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## **Schleiermacher in the Kierkegaardian Project: Between Socratic Ignorance and Second Immediacy**

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**Abstract:** In this paper I identify Schleiermacher as an intermediary between the two stages of the religious set forth in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Gesturing toward categories integral to the Kierkegaardian project at large, I also argue that he occupies a pivotal role between Socratic ignorance and second immediacy. These schemata uncover answers to a dilemma that has recently been articulated: whereas Kierkegaard administers highest praise to Schleiermacher at the beginning of his pseudonymous authorship, he becomes inexplicably hostile toward him at the end of his life and authorship.

The scholarship on the relation between these two thinkers has served mostly to distinguish the similarities and differences between them, clarifying the ways in which Schleiermacher influences Kierkegaard and that Kierkegaard's thought differs from Schleiermacher's. Over the past twenty years, Richard Crouter has emerged as the foremost authority regarding their conceptual and historical relationships. Drawing on insights from Crouter, I pinpoint Schleiermacher's pivotal role in the Kierkegaardian project, conceived of holistically.<sup>1</sup> Thus I locate Schleiermacher within Kierkegaard's continuum of existence-spheres and the role he plays in Kierkegaard's understanding of the maturation of the self.

I argue that Schleiermacher rests at a midpoint between Johannes Climacus's *Religiousness A* and *Religiousness B*, between the "dialectic of inward deepening" exemplified by Socrates and the "paradoxical religiousness" that constitutes Climacus's highest conception of the religious; I also argue that he rests at a midpoint between two ideas that bookend the Kierkegaardian project at large, Socratic ignorance and second immediacy. Importantly, this contextual framework helps to establish answers to a problem that Crouter exposes and briefly addresses at the end of his latest

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<sup>1</sup> In using the term "project," I mean to encompass the guiding intentions behind Kierkegaard's entire authorship, signed and unsigned, and the ways that the impetus behind these intentions transforms his own existence.

contribution to the discussion: “Following the writing of *The Point of View for My Work as an Author* and *The Sickness unto Death* in 1848-49, Kierkegaard’s references to Schleiermacher become increasingly sporadic, appear only in the journals, and suddenly take on a mood of critical defiance.”<sup>2</sup>

## I Religiousness A

Having discussed the frequent references to Schleiermacher in Kierkegaard’s dissertation, *The Concept of Irony*, Crouter details the German’s influence on *Either/Or*, in which there are two explicit references, and briefly moves to discuss Schleiermacher’s possible influence on the *corpus* of Johannes Climacus. In the context of this overview of the early pseudonyms, Crouter notes the following: “In turn, when we look closely at the philosophical themes and theological orientations of *Philosophical Fragments* and *The Concept of Anxiety*, as paired books from 1844, the complementary inquiries of Johannes Climacus and Vigilius Haufniensis appear to have brought together the two sides of Schleiermacher.”<sup>3</sup> This insight and the investigation it invites comprise a background to the investigation undertaken hereafter.

Moving from Crouter’s vision of *Philosophical Fragments* and *The Concept of Anxiety* as a synthesis, I propose that Climacus’s third and final work, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, the final work of Kierkegaard’s first authorship, expands and enlarges our understanding of Schleiermacher’s influential role in the Kierkegaardian project. Thus the maturing Climacus, with a bit of help and clarification from Haufniensis, can be read as synthesizing and transcending the two Schleiermachers—the preeminent Plato scholar and devotee of Socrates, on the one hand, and the *Bewußtseins*-theologian on the other. Propelled by this sublation, Climacus sketches a higher understanding of the religious, Religiousness B. It is appropriate to begin, therefore, where both Climacus and Schleiermacher begin: with Socrates, in whom Religiousness A reaches its highest expression.

Subtly, as a prelude to inquiry, Johannes Climacus places a *Propositio* above the title of the first section of his first published work: “The question is asked by one who in his ignorance does not even know what provided the occasion for his questioning this way.”<sup>4</sup> The question at stake, with which his deliberation begins, is this: Can the truth be learned?<sup>5</sup> He relates the chain of reasoning that led Socrates to the doctrine of recollection and its corresponding proof of the soul’s immortality, and he concludes by providing a glimpse into Kierkegaard’s heart:

In view of this, it is manifest with what wonderful consistency Socrates remained true to himself and artistically exemplified what he had understood. He was and continued to be a midwife, not because he “did not have the positive,” but because he perceived that this

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Crouter, “Schleiermacher: Revisiting Kierkegaard’s Relationship to Him” in *Kierkegaard and His German Contemporaries*, Tome II, *Theology*, ed. by Jon Stewart, Aldershot: Ashgate 2007 (Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Resources, vol. 6), p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Crouter, “Schleiermacher: Revisiting Kierkegaard’s Relationship to Him,” p. 214.

<sup>4</sup> *SKS* 4, 218 / *PF*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Alternately, the referent could be the question(s) asked on the title page of the first edition of the work: “Can a historical point of departure be given for an eternal consciousness; how can such a point of departure be of more than historical interest; can an eternal happiness be built on historical knowledge?” *SKS* 4, 213 / *PF*, 1.

relation is the highest relation a human being can have to another. And in that he is indeed forever right, for even if a divine point of departure is ever given, this remains the true relation between one human being and another, if one reflects upon the absolute and does not dally with the accidental but with all one's heart renounces understanding the half-measures that seem to be the inclination of men and the secret of the system. Socrates, however, was a midwife examined by the god himself. The work he carried out was a divine commission, even though he struck people as an eccentric, and the divine intention, as he understood it, was that the god forbade him to give birth...because between one human being and another  $\mu\alpha\iota\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  is the highest; giving birth indeed belongs to the god.<sup>6</sup>

This passage, fraught with passion, may well be the heart of the entire authorship, the force flowing from the eccentric Dane and infusing life into each of the pseudonymous authors.<sup>7</sup> Exposed here are veins that course through the Kierkegaardian *corpus*: self-awareness, humility before the god, existential pathos, disdain for the system, artistic exemplification of the truth via indirect communication, and, perhaps as a prelude to all, Socratic ignorance.

