

THOMAS H. CURRAN
DOCTRINE AND SPECULATION IN
SCHLEIERMACHER'S *GLAUBENSLEHRE*



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THOMAS H. CURRAN

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Philosophie...Sie wird häufig für ein formelles, inhaltleeres Wissen gehalten, und es fehlt sehr an der Einsicht, daß, was auch dem Inhalte nach in irgendeiner Kenntnis und Wissenschaft Wahrheit ist, diesen Namen allein dann verdienen kann, wenn es von der Philosophie erzeugt worden; daß die andern Wissenschaften, sie mögen es mit Räsonnieren, ohne die Philosophie, versuchen, soviel sie wollen, ohne sie nicht Leben, Geist, Wahrheit in ihnen zu haben vermögen.

G.W.F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 1807.
Vorrede, §67.

For
Patrick, my brother

"Dein eigentlicher Beruf ist die Freundschaft"
Friedrich Schlegel to Friedrich Schleiermacher
August 1798

Preface

The primary text under consideration in this study is the second edition of Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith* (identified as *Glaubenslehre*²). I have employed the 1928 translation of this second edition throughout, and I have indicated by means of footnotes any deviations from the English text which was edited by H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart.

I have undertaken to provide one standard orthography for the English and German cited in this study. I have transliterated all archaic nineteenth-century German spelling into modern German usage (where this has been practicable, and with the rigid exception of the titles of all books and articles), and I have adopted standard English spellings for all quotations taken from American sources.

The endeavour has been to produce a fluid, unbroken and clear body of text. Consequently the details have been relegated to the footnotes, which the reader should employ as an interpretative commentary on the main argument. Had I attempted to incorporate this detail into the mainstream of my argument, the text would have become unreadable; had I neglected the comprehensive detail provided by the footnotes, the scholarship upon which this argument rests would have remained obscure.

Acknowledgements

The brevity of the following remarks is in inverse proportion to the help I have received from countless friends and colleagues over the years. May I summarize my gratitude by applying three headings.

- I. No research whatsoever could have been undertaken without the generous support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada in the form of a doctoral fellowship.
- II. This research would never have been brought to completion a) without the unflagging goodwill of Dr. James Barber, Master of Hatfield College—may I thank all my friends at the College through him; b) without the encouragement of Dr. Ann Loades, Chair of the Department of Theology at the University of Durham. It has been my privilege while at Durham to have worked with Professors Stephen Sykes, Richard Roberts, and Daniel Hardy.
- III. This research could never have been sustained without the grace of a family unafraid to speculate: *sapere aude*.

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Abbreviations

<i>Glaubenslehre</i> ₁	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Der Christliche Glaube</i> , 1st edition of 1821-1822, edited by Hermann Peiter.
<i>Glaubenslehre</i> ₂	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Der Christliche Glaube</i> , 2nd edition of 1830-1831, edited by Martin Redeker.
CF	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>The Christian Faith</i> , translation of the 2nd edition, edited by H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart.
KGA	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Kritische Gesamt-ausgabe</i> , edited by H.-J. Birkner et al. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, from 1980.
SW	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Sämmtliche Werke</i> . Berlin: G. Reimer, 1834-1864.

<i>Briefe</i>	<i>Aus Schleiermacher's Leben: In Briefen</i> , 2nd edition of 1974. Volumes I-IV (Volumes III and IV, edited by Wilhelm Dilthey and Ludwig Jonas).
GG	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Gelegentliche Gedanken über Universitäten in deutschem Sinn</i> (1808).
KD ₁	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Kurze Darstellung des Theologischen Studiums</i> , 1st edition of 1811.
KD ₂	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Kurze Darstellung des Theologischen Studiums</i> , 2nd edition of 1830.
<i>Brief Outline</i>	Friedrich Schleiermacher, <i>Brief Outline of the Study of Theology</i> , translation of both editions by T.N. Tice.
<i>Lücke</i>	<i>Schleiermachers Sendscreiben über seine Glaubenslehre an Lücke</i> (1829), in KGA I/10.
<i>Ästhetik</i> (ed. Lommatzsch)	SW, Volume III/7.
<i>Ästhetik</i> (ed. Lehnerer)	<i>Ästhetik</i> (1819/1825); PhB, Volume 365.

- Dialektik* (ed. Jonas) *SW*, Volume III/4-2.
- Dialektik* (ed. Odebrecht) *Friedrich Schleiermachers*
Dialektik. Leipzig¹, 1942;
Darmstadt², 1976.
- VPR G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über*
die Philosophie der Religion, Teil
1-3, edited by W. Jaeschke.
- LPR G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the*
Philosophy of Religion,
translation edited by Peter C.
Hodgson (Volumes 1-3).
- Kongreß *Internationaler*
Schleiermacher-Kongreß, Berlin,
1984. Conference Proceedings
published in the
Schleiermacher-Archiv (2
Volumes). Berlin: Walter de
Gruyter, 1985.
- OED *The Oxford English Dictionary*.
- PhB *Philosophische Bibliothek*.
Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag.
- RGG *Die Religion in Geschichte und*
Gegenwart, 3rd ed. Tübingen:
J.C.B. Mohr, 1957-1965.

