

Chapter 5: Traces of an Intellectual Crisis. The Metaphysical Issues

Chapter Overview

Between 1835 and 1872 there is a shift in Strauß' metaphysics away from anthropomorphic centrism to nature centrism by which Hegelian, 'metaphysical science' of Spirit 'returning' to Itself is replaced by the 'physical sciences' as nature 'turning inward on itself' to continue its materialistic creativity. The chapter traces Strauß' efforts to find an alternative to the Hegelian formulation of 'religion' across his corpus from 1837 until 1872. Having dismissed in "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity" of 1838 the Hegelian logical, meta-narrative of Double Negation, Strauß' initial attempt to define religion as an historically immanent experience of 'eternal reason' in every moment was nullified by Feuerbach's anthropomorphic criticism of 'reason' in religion. In the *Glaubenslehre* of 1841, Strauß presents the history of Christian doctrine as having collapsed under the weight of its own internal contradictions with no need of an 'external' philosophical perspective. With a focus on what is 'historically reliable' in the gospels of *The Life of Jesus* of 1864, Strauß follows (half-heartedly) the 'Return to Kant' among his circle of friends in the early 1860s to formulate a 'religion of humanity' devoted to moral improvement by the species, not the individual, in contrast to a 'religion of the Christ.' *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* of 1865 focuses on Schleiermacher's Christology not with respect to the feeling of absolute dependence, which Strauß had already decimated in "Schleiermacher und Daub" in 1839, but on Schleiermacher's Christology depending upon an absolute, eminent causality¹ of 'Perfect God-consciousness' in order to elevate humanity out of sensuousness. Finally, *The Old and the New Faith* of 1872 formulates religion within the framework of (Feuerbachian), reductionist materialism that views even 'life' as a product of nature (hylozoism) with consciousness constituting that 'place' where nature 'turns inward on itself' to continue its progressive, albeit materialistic, advance. Moral improvement is understood not in terms of ethical achievement by the individual, which is always problematic for Strauß, but by an accomplishment by species with its ever-new discernment of moral principles that are required in its changing historical circumstances.

Textual Analysis of Strauß' Metaphysical Wanderings

1835 *The Life of Jesus*²

History, not Merely Philosophical Metaphysics, Matters:
Universal Christology and Empty Abstractions

Strauß acknowledges that already as a student he and his colleagues were troubled by the Hegelian epistemological distinction between 'content' (idea) and 'form' (sensible representations) that reduced 'form' to a meaningless, logical 'x' because 'truth' was

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1. On the difference between eminent and efficient causality, see the "Introduction:" 84, n. 23.
 2. See Volume I especially Chapter 2 for an analysis of Strauß' 1835 *LJ*.

the idea, not its representations.³ However, in the *LJ* of 1835, Strauß embraced the Hegelian epistemological distinction between ‘content’ and ‘form’ in order to restore Church Doctrine that crumbles under ‘mythic’ criticism of the gospels. It is the ‘idea,’ which is already in the mind, that the text evokes that matters, not the literal text as a historical account of events.

Furthermore, in the *LJ*, Strauß defends his version of a universal, *inclusive* Christology in contrast to the *exclusive* Christology of the Right-Wing Hegelians and the *partially inclusive, elitist* Christology of the Left-Wing Hegelians although Strauß’ Christology is a claim based on Hegelian ‘epistemological and metaphysical logic’ rather than ‘facts.’ His so-called ‘break’ with the Hegelians in the *LJ* is asserted both by those who want to distance Strauß from Hegel to protect historical-critical biblical scholarship from any taint of Hegel and by those who are blind to Strauß’ nuanced Hegelian Christology, which seeks to ensure that Absolute Spirit is no ‘empty idea’ by ‘grounding’ It, universally, in humanity’s consciousness inseparable from history.

1837 Polemical Writings

*in Defense of my Life of Jesus and on the Characteristics of Contemporary Theology*⁴

In 1837, Strauß published a collection of essays that had appeared in the intervening two years as *Polemical Writings in Defense of my Life of Jesus and on the Characteristics of Contemporary Theology* (*Streitschriften zur Verteidigung meiner Schrift über das Leben Jesu und zur Charakteristik der gegenwärtigen Theologie*). Pamphlet III is primarily where he presents an account of his relationship to the Hegelians, and it illuminates his intellectual distancing from them, the initial step that drove Strauß’ search for, initially, a metaphysical substitute for Hegel’s Double Negation and, eventually in 1872, to an epistemological alternative to Hegel.

As in the *LJ*, here in his *Streitschriften*, he criticized the Hegelian limiting of the manifestation of an ‘idea’ to a single (or restricted) set of representations because that would constitute substituting a physical being for an idea contrary to the Hegelian epistemological claim that the physical representation is only a manifestation of the idea.⁵ Strauß sketches the four options for Incarnation⁶ here as: 1) The God/Man is always both ‘already’ and ‘not yet,’ which is Strauß’ own *inclusive* Christology that

3. See Strauß, "On the General Relationship of Hegel’s Philosophy to Theological Criticism" ("Allgemeines Verhältniß der Hegel’schen Philosophie zur theologischen Kritik") in *Streitschriften* III: 57–58. See as well, See Ziegler, I: 51.

4. Strauß, *Streitschriften zur Verteidigung meiner Schrift über das Leben Jesu und zur Charakteristik der gegenwärtigen Theologie* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1980).

5. This is what Kant called ‘subreption’. See the "Preface:" 64, n. 84.

6. See Strauß, "Allgemeines Verhältniß der Hegel’schen Philosophie zur theologischen Kritik" in Pamphlet III of the *Streitschriften*: 68–69.

takes all of human consciousness to be, potentially, an event of incarnation. 2) The God/Man is only the 'not-yet,' which would be making a claim of 'empty abstraction' equivalent to: the God/Man only exists as an Idea and has not yet been realized, actually. 3) Whoever affirms that the God/Man exists in history but denies the 'not-yet' would be claiming that the God/Man exists as already identical with all of mankind, which Strauß calls 'enthusiastic pantheism.' 4) If the God/Man is only a particular individual, one might present historical proof (which, given the nature of historical facts, is always questionable⁷), but to present such a historical proof, in fact, would, once again, be substituting an 'actuality' (the sensible representations) for the 'truth' (the Idea), which would constitute switching a physical 'actuality' (physical reductionism) for an Idea – (the 'Absolute Concept') – the very opposite of an empty abstraction. Strauß rejects here the three latter options as erroneous versions of Hegelianism.

It becomes clear in these writings that, for Strauß, there are two issues (the metaphysics of Christology and epistemological status of 'facts') at stake with the Hegelians, which go to the heart of the very role of history in Christianity. Both issues are related to the concern that truth not be a matter of merely 'empty abstraction' given that Hegel maintains that *without the particulars of representation one's thoughts are merely self-constructions, and one has only 'empty abstraction.'*⁸

First and foremost for Strauß is the issue that is the lynch pin to the dogmatic restoration of the *LJ*: the historical issue of the metaphysics of Christology. The Hegelian meta-narrative understood positive history, the sequence of historical events, to be a necessary process that established the finite conditions in order for Infinite Spirit to be experienced in consciousness with the identification of finite and Infinite Spirit constituting the God/Man (Incarnation).

Hegelians across their spectrum from Right to Left took 'the God/Man' to refer to what Hegel called in his "Über die wissenschaftlichen Betrachtungsarten des Naturrechts" 'the point of indifference' where all multiplicity was negated in finite consciousness in order to experience Absolute Spirit.⁹ For the Hegelians, this 'point of indifference' occurred as either a specific, historical individual (Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, an event *actually beyond history* according to Hegel) or it occurs in those elite, few Hegelian philosophers who themselves experienced the divinity beyond finite consciousness, proleptically, in their finite consciousness by negating multiplicity. In contrast, *Strauß took the notion of 'the truth is the whole' that 'involves the pain, the*

7. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte" in Pamphlet III of the *Streitschriften*: 94.

8. See Hegel, "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten, seine Stelle in der praktischen Philosophie, und sein Verhältnis zu den positiven Rechtswissenschaften:" GW II: 525.

9. Hegel speaks of the significance of the 'point of indifference' in his "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" GW II: 456., 465-467, 484, 487-488, 496-497, 499-500. He employed both meanings of the term 'indifference' in the course of the text: 'non-difference' (or unity) and 'affectless' (or meaningless) equanimity when it comes to the actual world. As unity, see GW II: 456, 501; as affectless dream GW II: 496-497, 499-500.

patience, and the labor of the negative' to refer neither to the historical life of a single individual (Jesus of Nazareth, as the Christ) nor to the few Hegelians but to all human consciousness – IN history. Strauß writes in his "Concluding Dissertation:"

If reality is ascribed to the idea of the unity of the divine and human natures, is this equivalent to the admission that this unity must actually have been once manifested, as it never had been, and never more will be, in one individual? This is indeed not the mode in which Idea realizes itself; it is not wont to lavish all its fulness on one exemplar and be stingy towards all others – to express itself perfectly in that one individual, and imperfectly in all the rest : it rather loves to distribute its riches among a multiplicity of exemplars which reciprocally complete each other—in the alternate appearance and suppression of a series of individuals. And (*isic.*) is this no true realization of the idea? Is not the idea of the unity of the divine and human natures a real one in a far higher sense, which I regard the whole race of mankind as its realization, than when I single out one man as such a realization? Is not an incarnation of God from eternity, a truer one than an incarnation limited to a particular point of time?¹⁰

Strauß claimed that one can avoid 'meaningless' truth claims of 'empty abstraction' only if one includes all of human consciousness as concerned with Absolute Spirit becoming aware of Itself.

Hegel himself had stressed in the *Phenomenology* that the process that leads to consciousness of the Absolute involves the entirety of history. Strauß took Hegel at his word, and he was amazed that the Hegelians across the board rejected him.¹¹ Hegel writes, though:

The life of God and divine knowledge, then, may well be pronounced as a playing of love with itself. This idea sinks [...] to blandness if the seriousness, the pain, the patience and labor of the negative are lacking in it [...] Precisely because the form [historical representation] is as necessary to the essence as the essence to Itself, absolute reality must not be conceived of and expressed as essence alone, i.e. as immediate substance, or as pure self-intuition of the Divine, but as form [as historical representation] also, and with the entire wealth of the developed form. Only then is it grasped and expressed as really actual.

The truth is the whole. *The whole, however, is merely the essential nature reaching its completeness through the process of its own development. Of the Absolute, it must be said that it is essentially a result, that only at the end is it what it is in very truth; and just in that consists its nature, which is to be actual, subject, or self-becoming, self-development.*¹² (emphasis added)

10. Strauß, *LJ*: 779–780.

11. See Strauß, "Hegel's Perspective on the Historical Value of Gospel History" in Pamphlet III of the *Streitschriften*: 126.

12. Hegel, "Preface" to the *Phänomenologie* GW III: 24 (Baillie: 81–82). In his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion* GW XVII: 203u ("3. Die Religion der Wahrheit und Freiheit"), Hegel writes: "Absolute religion is [...] the religion of truth and freedom. For the truth is not related to the objective as to a stranger. Freedom expresses the same thing that truth is by means of a determination of negation. *Spirit is for Spirit*: this is what it is; *it is therefore its own presupposition. We begin with the spirit as subject. He is identical with Himself, is eternal contemplation of Himself; He is thus at the same time*

However, if not already at the core of his universal Christology at the time of the writing of the *LJ* then shortly afterwards and clearly in his *Streitschriften*, a second issue with the significance of history in Hegelian philosophy arose for Strauß. Here, the issue is epistemological, not the issue of the God/Man.

If one simply equates intellectual perception (*intellektuelle Anschauung*, which is abstract thought) and sensible perception (*sensible Anschauung*, which is representations in perception),¹³ then the 'truth' of the abstract content of perception is identical with the factual representations of concrete, sensible perception. That leads to the conclusion that only 'true' factual representations can serve as the vehicle for grasping the 'real' truth of abstraction because only the factually 'true' can contain a 'true' idea. In other words, *if the gospel account is factually and historically false, then the gospel account cannot be the vehicle of representations that lead to divine truth.*

For Strauß, the reality of historical particularities was not debatable. However, the issue over the status of historical particularities and Christian faith was the worm that, by the time of his writing of the *Glaubenslehre*, led Strauß to reject the Hegelian attempt to unite 'reason' with religious 'feeling' as expressed in the form (representations) that are the gospel narrative accounts (not to speak of the historical claims of Church doctrine developed on the basis of gospel representations). Identification of mythic elements in the gospels has the conundrum that historically the mythic elements are 'false.' If there must be a factual 'unity' between the gospel representations and Christian 'truth,' then, the mythic representations could not ground the 'truth' of Christianity in actuality. Christianity becomes merely a system of 'empty abstractions.' *Removal of the 'false' representations from their 'true' ideas requires an a priori epistemology as well as metaphysics.* If false representations can preserve the truth, then the decision over their truth is not dependent upon history but upon the privileging of ideas over facts (not only the privileging of a specific metaphysical meta-narrative of Double Negation) and, at the least, the 'mythic' element of the gospels, which mean to confirm the 'truth' of the God/Man, cannot 'ground' the 'Idea' of the God/Man in history.

In point of fact, Strauß says in his *Streitschriften* that Hegel himself placed the turning 'point of indifference' in the resurrection *beyond history.*

conceived only as result, as end. He is the presupposition of Himself and also the result and is only as end. This is the truth, this being adequate, this being object and subject. This is truth: that He is Himself the object, is reality, concept, and idea." (emphasis added)

13. See Hegel, : "Glauben und Wissen" GW II: 305–306; "Die Form A ist [...] dieselbe im Subjekt und Objekt vorhanden." – *ibid.*: 312; "The 'real' [*Reale*] is the absolute identity of the universal and the particular;" abstraction 'needs' the positive of the particular – "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten:" GW II: 521; reason = highest abstraction (Unity, Knowledge, Freedom) but without the particular it is empty abstraction" – *ibid.*: 525; see as well, *Phänomenologie* GW III: 78–79!!; 97–98; 103–104 (Baillie) 142–143!!!; 167–168; 174–175.

1838 "On the Transient and Permanent in Christianity"

Religion as
'Rational Order' but a 'Relativized Christ'

The essay "Über das Vergängliche und das Bleibende in Christenthum" ("The Transient and Permanent in Christianity") published a year later in 1838, is not only a complementary text to the third edition of the *LJ*, which was intended to placate those shrill adversaries to Strauß in Zurich who opposed the initial effort in 1837 to call him to the University of Zurich, but also contains a first attempt to present an alternative conception of Christianity in contrast to Hegelian Idealism/Spirit.¹⁴ The entire meta-narrative of Hegel's 'dialectical logic' of 'Double Negation,' which Strauß had employed in the *LJ*, is now absent.¹⁵ Strauß is no longer employing Hegelian epistemology to explain the 'true' kernel of mythic husks.

Equally remarkable, though, is that Strauß insists here that, once one has stripped away the 'unhistorical' (the mythical) in the gospels, there is enough historical evidence to conclude that Jesus was a 'religious genius,' who, equal to all religious geniuses, is, nonetheless, unsurpassable by any other religious founder. Jesus is unsurpassable in that he introduced humanity not to Hegel's Absolute Idea but to the 'idea' of an 'an intimate and lively, internal harmony between all feeling, thinking, and willing *with the 'highest' truth that one can experience, that is, with reason.*' This reason is present in, and capable of acknowledgement by, all human consciousness.

Strauß calls this intimate and lively, internal harmony *the ideational and physical lawfulness that governs the physical world* – again, *not Hegel's negation of the world by means of the 'point of indifference' that leads 'back' to Absolute Spirit.* Furthermore, he calls it the 'essential unity of the truly human and the truly divine.' However, this is far more an echo of Schleiermacher's notion of 'immortality' as 'in the midst of finitude to be one with the Infinite and in every moment to be eternal' of Schleiermacher's *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*¹⁶ than it is of Hegel's Absolute Spirit beyond history.

14. On my reading of Strauß' distancing himself from Hegel in "On the Transient and the Permanent in Christianity," see above "Chapter 1: Methodology," 129, n. 75.

15. In Heft III of his *Streitschriften*, Strauß employs a definition of religion that still echoes Hegel's Double Negation: "ὁμιλία καὶ διάλεκτος θεοῦ πρὸς ἄνθρωπον καὶ ἀνθρώπου πρὸς θεὸν" ("Interaction and speaking/communication by God with humanity and humanity with God"). See Strauß, Heft III, *Streitschriften*: 48. However, the formulation is ambiguous. Interaction between God and humanity can refer to the Personal Theism of Logos Theology (λόγος ἐνδιάθετος/thought Logos) and λόγος προφορικὸς/spoken Logos), the Emanation and Influx of Gnosticism, Hegel's Double Negation, as well as Schleiermacher's definition of the experience of the infinite in every moment.

16. See Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (1799), John Oman, trans. (New York: Harper Torchbooks/Cloister Library, 1958): 101. To be sure, this is not Schleiermacher's later definition of religion as the 'feeling of absolute dependence' that is God-consciousness exclusively made possible for humanity by the new 'eminent causality' of the Christ as Perfect God-consciousness.

It is generally recognized that, along with the third edition of the *LJ* (1838), which re-considered the rejection of the gospel of John as an historical source for historical claims for the Christ, Strauß' essay "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum"¹⁷ ("On the Transient and Permanent in Christianity"), also published 1838, was an attempt to dull the swords of Christian Traditional Theists¹⁸ and to appeal to the Schleiermachers who had opposed his appointment to the University of Zurich already in 1837. It is also generally recognized that Strauß explicitly regretted, shortly afterward, his succumbing to his 'doubts about doubt' with respect to John¹⁹ and his efforts at appeasement with his Schleiermacherian opponents in Zurich.²⁰

A deep reading, though, establishes some startling elements that Strauß affirms in this text. These include remarkable claims about the 'God-consciousness'²¹ of the 'historical Jesus' and the limiting of the role of the '*genetic mythical principle*' to the miraculous, non-historical claims for Jesus in the gospels. In other words, the 'mythic' element of the gospels is contrasted with the historical elements,²² and Strauß is here focused on historical claims for Jesus in contrast to Hegelian, speculative metaphysical claims for the God/Man beyond history.

More specifically, in the *LJ* Strauß employed 'Mythic School's' distinction between the 'husk' and 'kernel' of 'mythic' stories to ground the 'truth' of even the 'false,' mythic material of the gospels by his use of Hegelian distinction between the narrative 'husks' and philosophical truth of the narrative 'kernels' – despite the falsehood of the narratives when read literally. Here in "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity," the focus is on historical criticism and 'factual' history. Strauß concludes now that the historical elements of the gospels are sufficient to claim that Jesus was a 'religious genius' who experiences an 'internal harmony' between finite human consciousness and God-consciousness. Nonetheless, Strauß relativizes Jesus' role as a 'founder of a religion' by 'drawing him down from God's throne' to the status of 'one religious leader among others' – even if unsurpassable.

17. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum" (1839) ("On the Transient and Permanent in Christianity") in *Zwei friedliche Blätter* (Altona; Verlag von J.F. Hammerich, 1839): 59–132. The essay appeared originally in *Der Freihafen. Galerie von Unterhaltungsbildern aus den Kreisen der Literatur, Gesellschaft und Wissenschaft*, Heft 3/4 (Drittes Quartalheft) (Altona: Verlag Hammerich, 1838): 1–48.

18. See above "Chapter 1: Methodology:" 129, n. 75.

19. See Ziegler, I: 271.

20. See Ziegler, I: 287–288.

21. See my discussion of Strauß' use of Schleiermacher's metaphors of 'God-consciousness' and the 'feeling of absolute dependence' in Chapter 4: "Why Schleiermacher was not an option:" 261, n. 43.

22. A broader application of the '*genetic mythical principle*' with respect to the gospels would view the 'mythical' as the general attempt, not to portray the 'true,' factual account of Jesus' 'life and ministry' but to generate the multiple understandings of 'who' Jesus of Nazareth was taken to be and his meaning for the early church based, not on 'history' but on the inherited stories of the Christian community found in their scriptures, the Septuagint. A recognition of the '*genetic mythical principle*' in the gospels in this broader sense would enable an understanding of why there are theological options for understanding Jesus in the four gospels, not a presentation of 'the' historical facts.

It is particularly important, though, to recognize that here, as well, this text confirms the subtle but profound shift in Strauß' understanding of the 'rational order' that anchors theology. The 'rational order' is no longer conceived as a meta-narrative, 'logic of dialectic' of Absolute Spirit that is the causal explanation of the 'creation' of the world/cosmos, but, rather, the 'rational order' here is a *'comforting lubricant' that arises out of nature itself.*²³ In short, *this text is more than an attempt at 'appeasement.' It is an attempt to grasp the 'essence of Christianity' in a non-Hegelian fashion that at least contains the seed of Strauß' materialism of 1872.*

Strauß writings after 1835, then, not only identify an intellectual crisis in his Hegelianism formulated in 1837 in the *Streitschriften*. They also identify, already with "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity" of 1838, the emergence of his materialist 'faith' that reaches its fullest articulation in 1872 with *The Old and the New Faith*. A careful reading of his texts identifies the signals that flag the transition from Hegelian Idealism to Feuerbachian Materialism.²⁴

What is most striking about "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity" is that already here Hegel's meta-narrative, which is based on the dialectical 'logic' of double negation, is gone. Here in 1838, although sounding quite Hegelian, Strauß speaks of religion 'having two sides:' a 'rational' and a 'feeling,' side. Whereas Strauß equates 'religion' with reason as the 'rational side' of religion,²⁵ religion, though, now consists in an internal harmony (with God and self) and equanimity over against the world as the 'feeling side' of religion.²⁶ There is no longer a meta-narrative of Double Negation invoked here. A 'religious genius' is one who combines the two sides of reason and feeling in an internal harmony.²⁷

Strauß speaks of genius as two kinds of extraordinary achievement: a genius of 'external skills' and a genius of 'internal harmony.'²⁸ The latter is a 'genius of piety.'²⁹ "[...] [S]triving for inner harmony consists in nothing else than that the lower powers of the soul are subordinated to the higher and all to the highest and hegemonic, which is religious consciousness."³⁰ (emphasis added)

23. See Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 365.

24. Later, I develop my thesis that Strauß' incomplete 'turn to Kant' allows invoking the overlooked perspective of Critical Idealism's *required conditions of possibility for any and all mental and/or physical experience*. When one does, one has a background for profiling the 'objective,' metaphysical shift of Strauß' reflections from Hegel's Idealism to Feuerbach's Materialism, and one can see, as well, that the *transcendental conditions of possibility required for an 'objective' metaphysical shift from Idealism to Materialism* is no retreat into 'subjectivism' or fanciful flight into 'empty abstractions'.

25. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 108.

26. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 107–108.

27. See Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 102–103.

28. See Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 109–110.

29. See Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 115–116.

30. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 116.

Flagging his commitment to the importance of ‘empirical history’ for establishing truth, Strauß takes Jesus to be an historical example of the ‘pious genius’ and ‘founder’ of a religion. Strauß asserts not only that it is ‘clearly’ portrayed, ‘once we remove all that is unhistorical from the gospels,³¹ that Jesus attained ‘this status of internal harmony and equanimity,’ which constitutes the *unity of ‘truly human’ consciousness and God-consciousness*, but also *that Jesus was the first to introduce into humanity this religious idea of inner harmony between humanity and God.*³²

If we subtract the unhistorical, this [idea of inner harmony of human- and God-consciousness] [...] fits most beautifully and consistently the description of Jesus in the Gospels. In him, too, the idea that he first introduced to mankind the consciousness of the essential unity of the truly human with the divine, showed such omnipotence that *his whole life was uniformly permeated and transfigured up to the point that all noticeable dullness vanished.*³³ (emphasis added)

These are startling ‘historical’ claims. However, no more than Strauß was satisfied with an exclusive Christology in the *LJ* is he satisfied with an exclusive Christology of internal harmony between human- and God-consciousness here in “The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity.” *In both texts, Strauß places the emphasis on history.* What distinguishes a ‘genius’ from others is the significance of the ‘problem that the genius solves; a ‘problem’ that had remained unsolved up to that point in history.³⁴ Yet here, he explicitly ‘pulls the Christ down’ from the throne of God (unlike the Hegelian ‘Double Negation’ and Schleiermacher’s Christ of ‘Perfect God-consciousness, which elevate the Christ out of history) and claims that he is ‘one among equals’³⁵ – if unsurpassable. Jesus has to step down ‘from the throne of the Son of God and the Redeemer’ and ‘take a seat on the bench of human geniuses.’³⁶ Strauß retains the sense of inclusivity in Christology, but it is no longer ‘universal’ but relative, among religious geniuses.

In this respect, it is no degradation to place Christ under a general concept, in which others besides him, each in his own way, have a share. Even in this extension it is still a most worthy concept, and yet the others are compared with Christ only in so far as they show the same concept more or less realized in themselves.³⁷

31. NOTE: Strauß here speaks of a ‘life-long’ enduring internal harmony in Jesus. Strange, given that at most (John) the gospels only speak of three years of Jesus’ life whereas the Synoptics only speak of a one year ministry (all other elements are unhistorical).

32. NOTE: Later in the *Glaubenslehre*, Strauß points out that the God/Man occurs ubiquitously in Indian religion/philosophy to the point that they raise the question, ‘why only one incarnation?’ *Glaubenslehre* II: 207–208.

33. Strauß, “Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:” 130–131.

34. See Strauß, “Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:” 105.

35. See “Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:” 102, 106, 109, 124–125.

36. See Strauß, “Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:” 104.

37. Strauß, “Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:” 106.

The concept of 'genius,' then, is not shared equally among geniuses. Particularly, there is a difference between the genius 'of skills' and the genius 'of internal harmony.'

[...] neither the statesman nor the general, neither the philosopher nor the poet, neither the painter nor the musician, neither the inventor of the plow nor of the printing press, [have] rendered so essential a service to mankind as those who have turned the gaze of people upward and taught them *to feel, to recognize, and to revere ever more deeply and ever more correctly the power, wisdom, and love which rules over all existence.*³⁸ (emphasis added)

The 'highest' genius, therefore, is not the practitioner of a particular technical skill but achieves the 'highest' that a human being can achieve.

One is a human being neither by his ear, which is open to harmony, nor by the eye, which is receptive to beauty, nor by the sociability which founds states, nor by the ability to produce and record poetic (107/108) forms, neither by agriculture nor by book printing. Rather, *one is a human being* by that of which all these different faculties are only as many emanations: *by reason.* By means of reason not insofar as it is trained to one-sided theoretical virtuosity [= Hegel's theoretical reason], as with the philosopher; but insofar as it [reason] is the drive and the faculty of the finite subject *to relate itself and everything given to a higher and highest, to make this relationship as intimate and lively as possible, and out of it to determine harmoniously all its feeling, thinking, and willing.*³⁹ (emphasis added)

However, Strauß recognizes that the Christ is not alone with this 'genius.' He especially names Socrates:

As an example of such natures [which an inwardly won harmony has worked on others] I mention Socrates. He was a philosopher, orator, warrior, statesman and he was also no stranger to poetic achievements. In each of these subjects he has certainly been surpassed by many others; in philosophy already by his disciple Plato: but this is not at all the basis of his value; *neither on his achievements in one of these subjects, nor on the versatility of having accomplished something in all of them: but that in which he is so unique, in which even Plato and Aristotle remained deeply below him, is this perfect balance of the inner life [... is the basis for his value].*⁴⁰

Yet, Strauß overlooks that Socrates' philosophical achievement was grounded in the profoundest of skepticism: In his defense at his trial (Plato's *Apology* 21d) for defaming the gods and corrupting the youth of Athens, Socrates both accounts for the animosity of his enemies and for his reputation as possessing 'wisdom' by demonstrating that 'we don't know what we think we know' (*Apology* 21d, 23b)

Examining his opponents (the politicians, poets, and artisans), Socrates demonstrates that we cannot define the very ideas on which our 'wisdom' depends. A defini-

38. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 107.

39. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 107–108.

40. "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 113.

tion requires establishing ‘identity and difference.’ that which is ‘identical’ to a set of phenomena as well as that which makes this set ‘different’ from all other sets. Socrates’ examination of his accusers demonstrates that it is next to impossible to establish such identity and difference because there is always the possibility of including under the idea something that is outside of the set, which, of course, is what makes language metaphorical, not literal. Strauß either has forgotten or he doesn’t know that Hegel’s critique of the ‘weakness’ of Kant’s ‘reason’ is its skepticism⁴¹ because Kant denied Absolute Knowledge and his ‘subjective’ philosophy was based on our inability to experience directly ‘things-in-themselves.’

To be sure, Socrates was not the founder of a religion, although one might quarrel with Strauß that, by his own definition of ‘religion,’ it is difficult to say why he wasn’t, except that he founded no ‘institution’ of religion. Here in "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity” Strauß says that:

[...] *reason is nothing other than religion, and the founder of religion is the one who helps humanity to develop reason,*⁴² i.e., religion is that without which the individual would not be human, and thus would know nothing of culture, state, art, and philosophy [...], [... and] insofar as Christianity is recognized as the most perfect religion, the founder of it is due the first fruits of that worship which we offer to the genius.⁴³ (emphasis added)

Furthermore, Strauß is proposing a different, universally *inclusive* Christology here than his Hegelian, inclusive Christology of the *LJ*. This *inclusive* Christology of "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity” helps *the individual* to ‘develop an intimate and lively, internal harmony out of all its feeling, thinking, and willing.’ Strauß appeals to the uniqueness of humanity’s moral agency and ‘aesthetics’ to articulate this Christology:

[...]the field of religion is not like, for instance, that of mechanics, [...] but, as in the field of morality and, to a certain extent, also of fine art, in such a way that ‘*no one can do anything for the other.*’⁴⁴ Rather, the second, third, tenth, who would achieve a pious consciousness in himself (of course, not only to the imagination, but to life in such a way that it penetrates his whole being), would have accomplished the same spiritual work as the first and would

41. See Hegel, "Glauben und Wissen:" GW II: 287–288, 303. He levels the same charge against Fichte. See *ibid.*: 427–428.

42. NOTE: Strauß is neither calling humanity to Schleiermacher’s ‘Perfect God-consciousness’ nor to Hegel’s ‘point of indifference’ where Absolute Spirit becomes aware of Itself. Rather, Strauß is claiming that religion is a call to ‘relate to oneself and to everything given to a higher and highest, to make this relationship as intimate and lively as possible, and out of it to determine harmoniously all its feeling, thinking, and willing’ in life.

43. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 108.

44. NOTE: This is not Kant’s notion that no one but the individual can self-select a moral principle to govern her/his actions. Much less does Strauß consider Kant’s notion that no one can think for another.

therefore not stand lower than the one who had succeeded in this at first.⁴⁵ (emphasis added)

However, the 'first' prototype has an extraordinary status:

[...The 'first' prototype] forms, as it were, *the point of passage through which an idea enters the world of phenomena*.⁴⁶ As such an idea, it tends to prove itself most powerfully; the greater extension which it later gains corresponds in that beginning to an intensity that is all the stronger. Especially that subordination, yes, that absorption of the whole personality in an idea, that this permeates all the veins of man, and moves and directs all his actions, we find most in such individuals in whom an idea first breaks through, as it were, from non-being into being.⁴⁷

Nonetheless, Strauß' Christology here is not Schleiermacher's *ultimate, eminent causality* of Perfect God-consciousness that establishes a new *ontological condition* to correct humanity's imperfect God-consciousness. It is also, obviously, not Hegel's Christology that, after death, finite consciousness is the 'point of indifference' by which Absolute Spirit becomes conscious of Itself In-and-For-Itself. Rather, Strauß' Christology is an 'idea,' yes, the idea of 'religious piety' in this life that is more the planting of a seed, which can 'develop in and throughout all humanity than the product of a 'empty' logic of negation that leads to Absolute Knowledge (awareness of the infinite in the finite) beyond history, but, reading with Cassirer, it is no less mythical. It is the 'idea' that an infinite and lively, internal harmony out of all feeling, thinking, and willing' with the 'highest' reality that one can experience, that is, with reason, *is present in, and capable of achievement by, all human consciousness* (relatively). As with his inclusive Christology in the *LJ*, the inclusive Christology of "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity" does not view the 'idea' as 'stingy' and limited to one exemplar, but 'it distributes its riches among a multiplicity of exemplars which reciprocally complete each other – in the alternate appearance and suppression of a series of individuals,'⁴⁸ although now the 'idea' is not the Idea of Absolute Spirit but an internal harmony within the individual in history.

The concluding line of Strauß' text claims that, as the first and unsurpassable founder of 'religion,' *the Christ is the 'essence of Christianity*: If Christ remains for us

45. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 129–130.

46. Here the focus is on the 'first' of an historical event in a very Platonic fashion of an idea as archetype that is copied for the first time in history. The 'idea' comes to history rather than history returning to the 'Idea'. The 'point' that is a historical first of an event is not the 'point of indifference' of Hegelianism that turns away from history.

Ernst Cassirer distinguishes between the 'cognitive perspective' of mythology and the 'perceptual perspective'. (See: 41, n. 20) Cassirer would have to say that Strauß, ironically, can be seen here as himself engaging in a mythical reading of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus is portrayed as an archetypal prototype viewed from the 'cognitive perspective' of myth.

47. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 130.

48. Strauß, *LJ*: 780.

[...] and if he remains for us as the highest thing that we know and are able to think of in religious terms, as the one *without whose presence in the mind no perfect piety is possible*, then *in him the essence of Christianity remains for us*.⁴⁹ (emphasis added)

This concluding sentence will come back to haunt Strauß as he read Feuerbach. By 1841, Strauß clearly *had* read Feuerbach's criticism of Hegel's anthropomorphic use of reason to define religion because he cites Feuerbach's *Philosophie und Christentum* (1839) and other writings of the "Introduction" of the *Glaubenslehre*.⁵⁰ It is not inconceivable that he had read Feuerbach's 1841 *Essence of Christianity* [*Wesen des Christentums*] in which Feuerbach specifically dismisses Christian theology for its apotheosis of 'reason.' Although Strauß holds onto a notion of 'reason' as central to 'religion' (but not for understanding Christology), he is able to do so only because he sees the 'new faith' that is at the core of Feuerbach's Nominalist notion of *ectypal* ideas. All of this becomes clear by the end of Strauß' career with his *The Old and the New Faith*.

Strauß made a valiant attempt in "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity" to establish the 'historical' significance of Jesus as the founder of Christianity, the religion. He explicitly says: "[...] *this Christ, insofar as he is inseparable from the highest design of religion, is a historical, not a mythical one, an individual, not a mere symbol*."⁵¹ (emphasis added) Here he views the 'mythic' nature of the gospels as entirely 'unhistorical' having given up on the Hegelian 'husk'/'kernel' or 'idea'/'representations,' epistemology, which had driven his project of the *LJ* to restore dogmatically by Hegelian philosophy what had been destroyed historically by criticism.⁵²

I propose that we follow Strauß' intellectual crisis as a 'metaphysical' search for an alternative to Hegelian Idealism that eventually led Strauß to Feuerbachian Empiricism/Materialism because he failed to adequately understand the option of Kantian Critical Idealism.

Nonetheless, the difference between an Idealist (in this case, Hegelian) and a Material Empiricist (in this case, Feuerbachian) is not as large as one might think. Although

49. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christentum." 132.

50. See the "Introduction" to Strauß, *Glaubenslehre*: 4 and n. 9.

51. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christentum." 131.

52. Had he grasped the breadth and depth of his own 'genetic mythical principle' in the *LJ*, though, Strauß could have discovered the 'hermeneutical key' that unites the gospels and the history of Church Doctrine, his next massive project. Rather than approaching the gospels or Church History as an issue of 'factual history,' he could have viewed both as the deposit of the multiple (!), theological narrative efforts of humanity to understand 'who' Jesus of Nazareth was and 'what' his significance for humanity was. In short, he could have viewed Christianity as a collection of portrayals of the meaning and theological significance of Jesus as the Christ. The virtue of such a hermeneutic investigation would have been to more easily see that what is decisive in a narrative is *not only* its assumptions, which consist of pre-figured narrative elements already in one's tradition, with which it begins to construct the new narrative, *but also* the dependence of all narrative constructions on what Kant identifies as the universal capacities of transcendental consciousness, which make possible the generating of narratives in the first place. In short, he could have grasped the significance of 'religion' for what it means to be human.

the 'object' of their convictions is 180° opposite, they share the same metaphysical conviction over what constitutes 'knowledge.' For the Idealist, knowledge consists in the agreement between an 'idea' and the 'object' that is appropriate to the 'idea' as the *objective cause* of the object. For the Empiricist, knowledge consists in the agreement between an 'object' and the 'idea' that is appropriate to the 'object,' which grounds the *subjective cause* (creation) of the idea. In other words, the required condition for 'knowledge' is the same for both: the knower must be able to experience 'ideas' and 'objects' in *causal* relation to one another. The difference between the Idealist and the Empiricist is which side of the equation carries the *causal* weight of 'truth:' the idea or objects? To be sure, this is no trivial difference, but both ignore the limits to finite, transcendental consciousness.

The thinker who acknowledges as 'true' only 'universal' and 'eternal' ideas with no connection to the empirical world is a fantasizer. Today, such a person, at least indirectly, encourages conspiracy theories. However, the thinker who has only 'objects' and takes ideas to be entirely relative is a reductionist materialist. Today, we could say s/he succumbs to scientism. At their extremes, both the Idealist and the Empiricist are caught in determinism.

With respect to the Idealist's determinism: On the one hand, if everything is the product of 'universal' and 'eternal' ideas (e.g., Platonism and Hegelianism), then the empirical world of concrete events has no contribution to make to 'knowledge.' Physical events are only the 'husk' for their 'truth,' which is their 'idea.' In the language of Platonism: the world is 'mere copy and shadow,' and the copies and shadows themselves are a 'prison' or 'tomb' of the soul⁵³ with no enduring meaning. On the other hand, *divine determinism* or Predestination is the logical conclusion drawn for those who think through the consequences of a Personal Deity as the ultimate origin of 'eternal' ideas – in Christianity expressed most consistently by Augustine of Hippo and Calvin of Geneva as 'double' predestination either to salvation or to damnation.

With respect to the Empiricist's determinism: On the one hand, if everything is the product of 'particular' matter combining and separating into a statistically infinite system with 'ideas' only the transient, abstract grasp of the impermanent order in the present, then the intelligible world of ideas has no contribution to make to 'knowledge.' Ideas are only 'abstractions' generated by nature out of nature because consciousness itself is a product of 'mere' nature. On the other hand, *material determinism* is the logical conclusion drawn by those who think through the consequences of 'reductionist materialism' as the generator of even ideas.

Furthermore, there is a fly in the ointment of both Idealism and Empiricism. Idealism is the product of an analogy that is grounded in finite conscious experience projected anthropomorphically onto an infinite consciousness. In other words, Idealism takes the human mind to provide the 'ultimate' explanation of all that is. In contrast, Empiricism takes ideas to be the product of conscious abstraction 'after' it

53. See Plato's *Cratylus* 400b-c and *Gorgias* 493a.

has experienced empirical phenomena. Whereas Idealism presupposes ‘consciousness’ as the key to knowledge and truth, Empiricism presupposes the inexplicable presence of an order in matter, which consciousness is capable of ‘abstracting’ out of the phenomena. Consequently, abstractions don’t create ideas, they merely describe the order of ideas that is already in the phenomena of perception.

Whereas Idealism and Empiricism define themselves as alternative ‘explanations’ of knowledge, they share the assumption of ‘consciousness.’ For Idealism, consciousness is either taken to mean the subjectivity of an individual’s mind, or it refers to a ‘logic’ of ideas, for example, Hegel’s notion of Double Negation, that governs all events. For Empiricism, consciousness is a capacity that is capable of abstracting, that is, creating, ‘ideas’ out of its experience of particulars. To the extent that this shared assumption of consciousness involves the metaphysical assumption that there is some objective ‘substance,’ mind, that is different from the objective ‘substance’ (matter), Idealism and Empiricism would be forms of dualism that leave us only with mud-slinging over which ‘substance’ is dominant – as if we somehow had access to one or the other (or both) substances in order to ground our explanations in one or the other. To the extent that the shared assumption of consciousness is not an objective ‘substance, then we are also left only with a dictum (*Machtspruch*) to decide between them.⁵⁴

There is nothing about the mere ‘appearance’ in consciousness of ideas that *requires* the conviction that there are ideas that exist independent of consciousness. There is nothing about the mere ‘appearance’ of objects that *requires* the conviction that the objects that we experience are as we experience them to be. Because both ideas and objects are mental or physical ‘appearances’ and because we experience neither directly but only indirectly as a consequence of our experience of them as appearances, neither set of appearances of ideas or objects requires that we experience them as they

54. The middle option is Critical Idealism. Rather than a ‘substance,’ consciousness is understood by Critical Idealism to be a transcendental capacity to grasp concepts as ‘relationalities.’ On the “functional” nature of concepts that are deduced by ‘association’ (*Vergesellschaftung*), which are necessary to understand objects (not direct perception of substances), see the “Introduction:” 86, n. 26 as well as Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 66–67 (*Verhältnisse in der Anschauung*) and B 93 (all sensible perception is effects, whereas concepts are functions). See as well, *Metaphysik Mrongovius* XXIX: 889 (A concept arises as a consequence of the experience of appearances because “I imagine the identity of my apperception in many representations.”). See as well, Ernst Cassirer, *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1910) The paradox of appearances is that, although we are incapable of experiencing, hence, we are incapable of knowing, their ‘causes’ or ‘substances’ directly, appearances confirm that there is a sub-set of appearances *that is required* in order for there to be an experience of (and understanding of) appearances, in general. This sub-set is transcendental consciousness, which is irreducible but inseparable from its ‘content:’ capacities and appearances. Although this appears to be a vicious circle of appearances accounting for appearances, there is an element in this paradox that checkmates the viciousness of the circle. That element is flagged by the italicized *that is required*.

‘really are.’ *We ‘can have an incorrect idea’ and/or we can be ‘deceived by’ the physical appearances.*⁵⁵

In other words, the required (or necessary, but by no means *determining*) conditions of possibility of experience are incapable of being objectively ‘known.’ Rather, they are an assumption of subjective requirements in order for us to experience anything like appearances – *although they are not a creation of the subject itself.* Precisely because they are only capable of indirect experience as the conditions for experience of appearances, they are incapable of objective proof in experience – because these conditions don’t and can’t appear in appearances, which alone constitute the direct content of experience.⁵⁶

Absent an understanding of the paradox of appearances as inexplicable in themselves but as *requiring transcendental conditions of possibility for the experience of appearances that can neither be proved nor disproved in appearances*, humanity is merely a drunken sailor staggering from one side of the street to the other – from Mental Idealism to Material Empiricism. Given that finite consciousness can directly *experience* only appearances, for finite consciousness, any claims for ‘knowledge’ of either Intelligible ideas or Empirical objects in themselves involves a *speculative* (even *enthusiastic*) leap of ‘faith’ because neither of these metaphysical options is capable of proof or disproof. Both treat as an ‘explanation’ something that is a ‘description,’ which is the committing of the classic error of a *μετάβασις εις ἄλλο γένος*.