It is Socratic ignorance, which persistently recognizes the limits of cognition, and especially of one's own cognition, that arouses Haufniensis's distinguished praise of Schleiermacher the Plato scholar. In contradistinction to Hegel, who "was in the German sense a professor of philosophy on a large scale, because he *à tout prix* must explain all things," Schleiermacher "was a thinker in the beautiful Greek sense, a thinker who spoke only of what he knew."<sup>8</sup> Setting a trajectory backwards into the history of philosophy, the watchman of Copenhagen shifts our focus from Hegel to Schleiermacher, whose Socratic approach had been "left behind long ago"<sup>9</sup> in the shadows of the system.

It is precisely with reference to Socratic ignorance that Kierkegaard identifies most with Schleiermacher; these thinkers are most alike in their militancy against human presumption, speculation-beyond-justification, and what they perceive to be the failings of the idealist tradition. For both, these convictions stem from a deep-seated identification with the Greek thinker who spoke only of what he knew, and who embodied the Delphic maxim of self-examination:  $\gamma\nu\omega\theta\iota\ \sigma\epsilon\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\nu$ .

Haufniensis's oft-cited Schleiermacher-Hegel juxtaposition can be found in the introduction to his work, occurring amidst his discussion of a tripartite division of sciences. In his second chapter, however, there hides an overlooked passage that has much to reveal about Kierkegaard's understanding of Schleiermacher as Plato scholar and Socratic thinker. After presenting an incisive critique of the unqualified conception of sin as selfishness, in which he pinpoints a detached, abstract understanding of *self* as the source of misunderstanding, an impassioned Haufniensis proposes concrete self-awareness as our sole hope for understanding:

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<sup>6</sup> SKS 4, 219-220 / PF, 11.

<sup>7</sup> See especially Melissa Fitzpatrick, "The Recollection of Anxiety: Kierkegaard as our Socratic Occasion to Transcend Unfreedom," *The Heythrop Journal*, vol. 55, 2014, pp. 871-882.

<sup>8</sup> SKS 4, 327-328 / CA, 20.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

And this is the wonder of life, that each man who is mindful of himself knows what no science knows, since he knows who he himself is, and this is the profundity of the Greek saying γνῶθι σεαυτόν, which too long has been understood in the German way as pure self-consciousness, the airiness of idealism. It is about time to understand it in the Greek way, and then again as the Greeks would have understood it if they had possessed Christian presuppositions.<sup>10</sup>

Haufniensis guides us retrogressively past Hegel, and modernity in general, to recapture the *wonder of life* that no science can grasp.

Philosophy, of course, began in wonder, but modern philosophy—as a younger and more anxious Climacus makes clear—begins with doubt.<sup>11</sup> And as the Greek approach is here again contrasted with the German, Haufniensis’s battle cry to recapture the Greek approach to self-knowledge speaks to Schleiermacher’s pivotal role in the Kierkegaardian project. Especially when coupled with its Climacian companion piece, *The Concept of Anxiety* reverberates with an exhortation to resurrect the spirit of Socrates and thence to move toward the point at which the eternal enters the historical. In historical regression, Haufniensis bids us to re-assume Greek presuppositions and follow the example of the simple wise man who advanced beyond his colleagues in self-understanding.

As Haufniensis desires to transport his reader from a post-Hegelian, speculative age and to begin again with Socrates, so Climacus takes up the Greek mantle as his point of departure.<sup>12</sup> He adds nuance to my depiction of the relation between the Greek and the German; to begin anew with the Socratic may be historical retrogression, but it is not regression in *wisdom*. Justifying the anti-idealist polemic in *Fragments*, he provides us with a new vision: “This much, however, is certain, that with speculative thought everything goes backward, back past the Socratic, which at least comprehended that for an existing person existing is the essential; and much less has speculative thought taken time to comprehend what it means to be *situated* in existence the way the existing person is in the imaginary construction.”<sup>13</sup> To begin again with the Socratic is to begin to comprehend what it is to be situated in existence—as the Kierkegaardian pseudonyms repeatedly emphasize, the ethical task implicit in the Delphic maxim preoccupied Socrates for an entire lifetime, whereas the system leaves behind existence with its first *Aufhebung*. But when the individual strives *à tout prix* to gain the world-historical, the self is lost.

Schleiermacher revives the Socratic by shifting our gaze from the ideal to the actual, or from the German to the Greek, situating us in existence and guiding us into Religiousness A. He does so at times by situating the individual in an imaginary construction, and at other times by inviting us to

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<sup>10</sup> SKS 4, 381-382 / CA, 79.

<sup>11</sup> The reference is, of course, to Johannes Climacus’s unpublished work, *De Omnibus Dubitandum Est*; cf. SKS 15 / JC.