<i>TRE</i>	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie.</i> Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, from 1977.
<i>WA</i>	<i>Luthers Werke: Weimarer</i> Ausgabe. Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger (1st ed.); Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlags-anstalt (2nd ed.).
<i>ZThK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und</i> <i>Kirche.</i> Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr.
ET	English Translation

Introduction: *Text and Context*

- I. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) became the first Dean of the Faculty of Theology at the newly-founded University of Berlin in September 1810.¹ His subsequent academic work at the University decisively affected the future study of Protestant Christian theology. The text which gives the most comprehensive statement of this quite monumental change in the methods and character of Protestant German dogmatic theology is Schleiermacher's famous *The Christian Faith*, a two-volume work which appeared in two editions in Schleiermacher's lifetime (1821/22 and 1830/31).

Schleier-
macher's
Glaubenslehre.
Its Title

The full title of these volumes (which is not even alluded to in the English translation of 1928!) needs to be given its due, if Schleiermacher's purpose is firmly to be grasped. The complete title actually reads—*The Christian Faith: Represented according to the Principles of the Protestant Church in their Interconnection*.² Schleiermacher's lengthy title (which still gives a very good sense of the content therein) has been supplanted in all popular and scholarly discussion by the designation *Glaubenslehre*, a term Schleiermacher himself used in referring to this epoch-making theological publication. *Glaubenslehre* is neither a word that Schleiermacher coined, nor is it properly speaking the title of any book;

Glaubenslehre is first and foremost a theological method, a way of doing theology, of which Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith* may justly be considered the paradigmatic manifestation.

This study—which will have as one of its fundamental tasks the careful dissection of this concept—follows the whole German theological tradition in keeping *Glaubenslehre* as the rubric which denotes Schleiermacher's most significant scholarly legacy, both in the general sense of his dogmatic method and in the particular sense of his two-volume *The Christian Faith*. (I have not inclined to the practice of translating *Glaubenslehre* by the ugly phrase "faith-doctrine",³ which is un-English both in expression and content.)

Schleiermacher inherited the term *Glaubenslehre* both from Pietism and eighteenth-century theology. In 1688 the famous pietist Philipp Jakob Spener published a collection of sermons under the title *Evangelische Glaubens-Lehre*, a phrase then adopted to identify a three-volume dogmatic treatise published in Halle in the years 1759/60.⁴ What Schleiermacher sensed in this new terminology, and then developed further and more systematically than any of his forebears, was a complete re-orientation of the theological task. If, formerly, the intended subject of any dogmatic *theology* was clearly to be the absolute subject, God, his nature and his attributes, then, in *Glaubenslehre*, the initial subject (at any rate) was, by contrast, the Christian faith itself. *Glaubenslehre*, "the doctrine of faith", arises from the reflection *upon* faith, and the special achievement of Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* is that in it this reflection is systematically prepared and ordered.⁵

Of course, the systematic ordering and presentation of Christian dogmatics was not something Schleiermacher either single-handedly recovered or invented. But the unique qualities of Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* do emerge in the proposition that his dogmatics offer a *self-representation* of the Christian faith,⁶ which is achieved with the "help" of the conceptual language of theoretical reflection and disciplined scholarship. The auxiliary status of this conceptual language is the *sine qua non* for the integrity of Schleiermacher's theological method. *Glaubenslehre* is supposed to be the "analysis of Christian piety",⁷ not its systematic substitution or transformation. Where the primary character of the faith and the ancillary character of the systematic language are not strictly adhered to, there we confront the danger—again and again—that the conceptual formulation will replace or displace the very piety which it was originally *meant* to clarify.

Schleiermacher went to enormous lengths to guard the borders of his Christian *Glaubenslehre* against the possibility of such a "speculative" usurpation. By focusing decidedly on "the realm of inner experience", Schleiermacher hoped to ensure that "nothing alien" would be able to "creep" into the body of his theological exposition. How far this will take us away from what had hitherto been assumed to be the theological task becomes apparent in §30.2, where Schleiermacher declares "the description of human states" to be "the fundamental dogmatic form".⁸ What kind of *theologia* (in the sense of a doctrine of God) such a dogmatic source can possibly yield remains to be seen.

1. Martin Redeker, *Friedrich Schleiermacher: Leben und Werk*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968. p. 142. (English Translation by J. Wall-

hausser, Schleiermacher: *Life and Thought*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973. p. 99.)

