the intensified faith that is, for Kierkegaard, a second immediacy (ibid.).

First love

Despite his former conception of Schleiermacher as an ally in the war upon speculative idealism, and despite the praises bestowed at the beginning of his pseudonymous authorship, Kierkegaard exhibits an almost inexplicable hostility toward Schleiermacher during the final years of his life. One comment, written in 1850, contrasts the passivity of Schleiermacher’s conception of the religious with the active orientation of Kierkegaard’s own conception:

The error in Schleiermacher’s dogmatics is that for him religiousness is always really a condition, *it is*; he represents everything in the sphere of being, Spinozian being. How it becomes in the sense of coming to exist and in the sense of being maintained does not really concern him. This is why he is unable to pick up very much from dogmatics. Every Christian qualification is characterized by the ethical oriented to striving. From this comes fear and trembling, and the *you shall*; from this also the possibility of offense etc. This is of minor concern to Schleiermacher. He treats religiousness in the sphere of being (Kierkegaard 1975, no. 3852).

Kierkegaard juxtaposes his own emphasis on *becoming* with Schleiermacher’s emphasis on *being*, and he remarks that for Schleiermacher “religiousness is always a condition.”

Integral to the discussion of moving beyond the Socratic in *Philosophical Fragments* is Johannes Climacus’s notion of *the condition*. In Socratic midwifery, the teacher merely provides *the*

occasion that provokes the learner to recollect for herself, e.g. the question that provokes the learner to recollect. By contrast, the god provides *the condition* whereby the learner transitions from untruth to truth, a singular act that transpires at a specific point in time or points in time (Kierkegaard 1985).

For Schleiermacher, however, religiousness is always a condition. The possibility of transcendence is not a particular initiative act by which the learner transitions from untruth to truth, but is rather, following the paradigm established by Platonic recollection, an open door to experiences of religious immediacy—one that requires, it would seem, the provocation provided by an externally-derived *occasion*. In the same way that the Socratic pupil is prompted from without to recollect the truth, so the adherent to Schleiermacher's paradigm is externally prompted unto religious immediacy, an experience that harkens back to original perfection of humankind.

With these qualifications in mind we can address an addendum that Kierkegaard added to his being/becoming critique: “S. conceives of religiousness as completely analogous to erotic love. But this is a misunderstanding. Erotic love essentially has nothing to do with a striving. But Christianity has to do with a striving” (Kierkegaard 1975, no. 3853). In “The Aesthetic Validity of Marriage,” found in the second part of *Either/Or*, Judge William contrasts romantic love with the higher love that comes to exist within the context of marriage; this contrast coincides with Kierkegaard's being/becoming, externally-derived/internally-derived distinctions.¹⁸

William bids the young aesthete to whom he writes to consider the multitude of romance stories that chronicle the ills and misfortunes of two lovers who fight toward the goal of beginning a happy marriage, celebrating the victories of first love. These stories, he contends, hardly impart wisdom to their readers—they merely relate the passion that arouses the “first flame of love” without ennobling the reader to kindle and sustain it.¹⁹ Thus good that exists in these accounts is counterbalanced by their essential lack of inwardness: “That which is true in this whole development, the genuinely esthetic, is that love is situated in striving, that this feeling is seen to be battling its way through an opposition. The defect is that this battle, this dialectic, is completely external and that love emerges from this battle just as abstract as when it entered into it” (Kierkegaard 1987, p. 18). The lovers fight through various trials, but their love is not transformed into inwardness. It remains external and abstract, based upon emotion and inclination.