<sup>12</sup> González calls attention to Haufniensis’s self-referential line, “I am a king without a country” (SKS 4, 313 / CA, 8), positing that no science maps onto the approach to anxiety that he pioneers in his book. In the context of our current discussion, I use the term “transport” with reference to this line, in the sense that Haufniensis desires to remove his reader from the speculative-philosophical country to which she ought not pledge her loyalty. See Darío González, “The Triptych of Sciences in the Introduction to *The Concept of Anxiety*,” *Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook*, 2001, pp. 15-42.

<sup>13</sup> SKS 7, 194-195 / CUP1, 212-213.

inquire into the theological consciousness; in either case, Socratic understanding emanates from Schleiermacher's *corpus*.

With heightened self-awareness, Socrates unwittingly brushed against the horizon of a category that would be explicitly diagnosed not long after his lifetime. Juxtaposing himself with the common person of his day, Climacus introduces a moral qualification: so long as time is taken to attend to the world-historical, the everyday speculative thinker is generally regarded as a good person. In contradistinction, Climacus attends to himself—and finds that he is certainly not a good person, but is rather a “corrupt and corruptible man.”<sup>14</sup> His only consolation is the Greek thinker who came to precisely the same conclusion: “Let us, then, lest we be disturbed by thinking about me, stick to Socrates, to whom Fragments also had recourse. By means of his ethical knowledge, he discovered that he had a disposition to all evil.”<sup>15</sup> Contrary to the idealist, the one who understands in the Greek sense becomes aware of such a disposition and is thereby confronted with an ethical task.

With this awareness the existing individual can no longer arrive without delay at the world-historical; “On the contrary, the way of the ethical becomes exceedingly long, because it begins with making this discovery first of all.”<sup>16</sup> The ethical mode of existence impels Socrates to Religiousness A, the dialectic of inward deepening.<sup>17</sup> In this dialectic, an essential relation obtains between the individual and the prospect of eternal happiness; in existential pathos, one's eternal happiness transforms the entire existence of the existing person.<sup>18</sup>

## II Religiousness A.b<sup>19</sup>

Whence arrives the second Schleiermacher, the *Bewußtseins*-theologian—I refer to Schleiermacher as a theologian of consciousness rather than as a theologian of sin in order to prioritize his broadly phenomenological contribution over his more specific hamartiological contribution.<sup>20</sup> Naturally, the theological connection, especially with reference to sin, comprises the backbone of the literature on the Schleiermacher-Kierkegaard relationship. Haufniensis's deliberations on the story of Adam and Eve are heavily indebted to Schleiermacher's insights in the *Glaubenslehre*, and the vast majority of commenters mine this foundation for additional understanding. The early contributions by Hirsch and Fischer operate within these parameters, as do later treatments by Anz and Quinn.<sup>21</sup> Deviating from this approach in his first offering, Crouter

<sup>14</sup> *SKS* 7, 149 / *CUP* 1, 161.

<sup>15</sup> *SKS* 7, 150 / *CUP* 1, 162.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *SKS* 7, 505 / *CUP* 1, 556.

<sup>18</sup> *SKS* 7, 352-353 / *CUP* 1, 387.

<sup>19</sup> My contention is that Schleiermacher brings us into and slightly *beyond* Religiousness A, but not yet to Religiousness B; therefore “Religiousness A.b.”

<sup>20</sup> I emphasize the phenomenological contribution to the Kierkegaardian project in order to encompass the broader, methodological relation. It is important to note, however, that one's awareness of sin and one's understanding of reality stand in a reciprocal relation—that the history of the hermeneutic circle begins with Schleiermacher attests to the integral relation between these two conceptually distinguishable categories.

<sup>21</sup> See Emanuel Hirsch, *Kierkegaard-Studien*, vols. 1-2, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann 1933, vol. 2, pp. 39-76, and *Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie*, vols. 1-5, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus 1949, vol. 5, p. 453; Hermann Fischer, *Subjektivität und Sünde, Kierkegaards Begriff der Sünde mit ständiger Rücksicht auf*

moves forward to discuss Schleiermacher's formative influence on Kierkegaard's method of indirect communication, with an eye to Romantic and Socratic underpinnings.<sup>22</sup>

The following sections nod to both angles of approaching the conceptual relationship, proceeding by careful contextual analysis to draw out the intimate relation between the two Schleiermachers and their Kierkegaardian appropriation, then presenting the sublation of Johannes Climacus. The precise point that I intend to make in this section is that Schleiermacher pioneers an existentially grounded Christianity, thus embodying Haufniensis's ideal of Greek-plus-Christian-self-awareness.

Discussions of sin must take place in the correct mood, the mood of earnestness—thus begins Haufniensis's discussion of sin in the introduction to *The Concept of Anxiety*. Any lack of earnestness belies the fundamental hypocrisy for which Socrates berated the Sophists: "They could talk at length about every subject but lacked the element of appropriation."<sup>23</sup> Ethics, the science corresponding to appropriation, is thereby fundamental when approaching the concept of sin. But when ethics attempts to address the individual's inability to comply with the lofty demands of ethics, a shipwreck occurs: "Sin, then, belongs to ethics only insofar as upon this concept it is shipwrecked with the aid of repentance."<sup>24</sup> In imposing ideal standards on the individual, ethics becomes a law that "does not bring forth life,"<sup>25</sup> and what results is an ethical contradiction between the ideal and the actual. Surprisingly, Greek ethics failed to perceive this contradiction—Haufniensis argues that Greek ethics "was not ethics in the proper sense but retained an esthetic factor."<sup>26</sup> This assertion must be qualified, however, because while Aristotle may not have brushed against the contradiction, Socrates did.