55. In contrast to mental and physical ‘appearances,’ Critical Idealism stresses that what we undoubtedly experience are appearances, out of which all experience arises and to which all accountable reflection returns. In order for us to experience appearances, there are *certain, required* to possess universal, mental capacities in order for us to experience appearances. These mental capacities are not *directly* experienced as appearances, but, rather, they are *indirectly* experienced as the *required conditions of possibility for any and all experience of appearances* (mental or physical).

Whereas this account of Idealist and Empirical epistemology is framed by the ‘correspondence theory’ of truth that views truth as the interface between ‘actual’ ideas and ‘actual’ phenomena, Kant’s account of the conditions of possibility of experience *anticipated* the Heideggerian theme of truth as *a dynamic of concealed and revealed possibilities*, which are not merely nothing. See already in 1755 Kant’s “A New Exposition of the First Principles of Metaphysical Knowledge” AA I: 395–396, English trans in *Kant’s Latin Writings. Translations, Commentaries, and Notes*, Lewis White Beck ed., John a. Reuscher translator (New York: Peter Lang, 1986) 70–72: and in his *Metaphysik Mrongovius* AA XXIX: 960 ff. Heinz Happ points out that Heidegger’s theme of *Sein as Möglichkeit* is at the core of Aristotle’s understanding of ‘matter’ (ύλη). See Happ, *Hyle. Studien zum Aristotelischen Materie Begriff* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971): 287 “[...] ύλη ist das, der Möglichkeit nach’ (δυναμίει), was das τόδε τι ‘der Wirklichkeit nach’ (ἐνεργεία) ist.” (287). Later Happ adds: 687: “Alle Einzelfälle von ἐνεργεία gründen im *Actus purus*, von δύναμις in der ‘reinen Möglichkeit; die als ‘Urgegensatz’ Dynamis/Energeia einander gegenüberstehen.”

56. The paradox is that appearances provide *required* conditions of possibility for them to be experienced, but those *required* conditions are neither merely ‘ideas’ (Idealism) nor merely ‘matter’ (‘Empiricism’), which would require access to ideas and objects as they are in themselves and distinct from one another. Rather, these *required* conditions of possibility are ‘metaphysical’ in the strict sense of ‘beyond-the-physical’ *as required condition* for experiencing and understanding, but NOT the content of, or explanation of, either ideas or objects.

1839 "Schleiermacher und Daub"

In 1839, Strauß no longer is interested in reconciliation with his opponents. The fourth edition of the *LJ* returns to the original. The first text, "Schleiermacher und Daub, in ihrer Bedeutung für die Theologie unserer Zeit" ("Schleiermacher and Daub. Their Significance for the Theology of our Age") in the volume *Characteristics and Criticisms. A Collection of Various Essays out of Theology, Anthropology, and Aesthetics* (*Charakteristiken und Kritiken. Eine Sammlung zerstreuter Aufsätze aus den Gebieten der Theologie, Anthropologie und Aesthetik*), is an unequivocal break with the Schleiermachians. It also confirms the break with the Hegelians, represented by Carl Daub, the Right-Wing Hegelian who was Ludwig Feuerbach's professor in Heidelberg.

In "Schleiermacher und Daub" Strauß attacks, especially, along with a long list of other themes in him,⁵⁷ Schleiermacher's notion of 'Perfect God-consciousness' as the 'feeling of absolute dependence.' Furthermore, he ridicules Daub's attempt to use the Hegelian distinction between 'content' (the Idea) and 'representations' (sensible forms) to portray the God/Man as the point of indifference that negates multiplicity and 'returns' to Absolute Spirit as the true 'kernel' of the gospel accounts with the gospels themselves as individual texts being mere 'husks' of eternal truth.

What made Hegelianism 'modern' was Spinoza's attempt to give a metaphysical account of a non-Personal God. As F.C. Baur pointed out, Hegel's novelty was that he combined Spinozian Pantheism with a 'horizontal' conception of Gnostic salvation,⁵⁸ which I map onto a horizontal reading of a reclined version of Plato's simile of the line.⁵⁹

Hegel's 'science' was framed by the Medieval Scholastic, 'Intellectualist' tradition in an all-out rejection of the Medieval Scholastic, 'Occasionalist'/'Voluntarist' tradition. In short, Hegelian 'science' means 'Rationalism' in the sense of a teleological project of an Intellectualist logic of dialectic, and it is an example of Medieval Scholasticism.

To be sure, Hegel was not a 'Rationalist' in the sense of 18th and 19th C biblical critics such as the 19th C. H. E. G. Paulus, whom Strauß ridiculed in the *LJ*, and, to a great extent, as Schleiermacher. The 'Rationalists' sought to protect the 'truth' of the gospels by insisting that physical events are governed by an eternal, lawful order and must be adhered to even by its 'creator' – the Personal God of Platonic-Christian 'Intellectualism.' Hegel's 'Rationalism' was equally 'Intellectualist,' but, following Spinoza,

57. In Chapter 4: Why Schleiermacher was not an Option," see "A Fragile Edifice Built on the Sand of Feeling:" 267 ff.

58. See F.C. Baur, "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie" in *Gnosis*: 668–740.

59. Plato's account of the Simile of the Sun (*Republic* 507b -509c) and Simile of the Line (*Republic* 509c-511e) define Christian Platonism. The Simile of the Line was taken to be a 'stick figure' of a standing human being. On reading Hegel's account of reason, understanding, and Double Negation as a reclining version of Plato's two similes, see Chapter 8: "Hegel's Reclined Plato and Kant as a 'Subjectivist'" 811 ff. and Chapter 9: "Hegel on Beauty:" 868 ff.

he rejected the notion of a Personal, creator God. *Hegel's God created according to the 'necessity' of (empty) dialectical logic.*

The 18th and 19th C Rationalists were biblical critics. They were concerned to establish that those biblical texts, which appear to contradict the physical laws of 'modern' science, were actually in conformity with physical laws – only that they were mis-perceived and/or mis-understood in an age that had no conception of physical laws. However, as Strauß pointed out in his "Hegel's Perspective on the Historical Value of Gospel History" ("Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte") in Pamphlet III of his *Streitschriften* of 1837, Hegel was not a 'biblical critic' if by 'criticism' one means that one is concerned with the historical status of the 'entire account of Jesus as it is portrayed in the gospels.'⁶⁰

For Hegel, God does not appear as an agent communicating in sensible forms like the 'burning bush.'⁶¹ Furthermore, Hegel rejected attempts at historical proof of the miracles because 'God's power in nature is manifest by eternal laws, which means that the 'true miracle' is Spirit Itself,⁶² not some particular historical event. The sole purpose of history is to create the physical conditions that allow for the God/Man Jesus, who "awakened a representation of a new heaven and earth as the manifestation of God's love."⁶³ God's love works its way through all events in empirical history in order to establish the conditions for 'reconciliation with God' (the restored atonement as the 'at-One-ment') that occurs by the Oneness that is Absolute Spirit's becoming aware of Itself 'In-and-For-Itself.'⁶⁴ Hegel did not need 'sensible facts' to establish spiritual certainty. The sensible world is only the 'husk' for the spiritual truth of the God/Man that is the 'true' 'kernel' of history. In other words, the relationship between the divine and the sensible realm is 'negative.'⁶⁵ The physical universe is the product of Spirit's negation of Itself in the sense of negating the Spirit's 'merely abstract' 'In-Itself.' The 'return' to Spirit requires the negation (nullification) of physical phenomena at the 'point of indifference.'

According to Hegel, then, the sensible realm was not created by means of the two-step process of a Personal Deity for whom creation is a conscious, intentional act. God did not, first, 'think' the archetype (λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, internal reflection) followed, second, by 'speaking' God's thoughts (λόγος προφορικὸς, external technical agency) by copying the archetype in matter as in 'classical' Neo-Platonic Christianity. Rather, creation is caused by a 'necessary,' dialectical logic.⁶⁶ Awareness requires 'twoness' (a

60. Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 90.

61. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 77–78.

62. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 91.

63. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 83.

64. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 85.

65. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 89–90.

66. On Kant's rejection of dialectic for grounding the ultimate, causal ground of 'what is,' see *Critique of Pure Reason* B 697 and Chapter 6: 670.

‘this’ and a ‘that’). By definition, an Absolute Oneness contains no ‘twoness.’ Starting from an Absolute Oneness, a ‘this’ and a ‘that’ can only be the product of the dialectical ‘negation’ of It’s own Oneness by Absolute Spirit in order to establish by the First Negation the initial ‘two-ness’ required by the logic of dialectic in order to achieve ever new syntheses that ever so slowly and cumulatively results by the on-going process of negating ‘what is’ to generate ‘newness.’ This logical process of negation eventually creates the physical conditions for the emergence of consciousness. In its ‘highest’ form, consciousness has the capacity to perform the ultimate, Second Negation. It is this Second Negation that negates all multiplicity to think the original Absolute Oneness, the Absolute Knowledge, and the Absolute Freedom above all negation that is Absolute Spirit. This Second Negation is the God/Man who, negatively, overcomes ‘sin’ (sensuousness) by negating it by, positively, divinizing consciousness.

The ‘proof’ of Christianity is ‘an internal witness of finite Spirit’ to its ultimate, *a priori* Infinite Spirit, which is the ‘task of philosophy to elevate Christian truth in Spirit,’⁶⁷ above all history. The ‘fact’ that historical nature and consciousness exist ‘proves,’ logically, that Absolute Spirit negated Itself to generate them because nature and consciousness could not have come about if the ultimate starting point of Oneness did not negate Itself. In other words, the ‘proof’ of the Christian faith cannot be established by anything particular and finite, which includes both physical nature and the scriptures – all of which is a product of ultimate causality. Its proof is the ‘fact’ of Spirit necessarily presupposed by all particulars and finitude.

Specifically, for Hegel, because the attempt to establish facts in an ‘historical, juridical sense’ is subject to endless qualifications and doubt,⁶⁸ the question of determining the truth of such ‘facts’ as the resurrection and ascension was meaningless.⁶⁹ Faith in Jesus as ‘the God/Man’ occurs only after the death of Jesus, that is ‘only after the cessation of his [historical] physical presence,’⁷⁰ and occurs as the recognition that ‘the God/Man’ status transpires ‘beyond history’ (as Karl Barth⁷¹ and Wolfhart Pannenberg⁷² continued to claim in the 20th C).

According to Hegel, the cosmos is ordered by ‘Reason,’ but not as the ‘thoughts’ of a Personal God. Rather, ‘Reason’ is the eternal structure of ‘ideas’ and its necessary logic of dialectic that imperceptibly and silently shape all events and the attainment of all knowledge. *Just as what natural sciences ‘knows’ are the ‘eternal’ laws of nature*

67. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 89.

68. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 89, 94.

69. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 91–92.

70. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte:" 80–81 (see as well, 83 84 86 92, 93.

71. See Karl Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, Douglas Horton, trans. (New York: Harper & Row, 1957): 90.

72. See Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe trans. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974).

(generated, in actual experience, by dialectic), which are 'beyond' empirical facts and not directly given with them, knows' so, too, in the scriptures. True knowledge of the gospels is not concerned with the 'historical facts' of the gospels but consists of the 'truth' of the 'idea' of the God/Man (Absolute Knowledge of the Absolute Spirit) beyond transient history. 'Nature' and 'historical facts' are only logically necessary in order that 'knowledge' not be 'merely empty' abstractions. However, neither nature nor historical facts contribute anything to the 'true content' of knowledge.

Strauß' "Schleiermacher und Daub" from 1839 indicates even further distancing from Hegel with Strauß embracing the ectypal, rather than archetypal, character of ideas. I have discussed the Schleiermacher elements of this text in Chapter 4: "Why Schleiermacher was not an Option." Here, I examine Carl Daub, the Right-wing Hegelian theologian in Heidelberg. Forgotten today, Carl Daub, theologian and university rector in Heidelberg, was a prominent Right-Wing Hegelian theologian in the first half of the 19th C. During his first term as rector in 1816 and along with the theologian, Henrich Paulus, he obtained Hegel's appointment to the faculty of the University of Heidelberg in 1816 where Hegel taught for two years before going to Berlin.⁷³ Ludwig Feuerbach's acquired his understanding of Hegel from Daub, his professor in Heidelberg.

In the course of presenting the work of Schleiermacher and Daub, *Strauß emphasizes that Daub's Hegelianism is 'correct'* in that it places 'reason' above feeling – although not separated from feeling! Speaking of Schleiermacher, according to Strauß:

[According to Schleiermacher], [r]eligion is mediated [...] by thinking; but, therefore, its own essence⁷⁴ is not thinking but feeling. Thinking expands the conception of the world in various stages; feeling joins thinking, and recognizes the more completely or more incompletely imagined world as a purely dependent one; thinking, in turn, reflects on this feeling, and from this reflection forms the conception of a fetish, of a circle of gods, or of the unified God: but the religious thing here [in Schleiermacher] would always be neither the preceding nor the following thinking, but only the feeling that lies in the middle. Namely, although pious feeling, on the one hand, owes to thinking both its greater or lesser purity and extension and, on the other hand, its representation of God in general, it should nevertheless have to thank its specifically religious moment to feeling as such, according to which it *sets the entire content of sensual consciousness at every level as being solely dependent on feeling*. This is also expressed by Schleiermacher as follows, 'God is given to us in feeling in an original way' (*Glaubensl.* 1. p. 23 [see the final paragraph in § 4

73. See *Hegel-Lexikon*, Cobben, P.G., Cruysberghs, P, Jonkers, P.H.A., & de Vos, L, eds. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlichen Buchgesellschaft, 1006): 10.

74. NOTE: Schleiermacher speaks of feeling as the 'essence' of religion. An 'essence' is an imperceptible 'idea' shared in common by a set of particulars. As the translator of Plato, Schleiermacher surely knows that. In Christian Platonism, essences are the eternal thoughts (Reason) of God that are the ground for any and all reflection. Clearly, though, here Schleiermacher is taking 'reason' to mean merely *the activity of reflection, not the eternal order of ideas/essences (Logos)* required for any and all activity of reflection to occur. Abstract reflection is *always accompanied by a feeling*. However, feeling is an *a posteriori* affect, not the *a priori* condition of reflection.

of Schleiermacher's *Glaubensl.*]); besides this, however, it is not denied that thinking can contribute in an original manner the formation of the idea of God. *The only qualification is that both original feeling and equally original knowledge of God should remain each for itself; none should have anything to do with the other, and especially the former should not be derived from the latter.* [Strauß now turns to Daub's criticism of Schleiermacher's emphasis on feeling:] This separation of the various spiritual spheres is no more natural[, though,] than if it occurred to a naturalist to say that ice is something in itself, water something in itself, and steam something in itself, that none comes from the other, but has its own principle in itself; because they are all only different metamorphoses of one and the same substance, just as thinking, feeling, and willing are different phases of the one spiritual life. That man is capable of becoming aware of God, he owes to his spiritual, intelligent nature, as is evident from the fact (*to which Hegel rightly draws attention again and again*) that animals lack the ability of such awareness; man raises the indeterminate possibility of awareness of God to reality, and forms it into a definite, more or less perfect, conception through thinking; he takes this conception back from himself, makes it the living definiteness of his being, through feeling. – Thus, [the Hegelian] Daub is correct here, in contrast to Schleiermacher, when he understands piety as feeling and acting accordingly, but religion as faith and cognition, thus as thinking.⁷⁵ (emphasis added)

Strauß unequivocally expresses his own commitment here to thought (cognition) above feeling. However, he indicates his distance from Hegelian 'reason' just eight pages later when he contrasts two ways by which thought (philosophy) engages church faith and dogmatics:

Philosophical thought becomes theologically dogmatic thought, in that at every turn it is both reflection on ecclesiastical faith and biblical content; whereby a double course can be taken: [1]) either one can descend from the concept to the dogma, to prove immediately what is speculatively recognized [to be true] to also be the teaching of the Bible and the consciousness of the church; or [2]) or one can ascend from the given positive, the individual article of faith, to the philosophical concept, to derive the philosophical concept out of this positive element through the dialectic of the dogmatic material. I consider the latter method to be the correct one.⁷⁶

Here Strauß rejects the speculative metaphysics of Hegelianism, which takes the idea to be the explanation of the particular phenomena to which it belongs and claims the idea as archetype. Strauß now is claiming that ideas (abstractions) are *a posteriori* ectypal constructions that first arise out of the experience of particulars. Although he doesn't specifically cite Feuerbach at this point in "Schleiermacher und Strauß," his "Introduction" to his *Glaubenslehre* indicates that he was engaging Feuerbach (see Strauß' *Glaubenslehre*: 4, footnote 9).

Strauß repeats his commitment to ectypal ideas in his concluding criticisms of Schleiermacher and Daub. Schleiermacher succumbs to feeling whereas Daub embraces uncritical historicism of the scriptures:

75. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub.:" 155–156.

76. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub.:" 172–173.

One finds in both Schleiermacher and Daub the 'scientific principle of their age,' the Absolute Concept, but diametrically in a one-sided fashion. Both know that substance is subject. However, one in the lopsidedness of substance, the other in the lopsidedness of subjectivity. The unity of divinity with humanity was achieved by Schleiermacher only in the subjective form of feeling and reflection concerning this subjective form. Daub claimed that one has not attained a complete unity of divinity with humanity when the believer has not selflessly sunk into the substance of Church faith. If Daub's thinking is submerged in the substance of belief, Schleiermacher's substance is absorbed in the feeling of the subject. Schleiermacher, as a dogmatist, does not seek the idea at all, because he is assured of its absolute content in inner experience. Daub has found the Idea, but in and with it he also believes to have assured himself of the experiential truth of sacred history. *Both lack the true mediation of dogma with the concept, of the historical with the ideal.*⁷⁷ (emphasis added)

The mediation of the historical with the ideal takes ideas to be generated 'bottom-up' out of history and the material order rather than ideas constituting a 'top-down' Idealist explanation of history and the material order. Strauß avoids 'empty abstractions' by grounding the possibility of ideas in the experience of the historical, material world. History is the domain of truth so that, if the historical account is false, so too, the dogmatic convictions that claim their 'anchoring' in such perceptible representations is both false and 'empty.'

It is possible that Strauß already in 1839 anticipates his conclusion in 1872 or at least is on the way to thinking of the origin of ideas/laws as arising as a 'lubricant of solace' in the midst of the mechanical cogwheels of nature from out of an internal source ('*Quelle*')⁷⁸ that is nature reflectively 'turned inward on itself.'⁷⁹ Yet, Strauß is either unaware or chooses not to acknowledge, that this is precisely the account of ideas that is proposed by Kant. Contrary to Hegel, who in "Glauben und Wissen" asserts that Kant's notion of 'reflecting judgment' claims to be a *causal explanation* of the origin of the judgment's *content*.⁸⁰ Kant, however, is only presenting a *description* of how finite consciousness goes about 'making sense' of a set of phenomena that it doesn't yet understand by means of a deductive search for the concept, which it employs to classify phenomena.⁸¹ Hegel, in contrast, is an Absolute Idealist who takes ideas to be 'top down,' *a priori*, and derived from Absolute Spirit/Absolute Unity. Strauß/Feuerbach take ideas to be 'bottom up,' *a posteriori* constructions of finite consciousness.

However, there remains a crucial difference between Strauß/Feuerbach and Kant. The former two take their *a posteriori*, causal account of ideas to *explain their origin* as 'bottom up' creation by abstraction whereas Kant maintains that reflecting judgment,

77. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 208.

78. See Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 365.

79. See Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 240, 366.

80. See Hegel, "Glauben und Wissen:" GW II: 322–323.

81. On Kant's distinction between the capacities of *reflecting* and *re-producing* judgment, see the "Introduction:" 86, n. 26.

or the process of subsuming a set of appearances under a (universal) concept, is a *heuristic process* by which transcendental consciousness *deduces, presupposes, and applies* an *a priori* concept to a set of phenomena in order to understand the phenomena. In other words, *Kant doesn't offer an ectypal, causal explanation of concepts. He only describes* what is required in order for transcendental consciousness to 'make sense' of phenomena. *Strauß and Feuerbach succumb to a μετάβασις εις ἄλλο γένος because they substitute an explanation of the origin of concepts for what can only be a description of how concepts are deduced and applied by transcendental consciousness.*

History: Constitutive or Merely a Place Holder of 'Indifference'?

When it comes to Hegel, the central issue for Strauß is history: What significance do the particulars of historical events possess in relationship to 'eternal' truth? In his *Glaubenslehre* of 1841, Strauß identifies Daub as the point where Hegelian, speculative theology not only denounces biblical criticism, but also Daub enables the recognition that history for Hegelian speculative metaphysics is, ultimately, a matter of irrelevant indifference.⁸² In the face of the limits to speculative arguments for God, Daub embraces an uncritical, 'historical' reading of the text to ground theological claims.

Daub's exegetical strategy is framed by the Hegelian distinction between 'true' content (*Inhalt*) and the vehicle of representations (*Form/Vorstellungen*). The 'truth' of the text shines through the scriptural narratives but is not literally identical with the narratives. Nonetheless, the task of exegesis is not to 'critically' sort out what were the 'true' historical events of Jesus' ministry and/or the legitimacy/illegitimacy of factual truth in the gospel narratives as accounts of 'historical' events in relationship to Church Doctrine. Rather, the task of exegesis is to embrace the 'revealed truth' of the God/Man mediated by consciousness and 'shining through' the scriptures.