Lest we think Judge William's comment that in such stories “love is represented as a striving” nullifies Kierkegaard's point that Schleiermacher's view is analogous to erotic love, which has nothing to do with striving, William reveals that romantic love is determined from without, arising of necessity. He writes, “Romantic love manifests itself as immediate by exclusively resting in natural necessity. It is based on beauty, partly on sensuous beauty, partly on the beauty that can be conceived through and in and with the sensuous...” (Kierkegaard 1987, p. 21). Harkening back to our discussion of *the present*, Judge William acknowledges that romantic love is somewhat

¹⁸ Westphal (2003) makes apparent an essential detail that others have overlooked: for Kierkegaard both faith *and* love are second immediacies. Situating Kierkegaard's notion of *second immediacy* against the background constituted by the notion of *mediated immediacy* in Hegel, Westphal engages in discussions of love in Judge William's writings to the young aesthete and in *Works of Love*, situating them alongside discussions of faith as a second immediacy. I have followed suit in this section.

¹⁹ I am quoting here from the Lowrie translation (1974, p. 18).

redeemed by the lovers' consciousness of eternity—although, as he mentions earlier, in this case the eternal is thus based on the temporal, thus cancelling itself. The two lovers describe their love as “eternal,” and “although this love is based essentially on the sensuous, it nevertheless is noble by virtue of the consciousness of eternity that it assimilates, for it is this that distinguishes all love from lust: that it bears a stamp of eternity” (Kierkegaard 1987, p. 21).

Kierkegaard himself makes a similar connection in *Works of Love*, revealing the source of the desire that keeps the flame of erotic love alive. He writes, “Christianity knows far better than the poets that the love they celebrate is secretly self-love, and that precisely by this its intoxicated expression—to love another person more than oneself—can be explained. Erotic love is still not the eternal; it is the beautiful dizziness of infinity...” (Kierkegaard 1995, p. 19). Echoing Judge William's comment that celebrated love contains hints of the eternal, Kierkegaard reveals here that self-love serves as kindling for erotic love.

By contrast, love's transformation requires self-denial. Explicating his point that regarding the fruits of love, “sometimes the poisonous fruit is also delicious and the healthful fruit bitter in taste,” Kierkegaard provides an example that makes this clear: “For example, when a person makes the mistake of calling something love that actually is self-love, when he loudly protests that he cannot live without the beloved but does not want to hear anything about the task and requirement of love to deny oneself and give up this self-love of erotic love” (Kierkegaard 1995, p. 7). The difference between self-love and the ethical requirement is the difference that separates immediacy from love's transformation: “What a difference there is between the play of feelings, drives, inclinations, and passions, in short, that play of the powers of immediacy, that celebrated glory of poetry in smiles or in tears, in desire or in want—what a difference between this and the earnestness of eternity, the earnestness of the commandment in spirit and truth, in honesty and self-denial!” (Kierkegaard 1995, p. 25). This difference is analogous, for Kierkegaard, to the difference between Schleiermacher's understanding of religion and his own.

When we consider these reflections against the background of Kierkegaard's being/becoming, external/internal critique of Schleiermacher, it becomes clear that Schleiermacher's view of religiousness is based on experiences derived from without, and furthermore that the immediacy of erotic love corresponds closely to “the moment,” the parody of the eternal discussed in the previous section. Judge William supports this connection and advances our discussion by positing a forward-looking movement: “The sensuous is momentary. ...The true eternity in love, which is the true morality, actually rescues it first out of the sensuous. But to bring forth this true eternity requires a determination of will—but more on that later” (Kierkegaard 1987, pp. 21-22). It is this active determination, a choice made by the single individual, which must initiate a break with the passive enchantment of immediacy.

Objective uncertainty

The illusive author—take, for example, Kierkegaard himself—understands something that his or her reader may not: while a direct mode of communication may provide the reader with additional knowledge (receptivity), only an indirect mode of communication can incite the reader to seek truth for herself (activity), creating an inwardness that will sustain her on her individual quest for

truth. This is the very foundation of Socratic pedagogy. Ironically, Kierkegaard draws upon Schleiermacher in formulating his dialogical method of indirect authorship, but this break with passivity is a break with Schleiermacher's conception of the religious.²⁰

It is also the foundation for Johannes Climacus's thesis, in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, that subjectivity is truth. God aims to inspire subjectivity on the part of the single individual, guiding her away from untruth: "And why is God illusive? Precisely because he is truth and being illusive seeks to keep a person from untruth. The observer does not glide directly to the result but on his own must concern himself with finding it and thereby break the direct relation. But this break is the actual breakthrough of inwardness, and act of self-activity, the first designation of truth as inwardness" (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 244).²¹ The individual does not arrive at truth via receptivity, in the manner that Schleiermacher's God-consciousness exemplifies. To claim that subjectivity is truth is to emphasize the way of truth, and the motivations, decisions, and passion of the one seeking after the truth.