It is at the contradiction between ideality and actuality that the ethical reaches its limit, Socrates must remain, and Religiousness A comes to a standstill.<sup>27</sup> At this juncture, ethics attempts to grasp at the category of sin, but it "withdraws deeper and deeper as a deeper and deeper presupposition."<sup>28</sup> It is here that dogmatics extends a lifeline to the ethical. Unlike the ideality of ethics, dogmatics begins in actuality—it posits the category of hereditary sin as a diagnosis of the phenomenon that resists ethical scrutiny.<sup>29</sup> However, when the concept of hereditary sin is posited,

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*Schleiermachers Lehre von der Sünde*, Itzehoe: Die Spur 1963, pp. 77-82; Wilhelm Anz, "Schleiermacher und Kierkegaard: Übereinstimmung und Differenz," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, vol. 82, 1985, pp. 409-429; and Philip L. Quinn, "Does Anxiety Explain Original Sin?," *Noûs*, vol. 24, 1990, pp. 227-244.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Crouter, "Kierkegaard's Not so Hidden Debt to Schleiermacher," *Zeitschrift für Neuere Theologiegeschichte*, vol. 1, 1994, pp. 205-255. This essay is also published as a chapter in one of his books: Richard Crouter, "Kierkegaard's Not so Hidden Debt to Schleiermacher," in *Friedrich Schleiermacher: Between Enlightenment and Romanticism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2005, pp. 98-122.

<sup>23</sup> SKS 4, 323 / CA, 16.

<sup>24</sup> SKS 4, 324 / CA, 17.

<sup>25</sup> SKS 4, 324 / CA, 16.

<sup>26</sup> SKS 4, 324 / CA, 16.

<sup>27</sup> In this light, it might well be argued that Johannes de Silentio is an individual operating within the sphere of Religiousness A, brushing up against the contradiction between ideality and actuality. This supports my contention, argued elsewhere, that de Silentio is one "whose anxiety has prevented him from attaining to faithfulness, but whose anxiety also provides evidence that he is in the beginning stages of a journey unto faith." Chandler D. Rogers, "From the Shadows of Mt. Moriah: Approaching Faith in *Fear and Trembling*," *Religious Studies and Theology*, vol. 34, 2015, p. 51.

<sup>28</sup> SKS 4, 326 / CA, 19.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

as is so often the case in dogmatics, the danger of abstraction lurks closely nearby. In this context Schleiermacher appears as a faithful guide, and abstinence from abstraction at this precise point is Schleiermacher's immortal service to the science of dogmatics.

In *The Concept of Anxiety*, explicit mentions of Schleiermacher cease after the introduction. Yet as Crouter notes, and as I argue, the spirit of Schleiermacher finds new life in Haufniensis's work. To harken back to the previous section, Schleiermacher abandons the "airiness of idealism" and addresses the self as the Greeks would have, had they possessed Christian presuppositions—not in the abstract, removed manner of an objective science, but with what Haufniensis calls the "wonder of life," following the example of Socrates.<sup>30</sup> Thus he proceeds with *existential pathos*; he knows himself in the way that no science can begin to explain, and he employs this self-knowledge in his innovative analyses of sin. This spirit inhabits the new science pioneered in *The Concept of Anxiety*, which "has its ideality in the *penetrating consciousness of actuality*, of the actuality of sin."<sup>31</sup>

Seven years prior, in 1837, Kierkegaard commended Schleiermacher on these grounds, noting that he brings *wonder* to bear on self-awareness: "he has incorporated the concept of the miraculous in its inwardness within the system, rather than, as before, keeping it outside as a prolegomenon; his whole standpoint is that of the miraculous and his entire self-awareness is a purely new Christian self-consciousness."<sup>32</sup> Schleiermacher leads us from ethics to dogmatics without sacrificing the Socratic disposition to wonder, and this retention leads to a "completely new Christian self-awareness," which forms the basis for Haufniensis's second ethics and Climacus's movement from Religiousness A to Religiousness B.

In pioneering an existentially grounded approach, Schleiermacher takes us a half step beyond Religiousness A. Kierkegaard confirms that it is indeed a half step when he writes, "Schleiermacher's is basically the first level of genuine orthodox dogmatics (and he will come again to have great importance), however heterodox his position is in many respects."<sup>33</sup> Perhaps Haufniensis's direct reference, and the synthesis that arises when we consider *Philosophical Fragments* and *The Concept of Anxiety* in tandem, are Kierkegaardian attempts to usher the *Bewußtseins*-theologian out from the shadows of the system and again into a position of great importance. With existential pathos, Schleiermacher takes us beyond Religiousness A, which is "not a specifically Christian religiousness,"<sup>34</sup> to the "first level of genuine orthodox dogmatics." But this is not yet the Religiousness that "gives rise to a new pathos."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> See footnote 10.

<sup>31</sup> SKS 4, 328 / CA, 20, emphasis mine.

<sup>32</sup> SKS 17, 249, DD:86 / KJN 1, 240.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. This entry, written during Kierkegaard's twenty-fourth year (approximately), attests to his early hesitation toward Schleiermacher. Setting the charge of heterodoxy aside, Kierkegaard recognizes that Schleiermacher's thought begins with *wonder* in an era that begins with doubt, and that he understands the self as the Greeks would have, had they possessed Christian presuppositions; these will become essential aspects of the Kierkegaardian project.