2. *Der Christliche Glaube: Nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhange Dargestellt.*
 - i) This work will be cited in the following editions:
 - a) The 1st edition: *Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (hereafter KGA) Volume I/7, Parts i and ii; *Der Christliche Glaube* (1821/22), edited by Hermann Peiter. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980 (hereafter *Glaubenslehre*₁).
 - b) The 2nd and all subsequent editions: *Der Christliche Glaube* 1830/31, 2 Volumes edited by Martin Redeker. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1960 (hereafter *Glaubenslehre*₂).
 - c) The English translation of the 2nd ed.: *The Christian Faith* edited by H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928 (hereafter CF).
 - ii) Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith* will be cited by paragraph number, and all paragraph references are to the second edition (*Glaubenslehre*₂), unless otherwise indicated.
 - iii) The difficulty of rendering this work's title into intelligible English commends the caution of the 1928 translation. The key words which we shall have carefully to consider in the interpretation of this systematic theology are "im Zusammenhange dargestellt"; here—"represented in their Interconnection". I have decided to translate "evangelisch" by "Protestant". The translation "Evangelical" can only be misleading. Schleiermacher makes clear in the Prefaces to both editions of *The Christian Faith* that he intends this work of Christian dogmatics to serve the union of the two great German Protestant (*evangelisch*) traditions, the Lutheran and the Reformed. See Prefaces: *Glaubenslehre*₁ i, pp. 6 and 7; *Glaubenslehre*₂ I, pp. 4 and 5; CF, p. vii.

3. So, for instance, §225 in T.N. Tice's translation of Friedrich Schleiermacher's *Brief Outline of Theology as a Field of Study* (hereafter *Brief Outline*). Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988.
4. Reinhard Slenczka, "Glaube VI" in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (hereafter *TRE*), Volume XIII. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984. pp. 318–365; here pp. 334 and 337.
5. "im Zusammenhange dargestellt": See, for instance, Gerhard Sauter, "Dogmatik I" in *TRE*, Volume IX, 1982. pp. 41–77; here p. 42.
6. "Die Theologie ist daher die Selbstdarstellung des christlichen Glaubens mit Hilfe der Begrifflichkeit wissenschaftlichen Denkens." So Martin Redeker in the Introduction to *Glaubenslehre*2, p. xxii.
7. "die Analyse der christlichen Frömmigkeit" (§30.3).
8. "... so ist klar, daß Beschreibungen menschlicher Gemütszustände dieses Inhaltes nur aus dem Gebiet der innern Erfahrung hergenommen werden können, und daß sich also unter dieser Form nichts Fremdes in die christliche Glaubenslehre einschleichen kann. . . . Daher müssen wir die Beschreibung menschlicher Zustände für die dogmatische Grundform erklären. . . ." (§30.2).

II.

The
Dedication
to Jacobi

It had been Schleiermacher's intention to dedicate the first edition of his *Glaubenslehre* to the venerable German philosopher and man of letters, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi. This dedication was forestalled by the philosopher's death on March 10, 1819, some two years prior to the publication of the first volume of Schleiermacher's *magnum opus*. Schleiermacher had hoped to confer this honour upon Jacobi both in recognition of the philosopher's enormous formative influence, and as a means of furthering their more recent correspondence and philosophical conversations. Schleiermacher's letters reveal that he was already familiar with Jacobi's writings as a student at Halle—over thirty years earlier;⁹ and it was through Jacobi's important *On the Doctrine of Spinoza* (1st edition, 1785) that Schleiermacher made the initial acquaintance of another lifelong philosophical influence.¹⁰

How appropriate it would have been for the author of the *Glaubenslehre* to have dedicated his representation of the Christian faith to the German thinker who has come to be known as the *Glaubensphilosoph*.¹¹ Jacobi was awarded this epithet for his vigorous presentation of the irreducibility and necessity of faith. Jacobi's treatment of faith as an aspect of feeling (*Gefühl*)—independent of the constraints of the human understanding—brings him in obvious alignment with one of Schleiermacher's most cherished principles. Another major point of agreement between them would have been Jacobi's deep suspicion of any system of thought which sought to be complete just in itself.¹² As early as 1789, Schleiermacher had informed his father of his constitutional aversion to "system-mania"—which certainly remained an

ingredient of his intellectual make-up throughout his lifetime. In the same communication to his father, Schleiermacher added this fateful assertion:

I do not believe that I shall ever bring things to a fully developed system, so that every question one can raise can be answered decisively and in connection with all the rest of my knowledge.¹³

We shall want to consider the degree to which this youthful prediction is actually reflected in Schleiermacher's mature, scholarly output.

Schleiermacher would not have drawn much comfort from the fact that G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) also detected a great affinity between Jacobi's philosophy and the anonymous(!) publication which secured Schleiermacher's reputation—*On Religion: Speeches to the Cultured among its Despisers* (1st edition, 1799).¹⁴ In an early study, *Faith and Knowledge* (1802), Hegel claimed to find in Jacobi's philosophy an approach towards the "subjective beauty of Protestantism", an approach raised "to a higher power" by the anonymous publication of the "Speeches on Religion".¹⁵ Hegel's identification of Jacobi and Schleiermacher in this way has been labelled an estimation of "considerable insensitivity",¹⁶ but Schleiermacher shows himself aware of Hegel's opinion in a letter written in October 1803. There Schleiermacher acknowledges that Jacobi's mantle has been conferred upon him, and that his *Speeches* supposedly elaborate and "exponentially" extend Jacobi's philosophy. He wonders why Jacobi has not responded to this conflation of their views, and he hopes that Jacobi has not been stung by the injustice of the charge.¹⁷