In accordance with his emphasis on *striving*, and on the need for an active disposition on the part of the learner, Kierkegaard conceives of divine hiddenness as a type of indirect authorship—the ultimate foundation, perhaps, for the method of indirect communication that undergirds his entire pseudonymous corpus.²² Climacus draws a correlation between his pedagogical convictions and his understanding of divine providence, arguing from the ineffectual nature of direct communication—the Climacian corpus only begins to express Kierkegaard's antipathy toward heavy-handed indoctrination—that God operates *indirectly*. Climacus writes, "No anonymous author can more slyly hide himself, and no maieutic can more carefully recede from a direct relation than God can. He is in the creation, everywhere in the creation, but he is not there directly..." (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 243). For Climacus, God is not directly present in nature, and does not reveal himself directly.²³ He does not overwhelm the individual such that her religious

²⁰ Cf. footnote 15.

²¹ In the conversation that follows, Climacus reiterates this point: "Just as important as the truth, and of the two even the more important one, is the mode in which the truth is accepted, and it is of slight help if one gets millions to accept the truth if by the very mode of their acceptance they are transposed into untruth" (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 247).

²² Kierkegaard's signed works provide evidence that this correspondence is integral to his own understanding, not merely a view unique to his pseudonyms. See especially "Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing," (Kierkegaard 1993) in which Kierkegaard references several means that God uses to communicate indirectly (repentance, regret, erotic love, trials, and punishments, to name a few), and see also the prayer that opens *For Self-Examination* (Kierkegaard 1990), in which he depicts God as patiently guiding the individual into subjectivity.

²³ The same is true for Kierkegaard himself. With reference to the mystical tradition, he writes in 1836, "May not Matthew 11:12 properly be interpreted as referring to the mystics (here I am giving this verse a wider meaning, whereby it can apply outside the sphere of theology also), who think that they have a direct relationship to God and consequently will not acknowledge that all men have only an indirect relationship (the Church—in the political domain, the state.)" (Kierkegaard 1975, no. 2794). However, his negative disposition toward the mystical tradition—inferred on the basis of his implicating the mystics as those who take the kingdom by force, causing it to suffer violence—had apparently undergone a paradigmatic shift by 1840. In this year, he writes, "As with certain bird cries, we hear a mystic only in the stillness of the night; for this reason a mystic generally does not have as much significance for his noisy contemporaries as for the listening kindred spirit in the stillness of history after the passage of time" (Kierkegaard 1975, no. 2796). It seems to me that Kierkegaard is here referring to himself as a "listening kindred spirit" who has obtained ears to hear the truth contained in outpourings of mystical fervor. It may even be the case that his own (mystical) experience, which had taken place in the interim separating these two differing appraisals (1838, cf. footnote 9), gave rise to this change in disposition—although another comment from 1840 seems to indicate that his admiration for the mystic is still highly qualified: "Mysticism does not have the patience to wait for God's

inclinations depend solely upon passive receptivity. The glimpses that he may or may not provide are not to be taken as ends in themselves.

The back-and-forth between revelation and reception is not the prerequisite to the sustained immediacy that characterizes Schleiermacher's perfect God-consciousness. Rather, moments of immediate reception are intended to inspire an act, or repeated acts of the will on the part of the individual. Thus "only when the single individual turns inward into himself (consequently only in the inwardness of self- activity) does he become aware and capable of seeing God" (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 243). The inward turn instantiates a division between external religion and internal religion, and Climacus continues,

The direct relationship with God is simply paganism, and only when the break has taken place, only then can there be a true God-relationship. But this break is indeed the first act of inwardness oriented to the definition that truth is inwardness. Nature is certainly the work of God, but only the work is present, not God. With regard to the individual human being, is this not acting like an illusive author, who nowhere sets forth his result in block letters or provides it beforehand in a preface? (Kierkegaard 1992, pp. 243-244).