<sup>34</sup> SKS 7, 505 / CUP1, 55.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. Schleiermacher turns inward, but remains too closely attached to what Climacus calls a *direct relation* to the divine, an immediacy that corresponds to the hidden inwardness of Religiousness A: "[God] is in the creation, everywhere in the creation, but he is not there directly, and only when the single individual turns inward into himself does he become aware and capable of seeing God.... Nature is certainly the work of God, but only the work is directly present, not God." SKS 7, 221 / CUP1, 243.

### III Religiousness B

The movement that separates Religiousness A from B, and the sublation that propels Climacus beyond a synthesis of the two Schleiermachers, is this: Religiousness B is characterized by a *break with immanence*. Recall for a moment the distinction that Haufniensis makes between ethics and dogmatics. He writes that Greek ethics—with the exception of the person of Socrates—failed to perceive the contradiction between ethical ideality and ethical actuality, thereby failing to follow Socrates into Religiousness A. This contradiction is the point at which dogmatics comes to the rescue, and at which Schleiermacher diagnoses the human propensity toward evil as *sin* without forfeiting the concreteness of existence.

The movement that separates Religiousness A from Religiousness B is also a point of contradiction: “The paradoxical-religious [Religiousness B] establishes absolutely the contradiction between existence and the eternal.... In Religiousness A, the eternal is *ubique et nusquam* but hidden by the actuality of existence; in the paradoxical-religious, the eternal is present at a specific point, and this is the break with immanence.”<sup>36</sup> In the immanence of Religiousness A, refractions of the eternal glint everywhere in the temporal, and harmony exists between existence and the eternal.<sup>37</sup> Religiousness B denies the existence of such an “immanent underlying kinship between the temporal and the eternal,”<sup>38</sup> and this break with immanence creates, or reveals, dissonance.

Surprisingly, the emergent dissonance of Religiousness B is more concrete than the harmonious immanence of Religiousness A. Climacus writes that A “hinders the existing person in abstractly remaining in immanence or in becoming abstract by wanting to remain in immanence.”<sup>39</sup> Westphal explains this hindrance:

What makes Religiousness A abstract is its withdrawal from that to which it is essentially related (but to which it has no immanent connection), namely, God in time. We can express this kind of abstraction more concretely. Immanence prevailed in the Garden of Eden, where it was possible for Adam and Eve to meet God face-to-face. The metaphysics of presence was not a theory but a daily experience. As the embodiment of Religiousness A, Socrates is the realization of Paradise lost. It is no longer possible to meet God face-to-face, but hidden in the trees and underbrush, God is never very far away.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> SKS 7, 519 / CUP1, 571, emphasis mine.

<sup>37</sup> This point coincides with Mariña’s argument that Schleiermacher’s *feeling of absolute dependence* provides a compelling explanation of the diversity of religious traditions. In *On Religion*, Schleiermacher writes, “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?” Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, trans. by John Oman, New York: Harper & Row 1958, p. 216. See Jacqueline Mariña, “Schleiermacher on the Outpourings of the Inner Fire: Experiential Expressivism and Religious Pluralism,” *Religious Studies*, vol. 40, 2004, pp. 125-143.

<sup>38</sup> SKS 7, 520 / CUP1, 573.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Merold Westphal, *Becoming a Self: A Reading of Kierkegaard’s Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, West Lafayette: Purdue University Press 1996, pp. 186-187. Elizabeth A. Murray challenges Westphal’s overall use of the Derridian critique of the onto-theological *metaphysics of presence*, and “Religiousness C,” a category he advances to



The Derridian language of a “metaphysics of presence” that Westphal employs to describe Religiousness A elicits a direct connection to Schleiermacher’s religion of immanence. In Schleiermacher’s view, returning to an immanent relation of presence is precisely the τέλος of religion, and one who does not experience kinship with the eternal has not yet attained to perfection.

For Schleiermacher, the height of religious selfhood consists in perpetual God-consciousness. In a section of the *Glaubenslehre* titled “The Original Perfection of Man,” he describes the relation between God-consciousness and perfection by contrasting a person existing in utter imperfection with one existing in full perfection: “And as it would be an absolute imperfection of human nature...if the tendency [toward God-consciousness as an inner impulse] were indeed present latently, but could not emerge.” He writes, “It is an essential element in the perfection of human nature that those states which condition the appearance of the God-consciousness are able to fill the clear and waking life of man onwards from the time when the spiritual functions are developed.”<sup>41</sup> One lacking the faculties necessary to experience the feeling of God-consciousness would exist in a state of absolute imperfection; by contrast, the state of absolute perfection is marked by the experience of God-consciousness as absolutely present at each moment.

Thus in the state of perfection, each human is continually conscious of God as immediately and immanently present:

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, though not abrogating any feeling of partial dependence or freedom, were confined as such to separate and scattered moments.<sup>42</sup>

Separate and scattered moments of the feeling of absolute dependence, or God-consciousness, signify an essential imperfection—but perfection is to return to a state of immediacy unbroken in time. For Schleiermacher, this return marks the height of religiousness; for Climacus, this notion of perfection bars us from attaining to the highest sphere of the religious.

#### IV Toward a Second Immediacy

In this context, a key divergence appears: for Schleiermacher, mature selfhood constitutes a *return* to a former state, but for Kierkegaard and his pseudonyms, mature selfhood necessitates movement toward a qualitatively *new* state. Schleiermacher’s heightened version of Religiousness A

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designate Kierkegaard’s more sophisticated understanding of religious existence. See Murray’s review of Westphal’s *Becoming a Self*, published as the featured review article in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 40, 2000, pp. 497-505.