Whatever the merits or shortcomings of Hegel's analysis in this essay at the beginning of his career, there is an uncanny

intuition in seeing Schleiermacher as the enlarger and extender of the master's philosophical principles. Schleiermacher's reverence for Jacobi is well attested,¹⁸ and yet the proposed dedication of the *Glaubenslehre* was not simply intended as an act of homage. The dedication was to serve as a small reminder of their relationship, but it was also meant to further a discussion they had been having both in correspondence and in a personal meeting. Schleiermacher had hoped that his *Glaubenslehre* might bring to light—to the best of his ability—"Jacobi's real relation to Christianity".¹⁹

How the publication of Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* might possibly clarify Jacobi's "relation to Christianity" is rehearsed in a famous letter Schleiermacher wrote to Jacobi on March 30, 1818. The occasion for this letter was some private remarks which Jacobi had in the first instance directed towards another German philosopher, K.L. Reinhold of Kiel. A copy of this communication was in time passed along to Schleiermacher,²⁰ and to say that Schleiermacher found Jacobi's remarks a little insufficient and rash would be rather to understate the case. According to Jacobi's pithy analysis, we are presented with a series of stark and ineluctable alternatives—between which there can be no possible mediation, and beyond which there exists no third term. The Pillars of Hercules which confront each other in pure antagonism are: paganism and Christianity, philosophy and Catholicism, pantheism (*Naturvergötterung*) and anthropomorphism, shaky philosophical Christianity *and* the concrete, historical original upon which it preys. Summing up this unhappy dichotomy, Jacobi declares himself a pagan in his understanding, but a Christian with his whole heart (*mit dem ganzen Gemüte*); and Jacobi represents himself as swim-

ming between two currents, two bodies of water, which for him can never unite.²¹

For Schleiermacher this divided consciousness, this bifurcation of the human personality, is quite simply intolerable. To concede such a schism as the inescapable condition of modern life is to surrender any hope of a truly intellectual relation to one's Christian faith—and that is precisely the quandary which Jacobi's letter exposes.

A decade later, when Schleiermacher was preparing his public for the *second* edition of his *Glaubenslehre*, he penned a sentence which once again threw up this very Jacobian antinomy; he asked his readers the famous rhetorical question, "Must the knot of history so unravel that Christianity becomes identified with barbarism and science [*Wissenschaft*] with unbelief?"²² It was Schleiermacher's unswerving conviction that there could be a disciplined presentation of the Christian faith, which would not bring it into immediate, ruinous conflict with free, secular inquiry.²³ Even more significantly, it would be the explicit task of such a dogmatic theology to show that Christian piety is not simply maintained in opposition to, or in spite of, whatever secular research might uncover, whether in reference to the natural world or the character of Christian origins. For Jacobi (on the basis of what he sent to Reinhold) no such possibility appears to be envisaged. But for many of those who *were* able to read Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*, it has been Schleiermacher's supreme genius to demonstrate how "it is still possible to be both devout and intellectually honest".²⁴

Jacobi's list of irreconcilable alternatives represents the Scylla and Charybdis which the *Glaubenslehre* will have to negotiate, if it is to succeed in carrying us beyond Jacobi's

quite impossible position. Inasmuch as Jacobi gives such a concise account of the dilemma in which the "cultured" believer finds himself caught, Schleiermacher's intended dedication of his great dogmatic work is not just a courteous nod in the direction of a revered philosopher, but it must be seen as taking up the challenge which Jacobi's letter lays down. The German critic Emanuel Hirsch extends our theme in praising the skill with which Schleiermacher manages to find "the narrow way" between sceptical atheism and mythical orthodoxy,²⁵ those same bleak alternatives we find in Jacobi's testament to Reinhold.

Schleiermacher's preliminary answer to Jacobi's perplexity can be found in the letter which he wrote to the philosopher in the year before Jacobi's death. Schleiermacher rejects the notion that a pagan understanding can coexist with a Christian feeling—a Christianity of the heart—because the understanding can do no more than interpret or translate the feeling that it already finds present. Schleiermacher says explicitly in this letter that "dogmatics" is nothing other than the interpretation (*Dolmetschung*) of the religious feeling by the reflective activity of the understanding, and as a consequence a pagan interpretation, or exegesis, of a Christian feeling would be a contradiction in terms.²⁶

Schleiermacher has chosen his words carefully. Not only is this word *Dolmetschung* used to describe the general appropriation of Christian piety by the understanding, but it also acts as the clue to the abiding authority of the Christian New Testament scriptures. In Schleiermacher's account, the Bible is the original and originaive "interpretation" of Christian feeling, so firmly established that one is always driven to

understand the New Testament better and develop it further.²⁷ The sense which Schleiermacher wishes to convey by his repeated use of "Dolmetschung" is illuminated when we consider Schleiermacher's trenchant definition of this term some five years earlier.

In 1813 Schleiermacher had delivered a lecture to the Royal Academy of Sciences in Berlin on the problems which confront anyone who has ever tried to translate a text from one language into another. This lecture "on the different methods of translation" draws a crucial distinction between the activities of interpretation and translation, between *Dolmetschen* and *Übersetzen*. The former, Schleiermacher describes as a "mechanical" business,²⁸ because interpreters are employed in the fields of tourism, diplomacy, commerce and natural science, where everyone speaks "the same language", even if we continue to use different words. "Translation" by contrast is more complex; there is no assumption here of an easy fit between the literary, historical and philosophical conventions and concepts of any two developed languages, and the problem is always how to make the moods and ideas of one culture intelligible to another—without gross distortion. Whereas the techniques of "interpretation" can be refined to the point of the "simultaneous translation", *Übersetzen* (translation proper) is always an unending task, a continuing effort to build a bridge between essentially incommensurable cultures and the forms of expression which they adopt.