Climacus maintains that the individual must break with the illusion of a "direct relation"—with the certainty of immediate religious experience, a mode of reception that operates on the basis an *externally* derived moments of revelation. In contrast to the indirect and inward nature of higher religiousness, "immediate religiousness rests in the pious superstition of seeing God directly in everything" (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 505). Schleiermacher's God-consciousness succumbs almost entirely to this characterization—especially if we substitute "seeing" in the phrase "seeing God directly in everything" for "experiencing."

Immediate religiousness, i.e. first immediacy, or *the first immediate*—the annulment of which concludes the first movement of Hegelian philosophy—consists in the "pious superstition" of *experiencing* God directly in everything. This *is* the essence of Kierkegaard's critique of the conflation of "faith" or "religion" with "the first immediate." Recall Kierkegaard's original critique: "That which Schleiermacher calls 'religion' and the Hegelian dogmaticians call 'faith,' is at heart nothing other than the first immediate, the condition for everything—the *vitale fluidum*—the atmosphere that we, in spiritual sense, breathe in" (Schreiber 2011, p. 139, footnote 10). Kierkegaard holds Schleiermacher responsible for promulgating this misapprehension of faith, and this is no mischaracterization of Schleiermacher's view, as Schreiber argues. Furthermore, it is not out of the realm of possibility that Hegel and the Hegelian theologians imbibed their conception of faith from the view that Schleiermacher had popularized—this thought may well be in the back of Kierkegaard's mind when he raises both his early (1837) and later (1850) critiques of Schleiermacher.

In *Postscript*, Climacus argues that the *summa summarum* of nature is an objective uncertainty, and again Dillard demonstrates the facticity of this claim by presenting an account that culminates

revelation" (Kierkegaard 1975, no. 2795). At any rate, by 1850, Kierkegaard apparently holds the mystic in very high esteem: "The system *begins* with 'nothing'; the mystic always ends with 'nothing.' The latter is the divine nothing, just as Socrates' ignorance was devout fear of God, the ignorance with which he did not begin but ended, or which he continually reached" (Kierkegaard 1975, no. 2797).

in her struggle with objective uncertainty. Immediately after Climacus postulates his understanding of truth as “*An objective uncertainty, held fast through appropriation with the most passionate inwardness,*” he writes: “I observe nature in order to find God, and I do indeed see omnipresence and wisdom, but I also see much that troubles and disturbs. The *summa summarum* of this is an objective uncertainty, but the inwardness is so very great, precisely because it grasps this objective uncertainty with all the passion of the infinite” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 213). Schleiermacher approaches nature in *wonder*—this disposition to wonder is the spirit that Kierkegaard finds so appealing in Schleiermacher (cf. Rogers 2016), and Kierkegaard attempts to give new life to it through his own work—but Schleiermacher remains too far removed from nature’s minutiae to take its darker realities into consideration. He exemplifies the passion that Climacus requires, but not the inwardness; he observes nature with a disposition to receptivity, but arrives neither at objective uncertainty nor the point of decision.

Conclusion

What distinguishes Dillard’s view from Schleiermacher’s is that she observes the natural world meticulously and finds not only transcendence and beauty, but also—and overwhelmingly so—callousness and ruthless brutality. Driven to despair by this unresolvable tension, objective uncertainty leads her to a point of decision, the climax of *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*: “Either this world, my mother, is a monster, or I myself am a freak” (Dillard 1974, p. 179). She disregards her experiences of immediate transcendence and chooses to take nature as her standard of normativity, rather than her abhorrence. She resolves to overcome her freakishness and conform herself to nature’s pitiless expectations.