Strauß writes of Carl Daub: "[...] because only Absolute Knowledge is true in the full sense, man seems to be denied knowledge of absolute truth. However, if not absolutely true Spirit itself, man nevertheless recognizes it by virtue of its eternal revelation in the human spirit; thus, the theological element of human knowledge is a given."⁸³ Strauß then cites to Daub's "Über das theologische Element in der Wissenschaft" where Daub clearly invokes Plato's heliotrope of the Simile of the Sun in the *Republic*, Book VI:

82. Hegel, as well, speaks of 'indifference' in two senses: 1) non-difference as a metaphor for the Absolute One ("Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" GW II: 456, 501) and 2) irrelevancy (*affektloser Traum*) (*ibid*: 496–497, 499–500). Of course, Hegel doesn't acknowledge the irrelevancy of the particulars of history because they are 'logically' relevant as the actual place holder of ideas so that ideas are not 'empty'.

83. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 101.

As light is to the earth and to life, as religion is to the state and its members, so is the theological element to the sciences: as the principle of their origin, reason of their preservation, and impulse of their growth and completion. From this theological element humanity derives a knowledge in which truth and certainty, consequently all knowledge, are founded. We call it an element because in it every science has its existence, and it itself rules in it and all its parts, like the soul in its body and its members, and affirms them" ("Über das theologische Element:" 3). Ascribing this cognition to itself and exploring in it, reason does not exalt itself so that it falls into the Kantian accusation of transcending its limits because 'man's knowledge of God is not his, but God's, as God's wise revelation in finite spirit' ("Über das theologische Element:" 8).⁸⁴

Writing of the miracles in the gospels and historical claims for Jesus' moral 'purity' however, Strauß observes of Daub: "We see already [... with] Daub that, where the issue is the realization of the idea of the God/Man in the historical person of Jesus, he returns to historical-critical grounds, above which he had proudly wanted to elevate himself."⁸⁵ Daub's dogmatic claims for Jesus as the God/Man allow him to conclude

[...] that Jesus of Nazareth was the God/Man is neither certain from the miracles that the evangelists tell about him, nor from the moral purity that [... is attributed] to him. On the contrary, because the idea of God necessarily continues to be that of the God/Man, we attribute these attributes to Christ.⁸⁶

Strauß immediately asks:

But why him of all people? – Daub asks in return: Who else? From his life and teachings, his deeds and sufferings, there shines forth a glory of the Son from the Father; we see this glory as his contemporaries saw it.⁸⁷ We see it; from the evangelical narratives: in this way alone is the God/Manhood of the historical Christ to be proven; or, if not in this way, then it cannot be proven at all.⁸⁸

Although knowledge of God comes from revelation, nonetheless, the texts prove the God/Man status of the historical Christ. Daub places the truth beyond history but insists that the text provides the proof of the truth beyond history.

However, increasingly for Strauß, already in the *LJ* but also with growing emphasis in his writings of the 1830s, theology hangs on the value of 'historical criticism' by which Strauß means the objective analysis and conclusions of empirical investigation of the scriptures – not on God's revelation of Himself to Himself.

84. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 101. In this judgment that Kant has elevated humanity to the throne of God, Daub articulates Barth's accusation in *Die protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert. Ihre Vorgeschichte und ihre Geschichte* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1981): 40, 53–56, 85 100 ff.

85. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 211.

86. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 211. An amazing hermeneutical circle, I would add.

87. Strauß footnotes to Daub's *Judas Iscariot*, II: 310 and his own "Schleiermacher and Daub:" 119 ff.

88. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 211–212.

As I pointed out above, already in his articles from *Die Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik* in his *Streitschriften*, Strauß demonstrates that Hegel himself was not interested in historical conclusions. Hegel's very Christology is exposed as an event that occurs 'beyond history.'⁸⁹ Strauß addresses the theme as formulated in Daub's *Judas Ischariot* published between 1816 and 1818.⁹⁰ In what just could be a reference to Kant's 'dove' dreaming of flying in a vacuum in the "Second Introduction" to the *Critique of Pure Reason* (B 7) Strauß writes in "Schleiermacher und Daub.":

[...] a displeasure with criticism [was] unequivocal, but [for Daub] it came to open renunciation of criticism only in *Judas Ischariot*. Riding on the wings of the idea, speculative theology thought it did not need the laborious cleansing of the earthly path from its impulses. Because they disappeared from its bird's-eye view, it thought they had really been cleared away. In the end, however, those will have come farther, who, paving the way stretch after stretch, moved forward only at a snail's pace, than those who flew in a race with the eagles and cranes – in dreams.⁹¹

If this is a hint of influence from Kant, it is the only indicator that Strauß saw any value in Kant's Critical Idealism – other than a weak form of Kant's moral theory viewed through the lens of Hegel's "The Moral World View," not Kant himself. With his focus on the significance (for Strauß himself) or lack of significance of history (for Hegel and Daub), Strauß was never interested in undertaking a defense of Kantian 'metaphysics' in this text on Daub or elsewhere.

Given the absence of Hegelian metaphysics already in "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity" of 1838, Strauß' *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* of 1864 attempts to appropriate Kant in the latter. Daub's readings of Hegel and Kant as summarized by Strauß in "Schleiermacher und Daub" in 1839 are crucially important for following the trajectory of Strauß' metaphysics from Hegel to Feuerbach.

Daub's 'Argument for God:'

Strauß' wrestling with his personal theological perspective is no more clear than in his comments on Daub's treatment of the arguments for God in "Schleiermacher und Daub." As I point out above, already in "On the Transient and Permanent in Christianity," Strauß no longer employs Hegel's logic of Double Negation in order to talk about God as he had in his "Concluding Dissertation" of the *LJ*. Rather, *he 'reduced' Hegel's metaphysics to its 'Intellectualist' core for which 'reason' is the imperceptible order that governs nature and humanity – in line with traditional, Christian Platonism.*

89. See Strauß, "Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte" in *Streitschriften* III: 80–84, 86, 92–94. See Chapter 5, "Traces of an Intellectual Crisis:" 579, n. 70.

90. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 103 ff.

91. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 120–121.

In his discussion of Daub's *Theologumena* in "Schleiermacher und Daub," Strauß praises the thoroughness of Daub's 'comprehensive' examination of the proofs for God (although he emphasizes that Daub's analysis is 'even more strenuous' in a posthumously published lecture). Daub includes Kant's criticisms of the cosmological, ontological, teleological, and moral arguments for God. However, 'even for Daub' the conclusion is "[...] that the proofs are neither sufficient individually nor all together, but rather already presuppose the idea of God in the human mind."⁹² Strauß then adds: Daub maintains in the *Theologumena* that God is 'absolutely' knowable.⁹³ Strauß points back to Daub's earlier employment of Double Negation for turning 'doubt' into 'absolute certainty.' "*Because the dogma was first negated by your doubt, but now the doubt itself is doubted, through this second negation what was first negated, the dogma, is restored, just as it was and had been before the first doubt.*"⁹⁴ (emphasis added) According to Daub,

[...] the Bible and Church ought not to have any authority over us anymore [...]. [T]ruth itself ought to be your authority. However, the scriptures contain the truth. The negation consists in being free from the church but true to the church. It is not because it is stated in the biblical text or the confession that it is true [... Rather], *it is true because it is true.*⁹⁵ (emphasis added)

Strauß points out, though, that it is precisely the last claim that we doubt. Daub responds: "[...] [Y]our initial doubt is one-sided and incomplete. Let your doubt become absolute doubt: then you doubt your own insight, and faith is quickly restored."⁹⁶

Strauß corrects Daub's logic: *Truly absolute doubt can no more forget that it is the doubt of a finite consciousness than it can forget that dogma is a finite form. Rather, doubting the finitude on both the objective and the subjective side, the doubter strives to escape the finitude of both sides.*⁹⁷

Rather than having constructed his dogmatic certainty on the basis of metaphysical arguments for God and a logic of doubting, double negation, both of which only refer to certainty with respect to predicate claims for finite consciousness either as anthropomorphic projections or as Cartesian doubt, Daub insists on the divine revelation of the scriptures to establish historical certainty.

Given his acknowledgement that finite spirit is not itself Absolute Spirit, that Absolute Knowledge is dependent upon revelation, and that metaphysical arguments for God are inadequate with theological 'certainty' based upon a logic of negation that results in affirmation of its dogmatic starting point by faith (rather than acknowledge-

92. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 178.

93. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 178.

94. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 145.

95. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 145.

96. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 145.

97. See "Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 145.

ment of the appropriateness of Cartesian skepticism being limits to finite consciousness itself), Daub's theological arguments are built on sand.⁹⁸

Strauß' Criticism of Daub's 'Argument for God:'

Strauß writes:

As correct as Daub is [with his logic that doubt leads to faith], the further and even more satisfying thing would have been to understand them at the same time as the necessary mediations through which thinking, consciously or unconsciously, arrives at the thought of the absolute, and to grasp this mediation as a negative as well as an affirmative one in itself: as Hegel did better and more sharply, namely, in the short note of the *Encyclopedia* than in the expansive lectures on this subject that therefore did not reach their goal.⁹⁹

Strauß doesn't explicitly identify here in "Schleiermacher und Daub" where in Hegel's *Encyclopedia* one finds this 'short note,' but he does indicate two passages from the *Encyclopedia* in the *Glaubenslehre*. Here in the *Glaubenslehre*, though, Strauß emphasizes the dualistic circularity of Hegelian logic :

Those (including Anselm and Kant), Hegel says, who are convinced that absolute Being in thinking is not thought itself, speak of God as over against (*jenseits*) consciousness. They take thought to be the Concept (*Begriff*) of Him but whose existence or reality is something distinct from this Concept (*Begriff*). As in the case when we represent and think of an animal, [...] our concept of it or our representation is something entirely different than the animal itself. Even with respect to sensed objects, by the way, its essence (*Wesen*) as a universal (*in der Allgemeinheit*) as pure essence is present only in our thinking as our thinking whereas *in itself it is united with its sensed particularity*. Consequently, *our Concept (Begriff) of an absolute essence (Wesen) is this essence itself, when it really is [only] the Concept of the absolute essence and not of something else.*¹⁰⁰ (emphasis added)

According to Hegel, the concept of this absolute Being is not thereby entirely established because it is not merely essence and concept but also existence. As pure essence it is our thought of it; but its real existence is nature.¹⁰¹ In this real [*reale*] existence, the I is a

98. "In his *Theologumena*, Daub addresses "[...] the essence of God, and asserts his knowability, which he even determines as absolute; although over the latter point, if one remembers what was said earlier [page 145], no little vacillation occurs." Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 178. Strauß repeats this criticism later (*ibid.*: 195): "Everything is quite indeterminate and fluctuating, as you can see. Therefore, there is no need of closer examination."

99. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 178.

100. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 399.

101. That is, the concept is not merely an *a priori* synthetic judgment, which would be 'empty,' but it is also actually present in empirical phenomena *analytically*.

particular thinker; it [the "I"] belongs to this existence as a moment of it but does not exhaust its existence.¹⁰² (emphasis added)

Nonetheless, there is a circularity here.

Hegel's ontological argument is a proof only to the extent that for him the existence of God, which he wants to prove, is nothing other than the idea of God from which the argument commences. As far as the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am") is from being a conclusion [about God], far more immediately, *cogitare* (thinking) is the *esse* (being) of an individual as [universal] Spirit (*Geist*). Precisely for this reason, for him [Hegel] the ontological conclusion with respect to the immediate being of God in human thought coincides with the individual's thought of Him.¹⁰³ (emphasis added)

It is with respect to Hegel's claim that the Cartesian *cogito* is actually Absolute Spirit thinking Itself in finite spirit that Strauß cites to §§ 64 and 76 of the *Encyclopedia*. Yet, Hegel skims past Descartes' 'ontological argument' for God based on infinite, eminent causality and the Principle of Sufficient Reason as he stresses that, with the very idea of God, finite consciousness is God thinking Himself. However, Hegel writes:

[...]the principle of immediate knowledge is knowledge that arises from comparison with Cartesian philosophy returned to in recent times. In both [Descartes and recent philosophy] is asserted:

the simple inseparability of thinking and being of the thinker, – *cogito ergo sum* is the same [as] that being, reality, existence of the I directly revealed to me in consciousness (at the same time, *Descartes expressly declares* in his *Principia philosophiae* I, 9, *that by thinking he understands consciousness in general as such*) and that this inseparability is the absolutely first (not mediated, proven) and most certain knowledge;

the inseparability of the conception of God and his existence, so that *God's existence is contained in the conception of God itself*, that conception includes *par excellence* the determination of its existence, the latter is thus necessary and eternal.* (emphasis added)¹⁰⁴

The asterisk is to Hegel's footnote, which says:

Descartes, *Principia philosophiae* I: 15: "It [the soul] will be the more convinced (that a supremely perfect being exists) if it observes that in no other of its ideas is this necessary existence contained in the same way; for it will see from this that this idea represents only a true and unchangeable nature, *which must exist because necessary existence is contained in it.*" A subsequent addition, which reads like an arbitration and proof, adds nothing to this initial grounding.¹⁰⁵ – With Spinoza it is quite the same that God's essence, i.e., the abstract

102. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 399–400.

103. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 400.

104. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie* II: GW VIII: 165.

105. This is a remarkable comment by Hegel. In the *Wissenschaft der Logik*, Hegel argues that the Absolute Concept contains its sufficient ground within Itself – or else it is not a ground. He

conception, includes existence in itself. The first definition of Spinoza is that of *causa sui*, that it is such a thing "whose essence includes existence in itself, or that whose nature can only be conceived as existing," *Ethics* I, Def. 1. – *the inseparability of the concept from being is the basic determination and presupposition*. One may ask, though, which concept is it to which this inseparability from Being belongs? Not that of finite things, for these are precisely those whose existence is accidental and created. – Spinoza's 11th proposition: that God necessarily exists, is followed with a proof, in the 20th proposition: God's existence and his being are one and the same, – is a superfluous formalism of proof. *God is the (and only) substance; but substance is causa sui, therefore God exists necessarily – means nothing else than that God is this, whose Concept and Being are inseparable.*¹⁰⁶ (emphasis added)

Descartes' argument, which Hegel skims over, presupposes that the soul has a perfect concept of perfection in addition to its ability to conceive imperfect objects of perception external to the soul (*Principia philosophiae* I: 12). In other words, Descartes takes the content of the soul's 'thinking' to consist of 'representations' of things distinct from the soul (external objects, which includes God as an objective Being).

However, in § 64 of the *Enzyklopädie*, Hegel proposes that Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* does not constitute a conclusion about the existence of the individual soul but about God. Rather, the conclusion of existence presupposes that '*thinking is existing*.'¹⁰⁷ For Hegel, the major premise of Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* argument is that "everything that thinks 'is' (that is, 'exists')." He draws from this that the thought of God by definition proves its existence because *the thought of God is not a conclusion of a syllogism but the very condition of thinking itself. God thinks Himself in all thinking*. In other words, Descartes takes God to be other than the soul (that is, *jenseits von der Seele*), precisely the erroneous position that Hegel attributes to Anselm and Kant, above. In other words, for Descartes God is a 'perfect Being' over against and in contrast to humanity. Hegel's shift of focus from Descartes to Spinoza in § 76 of the *Enzyklopädie* is a clear and shrill indicator that Hegel reads Descartes through the lens of Spinoza. *Hegel tries to squeeze Descartes into a Spinozian mold in which substance is 'thinking' and thinking substance is universal to all events and all thought*.

overlooks that his Absolute Concept is a cause, and all causal 'explanations' (accounting) is a matter of *a priori* synthetic judgment because causes are 'known' (understood) only through their effects. See Chapter 6: "Grand Narratives of Theoretical Reason:" 702, n. 190. What follows in Descartes' text is his argument for God based on the idea of perfection in finite consciousness. For Descartes this argument presupposes the 'Principle of Sufficient Reason' (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*) (*Principia philosophiae* I: 18: 'something cannot come from nothing').

106. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie* II: GW VIII: 165.

107. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie* II: GW VIII: 155: "Descartes himself explicitly stated that the proposition *cogito, ergo sum* is not a conclusion. Descartes first says that we are thinking beings is 'a certain basic notion that is not inferred from any syllogism,' and continues, 'when someone says, 'I think, therefore I am or I exist,' he does not infer existence from thinking by a syllogism.'" Because Descartes knows what belongs to a conclusion, he adds that if a derivation by a conclusion should [... occur with *cogito ergo sum*], then the major premise would belong to it: 'everything that thinks is or exists.'" This latter conclusion, however, would be one that one derives from the first conclusion [which 'is not inferred from any syllogism']" (emphasis added) Hegel, *Enzyklopädie* II: 154–155.

Strauß points out Hegel's 'vicious' circle:

Just as the *cosmological argument* proves the existence of all things, the *physico-theological argument* proves the life in all living things, the *historico-teleological* and *moral arguments* prove the ethical world order, so for Hegel the *ontological argument* proves the Spirit in all spirits, the thought in all thinkers.¹⁰⁸

Far from constituting proofs, though, Strauß observes a vicious circle: "*the existence of God, which he [Hegel and Daub, as well] wants to prove, is nothing other than the idea of God from which the argument commences.*"¹⁰⁹ This idea of God is that God thinks Himself in all thinking – whether acknowledge by the individual or not, whether historical events have significance or not.

1841 *The Glaubenslehre*. An 'Epistemological' Conclusion

By 1841, Strauß was reading Feuerbach as Strauß himself confirms in *Glaubenslehre* wherein he cites Feuerbach's earliest work, the 1830 *Thoughts on Death and Immortality* (*Gedanken über Tod und Unsterblichkeit*) and Feuerbach's works that appeared prior to the *Glaubenslehre*. Is it possible that he had read Feuerbach's *Wesen des Christentums* (*Essence of Christianity*) even though it, too, was published in 1841? Strauß would not have had to, though, in order to have acquired Feuerbach's key criticisms of Hegel's anthropomorphic theological reflections because those reflections are clearly present in Feuerbach's earlier writings.

After wrestling with all of the controversies generated by his *LJ* and the erosion of his Hegelian convictions, Strauß gave up on his original aim of a history of Church Doctrine (*Glaubenslehre*). Before the *LJ*, he spoke of writing an account of such a history to be the same as his aim in the *LJ*: to 'retore' by means of Hegel's meta-narrative what had been destroyed by historical criticism.¹¹⁰ That aim was no longer an option for Strauß by 1841. The task became one of demonstrating that "the criticism of Church Doctrine is its own history."¹¹¹ F.C. Baur's (1838) *The Christian Doctrine of Atonement and its Historical Development from Most Ancient Time Down to the Present*) provided Strauß with a solid illustration of the thesis. Furthermore, here in the *Glaubenslehre*, the enduring influence of F.C. Baur is in the foreground, not Hegel or Schleiermacher.

108. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 400.

109. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 400.

110. On the aim of restoring what is destroyed by historical criticism, see the "Preface:" 54, n. 56.

111. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 71. Already in "Schleiermacher und Daub," Strauß pointed out that "[...] the true criticism of a thing [can] only lie in its history," Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 30.

Significance of Baur's work on Atonement for Understanding Church History

Baur's son-in-law, Eduard Zeller wrote that "[i]f Strauss came to his work from philosophy, Baur comes to his from history."¹¹²

Strauss [...] turns his criticism against that in the writings [of the gospels] which disturbs him most, the miraculous and improbable, partly because it is most concentrated here [in the gospels], partly because it hits the center of the Christian religion, the person and history of Christ himself; Baur [...] prefers those books from early Christian times of the New Testament collection, the genuine Pauline letters, which, as the most direct and oldest documents are preferably suitable for this purpose [of establishing the center of the Christian religion].¹¹³

In his "Required Clarification against an article in the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung*" (1836) ("Abgenöthigte Erklärung gegen einen Artikel der evangelischen Kirchenzeitung"), Baur stressed in his personal defense over against those who attacked him because of his student's (Strauß') *LJ* of 1835 that the primary focus of his historical work on the Second Testament was Paul, not the gospels and asked:

Who developed the entire depth and completeness of Christian faith more superbly than the Apostle Paul in his letters? Did he fixate on the details of Jesus' life, [did he] prize particular miracles and incidents, when he looked back at Jesus' historical life, was it not the entirely, general events of the gospel story, *which everyone must presuppose and recognize in some fashion and which are established without the gospels*, that he presupposed and from which he exclusively builds upon?¹¹⁴ (emphasis added)

Already in his *Christian Gnosis or the Christian Philosophy of Religion in its Historical Development* (1835) (*Die christliche Gnosis oder die christliche Religionsphilosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*), Baur had developed the core teaching that he found to anchor Christianity in actuality, not empty, abstract ideas, precisely, in Paul's notion of the church as the 'body of Christ.' As I have said,¹¹⁵ Baur takes Paul's claim that the church is the 'body' of Christ (, I Corinthians 12:12 ff., Ephesians 3: 3–6, and Colossians 3:24–28) to mean that the 'historical' God/Man refers not to a single individual or limited set of individuals but to that growing number of those who grasp

112. Eduard Zeller, "Die Tübinger historische Schule." In. In *Vorträge und Abhandlungen, Erste Sammlung and Zweite Auflage*, 267–353. Leipzig: Fues's Verlag (R. Reisland): 310.