In light of this fundamental distinction, which Schleiermacher's lecture actually builds into the German language,²⁹ we can presume that Schleiermacher has adopted the terminology of "Dolmetschen" in his response to Jacobi with some

care. Understanding's "interpretation" of Christian feeling, like the original "interpretation" offered in the New Testament, implies a close "fit" between original experience and reflected description, between the "religiosity" of feeling and the "religion" of the understanding.³⁰ What Schleiermacher appears to be suggesting is that when the understanding reflects upon the piety it already finds at hand, there can occur something like the "simultaneous translation" which we find at international conferences or at the United Nations: apparently there can be a transposition of Christian piety into a higher register or a new key without distortion and without remainder. Here we have come to the crucial point. Schleiermacher's dogmatics, his *Glaubenslehre*, is supposed to be the "interpretation" of Christian piety, not its translation; philosophical "translations" of the Christian faith exist in sufficient numbers. Schleiermacher set out to provide the Protestant German Churches with dogmatic propositions understood as not more and not less than "logically ordered reflection upon the immediate utterances of the religious self-consciousness".³¹ In stressing that this reflection remains a *Dolmetschung*, Schleiermacher signals that his dogmatic procedure is to be free of those alien speculative and philosophical concepts which would necessarily translate Christian piety into a philosophical language, divorced from Christian origins. Schleiermacher explicitly repudiates this form of philosophical translation. In the Postscript to §16 of his *Glaubenslehre*, he claims:

The Protestant Church in particular is unanimous in feeling that the distinctive form of its dogmatic propositions does not depend on any form or school of philosophy, and has not proceeded at all from a speculative interest, but simply from

the interest of satisfying the immediate self-consciousness solely through the means ordained by Christ, in their genuine and uncorrupted form.³²

If Christian dogmatic theology is understood according to these criteria, then Schleiermacher may be right to argue that there is no inherent conflict between piety and understanding, between head and heart. The reflection upon faith takes place entirely within the realm of faith, and the understanding here operative produces a religion or theology "within the limits of piety alone".³³

There seems no escaping the conclusion here that Christian piety like Holy Scripture is *sui ipsius interpres*: Christian piety is its own interpreter. Luther had wanted the Bible, the Word of God, "to be sovereign—interpreted neither by his own spirit nor by anyone else's", but understood through itself and according to its own spirit.³⁴ This same sovereignty is what Schleiermacher now hopes to commandeer for the Christian self-consciousness. Christian piety must be shown capable of generating out of itself the concepts, categories and language which theology needs to analyse it. Indeed in his hermeneutical manuscripts Schleiermacher actually refers to Christianity's power of formulating new conceptual language: these new concepts are said to have arisen from the distinctive Christian stimulation of the affections.³⁵ Alongside the New Testament, the various Christian creeds and confessions are evidences of that self-interpreting Christian piety upon which the theologian in turn reflects. It is this self-interpreting capacity which frees Christianity from falling subject to alien speculative ideas and philosophical categories. And just because Christian piety is self-interpreting, Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*—"logically ordered reflec-

tion" upon the Protestant piety of nineteenth-century German-speaking peoples—is a discipline which can proceed without "speculative aids".³⁶

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9. Letter: Schleiermacher to his father; August 14, 1787. *KGA*, Volume V/1; *Briefwechsel 1774-1796*, edited by A. Arndt and W. Virmond. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1985. Brief 80, pp. 91-93.
 10. See Hermann Mulert, "Schleiermacher über Spinoza und Jacobi" in *Chronicon Spinozanum*, Volume III. The Hague: 1923. pp. 295-316; here p.295. See also Albert L. Blackwell, *Schleiermacher's Early Philosophy of Life: Determinism, Freedom, and Phantasy*. Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1982. pp.73, 81, 125-126.
 11. Horst Stephan & Martin Schmidt, *Geschichte der evangelischen Theologie in Deutschland seit dem Idealismus*, 3rd ed. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973. p.31.
 12. The useful entry "Jacobi, Friedrich Heinrich" in Volume III of the 3rd ed. of *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (hereafter *RGG*) by W. Wieland speaks of a philosophy "die glaubt, sich in sich selbst vollenden zu können". (*RGG*, Vol. III, cols. 508-509. Edited by Kurt Galling, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1959.)
 13. Translation by Albert L. Blackwell, op. cit., p. 60. Letter: Schleiermacher to his father; December 23, 1789. *KGA*, Volume V/1, Brief 131, pp. 182-186, here p. 183: "Noch weiter aber bin ich immer von der Systemsucht entfernt gewesen. . . . Ich glaube nicht, daß ich es jemals bis zu einem völlig ausgebildeten System bringen werde, so daß ich alle Fragen, die man aufwerfen kann, entscheidend und im Zusammenhang mit aller meiner übrigen Erkenntnis würde beantworten können..." Please note his use of the word "Zusammenhang" as denoting a characteristic of systematic thought.
 14. *Über die Religion: Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern*. This work will be cited in the following editions:
 - a) The 1st edition (1799): *KGA*, Volume I/2; *Schriften aus der Berliner Zeit 1796-1799*, edited by Günter Meckenstock. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984. pp. 189-326.