The road of anguish is an option that Kierkegaard hopes [t]o help his reader avoid. In choosing this option, however, Dillard *has* made a decision, thereby transitioning from the passivity of reception to the passion of despondency.²⁴ Schleiermacher’s passive mode of reception does not create the tension needed to break with the certainty of first immediacy, in passion, and to grasp for a higher immediacy; Dillard reaches the point at which a decision can be made, but she does not break with the realm of certitude. Faith necessitates courage, as one must be willing to break with the certainty of immediate religiousness and to leap into what is not yet known. The road to the point at which the leap can be made abounds with danger, and on this road temptations assail at every turn.

In “The Real Targets of Kierkegaard’s Critique of Characterizing Faith as ‘the Immediate,’” Gerhard Schreiber argues that a translation error leads Kierkegaard to wrongfully conclude that Schleiermacher’s religion is nothing other than *the first immediate*. Over-against Schreiber’s claim that Kierkegaard’s critique is not justified, I have argued by way of illustration and application that it is indeed a *de facto* characterization. First, I cited passages from Schleiermacher and American author Annie Dillard in order to establish the ubiquity of Schleiermacher’s *God-consciousness*. I also established that on Schleiermacher’s own view the experiences that Dillard recounts are

²⁴ Take, for example, a line from the final chapter of *The Concept of Anxiety*: “However, I will not deny that whoever is educated by possibility is exposed to danger, not that of getting into bad company or going astray in various ways as are those educated by the finite, but the danger of a fall, namely, suicide” (Kierkegaard 1981, p. 158-159).

outpourings of the inner fire, experiences of the immediate religiousness that is the singular basis for all religious systems, which arise via interpretations of these various experiences.

Second, I utilized Vigilius Haufniensis's discussion of time, and more specifically his definitions of *the present* and *the moment (die Augenblick)*, to argue that Kierkegaard's conception of *the moment* as an atom eternity coincides with Schleiermacher's perfect God-consciousness. I then problematized this claim by citing an account of Kierkegaard's musings on childhood, nature and eternity, coupled with a few deliberations from Anti-Climacus, to argue that Kierkegaard conceives of experiences of religious immediacy as *temptations*. I also pointed out that Kierkegaard and Schleiermacher have fixed their gazes in opposite directions, and I ended this section by concluding that immediate religiousness, arising in response to an external prompting, is not Kierkegaardian faith.

Third, I invoked Johannes Climacus's concept of *the condition*, occurring in *Philosophical Fragments*, to elucidate Kierkegaard's critique that for Schleiermacher "religiousness is always a condition," i.e. an open door to experiences of religious immediacy occurring in response to external promptings in the natural world. The key problem is the individual's receptive posture; to develop this point further I appropriated Judge William's discussion of the immediacy of romantic love as a means to interpret Kierkegaard's criticism that for Schleiermacher religiousness is analogous to erotic love, and I referred to Kierkegaard's arguments in *Works of Love* that self-love is the kindling that keeps the fires of erotic love ablaze. Finally, I presented Johannes Climacus's comparison between indirect communication and divine hiddenness. Climacus undermines the possibility of a "direct," or immediate relation to God, arguing that faith requires one to renounce the experiential certainty of religious immediacy for a higher immediacy.

Kierkegaard's conception of Schleiermacher's view of religion is not based on one passage from Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*, which happens to contain a mistranslation. His criticisms that Schleiermacher's religion is nothing other than *the first immediate*, the very atmosphere of the spiritual life, that Schleiermacher represents religiousness within the realm of being and not becoming, and that his view is analogous to erotic love, convey his hostility toward the posture of receptivity that fails to give rise to the tension needed to break with the certainty of immediate experience and to grasp, in passion, for the uncertainty of a higher religiousness.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank Uche Anizor and Andy Draycott for their comments on very early drafts of this essay, Garrett Bredeson and Mandel Cabrera for their comments during our discussion after I presented an early draft at the Southwest Seminar in Continental Philosophy in May of 2015, and Elizabeth A. Murray and an anonymous review[er] for their feedback on this draft.

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