113. Zeller, "Die Tübinger historische Schule:" 311.

114. Baur, "Abgenöthigte Erklärung gegen einen Artikel der evangelischen Kirchenzeitung, herausgegeben von D.E. W. Hengstenberg, Prof. der Theol. an der Universität zu Berlin. Mai 1836." *Tübingen Zeitschrift für Theologie*, III (1836): 214.

115. See Chapter 1: "Methodology:" 109, n. 21, Chapter 3: "Academic Controversy:" 225, n. 41, and Chapter 4: "Why Schleiermacher was not an Option:" 289, n. 154.

the significance of Absolute Spirit in finite spirit over the entire course of history that is the Christian Church (*Gemeinde*).¹¹⁶

In his *Christian Doctrine of Atonement* (1838), Baur defines religion¹¹⁷ as an essential relation between finite and Absolute Spirit,¹¹⁸ but not as Hegel's dialectic of Double Negation that leads to the 'point of indifference' beyond history.

Rather, the historical dialectic is that of the 'objective' dialectic of atonement theories found in Church doctrine. The thesis of this dialectic is the 'ransom theory' of atonement in the Early Church; the 'anti-thesis' is Anselm's 'substitution theory' of atonement; and the 'synthesis' consisting of Baur's notion the Body of Christ as the Christian community in history.

From the Early Church down to Anselm of Canterbury, this thesis of Atonement was taken 'objectively' to account for what Baur calls the 'myth' of ransom.¹¹⁹ The 'objective thesis' of myth consist of paying the ransom was taken to mean a ransom 1) owed to Satan although Satan had deceived humanity to sin¹²⁰ (on the basis of Colossians 2:15 and Hebrews 21:14¹²¹) or 2) owed to Satan by Christ's having broken

116. See Baur, *Gnosis*: especially, 721 but also 685, 696, and 734–736. To the 'left' of Baur, though, is Strauß in the *LJ* of 1835 with his universally, inclusive Christology that is not limited to the Christian *Gemeinde*.

117. For Baur's criticism of Strauß' 'failure to appreciate history in the *LJ*, see "Ferdinand Christian Baur's Criticism of Strauß" in Chapter 3: "Academic Controversy:" 222 ff.

118. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 287, 690.

119. According to Baur, 'myth' insists on objective representations (*Form*) being the actual content (*Inhalt*) of a teaching. See *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 142–143. This is not the 'husk' (narrative representation)/'kernel' (historical fact, idea, or symbol) of the Göttingen 'Mythic School'.

According to Baur, the teaching of the Atonement based on 'ransom' for a 'debt' is an objective 'mythic' portrayal of what, for Baur, is a subjectively, internal, essential union between finite and Absolute Spirit. (*Ibid.*: 142–143).

120. Baur documents that there was little agreement over the role of deception employed to trick Satan. Gregory of Nyssa even spoke of a double deception (*Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 75, see 68): Satan's deception of humanity to sin on the basis of sensuous desire to eat the fruit of the tree that gives knowledge of good and evil, and God's deception of Satan on the basis of Satan's mistaken belief, left uncorrected by God, that the perceived God/Man was only a human being under his sovereignty (Irenaeus in *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 36). Although Baur points out that as soon as the doctrine of deception of Satan was established, it fragmented into different explanations both of the nature of the deception and whether deception was reconcilable with God's nature (*Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 87ff.). Gregory the Great went so far as to claim the reason why Jesus had to die for the sins of humanity did not lie in Satan (the need for a ransom to free humanity from an Evil Kingdom) but in God (to repair the damage of His punishment of humanity for violating the command not to eat from the tree of good and evil). His death must be a sacrifice brought by God in order that humanity be reconciled with God (*Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 93). In short, God asserts the condition that brings death (violation of the commandment not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil) and provides the 'cure' of death (sacrifice of the Divine/Man). Reconciliation is concerned with God, not Satan because reconciliation's necessity is internal to God, whereas in relation to Satan reconciliation's necessity is a debt owed to a power other than God.

121. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 27. Origen formulated the claim of a contract between God and Satan in which both God and Satan knew what they were getting with his

into Satan's home and robbing him of his power over death (Matthew 12:29).¹²² Baur points out, though, that this 'mythic' account is a dualistic struggle between two realms (the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Devil). Not only does this 'objective' account of reconciliation depend upon God's deception of the Devil,¹²³ but also, as Baur reminds his reader, Origen points out that this *mythic*, 'objective' account of reconciliation based on deception was incompatible with the *doctrinal Idea* that the Logos has always and already reconciled all that is 'external' to God.¹²⁴

Baur views Anselm as the initiator of the 'second stage' or as 'antithesis' to the doctrine of Atonement as a 'ransom.' This antithesis focuses on *the logical necessity* of the sacrifice of the God/Man to pay a debt owed by humanity to God *for having violated God's honor with its sin rather than on objective sacrifice in order to pay a debt owed to the devil.*

Anselm offered a 'more satisfactory' 'objective' account of divine/human reconciliation than the 'mythic,' ransom alternatives. *Anselm's Atonement theory is based on the notion of 'perfect obedience' owed to God. Given the universal lack of obedience, though, not only was God's honor violated, but also there was no means by which the individual could 'make up' for her/his lack of obedience in the past.* Given the fact that the commencement of perfect obedience can occur at a specific point in time and perfection is unsurpassable, the individual cannot generate a surplus of perfection to 'pay the debt' of past disobedience. Hence, Anselm views the sacrifice of Christ with his infinite surplus of perfection to be the requirement to establish the condition for humanity's reconciliation with God.¹²⁵ However, Baur points out that Anselm's theory of atonement is also governed by a 'Manichaeian' dualism¹²⁶ with the reconciliation being 'physical' rather than 'essential' (Spirit).¹²⁷

According to Anselm, subjectively, humanity owes God perfect obedience so that sin is a subjective affront to the honor that is owed to God. Anselm's account of God necessarily having to provide the superabundant perfection needed to repay 'the debt' of humanity's sin that humanity itself could never repay, places Anselm in the 'Intellectualist' tradition in which God had to act as He did in conformity with His own *eternal* reason (*Logos*).¹²⁸

account of Origen's dualistic conviction that 'good' is stronger than 'evil'. See *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 47–48.

122. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 34, n. 3.

123. See Baur's discussion of Origen in *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 43–48.

124. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 59–61.

125. See, especially, Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 542, 628, and 674.

126. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 675.

127. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 676–677.

128. This 'Intellectualist' thesis was countered by the 'Occasionalist'/'Voluntarist' antithesis of Duns Scotus. Baur takes Thomas Aquinas as an unsuccessful attempt to establish a mediating synthesis between these two options. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 260. In the end, Baur

According to Baur, Thomas Aquinas followed Aristotle's distinctions among the various relationships in which the notion of 'necessity' applies: to what by nature can be nothing other than what it is, which would mean that the crucifixion was necessary either from the perspective of God or the perspective of humanity. However, for Aquinas, no external determination applies to the crucifixion. 'Necessity,' according to Aquinas, is concerned with what is required to achieve a specific, divine goal. The crucifixion was not determined externally by coercion but was necessary in order to achieve the specific goal of demonstrating God's mercy. However, according to Baur, unlike Anselm, *Aquinas gives no satisfactory accounting for the interface between subjective, human necessity (sin) and objective, divine necessity (reason and will)*.¹²⁹

Baur takes, then, the 'third stage of the doctrine of Atonement' not to be the actual 'synthesis' of Atonement. Rather, the 'third stage' commenced with Kant's radical 'turn to the completely self-determining, finite subject.'¹³⁰ Baur attributes this turn to the subject to Kant's "absolute legislation of the law of practical reason."¹³¹ Kant's 'law' is not the objective law of the Decalogue that is at the core of Lutheranism,¹³² but the objective law of subjective, moral duty personified in the Christ.¹³³ Baur emphasizes that, although the 'objective' moment in Kant is the law of moral duty, the law of moral duty is 'subjectively,' entirely contained within reason.

This 'subjective' formulation of divine/human reconciliation occurs through subjective moral effort alone (Baur's incorrect reading of Kant)¹³⁴ in which he reads Kant's account of 'radical evil' as original sin by assigning a dominant place to 'evil principles' prior to autonomous, creative freedom.¹³⁵ In Schleiermacher, Baur finds a 'subjective' acquisition of the 'Feeling of Absolute Dependence' by the individual only through the influence of the Christian community,¹³⁶ that is all Christian truth is mediated through history with the emphasis on the individual's conviction of subjective certainty.

insists that logical necessity (Intellectualism) dominates in Aquinas. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 264.

129. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 231. Baur asks whether the ultimate consequence is that Aquinas' teaching is docetic. See *ibid.*: 234, n. 2, and points out that *Aquinas leaves unclear what in salvation is dependent upon human subjectivity (sin) and what is dependent upon God's objective will and plan*. See *ibid.*: 241–242. Christ's suffering is 'a matter of convenience and expedience (i.e., Occasionalist/Voluntarist), not the necessity of logic (i.e., Intellectualist)'. See *ibid.*: 247, 269, n. 1.

130. Baur's reading of Kant's notion of 'autonomy' as completely subjective self-determination is a distortion of Kant's notion of 'autonomous freedom,' which is thoroughly dependent upon a world of appearances but capable of initiating sequences of events that nature, left on its own, could never achieve. See Chapter 7: "Practical Reason Elevates Theoretical Reason:" 705, n. 198; and 766, n. 171.

131. Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 14.

132. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 359.

133. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 578.

134. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 575–589.

135. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 576–577; 579.

136. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II 628–629.

When it comes to the doctrine of Atonement, Baur reads Kant's notion of the 'worthiness for happiness' to mean that the goal of Kant's moral theory is to achieve the happiness that is objectively, well-pleasing to God.¹³⁷ Kant, according to Baur, is a Pelagianist.¹³⁸ Kant's 'subjective' religion of reason is incapable of achieving the awareness of the unity between finite and Absolute Spirit and constitutes a rejection of Christian Atonement because it turns religion into an infinite, open-ended process of moral effort seeking perfection that it can never achieve.¹³⁹ Kant is only looking towards the future and has no genuine resolution for the 'debt' of sin owed for past offenses demanded by the Anselmian Satisfaction Theory.¹⁴⁰

However, Baur ignores Kant's Copernican Turn¹⁴¹ to finite, transcendental conditions of possibility for experience, understanding, and responsible agency and treats the moral status of humanity exclusively on objective actions (Consequentialism), not the individual's task of self-selecting the universal moral principle to give her-/himself permission to act. Although he acknowledges 'objectivity' in Kant's notions of God as Noumenon and the moral law as personified in the Christ, *both God and Christ are treated by Baur as ultimate causalities*, not as 'pure' ideas, which are not discussed by Kant as the cause (!) of finite, transcendental consciousness but are required for finite, transcendental consciousness to experience, understand, and exercise responsible agency in the world. Baur completely ignores the *a priori* synthetic judgments of finite, transcendental consciousness that humanity *must add* to its sensuous experience in order to understand and act responsibly in the world as it does. In other words, Baur's Consequentialism is an objective subreption¹⁴² that cannot grasp the necessities of finite, transcendental consciousness otherwise than from the issue of causality. *His concern with morality is with the causes of sin and redemption as consequences, not with the task of identifying the a priori capacities that enable a responsible (!), finite,*

137. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 567 and the theme of the 'proportionality' of between morality and happiness on 569. Strauß shares with Baur this erroneous reading of Kant, which claims that achieving (consequentialist ethic) happiness objectively pleasing to God.

138. Humanity has the 'subjective power' to save itself. See, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 576, as well: 569. He cryptically acknowledges that there are those 'strict Kantians' who claim that Kant rejected the notion of the 'moral goal of the world' as a 'proportionality' between 'worthiness' and 'happiness' (*ibid.*, 567–568), but nowhere does he present their reading of Kant. Rather, he turns only to those who read Kant as a Pelagian with all focus on the individual's 'earning' the blessedness of moral 'proportionality' between 'worthiness' and 'happiness' with the 'Pelagian presupposition' "running through the whole of Protestantism in this period." (*Ibid.*: 561). Furthermore, Baur claims that Kant's faith of reason can only see impurity of pure religion in the Christian doctrine of atonement. Christianity is an 'objective' story (myth) whereas Kant's religion of reason is 'subjective'. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 630.

139. This claim by Baur (and many others) is an attempt to squeeze Kant's moral theory into the framework Hegel's "The Moral View of the World" in the *Phenomenology*.

140. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 567.

141. On Kant's 'Copernican Turn,' see the "Preface:" 47, n. 35.

142. On the notion of 'subreption' and its presence in Kant's earliest writings, see the "Preface:" 64, n. 84.

intentionally (not merely instinctually) *creating transcendental consciousness in the world*. Contrary to Baur (and many other readers of Kant), being human does not mean achieving perfection.¹⁴³ *Being human means to be a finite understanding that is capable of assuming responsibility for its agency by means of moral effort* (not certain achievement) *in a finite world*.

Baur's own Christology is the 'fourth stage,' for him the actual synthesis, of the doctrine of Christian Atonement. It replaces the 'objective' law (as well as Kant's subjectively, personified moral duty) by an emphasis on the 'subjective' experience of Absolute Spirit with the goal of religion the recognition of the essential unity between finite and Absolute Spirit. *'Blasphemy of the Spirit is what offends God'* (Matthew 12:30–32; Mark 9:40, Luke 11:23, 1 John 3:16), *not violation of the law*. What grounds the actuality of Baur's Christology is not a proof or conviction that the perfect God/Man occurred at a specific time and place in history. Rather the actuality of Christian Atonement is the history of the Christian Church as the Pauline 'body of Christ.' Finite Spirit finds its unity in the Infinite, Perfect, Free, Unity of Absolute Spirit *only in the history that is the Christian congregation*. Here humanity achieves sovereignty over the sinfulness of sensuality. Baur claims that his Christology avoids all the limitations of the objective and subjective theories of reconciliation as well as avoiding turning reconciliation into an 'empty idea' devoid of actual history.¹⁴⁴

However, as the case with the entire sweep that is the history of Christian Atonement, Baur's Christology is an 'empty idea' desperately seeking its 'actuality' in phenomena. In other words, Baur's history of the doctrine of Atonement not only demonstrates the internal inconsistencies between the 'objective' and 'subjective' moments of its two main stages (down to Anselm and from Anselm to the end of the 18th C), but it also demonstrates the Gnosticism and Docetism of the entire discussion of the doctrine, including Baur's own Christology.

The 'mythic,' 'objective' narrative of 'ransom' and Christ's 'paying the debt for sin' or 'substitution for humanity's sins' with its assumption that humanity can achieve moral perfection turn out to be merely 'abstract, empty ideas' that may (or may not) be true.. Schleiermacher's 'new' Perfect God-consciousness, like Anselm's 'perfection', requires a new event of ultimate, eminent causality that is far more than the effect that it achieves. The Hegelian Second Negation that turns from finitude to Absolute Spirit turns out to be merely an 'abstract, empty idea' that even Hegel acknowledged occurs 'beyond history' with the 'resurrection.' The identification of the 'historical Jesus' with the historical community that understands itself to be the body of Christ turns out to be dogmatically relative and merely an 'abstract, empty idea' that may (or may not) be

143. See the discussion of Kant's notion of 'perfection' and rejection of moral 'purism' in the "Foreword:" 28, n. 11.

144. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* II: 738–752. See, as well, Baur's account of his Christology in Chapter 3 "Academic Controversy and Reaction to Strauß' *LJ*: Text of n. 41 on page 225.

true in light of the fact, as with Hegel, it is a 'certain necessity' grounded in logic, not objective reality. Baur himself claims that the 'new philosophy' (i.e., Hegel) is different from Gnosticism (and Docetism) only in form, not in content.¹⁴⁵ In all cases the determination of the presumed truth (or falsehood) of the theological options depends upon finite, transcendental consciousness ignoring its limits and soaring into the vacuum of speculative conjectures that not only deny our limitations but undermine our efforts at proper exercising of our capacities in the world.

In short, not even a careful reading of the history of Church Doctrine (and Strauß presents in his *Glaubenslehre* an astonishingly detailed reading) is required to demonstrate that Christian theology's own internal incoherence and inconsistencies make its doctrine anything but certain and more wishful thinking than plausible. In other words, one does not need anything like an 'external,' secular philosophy to demonstrate the collapse.

Nevertheless, Strauß' methodological structure for the investigation of Church teaching in the *Glaubenslehre* is the same that he employed in the *LJ* to investigate the gospel accounts of Jesus' ministry: First, he provides an account of the various and inconsistent positions of traditional teaching. Then, he presents the criticisms of traditional teaching among Christians in the Protestant Reformation (the 'Supernaturalist' reading); followed by the criticisms of 'modern science,' that is, metaphysics, not the physical sciences, principally, Spinoza, Böhme, the Rationalists/Schleiermacher, and the Hegelians (by no means reducible to, but analogous to the position of the 'Rationalists' in the *LJ*) that lead to Baur's 'true' Christology that restores Church doctrine devastated by 'criticism.'

However, unlike his employment of Hegel in the "Concluding Dissertation" of the *LJ*, the 'restoration' of Church Doctrine by means of Hegelian metaphysics is not even attempted. Rather, strewn across the two volumes in those sections devoted to 'modern science,' Strauß presents a running criticism, at times extremely detailed, of Hegelian philosophy. He ends the second volume with the doctrine of 'immortality.' Here, he explicitly quotes Schleiermacher's notion of immortality echoed in "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity," but, as I pointed out in the last chapter,¹⁴⁶ Strauß is referring not to Schleiermacher's account in *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* of the transcendent Oneness that is always concealed by the emergence of multiplicity in our experience in the world. Rather, as in "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity," *Strauß is referring to the 'eternal' ideational and physical lawfulness of the world* – on the way to his Materialism in *The Old and the New Faith*.¹⁴⁷

145. See Baur, "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie:" 735–736.

146. See in "Chapter 4: Why Schleiermacher was not an Option:" the section "Strauß' Theological Position at the Conclusion of the *Glaubenslehre*:" 293 ff.

147. See my comments on Strauß' use of Schleiermacher's metaphors of 'God consciousness' and 'the feeling of absolute dependence' to speak of humanity's 'dependence' on nature's lawfulness in

Strauß' *Glaubenslehre* is an achievement that marks a crucial turning point in Christian theology. On the one hand, its 1,500 pages present a strikingly broad, deep, and demonstrably devastating historical criticism of Church Doctrine *from within the Christian tradition*. On the other hand, Strauß' *Glaubenslehre* is a monument to the collapse of any significant influence on Christian theology by Hegelianism. However, the impact of his *Glaubenslehre* was blunted because there was no 'community' either within the church or among philosophers for whom it mattered. Those already 'committed' to the traditional narrative of Christianity had no interest in its internal contradictions. Those who were dismissive of Christianity had their own alternatives either turning to other religious traditions or to empiricism. Those open to an engagement of Christianity's internal contradictions did not constitute a critical mass to accomplish any significant change from 'within the faith' so that they either remained silent in order to be able to participate in the 'social' function of the institution, or they simply left the church. It is precisely this 'social' function of religion that led Strauß at the end of his life to shift his attention to the 'community' committed to the physical 'order' of reality rather than a spiritual 'escape' from reality.

Neither philosophy nor theology is prepared even in our age to benefit constructively and creatively from Strauß' work. When it comes to philosophy, it is viewed as an intellectual contrast and alternative to religion rather than a complement to religion. When it comes to religion, our epoch is one in which cutting-edge thought is driven by superficial notions of pluralism as blind acceptance of 'difference,' and 'progressive religion' consists of cherry picking theological elements that one (emotionally) finds attractive from a number of theological currents within one's own tradition and/or among the other religions of the world. The Kantian threads of Strauß' limited reading provide an opportunity to learn from Kant that any understanding of 'reality' requires inclusion of the imperceptible, conditions of finite, transcendental consciousness that are required for us to experience a world (much less understand it), in the first place, and to recognize that those *a priori* elements consist of an internally, 'coherent totality' rather than a merely capricious aggregation of elements or merely a pluralistic, fragmented, and capricious aggregation of 'approaches' to reality.

Yet more is at stake here than the fact that the 'blind' who define the elephant from the anatomical part that the individual touches have forgotten that the elephant is a 'whole,' not a single part of the whole. Perception requires imperceptible elements that have to be *added to* phenomena and that make possible perception in the first place. These imperceptible elements are always and already possessed even by the 'blind.'

These imperceptible elements, especially, require for their understanding more than a merely, explanatory, factual 'narrative' of objective 'truth' either physical or spiritual. Furthermore, the truth that includes transcendental consciousness is 'open-ended' because it includes the creative capacity of finite consciousness to initiate se-

Chapter 4: "Why Schleiermacher was not an Option:" the section "Schleiermacher's Feeling, Hegel's Absolute Knowledge, and Kant's Morality:" 264, and page 261, n. 43.

quences of events that are 'more' than merely factual. Without this 'more' there would be no creativity, and there would be no possibility for the creative individual to assume responsibility for her/his agency. Without this 'more,' transcendental consciousness would be physically determined, to be sure, in contrast to the spiritual determination of Christian predestination but, nonetheless, a mere automaton.

For example, the 'truth' of Christianity or any other religious tradition is not reducible to a narrow set of objective teachings that claims to consist of a non-existent, narrative thread that holds together all of reality past, present, and future. Such a search for a narrow thread consists in picking and choosing those elements to one's liking and combining them together into an arbitrary assemblage that is substituted for 'reality.' Consequently, the Christian tradition (or any other religion) that understands itself to grasp the 'totality' that is 'reality' in this life and/or beyond is by no means likely to be open to an investigation, such as Strauß' *Glaubenslehre*, which demonstrates that the tradition is an aggregate of doctrine combined into a capricious 'totality' of teachings that includes inescapable and devastating, internal contradictions.