- b) All editions of this work are available in the critical volume: *Friedrich Schleiermacher's Reden Ueber die Religion* edited by G.C. Bernhard Pünjer. Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschke und Sohn, 1879.
 - c) The English translation of the 3rd ed.: *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* translated by John Oman. New York: Harper & Row, 1958. Oman's translation of the title does not convey its literal sense. For the sake of convenience, this work will be referred to as Schleiermacher's *Speeches on Religion*.
15. G.W.F. Hegel, *Glauben und Wissen*, edited by Hans Brockard and Hartmut Buchner. Volume III of *Jenaer Kritischer Schriften (Philosophische Bibliothek—hereafter PhB—Volume 319c)*. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1986. "...das Prinzip des Jacobischen Philosophierens... sich einerseits der subjektiven Schönheit des Protestantismus nähert..." (p. 94); "In den *Reden über die Religion* ist diese Potenzierung geschehen..." (p. 96). See also *Faith and Knowledge*, translated by Walter Cerf and H.S. Harris. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977.
 16. So Albert L. Blackwell, op. cit., p. 164.
 17. Letter: Schleiermacher to Karl Gustav von Brinkmann; October 19, 1803. *Aus Schleiermacher's Leben: In Briefen* (hereafter *Briefe*), Volume IV, edited by Wilhelm Dilthey and Ludwig Jonas. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974 (2nd ed.). pp. 78-81; here p. 80: "...mich seinen Fortsetzer und Potenzierer genannt haben. ... seine Philosophie fortgesetzt auf mich hinführe..."
 18. Ibid.: "ich gestehe es, da ich Jacobi sehr liebe"; see also Schleiermacher's dedication of the 3rd ed. of his *Speeches* (1821) to K.G. von Brinkmann in Pünjer, op. cit., p. xii: "...schmerzte es mich tief, daß ich es dem nicht mehr senden konnte, mit dem ich zuletzt viel darüber gesprochen, ich meine F.H. Jacobi, dem wir beide so vieles verdanken und mehr gewiß als wir wissen."
 19. Letter: Schleiermacher to Berthold Georg Niebuhr, March 28, 1819. *Schleiermacher als Mensch: Sein Wirken, Familien- und Freundesbriefe 1804 bis 1834*, edited by H. Meisner. Gotha: Leopold Klotz Verlag,

1923. pp. 296-297; here p. 297: "Mir war der Gedanke gekommen und ziemlich fest geworden, ihm [Jacobi] meine Dogmatik, an der ich jetzt schreibe, zuzueignen, dadurch unserm Verhältnis ein kleines Denkmal zu setzen und zugleich nach meinem Vermögen Jacobis eigentliches Verhältnis zum Christentum ins Licht zu stellen."

20. See Albert L. Blackwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-164; and Hans-Joachim Birkner, *Theologie und Philosophie: Einführung in Probleme der Schleiermacher-Interpretation*. Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1974. p. 34.
21. Letter: F.H. Jacobi to Karl Leonhard Reinhold. *Briefe*, Volume II, 2nd ed. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974. p. 349: "Durchaus ein Heide mit dem Verstande, mit dem ganzen Gemüte ein Christ, schwimme ich zwischen zwei Wassern, die sich mir nicht ver-einigen wollen. . ." The translation "two currents" was suggested by Albert L. Blackwell, *op. cit.*, p. 163.
22. "Dr. Schleiermacher über seine Glaubenslehre, an Dr. Lücke": Zwei Sendschreiben. This work will be cited in the following editions:
 - a) The critical edition of the text provided in KGA, Volume I/10: *Theolo-gisch-dogmatische Abhandlungen und Gelegenheitsschriften*, edited by H.-F. Traulsen and Martin Ohst. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990 (hereafter *Lücke*). pp. 307-394.
 - b) *On the Glaubenslehre: Two Letters to Dr. Lücke*, translated by James Duke and Francis Fiorenza. Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1981.

"Soll der Knoten der Geschichte so auseinander gehen? das Christentum mit der Barbarei, und die Wissenschaft mit dem Unglauben?" (*Lücke*, p. 347; English translation, p. 61.) The translation of the German word "Wissenschaft" poses a perennial difficulty. In the context of this quotation Gerhard Spiegler suggests "culture" as the appropriate translation for "Wissenschaft". See his *The Eternal Covenant: Schleiermacher's Experiment in Cultural Theology*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. p. 17. We shall postpone our own discussion of this vexing term until we come to consider in what sense Schleiermacher understood his *Glaubenslehre* to be a *Wissenschaft* (*Glaubenslehre*_{1&2}, §1).