<sup>41</sup> Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. by B.A. Gerrish and J.S. Stewart, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1928, p. 245.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

advocates a return to Eden via perpetual God-consciousness, but Climacus, as Westphal explains, maintains that such a return is not possible:

Religiousness B is existence east of Eden. Its decisive break with immanence is the realization of having been expelled from the garden, separated from the place of divine presence by a flaming sword. Without access to that place, even the hidden presence of God will be possible for me only if God comes to where I am. God in time (where I exist, even according to the Socratic assumption) has become essential to me, both as the teacher who can give me the truth and the condition for recognizing it and as the savior who can give me eternal happiness. From this perspective Religiousness A is abstract because, by virtue of the illusion of still being in the garden of hidden presence, it cuts itself off from the God to whom it is essentially related.<sup>43</sup>

The question remains: What drives Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard to such divergent views of the height of religious existence? An appeal to Haufniensis's quantity vs. quality distinction will help to draw out the presuppositions that undergird these views.

Toward the beginning of the first chapter of *The Concept of Anxiety*, Haufniensis pits the innocence of Eden against the Hegelian conception of immediacy as that-which-is-to-be-annulled. Hegel and the Hegelian dogmaticians have conflated the two concepts, and the originary state of humanity has been taken to correspond to the immediacy that Hegelian logic takes as its initial point of departure. Haufniensis adamantly argues that the two are not identical; in the Hegelian context immediacy is situated in the realm of logic, but innocence belongs in the realm of ethics.<sup>44</sup> Unlike immediacy, innocence is annulled by *guilt*—a category that introduces a qualitative distinction. Thus “Innocence is a quality, it is a *state* that may very well endure, and therefore the logical haste to have it annulled is meaningless,” and “Innocence is something that is cancelled by a transcendence.”<sup>45</sup> There is no qualitative transition from immediacy to mediacy; the movement is merely one of annulment. By contrast, the transition from innocence to guilt is qualitative, and the movement is one of transcendence. With these insights, we leave behind the Hegelian context to connect back to Schleiermacher.<sup>46</sup>

In Kierkegaard, as Frawley and DeHart illustrate, we find a progression of selfhood that closely mirrors Schleiermacher's but with an essential difference.<sup>47</sup> Schleiermacher depicts the

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<sup>43</sup> Merold Westphal, *Becoming a Self*, p. 187.

<sup>44</sup> *SKS* 4, 341 / *CA*, 35.

<sup>45</sup> *SKS* 4, 343 / *CA*, 37.

<sup>46</sup> With particular reference to this section in *CA*, Schreiber argues that when the Kierkegaardian pseudonyms critique the notion of faith as immediacy, they are addressing *de facto* the Hegelian dogmaticians, not Schleiermacher. See Gerhard Schreiber, “Die eigentlichen Adressaten von Kierkegaards Kritik, den Glauben als ‘das Unmittelbare’ zu bezeichnen,” *Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook*, 2011, pp. 115-153, translated and published as “The Real Targets of Kierkegaard's Critique of Characterizing Faith as ‘The Immediate,’” *Acta Kierkegaardiana*, vol. 5, 2011, pp. 137-167.

<sup>47</sup> See Paul DeHart, “Absolute Dependence or Infinite Desire? Comparing Soteriological Themes in Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard,” in *Schleiermacher und Kierkegaard: Subjektivität und Wahrheit. Akten des Schleiermacher-Kierkegaard-Kongresses in Kopenhagen Oktober 2003*, ed. by Theodor Jørgensen, Claus Dieter Osthövener, and Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2006 (*Kierkegaard Monograph Series*, vol. 11), pp. 561-576, and Matthew J. Frawley, “Human Nature and Fall in Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard,” in *ibid.*, pp. 145-158. I have gleaned the following parallel in these corresponding views from Frawley.

progression in three stages: 1) a movement from childlike consciousness, to 2) a tension between “the sensible self-consciousness” (“flesh”) and “the immediate self-consciousness” (“spirit”), to 3) the acquisition of a perfect, perpetual God-consciousness, which includes a higher self-awareness than the self-awareness of the previous stage.<sup>48</sup> Kierkegaard depicts the progression of selfhood in a remarkably similar way: 1) a movement from childlike innocence, in which anxiety prods the individual toward the qualitative leap of sin, to 2) the state of sinfulness, in which the subject becomes aware of itself as a self, to 3) faith, which Climacus defines thus: “Faith is the contradiction between the infinite passion of inwardness and the objective uncertainty [of truth-as-subjectivity].”<sup>49</sup> The similarities are apparent: the general movement from childhood to maturity, the lapse from innocence to a state of internal turmoil, and the essential dependence upon the eternal that is the highest expression of the religious.

Frawley articulates a fundamental difference: Schleiermacher rejects the possibility of an actual, historical *fall*, but Kierkegaard upholds the actuality of this possibility for each individual. Schleiermacher’s rejection is grounded in his belief that a “disposition ‘to’ God-consciousness” is “the natural tendency of our being.”<sup>50</sup> From birth, every human tends toward God-consciousness, and *sin* is therefore “an arrestment of the deep longing for the fruition”<sup>51</sup> of God-consciousness. Sin is not a qualitative transition from one state to another, as in Kierkegaard, but is rather a lapse in the desire to be united with the eternal in the temporal.<sup>52</sup> In the absence of a transition, Schleiermacher depicts the inwardness of the eternal in the temporal as an *immediate* experience of the divine that is to be regained. But for Kierkegaard, as Haufniensis explains, the hope of returning to the state of innocence is an impossibility.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Michael J. Frawley, “Human Nature and Fall in Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard,” p. 148.