When it comes to the criticism of Church Doctrine of Strauß' *Glaubenslehre*, there is simply no substitute for the actual reading of his text. Unfortunately, the text is not available in English, but it should be. Strauß' careful presentation of the themes and clarifications of the issues at issue are a gift to anyone with the remotest curiosity over 'just what is Christianity.' Foremost, one quickly sees that Christianity is no 'single, consistent doctrine' that serves as the 'red thread' running through its various theological claims and controversies. Rather, Christianity is a collection of teachings shaped as much by its multiple cultural contexts and the unique (although grounded in universal capacities), particular experiences of individuals as it is by its actual, objective teachings. Strauß saves the reader the enormous task of collating and evaluating the broad spectrum of Church teaching.

When it comes to the philosophy of our age, we are no better off. We live in an epoch in which even 'progressive' thought is committed to merely capricious 'aggregations' of relative 'takes' on reality. Postmodernism and Deconstruction have given up on the project of 'truth' as if truth were exclusively defined by the 'correspondence theory' of subjective judgments fitting objective facts. For Postmodernists, reality is correctly understood as no 'meta-narrative' either 'Christian' or 'Hegelian.' However, for Deconstruction and Post-Modern thought, 'reality' is a set of merely arbitrary traces 'all the way down' that completely ignores the imperceptible, subjective (but universal, not merely relative) capacities that make any and all experience of 'reality' possible, in the first place.

The devastating consequence of reducing our understanding of 'reality' to an alternative between 'mere' traces, which denies anything like facts, and 'positivist' empiricism, which proclaims its imperceptible, physical laws to be facts, is that we are helpless in the face of fanciful illusions of Conspiracy Theories because of the erosion of any 'grounding' of experience. 'Criticism,' which means a negative dismissal

between and among empirical differences, has eclipsed ‘critique,’ which means the identification of the imperceptible, required conditions for any and all possible experience by a finite, transcendental consciousness. The result is that there is no basis on which to evaluate the adequacy of understanding and agency either by oneself or one’s tradition, not to speak of the ‘other.’

Equally dangerous, religious pluralism has become a cover for reactionary, religious conservatives to claim their right to proclaim the truth of their ‘community’ in the name of ‘tolerance’ while, conveniently, continuing to ignore the ‘other.’ Everyone and everything is acknowledged to have the ‘same’ right to her/his/its ‘truth’ as my and my community’s grasp of truth so that I am free to proclaim and proselytize my truth with impunity. Such ‘blind’ pluralism eliminates both criticism of the self and other as well as transcendental critique, the one strategy that can protect against systematic distortion in any and all understanding.

Strauß’ *Glaubenslehre* remains an extremely valuable resource for post-religious religion. It sharply profiles the confusing, inconsistent mixture of institutionalized doctrine that, along with the historical criticism of the gospels in the *LJ*, indicates the impossibility of determination anything approximating a ‘true,’ objective history of Jesus’ life, ministry, or teaching much less an ‘eternal,’ objective teaching of Christianity. The scriptures and the history of doctrine present us with an on-going process of narrative construction that articulates human ‘understanding’ and wishful thinking but is incapable of establishing the objective truth. What is ‘objectively’ true about Christianity is that it is not ‘*the truth*.’ What is ‘subjectively’ true about Christianity (or any religion) is not its fulfilment of objective fantasies and wishes. Rather, its ‘*subjective*’ truth consists of the imperceptible, universal conditions of transcendental consciousness that make it possible for anything like the experience, genuine understanding, and responsible agency of our species.

On the Metaphysics of the Glaubenslehre

With the *Glaubenslehre* of 1841, Strauß undertook the project in Church dogmatics that he had spoken of writing even before the *LJ*.¹⁴⁸ Far more ambitious than his cryptic ‘Concluding Dissertation’ of the *LJ*, which was meant to address the effects of *gospel criticism* on Church dogmatics by a Hegelian restoration of Christology, the original aim of Strauß’ dogmatics was to write the Hegelian ‘restoration’ of *Church teaching* that repaired the devastation of historical criticism of the history of Church Doctrine.¹⁴⁹

148. See Ziegler, II: 326.

149. See Strauß’ *Streitschriften* III: 58–59. F.C. Baur’s *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* essentially accomplished what Strauß and his friends sought in a Church dogmatics.

In his, admittedly brief summary of the project, Strauß' biographer, Theobald Ziegler, skips the first 350 page section on 'Apologetics' that is devoted to examination of crucial themes of biblical revelation, miracles and prophecies, development of Church teaching, the doctrine of inspiration, and the interpretation of the scriptures followed by an account of their 'dissolution.' This section ends with a discussion of 'Faith and Knowledge' that demonstrates both Roman Catholic and Lutheran rejection of 'reason'¹⁵⁰ to the advantage of 'feelings' in Christianity¹⁵¹ with a 'slow' transition in the 'modern' world to valuing reason.¹⁵²

Nevertheless, Ziegler's summary of the books overall project gives an indication of its depth and breadth as well as its structural similarities to the *LJ*:

Following the scheme of the old Protestant dogmatics, the individual "loci" are: the existence of the triune being and attributes of God; of the creation and the most distinguished creatures and their original state; of the fall and redemption, whereby first the person and then the office of Christ is addressed; of providence and evils; of sin and grace; of the means of grace and the church, of the last things, and immortality. Each time 1. the traditional doctrine is presented a) as biblical, b) as ecclesiastical, and this again α) as patristic-scholastic, β) as orthodox protestant. This is followed by 2. the criticism that consists of the dissolution of the ecclesiastical doctrine by Rationalism, which Strauß places with the Socinians (and Arminians), which he once called "the watershed" between the old orthodoxy and the newer, already rationalistically frail Supernaturalism. Their attacks on the orthodox system are treated, therefore, in particular detail, but, then, above all, the blows by Spinoza in his *Tractatus theologico-politicus* and the criticism of the English

150. Two illuminating examples, one on Aquinas, the other on Luther: First, Strauß writes of Aquinas: "Reason cannot positively establish the truths of faith but at the most negatively establishes that they [the truths of faith] are not impossible. In contrast, rational grounds that one tries to draw from other sciences in opposition to particular, theological claims have so little [convincing] power that, far more, everything from other disciplines that opposes revealed teaching is demonstrated to be false by the very fact [of their lack of convincing power]." (*Glaubenslehre* I: 309.) Strauß cites to Aquinas' *Summa* I, 99, 1. See http://www.logicmuseum.com/wiki/Authors/Thomas_Aquinas/Summa_Theologiae/Part_I/Q1 [September 2020]) See, especially, *Summa* I, 1, 6 replies to Objections 1) (sacred doctrine comes from divine, not human knowledge) and 2) (the knowledge of this [sacred doctrine] comes through revelation and not through natural reason. "Therefore, it [sacred doctrine] has no concern to prove the principles of other sciences, but only to judge them"). Second, Strauß quotes Luther: "There is no more dangerous thing on earth among all dangers than a supreme, sensible reason, especially when it falls into spiritual things that affect the soul and God. For it is more possible to teach an ass to read than to blind your reason and lead it to what is right. It must be blinded and destroyed." (*Glaubenslehre* I: 313, n. 34) Luther continues: "Reason serves in matters of faith not before but after faith, as do the tongue and all human powers and limbs. Reason, after being enlightened by the Holy Spirit, serves faith." (*Glaubenslehre* I: 314, n. 38)

151. Significantly, Strauß employs Feuerbach's framework of religion as 'feeling' and philosophy as 'reason' in Feuerbach's *Pierre Bayle nach seinen für die Geschichte der Philosophie und Menschheit interessantesten Momenten* (Ansbach: Verlag von C. Brügel, 1838).

152. For example, Strauß quotes from Spinoza's *Tractatus*: "Is there a greater perversion than that the human spirit should be subordinated to the shadow image of [...] the Word of God, to the dead letter? [...]. Can faith be defended, if men deny all their knowledge and give up their reason? Verily, he who is of this opinion has more fear for the Scriptures than faith in them." (*Glaubenslehre* I: 341.

and German Enlightenment are brought to the fore. The conclusion of these remarks and the transition to the third section is, normally, the reformulation of Church teaching in Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*. Finally, 3) conceptually-speculative thinking is addressed. Strauß begins with Kant and ends with Hegel and the Hegelian school. *In the original plan, Strauß had, of course, thought of it differently – as the reconciliation between faith and knowledge, as the restoration of dogma to a higher potency, as the proof of the identity of the content of Church Doctrine with the thoughts and concepts of Hegelian speculation. However, the belief in this identity was now abandoned, and, therefore consequently, this speculative treatment and reinterpretation was essentially conceived according to its destructive and dissipating aspect in contrast and in opposition to Christian dogma.*¹⁵³ (emphasis added)

In his *Streitschriften* I of 1837, Strauß suggests what the 'doctrinal restoration' based on Hegel's meta-narrative would have looked like. Consistent with Hegel's "The Moral View of the World"¹⁵⁴ in which ethical perfection is impossible and with the Hegelian meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit and the goal of divinization of the Christian, Strauß rejects Traditional Theology's notion of 'personal sin' and eternal damnation. Hegel/the early Strauß shift the focus from personal sin and eternal judgment to the eternal blessedness that is the internal experience of the 'point of indifference' to Absolute Spirit, which negates and 'rises above' all sensuousness. In *Streitschriften* I,¹⁵⁵ Strauß emphasizes that, according to Matthew 12:32 *there is only one 'sin' that cannot be forgiven. That 'sin' is speaking against the Holy Spirit.* Strauß points out¹⁵⁶ that when speaking of 'eternal life,' the NT refers to a state of an open-ended future. Furthermore, when it comes to 'judgment' of the individual, the text gives two options that are treated distinctly and are 'in no relationship to one another:' 1) judgment of each individual (Matthew 16:27; II Cor. 5:10) at the Last Judgment or 2) judgment of the individual immediately after death (Luke 16:19 [esp. v. 22], 23:43; see Phil. 1:21; II Cor. 5:8; Revelation 14:13) either with the individual in fellowship with Christ or with other persons, spiritual beings, and Christ with the resurrection that occurs at death:¹⁵⁷ That is, the text is ambiguous about the point at which and the ontological status of the individual at the time of 'judgment,' but it is unequivocal about the eternal, spiritual duration of the status of blessedness and with respect to dismissal of an eternal damnation. Hence, *Strauß apparently took the 'restoration' of Church Doctrine to be concerned not only with the individual's awareness of Absolute Spirit but also with that awareness constituting the aim of all consciousness in history as he described in the "Concluding Dissertation" of the LJ (§ 150: The Speculative Christology) and*

153. Ziegler, II: 344–345.

154. See Hegel's "The Moral View of the World," see Vol. II "Introduction:" "Hegel on 'I should, but I can't' in Contrast to Kant's 'If I should, I can':" 550 ff. and Chapter 7: "Practical Reason Elevates Theoretical Reason:" the section "Hegel's Account of 'The Moral View of the World' is not Kant's Mor:" 727 ff.

155. See Strauß, *Streitschriften* I: 151.

156. See Strauß, *Streitschriften* I: 150.

157. See Strauß, *Streitschriften* I: 148–149.

in his quarrels with the Hegelians presented in the *Streitschriften* III: "The Various Perspectives on Christology within the Hegelian School."

Strauß asks:

Is there really a difference concerning the concept of the thing, whether I say: God has always decided the redemption of mankind, and from the beginning of its history has exercised an influence on it, preparing the full redemption; or: God has put a principle into mankind, which pulls it up again and again out of all ruin, and just when the ruin has become deepest and most general, consequently also most felt and mature, develops most freely and perfectly? Is there really a difference between these two versions because, in both cases, it is God to whom salvation is attributed?¹⁵⁸

If Strauß no longer intended to 'restore' Church Doctrine 'destroyed' by criticism, how did he view the interface between religion and philosophy/science?

The aphorism that succinctly summarizes Strauß' *Glaubenslehre* is: "The true criticism of Church Doctrine is its history"¹⁵⁹; Ziegler points out that "[...] this critical process [is] not a product only of today's theologian, but it is already present in the whole history of the development of Christianity. The theologian today has only to watch it and to summarize it comprehensively."¹⁶⁰ Ziegler cites from Strauß' *Glaubenslehre*: "All the crucibles and retorts in which dogma is melted and distilled [...] are not first to be made and put into operation by us, but we may only take them as they are already given as ecclesiastical parties and disputes, as heresies and synods, as rationalism, philosophy, and so forth."¹⁶¹

Although the objective negativity of this judgment, perhaps, is what is most striking, it also includes Strauß' own metaphysical crisis. As noted, his original intention for a history of Church Doctrine was to portray how Hegelian metaphysics 'saved' Christian teaching. Absent of any other metaphysical option, then, Strauß was left with nothing more than a historical criticism of Christianity. The sliver of Church teaching that remained at the end of the documentation of the internal collapse of Church teaching was a notion of 'immortality.' However, it was not the Christian immortality of an after-life but an echoing of Schleiermacher's aphorism from *On Religion* (not Schleiermacher's later *On Christian Faith* with its emphasis on 'feeling') that speaks

158. Strauß, *Streitschriften* III: 164. This is the Hegelian claim that Strauß came to see as 'Gnostic' (*Glaubenslehre* I: 501) and that turns the particularities into a logical moment of 'indifference' (ultimate irrelevance) in the name of the 'point of indifference' (to Absolute Spirit) (see Hegel, "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" GW II: 456, 465-467, 484, 487-488, 496-497, 499-500) by which Spirit only touches history with the wingtips of a dove. (see "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 128) It is the realization that led to the rejection of his earlier aim to write a history of Church Doctrine that restored the 'truth' of Christian Doctrine despite the destruction of criticism (see *Streitschriften* III: 59) to focus, instead, on the history of Church Doctrine as merely an account of its collapse out of its internal contradictions – without the aid of an 'external' philosophy. (*Glaubenslehre* I: 71.)

159. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 71.

160. Ziegler, II: 342.

161. Ziegler, II: 342. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 71.

of immortality as 'the eternal' experienced in every moment of finite, conscious experience in history. However, unlike Schleiermacher, for Strauß the immortality of the 'eternal in the present moment' refers to the 'rational' lawfulness to nature and the cosmos.

How did Hegel attempt to unite 'feeling' and 'reason' in his philosophy of religion? This is arguably for Strauß the central issue of the *Glaubenslehre*. Hegel's epistemology sought to resolve any tension between feeling and reason by distinguishing between feeling as 'representations' (form) and reason as 'content' (idea). Although Hegel claimed that representations and their content are 'one and the same,' he also wished to claim that the 'content' was independent of its representations.¹⁶²

Strauß' "Introduction" to the *Glaubenslehre* opens with a characterization of the current status of theology (specifically, the Hegelian Philosophy of Religion) as *a failed attempt to unite 'faith' and 'knowledge' or 'feeling' and 'reason.'* Despite Hegel's optimism with respect to the philosophical achievement of finally having unified religion and philosophy, especially, in his various articles in 1802–1803 written in collaboration with Schelling in their self-published *Kritische Journal der Philosophie*, Strauß concludes that the attempted resolution is merely 'cunning' 'self-deception.'¹⁶³

In a letter to Märklin on November 3, 1839, Strauß employs the two examples of the virgin birth and the resurrection as Hegelian attempts to retrieve 'eternal truth' out of gospel representations: "[I [confess] openly that I no longer represent the Hegelian standpoint and that I no longer wish to speak of the virgin birth of Christ, His resurrection, etc. as eternal truths."¹⁶⁴

Feuerbach maintained that, when it comes to religion, Hegel's speculative philosophy reverses the very relationship between what is 'essential' and the 'non-essential.' Hegel takes the Idea or ideas as the essential whereas he takes perceptible forms as representations to be non-essential. This allows Hegel to identify ideas with 'reason' and their forms with 'feeling.' In "Lecture 2" of his Heidelberg lectures from 1848/1849 published as *Das Wesen der Religion*, Feuerbach writes: "

Already in 1830, [...] I pointed out in verse form to a Hegelian dogmatist, who claimed that there was only a formal difference between religion and philosophy, that [Hegelian] philosophy only raised into concept what religion had in the form of representation: 'Being is Itself the form. Therefore, *you erase the content of faith when you erase the representation,*¹⁶⁵ I, therefore, reproached Hegelian philosophy for *making the essential of religion into the unessential*, and vice versa, the unessential into the essential. The

162. See Strauß, *Glaubendlehre* I: 11–13.

163. See Ziegler, II: 333.

164. Ziegler, II: 333.

165. This passage appears in the 1830 edition of Feuerbach's *Gedanken über den Tod und Unsterblichkeit aus den Papieren eines Denkers, nebst einem Anhang theologisch-satyrischer Xenien* (Nürnberg, Johann Adam Stein, 1830): 202.

essence of religion is precisely that which [Hegelian] philosophy turns into a mere form [representation].¹⁶⁶ (emphasis added)

According to Feuerbach, religion is essentially feeling, wishful thinking, and fanciful anthropomorphic projections onto an 'ultimate' reality, God. Hegelian speculative philosophy succumbs to the same illusion. According to Feuerbach, Hegel is claiming that the essence of religion is concerned with an abstract realm that is itself a human construction. In other words, for Hegel 'truth' as abstract thought is substituted for concrete experience. Hegel takes the representations (forms) of the scriptures that express feeling, wishful thinking, and fanciful anthropomorphic projections to have their 'true' content in Absolute Spirit. Consequently, Feuerbach views Hegel as engaged in the same 'reversal' of the non-essential for the essential that religion, especially Christianity, made.

Hegel, though, was convinced that the identification of the ideal content and representational form in Religion preserves the equation of 'feeling' and 'thought' because *the 'idea' and its 'representations' have the same 'form'* (albeit, one version of the form is an 'intellectual perception [*intellektuelle Anschauung*] whereas the other version is a 'sensuous perception' [*sinnliche Anschauung*]¹⁶⁷).

*When it comes to religion, Hegel distinguishes between 'theoretical reason' (disinterested θεωρία/contemplation that is Spirit: called 'higher' consciousness) and 'practical reason' (self-interested 'feeling,' 'imagination,' 'wishful thinking' that drives teleological agency in the world: called the 'lower' appetites).*¹⁶⁸ Following Feuerbach, Strauß points out that, when it comes to religion, this Hegelian portrayal of 'intellectual' and 'sensuous' perception is 'inverted' (*verkehrt*) in contrast to their relationship in philosophy. In religion, "the non-essential [religion] is made essential, and the essential [philosophy] is turned into the non-essential."¹⁶⁹

Hegel, too, recognizes a form of 'revelation' that is 'subjective.' It is the activity of finite, subjective consciousness that emerges out of the 'urge to knowledge' of Absolute Spirit *following* (!) the 'first' revelation of the 'First Negation' and prior to the 'third' revelation of the 'Second Negation.'¹⁷⁰ However, Hegel's notion of 'subjectivity' here (and in his criticism of Kant) is not Feuerbach's understanding of religion as subjec-

166. Feuerbach, "Lecture 2" in *Das Wesen der Religion* (Deutsche Bibliothek, 1913): 12. The 'essence' of religion, according to Feuerbach, is fantasy and wishful thinking, not Hegel's abstract content of Absolute Spirit.

167. See Hegel, "Glauben und Wissen." GW II: 305–306. Although Hegel and Strauß are unaware of it, this is a classic example of what Kant calls 'subreption.' Substitution of sense perception (*sinnliche Anschauung*) for intellectual perception (*intellektuelle Anschauung*), that is, the belief that sense perception gives one access to the thing-in-itself. For the definition of subreption, see the "Preface:" 64, n. 84.

168. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 17.

169. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 17.

170. See the "Addendum" (*Zusatz*) *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaft* (1830) § 384: GW X: 30–32.

tive, wishful thinking and imagination, but the dualistic, subject-object epistemology that Hegel calls the 'illusion' of 'constructivism'.¹⁷¹ Hegel goes so far as to say that this subjective 'understanding' is 'separated' from reason.¹⁷² Hegel calls the 'skeptical' of subjective thought a doubt not over whether it creates its categories but whether there is any ultimate metaphysical necessity to 'reason'.¹⁷³

Hegel claims in "On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Right" that "*only philosophy can determine if something is a subjective opinion or objectively true*"¹⁷⁴ and that it is possible for sensible form to "fully lose its truth."¹⁷⁵ Hegel acknowledges a validity to religious 'forms' (representations) as 'feeling' not because they are objectively true. They can be 'false' and are only objectively true to the extent that one knows their 'true,' Idealist content. In other words, whereas Feuerbach concludes that religion is 'mere feeling,' 'wishful thinking,' and 'fantasy' because its 'positive' claims are enthusiastic, anthropomorphic analogies, Hegel concludes that religion is presented in the representations (form) of feeling, but its truth, its ultimate concept, is Absolute Spirit, *regardless of the forms of its representation*. Religion as subjective feeling contains the 'true.'