23. ". . . der nach allen Seiten freigelassenen, unabhängig für sich arbeitenden wissenschaftlichen Forschung. . ." (*Lücke*, p. 351.)
24. See the Preface to Brian A. Gerrish, *A Prince of the Church: Schleiermacher and the Beginnings of Modern Theology*. London: SCM Press, 1984. p. xiii.
25. Emanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie: Im Zusammenhang mit den allgemeinen Bewegungen des europäischen Denkens*, Volume V. Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1968 (4th ed.). p. 316: "Schmal ist der Weg, der zwischen skeptischem Atheismus und mythischer Orthodoxie uns Heutigen gelassen ist, und wenige sinds, die ihn finden."
26. The definitive edition of Schleiermacher's letter to Jacobi of March 30, 1818, has been provided by Martin Cordes, "Der Brief Schleiermachers an Jacobi: Ein Beitrag zu seiner Entstehung und Überlieferung" in *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* (hereafter *ZThK*), Volume 68, 1971. pp. 195-212. The letter itself can be found on pp. 208-211: "... was wir zum Unterschiede davon Religion nennen, was aber immer mehr oder weniger Dogmatik ist, das ist nur die durch Reflexion entstandene Dolmetschung des Verstandes über das Gefühl." (p. 208.)
27. "Die Bibel ist die ursprüngliche Dolmetschung des christlichen Gefühls und eben deswegen so feststehend, daß sie nur immer besser verstanden und entwickelt werden darf." (Cordes, op. cit., p. 209.)
28. Schleiermacher's lecture "Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens" was read on June 24, 1813 and can be found in *Friedrich Schleiermacher's sämtliche Werke* (hereafter *SW*), Volume III/2. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1838. pp. 207-245. ". . . fast nur ein mechanisches Geschäft. . ." (p. 211.) An English translation is available in André Lefevere, *Translating Literature: The German Tradition from Luther to Rosenzweig*. Assen, the Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1977. pp. 67-89.
29. See George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. Oxford University Press, 1975. pp. 251-252. In Friedmar Apel, *Literarische Übersetzung*, we are told that Schleiermacher's lecture is perhaps the most-discussed essay in the whole history of translation theory. (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1983. p. 56.)

30. "Die Religiosität ist die Sache des Gefühls; was wir zum Unterschiede davon Religion nennen. . ." (Cordes, op. cit., p. 208; cf. n. 26.)
31. ". . . aus der logisch geordneten Reflexion auf die unmittelbaren Aussagen der frommen Selbstbewußtseins entsprungen sind. . ." (§16. Postscript.)
32. ". . . Befriedigung des unmittelbaren Selbstbewußtseins allein mittelst der echten und unverfälschten Stiftung Christi. . ." (§16. Postscript.)
33. Cf. the essay by Brian A. Gerrish, "Theology within the Limits of Piety Alone: Schleiermacher and Calvin's Notion of God" in *The Old Protestantism and the New: Essays on the Reformation Heritage*. Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1982. pp. 196-207.
34. Lütther's view of Holy Scripture as "sui ipsius interpres" can be found in Volume 7 of the Weimar edition (hereafter WA) of his complete works: "Assertio omnium articulorum M. Lutheri per Bullam Leonis X. novissimam damnatorum" (1520) in *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1897 (1st ed.); Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1966 (2nd ed.), pp. 94-151; here p. 97, line 23. See also p. 98, line 40 to p. 99, line 2: ". . . sed solam scripturam regnare, nec eam meo spiritu aut ullorum hominum interpretari, sed per seipsam et suo spiritu intelligi volo." I have consulted the translation of this passage by Brian A. Gerrish found in his article "Doctor Martin Luther: Subjectivity and Doctrine in the Lutheran Reformation" in *Seven-Headed Luther*, edited by Peter Newman Brooks. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983. pp. 1-24; here p.15. See also Gerrish's article "The Word of God and the Words of Scripture: Luther and Calvin on Biblical Authority" in *The Old Protestantism and the New*, op. cit., pp. 51-68, especially p. 57.
35. ". . . die neue Begriffsbildende Kraft des Christentums. . . die neuen B[egriff]e gingen aus der eigentümlichen Gemüts-erregung hervor." Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutik*, 2nd ed., edited by Heinz Kimmerle. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1974. p. 79. James Duke and Jack Forstman have provided an English translation: *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts*. Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977; see p. 104.
36. ". . . ohne spekulative Hilfsmittel" (§50.1).

III.

Their
Correspondence

Schleiermacher's letter to Jacobi has provided us with a useful introduction to the dogmatic method that his *Glaubenslehre* will employ: dogmatic theology is the "interpretation" of Christian feeling by the reflective understanding. But as this letter is being addressed to a *philosopher*, it is hardly surprising that Schleiermacher now opens up the discussion to include a more general consideration of how theology and philosophy might be related. Schleiermacher announces that, like Jacobi, he too is a philosopher with respect to his understanding, and this admission brings with it a significant new complication. While *within* the realm of religion, understanding and piety need not fall into ruinous conflict—the one becomes the means of interpreting and clarifying the other—surely it is impossible to maintain that the *only* function of the philosophical understanding is the pious interpretation of Christian feeling or Christian self-consciousness. The real issue raised by Jacobi's communication still remains: the potential conflict between secular philosophical understanding and the Christian religion (now duly interpreted).