<sup>49</sup> *SKS 7*, 187 / *CUPI*, 204. This rough outline has been imported from Frawley and is meant only to depict the religious individual’s upward movement from innocence to faith.

<sup>50</sup> Michael J. Frawley, “Human Nature and Fall in Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard,” p. 146.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> In response to this general point, Crouter argues that “the frequent observation that Schleiermacher views sin as a condition, while Kierkegaard sees sin and grace qualitatively, obscures the complementarity of their teachings on sin and grace.” Richard Crouter, “Schleiermacher: Revisiting Kierkegaard’s Relationship to Him,” p. 216. To bolster their complementarity, he appeals to his own work on their paralleling views of repentance. See Richard Crouter, “More than Kindred Spirits: Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard on Repentance,” in *Schleiermacher und Kierkegaard: Subjektivität und Wahrheit*, pp. 673-686. It is for the reasons Crouter references that I have refrained from saying more to distinguish Kierkegaard’s view of sin from Schleiermacher’s, and I take the conditional/qualitative distinction to be the fundamental point of divergence in this arena. Following Crouter’s example in acknowledging the complementarity of their views, I deviate from many who have drawn out the distinction, emphasizing the parallel in their corresponding views of the progression of selfhood. The conditional/qualitative distinction, however, is essential for my overall argument because it grounds Schleiermacher’s depiction of the height of religious selfhood as a return to an Edenic, perpetual God-consciousness, a return that is not possible on Kierkegaard’s qualitative paradigm. An anonymous reviewer has brought to my attention an excellent avenue for further analysis concerning the ways in which Schleiermacher’s thought coincides with Religiousness A, but does not quite realize the requirements of Religiousness B: more can be done either to solidify or dissociate Schleiermacher’s understanding of *sin* from the more basic understanding of *guilt* that characterizes Religiousness A. For reasons argued in this paper, however, I do not think that Schleiermacher’s understanding of sin can be considered commensurate with that of Religiousness B—despite *complementarities*, like the one to which Crouter would direct our attention.

<sup>53</sup> In addition to his note that “innocence is cancelled by a transcendence,” Haufniensis also writes: “Innocence is not a perfection that one should wish to regain, for as soon as one wishes for it, it is lost,” *SKS 4*, 343 / *CA*, 37.

In *Postscript*, Climacus shifts Schleiermacher's gaze forward, toward a new immediacy. He hints at the concept of *second immediacy* in his notion of a *new pathos*—which is essentially related to Schleiermacher's immortal contribution, but which also transcends it:

Accordingly as the individual in his existing expresses the existential pathos (resignation—suffering—the totality of guilt-consciousness), in like degree his pathos-filled relation to an eternal happiness increases. Then when the eternal happiness, because it is the absolute τέλος, has become for him absolutely the only comfort, and when in existential immersion the relation to it is reduced to its minimum, since the guilt-consciousness is the repelling relation and continually wants to take it away from him, and yet this minimum and this possibility are absolutely more to him than everything else—then is the appropriate time to begin the dialectical. It will, when he is in this state, give rise to a pathos that is even higher.<sup>54</sup>

Schleiermacher applies the existential pathos exemplified in Socrates to the Christian consciousness, thereby bringing us into and beyond the hidden inwardness of Religiousness A. But the harmony of immanence cannot produce the dissonance needed to make one's eternal happiness “absolutely the only comfort,” and it cannot heighten the repelling relation of guilt-consciousness to the point at which one's relation to an eternal happiness is reduced to a *minimum* and yet the possibility—note the movement toward contradiction—becomes “absolutely more to him than everything else.” When existential pathos amplifies this tension to its breaking point, a new pathos emerges.

## V Conclusion: Hostility Toward the Established Order

The hostility toward Schleiermacher that surfaces in the final years of Kierkegaard's life, the dilemma that Crouter exposes, can be addressed by the absolute tension between harmony and dissonance and by the new pathos that this tension begets. The critique that comes in 1850, four years after the publication of *Postscript*, is a reaction against a lack of impetus; here Kierkegaard chastises Schleiermacher's existing in the sphere of *being*, “Spinozistic being”—a critique which insinuates contentment with the harmony of the eternal in the temporal, the religiousness of immanence.

The point of contention is that Schleiermacher depicts Christianity as operating within the sphere of *being*, whereas for Kierkegaard Christianity is essentially expressed in the sphere of *becoming*. The following lines are included in this critique: “Every Christian category is marked by the ethical in the direction of striving. Hence fear and trembling and that ‘thou shalt’; hence also the possibility of offense.”<sup>55</sup> Kierkegaard's frustration is with a perceived lack of existential tension in the individual. In Schleiermacher he finds an absence of heightened guilt-consciousness and of the *new pathos* oriented toward inward deepening.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> SKS 7, 508-509 / CUP1, 559-560.

<sup>55</sup> SKS 23, 58, NB15:83 / KJN 7, 55f.

<sup>56</sup> SKS 7, 508 / CUP1, 559.

As is the case with Socrates and Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard's philosophy informed his existence essentially, and we do well to conclude that the historical details of Kierkegaard's life relate reciprocally to his expressed views regarding the progression of selfhood. On this basis, we concede likewise that Kierkegaard's own progress in the process of becoming informs his writings on the maturation of the self—and we may therefore conclude that his frustrations with Schleiermacher stem also from the reciprocal relation between existence and self-expression.