Feuerbach's claim is that both *Christianity and Hegel substitute a fantasy realm of wishful thinking (Christianity) and a fantasy realm of abstraction (Hegelian speculative philosophy) for the 'real,' concrete world of human experience*. In short, the non-essential replaces the essential. Feuerbach articulated his criticism of both Christianity and Hegel in his original text, but *his explicit 'reproach' of Hegelian philosophy* appeared not in the 1830 but in the 1847 edition of *Gedanken über den Tod und Unsterblichkeit*: "Speculative philosophy, therefore, has done exactly what Christianity did: It substitutes consciousness [*Bewußtsein*], appearance, for essence, and in its theological perversity has made essence out of appearance, out of pure speculation."¹⁷⁶

In other words, as Feuerbach observes, as well as others,¹⁷⁷ both religion and Hegel make human wishes and fantasies 'essential' whereas, according to Feuerbach, philosophical, theoretical understanding is 'non-essential' *for religion*. Referring to

171. Hegel ignores Kant's explicit rejection of 'constructivism' (*Erdichtung*) in the *Critique of Pure Reason* B xxxix*.

172. See the "Preface to the First Edition" of the *Science of Logic* GW V: 16–17.

173. See *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* GW XX: 121–122. This is a criticism that he raised already in "Glauben und Wissen" ["Faith and Reason"] in 1802, where he especially ridicules Fichte, the arch-Kantian (see *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* GW XX: 415–416).

174. Hegel, "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" GW II: 511

175. Hegel, "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" GW II: 516–517.

176. Feuerbach, *Gedanken über Tod und Unsterblichkeit* (Leipzig: Verlag von Otto Wigand, 1847): 403.

177. Strauß cites to Georg Friedrich Daumer, *Andeutung eines Systems speculativer Philosophie* (Nürnberg: Verlag von Friedrich Campe, 1831), who graduated from the Gymnasium in Würzburg during the time of Hegel's directorship, and Bernhard Heinrich Blasche, *Philosophische Unsterblichkeitslehre. Oder. Wie offenbart sich das ewige Leben?* (Erfurt und Gotha: Flinzer'sche Buchhandlung, 1831). See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 17, n. 17.

Feuerbach's *Darstellung, Entwicklung und Kritik der Leibnizischen Philosophie*,¹⁷⁸ Strauß summarizes:

The doctrine of Hegel's philosophy of religion that there is only an unessential difference between philosophy and positive religion, insofar as this point of view [taken by Feuerbach, Daumer, and Blasche] declares as wrong that *the same content there [in philosophy] is only elevated to the form of the concept, which here [in positive religion] exists in the forms of feeling and imagination because it makes the unessential essential, but the essential unessential*. It is precisely imagination and feeling/sentiment [*Gemüt*] that constitute the essence of religion, these formal determinations make up the specificity of its content; *nothing is said by insisting that the Absolute is the common content of philosophy and religion because the content of religion is the absolute not as such* ([‘as such’] it is only the content of philosophy), *but as the object of feeling/sentiment [Gemüt] and the imagination [...]*. The standpoint of theology is practical [agency in the concrete world]: that of philosophy the standpoint of *θεωρία* [abstract contemplation].¹⁷⁹ Theoretically, I conduct myself objectively [in abstract contemplation]. However, practically, I conduct myself subjectively [in the concrete world].¹⁸⁰ Thus, *the foundation of philosophy is the [essential] nature of the [objective] thing: the foundation of religion and theology is the [particular] needs of the subject*. The subject makes itself a God, as it needs one, or rather desires one [...]. When it comes to the [abstract] impersonal, general activity of cognition, God is substance, monad, idea. However, in religion, where man behaves as a personal agent, God is also determined as a person. The acts of God's creation, redemption etc. are not free-necessary developments of His being, but arbitrary-free resolutions of His will. The laws of human action are not relations flowing from the nature of the thing, moral categories based on themselves, but commandments of the Lord, who does not prescribe it because something is good but only his approval makes it something good.¹⁸¹ (emphasis added)

178. Ludwig Feuerbach, *Darstellung, Entwicklung und Kritik der Leibnizischen Philosophie* (Ansbach: Verlag von Carl Brügel, 1837).

179. On Plato's notion of contemplation (*θεωρία*, *theoria*), see: 24, n. 7.

180. NOTE: Strauß is employing Hegel's distinction between 'theoretical' (contemplatively abstract) and 'practical' reason (teleologically concrete), which faults Kant for ignoring Absolute Freedom. However, Kant and Strauß ignore entirely the significance of what Kant calls 'autonomous freedom' (creativity). In other words, they fail to grasp what Kant stresses are 'pure' reason's *a priori* capacities (*Anlagen*) that make it possible for transcendental consciousness to experience, understand, and exercise agency in the world. On Hegel's understanding of theoretical and practical spirit, see his "Zusatz" ("Addendum") *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaft* GW X: 237. See as well, in "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" Hegel's portrayal of practical reason's laws as analytical' (GW II: 460) and governed by the .negative' of physical necessity rather than the .absolute freedom' of Absolute Spirit (GW II: 457–458, see as well, *ibid.*: 463, 466). Furthermore, Hegel takes Kant's practical reason to consist of subjectively constructed, 'empty abstractions' (GW II: 451). See as well, Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* GW XX: 346.

181. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 17–18. Note that Feuerbach and Strauß are defining religion under the Medieval Scholastic category of 'Occasionalist'/'Voluntarist,' not 'Intellectualist.' Strauß is also distinguishing between the morality of philosophy and the ethics of religion according to Hegel's distinction in "The Moral View of the World" of the *Phenomenology* between abstract, 'moral duty' and concrete 'ethics,' not, as with Kant for whom moral principles (as the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom) are inseparable from the practical agency of autonomous freedom (as the *ratio essendi* of morality). See Kant, *The Critique of Practical Reason* AA V: 4*. Without autonomous freedom, there is no encounter-

Strauß points out that Hegel offers a comforting vision of history under the tutelage of Absolute Spirit. Equating philosophical 'reason' and religious 'feeling' by insisting that idea (the true content) and form (the representations of perception), properly understood, complement one another claims that there is an ultimate harmony accomplished by Absolute Spirit throughout all history – even accounts for the development of 'levels of religion' in history that stretch from materialism to Spirit. However, that vision of ultimate harmony overlooks Spirit's determinism, ridiculed by Strauß as humanity's and God's 'dark urge',¹⁸² and overlooks that erroneous representations, supposedly having the same content as true ideas, cannot account for the development of the alternative, true (!), scientific materialism out of those erroneous forms.

Strauß himself remains caught on the horns of a dilemma that consists of Idealism and Materialism. Strauß contrasts these two 'philosophical' alternatives as represented by the Hegelian meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit and Feuerbachian Materialism. Hegel's meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit is an appealing siren call because it offers a vision of the diversity and conflict in and among religions as the manner by which Absolute Spirit works its way through history – despite and in spite of humanity. Strauß, contrasts this vision of harmony with the 'elitism' that is 'the alternative philosophy' of scientific materialism that calls for the cultivation of the 'technical skills' of science. The horns of this dilemma that leave only a choice between Idealism and Materialism accompany Strauß for the rest of his life, and in *The Old and the New Faith* he commits, unequivocally, to the latter. Unfortunately, again, Strauß' failure to engage rigorously Kant's Critical Idealism left him with no choice but to embrace Feuerbachian Materialism given the illusions and self-deceptions of Hegelianism.

Strauß' presentation of the dilemma begins:

There is a beautiful humanity in Hegel's view to determine religion as the form in which truth is for all men: *if it remains, even according to its content, not unclouded by this form, it is nevertheless also in this refraction that its rays are poured out on all; if the religions and churches have often been about shells, they have nevertheless been the shells of truth.* Mankind, "in its obscurest urge [*dunkler Drang*] was nevertheless aware of the right way."¹⁸³

ing moral principles. Therefore, the experience of a single moral principle is sufficient because there is no other purpose for a moral principle than to be applied by a transcendental consciousness who possesses autonomous freedom although autonomous freedom as a causality is incapable of proof or disproof but only capable of 'defense.' See the *Groundwork* AA V: 458–459.

182. On Strauß' ridiculing of Hegel's notion of the 'cunning of reason,' see the "Preface:" 89, n. 35 and the following n. 183.

183. Strauß has this aphorism from the "Prologue" of Part I of Goethe's *Faust. Der Tragödie*: God says to Mephistopheles (lines 328–330:

"Ein guter Mensch in seinem dunkeln Drange
Ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewußt."

A good man, through obscurest urge,
Has still an instinct of the one true way.

Strauß equates this 'dark urge' with Hegel's 'instinct of reason' [*Vernunftinstinkt*] that Hegel calls the opaque urge of Spirit. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 19, 75.

According to the opposing view, truth would be found only among philosophers [scientists], and the history of religion and the church would have to turn [...] into a history of human folly. It is not possible to imagine, how from this point of view a satisfying philosophical view of history would be possible.¹⁸⁴ (emphasis added)

The Feuerbachian et al. point of view makes impossible a ‘satisfying philosophical view of history’ as a meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit. However, Strauß proceeds to point out that, in fact, the Hegelian meta-narrative also is an ‘unsatisfying view of history.’ Hegel’s meta-narrative requires the claim that ‘true’ ‘philosophical’ theses are derived from ‘false’ Church teaching because the false physical science of the Bible has the same truth as philosophical ideas. Such a claim not only leaves no satisfactory account of the emergence of understanding of truth by the empirical sciences because what matters for them is not the empirical evidence but the metaphysical claim that Absolute Spirit is the truth; but also the actual history of Church teaching indicates clearly that philosophical ‘truth’ is corrupted by the false religious ‘representation.’

As little as the Hegelian claim is grounded by an identity of content [*Inhalt*] between religion and philosophy (when it comes to philosophy’s connection to religion); so certain is it that religion, as the essential form of representation (or feeling and fantasy) is also affected by the content [*Inhalt*] and makes the content into something else and less perfect than the philosophical content [*Inhalt*] engendered by pure reason.¹⁸⁵

The Hegelian thesis, if correct, would mean that today’s ‘philosophical’ (that is, for Hegel, scientific) understanding arose out of the biblical representations. Strauß points out that this is contradicted by history.

[...] [W]hether philosophical propositions may at the same time be a derivation of the doctrines of faith is another question. *If it should be said that the philosophical doctrines emerged from the ecclesiastical dogmas as pure developments from within, without foreign, external influences: then such a derivation would certainly contradict the appearance, according to which [...] physics, geography, astronomy, etc. [...] influenced the biblical and ecclesiastical ideas [...]* Rather, it was [...] physics, geography, astronomy, etc., which gradually brought the biblical and ecclesiastical ideas of heaven and earth, God and creation, etc., into the form in which they exist in the philosophically educated consciousness of our

Elsewhere when speaking of the ‘cunning of reason’ as ‘dark urge’ (*dunkler Drang*), Hegel employs it as a metaphor for ‘Double Negation’ but does not explicitly say that it functions in humanity unawares much less does he acknowledge that it is his substitute for ‘grace’ and leads to the particularities of history in themselves having no meaning. See for example, Hegel’s *Wissenschaft der Logik* II (1832) GW VI: 452 and *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*: § 209 GW VIII: 365; s. ≈ 1 §159: 109. On Hegel’s use of ‚Drang’/‘Trieb’ des (Welt) Geistes, see *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* GW XII: 73–74; *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, “Begriff des Geistes” § 384 GW X: 29–30; the “Appendix” (Zusatz) GW X: 237; GW VIII: 31 *Vorlesung über die Philosophie der Religion* GW XVII: 29–30; and Hegel’s review of *Solgers nachgelassene Schriften und Briefwechsel* GW XI: 255.

184. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre*: 21–22.

185. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre*: 22.

time. On the other hand, there is no reason to object to the derivation in question, if it understands the religious conception as only one factor among others, and if it sets itself the task of showing how, under changed educational conditions, the ecclesiastical way of solving the designated tasks is no longer sufficient, and which other one is to be put in its place.¹⁸⁶

Strauß then recognizes that the task of 'changing the educational conditions' by which religious representations were taken to be one among many elements influencing the quest of human understanding makes it likely that the 'educated' would cease to embrace 'positive Church teaching' although the exact determination of the question is irresolvable.¹⁸⁷ Strauß stops the examination of the relationship between 'reason' (philosophy) and 'feeling (religion)' at this point. Although it is clear: Religious 'feeling' (representations) are not able to stand against the challenges of philosophical 'reason,' and the 'false' representations (sensuous perceptions/*sinnliche Anschauungen*) of biblical and Church teaching would not generate the 'true' content (intellectual perceptions/*intellektuelle Anschauungen* of abstraction).

The logic that Hegel fails to address, though, is that, as a consequence of their ambiguity the sensuous representations (form) of religion are ultimately irrelevant. Hegel's 'hierarchy' of religions from 'natural' over 'subjective' to objective Spirit is a misapprehension because it refers only to a hierarchy of representations (the perceptible forms) while ignoring that the 'truth' of those representations is, in fact, the Spirit Itself. The hierarchy of religions is only the veil that conceals Absolute Spirit seeking to be not only 'In-itself' but also 'For-Itself' by means of the imperceptible 'cunning of reason' through all of history.¹⁸⁸ In short, *Hegel's reconciliation between religious representations and their true, philosophical content is an illusion.*

Despite all claims to the contrary by Hegel, *the content is indifferent with respect to its form.* In his *Encyclopedia* (1830), Hegel himself maintains that "[...]it has been rightly said of the true that it is index sui et falsi [indicator of 'what is' true and what is false], but from the false the true is not known, so the Concept is the understanding both of itself and of the conceptless form, but the latter does not comprehend the former."¹⁸⁹ Here Hegel's Idealism is in sharp focus, but the exact relationship between the concept and its form is left unclear. He had claimed in "Faith and Knowledge" (1802) that there is an identity between the content (concept) and its representations

186. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 23–24.

187. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 24.

188. See Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (1837) "B" GW XII: 49. Hegel's three-fold account of 'revelation' in his 'Addendum' [*Zusatz*] to *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaft* (1830) § 384 in GW X: 30–32 makes it clear that the process of revelation is Absolute Spirit's revealing Itself to Itself under the presupposition of the 'cunning of reason'. See above 605, n. 170.

189. Hegel, "Vorrede zur zweiten Ausgabe" in *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaft* (1830): GW VIII: 31.

(form) so that he can say that the ‘truth’ of both is the same.¹⁹⁰ However, here in the *Encyclopedia*, form (sensible representations) does not grasp its ‘inner truth.’ ‘Inner truth’ can only be achieved by its content (concept). It turns out, as in “On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Right” (also from 1802), that the *form is a matter of indifference to the content. Truth is established by the content (concept/Concept) irrespective of the representations (form) that is its vehicle.*¹⁹¹

Strauß addresses this profound ‘indifference’ to representations (historical events/texts) in the *Glaubenslehre* (1841):

[...] in order that the deficiency between the appearance of the individual with her/his essence be offset, *Hegel does not refer to the divine view of infinite progress [of the individual] as completed, but to the concept of the Idea, in which externality, finiteness, imperfection, the otherness in general, is an unessential, disappearing moment [...]* [I]n Hegel’s sense, one could say as well: *[the disappearing moment] is essential and lasting; or it is unessential only in the sense that it belongs to the side of the appearance of the essence, and it disappears only insofar as it is, like every moment, nothing fixed, but a point of passage, however inevitable, in the process of the Idea.*¹⁹²

In stark contrast, Feuerbach rejected any harmony between religion (feeling, wishful thinking) and philosophy (thought) by pointing out that not only are the positive claims of ecclesiastical faith grounded in wishful, anthropomorphic analogies but also Hegel’s ‘speculative’ philosophy of Absolute Spirit as the ‘true’ content of religion is equally a set of anthropomorphic analogies. In other words, *Feuerbach’s claim is not only that religion is the projection of anthropomorphic predicates onto ‘God’ but also that the whole spiritual superstructure of Absolute Spirit, specifically Hegelian philosophy, is an anthropomorphic projection that reduces appearances to an non-essential indifference.*¹⁹³

Strauß formulates his task in the *Glaubenslehre* to consist not in demonstrating the ‘truths’ of Hegel’s meta-narrative but in the more pressing need to engage the consistency of Church dogmatics regardless whether it is to serve a ‘future church of rational believers’ (granted, a limited few) or only ‘the present and future congregation of the

190. See Hegel, “Glauben und Wissen.” GW II: 305–306.

191. I address the issue of ‘indifference’ in its two senses of ‘non-differentiated’ unity and ‘apathetic meaninglessness in the “Preface: 50.

192. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 494–495.

193. See for example, Feuerbach’s discussion of ectypal (not archetypal) ideas in Lecture 14 of the *Das Wesen der Religion*: 134–135: “[...] (T)he generic concept, however, exists in thinking and for thinking; hence it is that man comes to think and believe that the world has sprung from ideas, from the thoughts of a spiritual being. From the point of view of thought, which abstracts from the senses, nothing appears more natural than this course; for to the spirit, which abstracts from the senses, the abstract, the spiritual, the merely thoughtful, is nearer than the sensuous; it is for it earlier and higher than the latter, therefore quite natural for it to let the sensuous spring from the spiritual, the real from the thoughtful. We find this course even among the modern, speculative philosophers [Hegelians]. They still create the world out of their head, like once the Christian God.”

knowingly adept.¹⁹⁴ The 'knowingly adept' in the natural sciences may become the far wider audience but, of course, it may be an audience uninterested in its conclusions with respect to biblical and church teaching, a fate that Strauß' work encountered.

Ziegler's summary of the *Glaubenslehre* raises the question: To what extent did Strauß remain a Hegelian? Ziegler views the *Glaubenslehre* of 1841 as Strauß' writing himself out of theology.¹⁹⁵ Strauß remained silent, theologically, for twenty year after its publication, but Ziegler maintains that Strauß remained Hegelian to the very end because, Ziegler correctly recognizes, Strauß is no 'consistent' materialist.¹⁹⁶ According to Ziegler, Strauß remained a 'religious' 'pantheist'.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, Ziegler claims that, despite his acknowledgement of 'feeling' in religion along with Hegel,¹⁹⁸ for Strauß 'intellectualism' dominated.¹⁹⁹ Nonetheless, although Ziegler reports Strauß' own dismissal of the 'illusions' of Hegel(ianism),²⁰⁰ Ziegler maintains that there was a 'whiff' of Hegel in Strauß to the end.²⁰¹

While I agree with Ziegler that Strauß was 'no consistent materialist,' I disagree with him that he remained a Hegelian 'to the end.' 'Panlogism'²⁰² is not 'pantheism.' In fact, when it comes to Hegelianism, it is more appropriate to speak of 'pan-en-theism,' than 'pantheism.' However, already in the *LJ*, Strauß placed emphasis on the eternal, rational order of physical lawfulness of historical events that no miracle can

194. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 24.

195. Ziegler, II: 337.

196. Ziegler, II: 337

197. Ziegler, II: 352.

198. See Ziegler, II: 339.

199. Ziegler, II: 340.

200. See Ziegler, II: 336–337.

201. Ziegler writes in II: 690: "The universe reasonable and itself reason and goodness, the universe full of life and reason the highest idea – it is clear [McG: really?] where Strauss took this from. It is nothing else than Hegel's optimistic panlogism [McG: or Schleiermacher's Platonism?]. We are the beings in whom the sensible becomes personal, – that sounds like a sentence from the Preface to the *Phenomenology*, where it says: "The true is the whole; but the whole is only Being that completes Itself through Its development; it is to be said of the absolute that It is essentially result, that It is only in the end what It is in truth." So Strauss at the end of his life is still so far a Hegelian as he had been at the time of the *Glaubenslehre*. However, by translating the concept of the All into religious absolute dependence, he links Schleiermacher with Hegel and thereby gains a concept of religion [...]. [Just as correctly] he is quite right with the, again, Hegelian-sounding proposition that every true philosophy is necessarily optimistic, because otherwise it saws off the tree branch on which it sits." (emphasis added) Ziegler himself footnotes to his own Vol. II: 337 where he finds Strauß' Hegelian continuity 'explained' because *Strauß is unable to be a 'consistent' materialist*. Is Ziegler's take on Strauß as an enduring 'Hegelian' influenced by his own Hegelian commitments? See Ziegler's comments on what he takes to be a 'printing error' in Hegel's *Philosophie des Rechts* in "Zu Kants Rechtslehre." In *Kant Studien* 14 (Nov. 1909): 494.

202. Ziegler, calls Hegel a 'Panlogist' and 'Arch-Rationalist.' See Ziegler, I: 257.

contradict.²⁰³ This notion that physical lawfulness is what governs ‘modern science’ stands in tension with Hegelianism to the extent that, unlike Hegelianism which is a version of archetypal Idealism, ‘modern science’ is Nominalist (ideas are ectypal as defended by Feuerbach) and its method is the hypothtico-deductive investigation of phenomena. Hegelianism takes ‘science’ to refer to the ‘logic of dialectic’ that governs ‘reality’ towards the teleological goal of Absolute Knowledge. Already with the *Glaubenslehre*, Strauß had confronted the anthropomorphism of Hegelianism and especially, out of his encounter with Feuerbach, came to embrace ectypal Nominalism. Although committed to the ‘rational order’ of the physical sciences, Strauß no longer embraced Hegel’s meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit in his *Glaubenslehre*, and he was troubled, especially, by the implications of Hegel’s epistemology that subordinates ‘form’ to ‘content,’ which for Hegel was the key to uniting ‘feeling’ and ‘reason.’