The significance of Schleiermacher's response to Jacobi here emerges with greater clarity. We have chosen Schleiermacher's famous letter as a useful place to "take our bearings"³⁷ before entering into an analysis of the *Glaubenslehre* proper, not least because Schleiermacher had hoped through the publication of his dogmatics to throw some light on "Jacobi's real relation to Christianity". The letter then serves as a tool in establishing Schleiermacher's dogmatic intentions; but equally the interpretation of the letter can give the first indication of how a critic intends to treat Schleiermacher subsequently. Richard Crouter, for instance, warns (before

beginning his own interpretation) that "personal" correspondence cannot be accorded the same weight as more formal material.³⁸ This caveat has a slightly hollow ring, when we remember how many essential Schleiermacher texts have been reconstructed after his death from his manuscripts and fragmentary notes. Further, this letter cannot be regarded as ordinary correspondence, for in it Schleiermacher challenges, in detail, the opinions of a man whom he holds in the highest esteem. The fact is that the letter, and especially the images it employs, have entered into the Schleiermacher literature quite irreversibly.

The most important reference to Schleiermacher's letter in recent years comes from Gerhard Ebeling. He contended that the way in which Schleiermacher relates theology and philosophy is the key issue (*das Kernproblem*) in the interpretation of his thought. In support of this claim Ebeling then cites (from the letter) the celebrated ellipse which Schleiermacher proposes to draw around the dual foci of his existence.³⁹ The controversy arises when we try to establish precisely what these foci represent. One school of thought would have us restrict the use of this focal imagery to the immediate context of the letter. According to this analysis, the primary polarity within Christian consciousness is between "deep religious feeling (*Gefühl*)" and "keenness of intellect (*Verstand*)".⁴⁰ There is no requirement to see this polarity as in any way destructive of the Christian life, since within the sphere of religion, the one can clarify and enhance the other. Indeed, Schleiermacher's letter goes on to envisage a kind of "galvanic operation, in the feeling of understanding and in the understanding of feeling", which he describes as "the innermost life of the human spirit".⁴¹ The argument is

that the understanding, and the piety it interprets, can live harmoniously; they are able to work together, while yet remaining distinct.

This attractive picture is shattered when we recall that Schleiermacher is still addressing his remarks to a philosopher. Perhaps Jacobi was pleased to learn that the critical intellect could offer such distinguished service in the cause of piety—but it can hardly be suggested that this account exhausts what Schleiermacher means by being a "philosopher" with respect to the understanding. The striking thing about Schleiermacher's use of this metaphor of the ellipse is that he concludes its discussion with the statement that his philosophy and his dogmatics, then, "are firmly determined not to contradict each other".⁴² Obviously, there is more at issue here than the limited discussion of how the understanding can be of assistance to piety. Ebeling is perfectly justified in identifying the foci of Schleiermacher's ellipse as his theology and his philosophy, for these are two sides of Schleiermacher's personality which he sought "to attune" right until the very end of his lifetime.

Our interpretation of Schleiermacher's letter is limited in scope and purpose. We are using this piece of correspondence both as a convenient introduction to the *Glaubenslehre* and to the central question of this study, viz. the relation of philosophy to theology *within* Schleiermacher's dogmatics. Nonetheless, it is difficult to reconcile what we wish to emphasize about Schleiermacher's letter with some of what we read in his ablest interpreters. So, for instance, Hans-Joachim Birkner argues that not only Schleiermacher's image of the ellipse, but indeed the whole letter, is really about the relation of understanding to feeling. Since the relationship of

philosophy to dogmatics is not really the subject under discussion, the *only* thing that can be taken from the letter in this regard is Schleiermacher's statement that for him his theology and his philosophy will always attempt to remain free from contradiction, while simultaneously they will constantly seek a viable *rapprochement*.⁴³ If this is "all" that may legitimately be taken from the letter on this matter, it is not hard to see why in the relation of philosophy to theology Ebeling discovers the quintessential Schleiermacherian ellipse. Like the foci of an ellipse, Schleiermacher's theology and philosophy are *two* centres of his thought, which are neither permitted to pull further apart, nor are they ever to collapse into each other. Their relation is one of distinct, harmonious separation.

Brian Gerrish's discussion of this letter is in some ways more troubling. He too wishes to underscore that the letter (used as an introduction to the *Glaubenslehre*) is about the "dialectical" operation that obtains between Christian feeling and the critical interpretation of it by the understanding. Yet, when Gerrish refers us to Schleiermacher's effort "to attune the two sides of his personality" in this operation, he gives no indication that this "attuning" is what Schleiermacher intends for the relation of his philosophy to his dogmatics.⁴⁴ That these two sides of Schleiermacher's personality also require their reconciliation, Gerrish is happy to acknowledge in other contexts. So, for instance, he first drew my attention to one of Schleiermacher's most extraordinary pronouncements—words recorded by his wife as he lay dying in February 1834. According to her report, Schleiermacher is supposed to have called out, "I must think the most profound speculative thoughts, and they are for me identical with the