Climacus explains that the higher one ascends within the religious sphere, the more suffering ensues. He writes that “the more that is suffered, the more religious existence,” and religious “existence is suffering, and not as a transient element but as a continual accompaniment.”<sup>57</sup> Questions of pseudonymity aside, Kierkegaard himself expresses this point in a number of places. He writes in *For Self-Examination*, for example, “And you, my listener, remember that the higher the religious is taken, the more rigorous it becomes, but it does not necessarily follow that you are able to bear it—perhaps it would even be an offense to you and your ruin.”<sup>58</sup> Kierkegaard's life expresses the upward movement of spirit that he desires for his reader, and the general thrust of his authorial project reflects this progression. At the end of his life, through publication, Kierkegaard takes the religious to its highest point of rigor. In a manner that ends in public condemnation, humiliation, and—perhaps incidentally, but perhaps not—his death, Kierkegaard confronts the hypocrisy of the sophistic, pharisaic politico-religious elite of his day.<sup>59</sup>

For Climacus, Religiousness A connects the individual to the multitude of human beings at a rudimentary level. By contrast, the pathos of inward deepening is one of isolation, and it heightens the difference between the individual and the established order: “Religiousness B is isolating, separating, is polemical. Only on this condition do I become blessed, and as I absolutely bind myself to it, I thereby exclude everyone else. This is the impetus of particularism in the ordinary pathos. Every Christian has pathos as in Religiousness A, and then this pathos of separation.”<sup>60</sup> Over-against the pathos of Religiousness A, the pathos of separation and inward deepening begets a religiousness that is both isolating and *polemical*—a depiction that sets the tone for Kierkegaard's war on Christendom.<sup>61</sup>

Without substantial elaboration, Crouter draws a correspondence between Kierkegaard's attack on the established order and his unexpected assault on Schleiermacher: “Kierkegaard distances himself from Schleiermacher, as if he holds him responsible for the plight of the Danish church. His deep sympathies with Schleiermacher somehow shift amid the rising scene of self-martyrdom

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<sup>57</sup> *SKS* 7, 262-263 / *CUP* 1, 288.

<sup>58</sup> *SKS* 13, 41 / *FSE*, 11.

<sup>59</sup> The dissonance of Religiousness B is not quite the height of the religious. Johannes de Silentio's *dancing tax collector* illustrates that the knight of faith is unrecognizable in temporality, and Westphal's “Religiousness C” calls attention to the love-of-neighbor that the earlier pseudonyms—almost all of whom claim not to be people of faith—do not emphasize. Together, these descriptions of a higher religiousness convey the image of one who has renounced and then received back temporality, and who thereby gains a “harmony” in temporality that supersedes the harmony of Religiousness A and the dissonance of Religiousness B. Put another way, the person of higher religiousness renounces the immediacy of hidden inwardness and receives a higher, or second immediacy.

<sup>60</sup> *SKS* 7, 529 / *CUP* 1, 582.

<sup>61</sup> Clear evidence of Kierkegaard's coming attack appears in 1848, two years after the publication of *Postscript* and two years before the aforementioned critique of Schleiermacher's contentment with Spinozistic being. In *Armed Neutrality* Kierkegaard harkens back to the early Church's opposition to secular and religious establishments, arguing that an established state church is a sure sign that genuine religion is absent.

that coincides with the attack upon the bourgeois state-dominated Christianity of Bishop Mynster.”<sup>62</sup> My account provides evidence that helps to solidify the connection between these two seemingly unconnected attacks. In the upshot of the isolating and polemical nature of Religiousness B, Kierkegaard was himself renouncing the harmony of the eternal in the temporal for a higher immediacy, and he found occasion to chastise Schleiermacher for not doing the same. Furthermore, it is likely that the frustrations directed at Schleiermacher during this period were occasioned by the memory of Schleiermacher’s solidarity with the very order Kierkegaard was setting himself against.<sup>63</sup>

In response to the three possible solutions that Crouter proposes—that we take the attack on Schleiermacher to be Kierkegaard’s definitive view, that we follow Crouter’s own approach by carefully attending to Kierkegaard’s contexts and development, or that we revert to Kierkegaard’s suspicious views of Schleiermacher as a young theological student—I have operated according to Crouter’s own approach by attending to context and development, and with specific reference to the Climacian sublation that occurs in *Postscript*.<sup>64</sup> In light of Kierkegaard’s upward movement on the trajectory initiated by Climacus, and without discounting Schleiermacher’s pivotal role in the Kierkegaardian project, we can fully acknowledge Schleiermacher’s “immortal contribution”—and his role as a faithful guide to the *confinium* between Religiousness A and Religiousness B.

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<sup>62</sup> Richard Crouter, “Schleiermacher: Revisiting Kierkegaard’s Relationship to Him,” p. 218.

<sup>63</sup> See especially Crouter’s account of Schleiermacher’s reception in Denmark (1833), which reveals his high status in the eyes of what Kierkegaard called the established order, the politico-religious milieu fostered by Danish academia and the Danish state church. One comment summarizes nicely: “Yet noting the Copenhagen visit heightens our sense of the general esteem and high regard with which Schleiermacher was held in Danish letters.” Richard Crouter, “Kierkegaard’s Not so Hidden Debt to Schleiermacher,” p. 207.

<sup>64</sup> Before making his concluding remarks, Crouter ends his chapter by presenting these three responses to the dilemma he has just raised. See Richard Crouter, “Schleiermacher: Revisiting Kierkegaard’s Relationship to Him,” p. 221.