My reading of Strauß, though, claims that Strauß’ theological crisis with respect to Hegelianism arose even before the writing of the *Glaubenslehre* (already in “The Transient and Permanent in Christianity”) and clearly shaped his presentation of the history of Church Doctrine in the *Glaubenslehre*. Ziegler, however, suggests not only that Strauß remained in the Hegelian, ‘Intellectualist,’ metaphysical camp but also that he managed to hold together the tensions between ‘feeling’ and ‘knowledge:’

Strauss did not fail to recognize the emotional²⁰⁴ side of religion, he tried to unite Schleiermacher and Hegel by combining feeling and imagination (*Gefühl und Vorstellung*). However, as in the master, that is in Hegel himself, intellectualism and panlogism strikes again and again, so also [it remains] in [... Strauß], and makes his concept of religion more one-sided and narrower, makes the enduring contrast between religion and philosophy more tense and dangerous.²⁰⁵

In his last book in 1872, Strauß concurs with Feuerbach et al. that Hegel’s speculative philosophy of Absolute Spirit is anthropomorphic, wishful thinking. Yet, before turning to Strauß’ *The Old and the New Faith*, it is valuable to take a look at the work that marked Strauß’ re-entry into the theological fray and his re-engagement of Schleiermacher in 1865.

203. See Strauß, *LJ*: 78. However, Strauß nowhere acknowledges or remarks that Kant in a “General Remark” at the end of Section II of *Religion* rejects any role of miracles because it would ‘paralyze’ reason. See AA VI: 86–87.

204. Strauß here, at least, equates ‘feeling’ with merely emotions, not Hegel’s understanding of ‘feeling’ as part of practical reason’s *self-interestedness*, ‘imagination,’ and ‘wishful thinking’ that drives *teleological agency in the world*. See above: 605, n. 169.

205. Ziegler, II: 340.

1864: *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*. 'Natural' Moral Duty

After a twenty-year silence in which Strauß devoted his attention to biographies, Strauß returned to theological writing with his work on Reimarus (1862) and with his own theological reflections in *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* of 1864.

Strauß' *Hermann Samuel Reimarus und seine Schutzschrift* [*Herman Samuel Reimarus and his Protected Writing*] was an important milestone on the way to Strauß' 'return to theology' after the *Glaubenslehre*. Similarly to Reimarus, Strauß had concealed his religious convictions for twenty years. Strauß understood full well why Reimarus never published his criticisms of Christianity. Strauß, above all, was sympathetic with Reimarus' bitterness. Strauß writes: "So what else is to blame for the hypocrisy of so many published, reasonable people than the constraint of faith, linked to so many temporal misfortunes, which the theologians and preachers by means of their insults and persecutions impose on the confessors of a rational religion until their death?²⁰⁶" Strauß concludes: "He [Reimarus] would rather not speak at all than, once he had spoken, not speak fully and frankly.²⁰⁷" Strauß was ready to 'speak fully and frankly' with his second *Life of Jesus*. To be sure, in 1862 Strauß was fully and frankly clear about what he opposed although it is not until 1872 with *Der alte und der neue Glaube* that he expressed fully and frankly that for which he stood. See the final two poems in Appendix IV.

In his *Reimarus* work,²⁰⁸ Strauß signaled key shifts away from his theological convictions down to 1841, which he articulated more fully in his second *Life of Jesus* of 1864. For example, he points out that, according to Reimarus, Moses established a 'theocracy,' not a 'revealed' religion. Reimarus took the key to 'revealed' religion to be the 'afterlife.' However, Reimarus emphasized that the notion of the afterlife arose in Judaism only with the Maccabees after the return from the Babylonian Exile. In fact, earlier, the Hebrews viewed the soul as 'material' and took 'reward and punishment' to consist of 'success or failure' in this life. Furthermore, Reimarus demonstrated as unfounded the Christian teaching that connected the 'First' Testament notion of messiahship with resurrection and the afterlife. Whereas Reimarus' understanding of 'revealed religion' was solidly anchored in the afterlife, Strauß already here distances himself both from Reimarus and the 'Spirit' *Weltanschauung* of the 19th C.²⁰⁹

206. Strauß, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus*: 248–249.

207. Strauß, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus*: 249.

208. See Strauß, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus* §21: 330–334.

209. This is another clear indication that Strauß had not studied Kant with any rigor. In *Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason*, Kant claimed that 'any religion without a notion of the afterlife' was not a real religion. To be sure, Kant's focus for the afterlife was not the attainment of blessedness in the next life but the effect that the afterlife can have on one's responsibly exercising one's creative talents in this life. Furthermore, Kant's concern was not 'success' in one's efforts but 'satisfaction'. See "5) Kant claimed no role for the resurrection and ascension of Christ.:" 836 ff.

We in the nineteenth century take a different attitude to this point; from our side it would be the last reproach we would make to the Old Testament that it lacks the doctrine of immortality. It is true that the New Testament is superior to us in that it contains this doctrine, for we know that the way from the external to the internal, from the sensual to the spiritual, is through the hereafter. Man first necessarily becomes aware of the Spirit as the power over matter in the form that his (*sic.*) soul continues after the dissolution of the body; of the mind as that which determines the value and destiny of man independently of the course of the world *only in such a way that he promises himself a redemption in the hereafter*. Behind this standpoint of the New Testament the Old is as much behind as we are beyond it: we know that one only begins to think about all questions concerning human destiny and human destiny when one has renounced the fantasy of a continuation after death; that *morality only stands on solid ground when it no longer needs a future retribution because it finds its reward in itself*. And we see with satisfaction how even a man of so high a mind and so noble a disposition as Reimarus falls into the inevitable fate of all those who seek to prove immortality from the standpoint of a future retribution: *namely, to contradict himself and to utter vulgarities*. The tenth of his treatises on the noblest truths of natural religion, in so far as it is devoted to this proof, stands in direct contrast to the ninth, in which he had set aside the doubts against divine providence, and had resolved with much subtlety all those alleged contradictions between worthiness and happiness in this life, from which he now seeks to extract proofs of retribution in another. However, when Reimarus in his *Protected Writings* [*Schutzschrift*] also thinks that without a future life the animals would be happier than man; when he exclaims: 'If we are only born for this life, what good is the knowledge of the highest being, from whose perfections we are completely cut off? what the moral precepts which restrain our sensual pleasures, and yet are connected with no certain or long-lasting reward? what the foresight of an inevitable death, the mere idea of which makes our whole life bitter?' -- with such commonplaces and vulgarities Reimarus sinks still deeper beneath himself than the apostle Paul in the well-known passage I Cor 15:19, 32.²¹⁰ (emphasis added)

Nonetheless, what Strauß shared with Reimarus was incredulity over God's having waited so long before introducing 'revealed' religion and the blessedness of the afterlife to humanity.²¹¹

In *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* of 1864, there is, now unsurprisingly, no mention of Hegelian metaphysics. What comes as a surprise is Strauß' invoking Kant in his new portrayal of Christianity. In the early 1860s, his circle of friends were calling for a 'return to Kant.' It is clear, though, that he did not share, entirely, their enthusiasm for Kant. Strauß' understanding of morality remains stuck in Hegel's "The Moral View of the World" from the *Phenomenology* and in Baur's reading of Kant in *Gnosis* and *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*. Moral duty remains an 'empty abstraction' distinct from the 'real world' limits on ethics and retains Baur's

210. Strauß, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus*: 333–334.

211. See Strauß, *Hermann Samuel Reimarus*: 334. Strauß himself ignores Paul's claim that until Jesus' coming God had patiently tolerated humanity's affront to 'His' honor (Romans 3:25–26) – as if 'blessedness' was a matter of God's honor, not His 'love' or His concern for the oppression, persecution, exploitation, and suffering of humanity.

emphasis on Kant's 'radical subjectivity.'²¹² 'Salvation' here is formulated in terms of Jesus, the 'savior,' sowing the 'seed of internal awareness' of the moral capacity of 'I can,' which I 'must' but am unable to achieve perfectly.²¹³ In other words, Christianity was founded, according to Strauß in 1864, by a 'moral teacher' who (like others before him and those after him, who had or will have addressed a different social context) was concerned with 'the heteronomous, moral improvement of humanity *as a species* in this world, not by objective, open-ended exercising of perfect, moral capacities on the part of the individual in this or the next life.'²¹⁴

To be sure, Jesus is a model teacher, but he is neither the first nor the last. As one among the educators of ideal humanity, he is clearly at the forefront. However, from the way Jesus is portrayed in the gospels, one can say that, whereas certain elements of human experience were completely developed, others were not (for example, family life is overlooked; the relationship to the state is passive; pursuit of a career in all its variables is absent; and everything concerned with the arts and enjoyment of life remain completely outside his concern).²¹⁵ Here it is not merely that he partially addressed certain aspects of human experience by only providing, sketchy, governing principles, but the very concepts appropriate for them are not to be found.²¹⁶ These elements require various cultural contexts as well as other epochs of history yet to come, and not merely models from the past.²¹⁷ All such improvements in understanding humanity fit entirely, according to Strauß, with the ideal of humanity found in Jesus. They don't require that Jesus introduce something so perfect and new into the course of history that the fundamental conditions of human experience are transformed.²¹⁸ In short, Strauß places the notion of 'moral improvement' within the framework of the historical development of the human species, not as merely a concern with the individual's assumption of personal responsibility, however limited by circumstances, for the exercise of her/his agency.²¹⁹

212. On Baur's reading of Kant, see the "Preface:" 51, n. 47.

213. This is entirely unlike Kant's notion of 'if I should, I can.' Kant's aphorism is a criticism of 'original sin,' and is directed at confirming humanity's *autonomous freedom* to initiate sequences of events that nature on its own cannot achieve. Autonomous freedom as the *ratio essendi* of morality is acknowledged because we experience universal, moral principles – in contrast to hypothetical imperatives that govern how to properly do a specific activity. There is no other ground for a moral principle than an agent of autonomous freedom. Without autonomous freedom the agent would be determined by nature without any genuine responsibility for her/his agency. See Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* AA V: 4*.

214. See Strauß, *LJEGP* (1864). Leipzig: 'F.A. Brockhaus, 1864: 626–627.

215. See Strauß, *LJEGP*: 625–626.

216. See Strauß, *LJEGP*: 626.

217. See Strauß, *LJEGP*: 626.

218. See, Strauß, *LJEGP*: 626–627.

219. Although the theme of the 'moral improvement of the human species' is central to Kant's moral theory, the *ground* for Kant's claim is not that changing historical circumstances call for newly created ethical rules but, in dramatic contrast, the enduring creativity of humanity's 'autonomous freedom' is self-governed by universal, that is 'wide,' *categorical* imperatives. Without autonomous

Unlike his portrayal of the ‘unsurpassability’ of Jesus in “The Transient and Permanent in Christianity,’ here any teacher of ethics must *necessarily* be surpassed because humanity’s ever-changing and new historical context requires the discovery of the appropriate ethical principles of the new context. There is a degree of surpassability of Jesus, for example, because he could not have encountered the demands of family life and the subsequent developments of economics and politics, which require other ethical principles than those encountered and taught by Jesus.

The crisis that the *Glaubenslehre* represents for Strauß is that *both* faith and reason are in tatters, not merely ‘traditional’ faith as a consequence of an attack on it by secular reason. Strauß had no adequate ‘religious’ alternative to Hegelianism in 1841, which is, in my judgment, the best explanation for his remaining silent with respect to religion for twenty years. He devoted his energies to the ‘geniuses’ of ‘culture’ and education, especially German culture with the writing of biographies of ‘*Andersdenkenden*’ (dissenters and dissidents).²²⁰ When he returned to his own theological reflections in 1864, his reentry was shaped by what was for him the core issue of his initial entry into theology, Christology. However, this time the Hegelianism of 1835 is gone, and there is an effort to substitute a modified Kantian Christology for his Hegelian Christology.

Feuerbach’s work was an unqualified rejection of ‘God-consciousness’ in all its forms: as a Personal Deity, a Hegelian ‘Double Negation,’ and a Schleiermachiean ‘Perfect God-consciousness.’ At the end of his *Glaubenslehre*, Strauß clung to his own, thin-thread notion of God-consciousness formulated in “The Transient and Permanent in Christianity” as the sense of a subjective, internal harmony with eternal reason within consciousness, to be sure, *in history*. With his *Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*, not only is there no longer any Hegelian meta-narrative and Schleiermacher plays as good as no role, but also Strauß’ own notion of internal God-consciousness of a rational order is barely recognizable. Rather, he formulates a ‘religion of humanity’ in contrast to the ‘religion of Christ’ that draws on aspects of Kant’s moral philosophy as it had become popular among his circle of friends in the 1860s. Religion means the ‘moral improvement’ of humanity as a species, not as individuals, in this world.

freedom there is no reason for there to be anything like a universal, categorical imperative. Yet, given that there are such imperatives, they confirm the ‘reality’ of autonomous freedom. See Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* AA V: 4*.

220. Strauß wrote biographies beginning already in 1836 with a collection of lectures on *Voltaire*. 6 *Vorträge* (Leipzig: Kröner, 1836); *Christian Märklin: ein Lebens- und Charakterbild aus der Gegenwart* (Mannheim: Bassermann, 1851); *Nicodemus Frischlin* (Frankfurt a.M.: Literar. Anst, 1856); *Ulrich von Hutten*, 2 Vols. (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1858–1860); *Herman Samuel Reimarus* (1862; Bonn: Verlag von Emil Strauß, 1877); and essays on Justinus Kerner. This focus on *German* ‘geniuses’ is reflected in the two ‘encores’ (*Zugaben*) that conclude *Der alte und der neue Glaube* in which Strauß reviews the achievements of ‘our poets (*Dichtern*), Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller as well as ‘our musicians,’ Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

However, this Kantian moral philosophy is itself a watered-down version of Kant's practical reason. Strauß continues to take 'practical reason' in the Hegelian sense to be concerned with teleological agency that is concerned, ethically, only with consequences, not with transcendental conscious' capacity for autonomous, creative freedom and *a priori* synthetic judgment of lawfulness that governs the two 'domains' of understanding of nature (theoretical reason) and of assumption of responsibility for one's creativity (practical reason).

Furthermore, as in "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity," the 'life of Jesus' presented here is the 'bare bones' of history that is discernable in the gospels in an attempt to 'ground' Christianity in factual claims. No more than he grasped Kant's understanding of practical reason has Strauß tapped into the implications of the Kantian, creative element of *autonomous freedom* that is at the core of his own 'genetic mythical principle' in the original *LJ*.

The first Appendix. "Likely 'Historical' Elements of Jesus' Life"²²¹ present a summary of that material that Strauß considered as 'historical' in *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*. I do not repeat that account here but focus on the Kantian elements that accompanied Strauß across his career, beginning with the *LJ*, that shape his understanding of Christianity in 1864.

In the *LJ* of 1835, Strauß presents what he calls Kant's 'symbolic' Christology. Salvation does not require the belief that "[...] there was once a man who by his holiness and merit gave satisfaction for himself and for all others [...]"²²² Rather, "[...] it is the duty of men universally to elevate themselves to the ideal of moral perfection deposited in reason, and to obtain moral strength by the [McG: ... remonstrance (*Vorhaltung*)] of this ideal. Such moral faith alone man is bound to exercise, (*sic.*) and not historical faith."²²³ *The key elements to Strauß' understanding of Kant's 'symbolic' Christology are: 1) 'salvation' is concerned with elevating oneself to the 'ideal of moral perfection' that is 2) inwardly present as 'reason,' which in turn motivates agency.*

Only humanity's reason alone makes the "[...] world the object of divine Providence, and the end of creation. This idea of a humanity well-pleasing to God, has existed in God from all eternity; it [the idea of a humanity well-pleasing to God] proceeds from his essence, and is therefore no created thing, but his eternal Son, the Word, through whom, that is, for whose sake, all things were created, and in whom God loved the world."²²⁴ This ideal of moral perfection well-pleasing to God does not come from humanity, its presence in humanity is inexplicable. Symbolically, it can be said "[...] to have come down to us from heaven, and to have assumed human

221. See

Part II:

An Historical Reader for the 1839 Zurich Revolution: 319 ff.

222. Strauß, *LJ*: 773.

223. Strauß, *LJ*: 774.

224. Strauß, *LJ*: 774.

nature, and this union with us may be regarded as the condition of God's [... emptying (*Erniedrigung*, kenosis)] of Himself as the God/Man."²²⁵ *The ideal of moral perfection is only possible for a creature possessing needs and inclinations, which leads us to the ideal of a human being who was willing to and overcame all obstacles and suffering, even the most shameful death.* "[...] [T]his idea has its reality completely within itself, and it needed no exemplification in experience, since [*sic.*] such an example would not fully disclose the inward disposition, but would only admit of our forming dubious inferences thereupon."²²⁶ For that reason, the ideal resides 'only in reason' because no example in the senses is adequate to have fulfilled its expectation. "[...] [B]esides the moral faith in the idea, nothing further is requisite than the historical perception [*historische Wahrnehmung*] that [... a person's] life conformed to that idea, in order to accredit him as its personification."²²⁷

Anyone aware of such a moral disposition to perfection has no need of an historical example but "[...] he would adhere unalterably to this exemplar, and faithfully follow his steps" and "[...] such a man alone is entitled to consider himself an object of divine pleasure [*Gegenstand des göttlichen Wohlgefallens*]."²²⁸

To elevate himself (*sic.*) to such a state of mind, man must depart from evil, cast out the old man, crucify the flesh; a change which is essentially connected to a series of sorrows and sufferings [...] [T]he regenerated man [...] physically and in his empirical character [...] he remains the former man [...] but morally, with his changed disposition, [he has] become a new man. Having [...] taken [...] on] the disposition of the Son of God, that which is [...] the new man [...] may be represented, by a personification of the idea, as a substitution of the Son of God [...] [T]he suffering which the new man, in dying to the old, must perpetually incur through life, being conceived in the representative of mankind, as a death suffered once for all.²²⁹

The only thing recognizable in this account of Kant are the metaphors. Strauß has either not understood Kant's text and its irony, or he has purposefully distorted it. Strauß presents only a caricature of Kant through the Hegelian lens that portrays Kant as a 'subjectivist' whose 'ideas' and 'ideals' are merely 'empty abstractions' with humanity by its own (always unsuccessful) efforts rising above sensuality to achieve the ideal of moral duty to which it aspires merely by the subjective means of 'awareness of the ideal' – an obviously impossible achievement from the perspective of Hegel's "The Moral View of the World."

225. Strauß, *LJ*: 774.

226. Strauß, *LJ*: 774.

227. Strauß, *LJ*: 774.

228. Strauß, *LJ*: 775.

229. Strauß, *LJ*: 775. Strauß cites to Kant's *Religion*, "Part Two: Concerning the Battle of the Good Against the Evil Principle for Dominion over the Human Being," "Section One" and "Part Three: The Victory of the Good Principle over the Evil Principle, and the Founding of a Kingdom of God on Earth," "Division One."

Without Kant's notion of *autonomous freedom*, which consists of the capacity intentionally to initiate sequences of events that nature cannot accomplish on its own, there can be no accounting for how one gets from 'moral duty' to 'concrete agency.' The Hegelian 'solution' claims that the gap between 'ought' and 'is' is accomplished by Absolute Spirit Itself (*as a form of divine predestination*) working Its way to self-awareness through the finite world with the consequence that the restrictions that are the limits of concrete experience prohibit the individual's fulfillment of moral duty. If this caricature of Kant were correct, his moral teaching is incapable of fulfillment and a silly illusion.

Strauß says precisely these things as he concludes:

This [Kantian] view was met immediately on the part of the church by the reproach, that instead of the riches of divine reality which faith discovers in the history of Christ, it palmed upon us a collection of empty ideas and ideals; *instead of a consolatory work effected, an overwhelming obligation.* [...] By this system, man is thrust out of the reconciled world in which Christianity places him [McG: 'properly' understood by Strauß in 1835, of course, as the reconciliation of Absolute Spirit by means of Double Negation], into an unreconciled world, out of a world of happiness into a world of misery; for where reconciliation is yet to be effected, *where happiness has yet to be attained, there is at present enmity and unhappiness.*²³⁰ And [*sic.*], in truth, the hope of entire deliverance from these conditions is, according to the principles of this system, which admits an infinite approximation towards the idea, deceptive; for that which is only to be reached in an endless progression, is in fact unattainable.²³¹ (emphasis added)

Strauß now rallies 'science' against Kant:

Science has perceived that to convert ideas simply into an obligatory possibility, to which no reality corresponds, is in fact to annihilate them; just as it would be to render the infinite finite, to present it as that which lies beyond the finite. *Science has conceived that the infinite has its existence in the alternate production and extinction of the finite;* that the idea is realized only in the entire series of its manifestations; that *nothing can come into existence which does not already essentially exist* [McG: Intellectualist Idealism]; *and, therefore, that it is not to be required of man [sic.], that he should reconcile himself with God, and assimilate his sentiments to the divine, unless this reconciliation and this assimilation are*

230. Strauß reads Kant as a 'consequentialist,' who is supposed to have claimed that the goal of moral effort is happiness. Strauß clearly has not read Kant at this point. Kant frequently rejects the notion that happiness (*Glückseligkeit*) is the goal of morality. An example, from the 'Preface' to the *Metaphysics of Morals*. "[W]hen eudaimonia (the happiness principle) is established as precept rather than eleutheronomy (the principle of freedom and its internal legislation), the consequence is the *euthanasia* of all morality." (parentheses from Kant) (AA VI: 378). See as well: 28, n. 11.

Although Kant's *Menschenkunde* was published in 1831, Strauß is unaware of Kant's account of his 'negative method' with its response to pain and suffering with a 'positive' passion for the lawfulness that motivates theoretical and practical understanding and brings satisfaction (not necessarily happiness) when one responsibly creates on the basis of one's autonomous freedom. See "Kant's 'Negative Method'" in 45, n. 28.

231. Strauß, *LJ*: 776.

already virtually effected [by the ‘predestination’ that is the Double Negation of Absolute Spirit].²³² (emphasis added)

Strauß’ Kantian morality in the *LJ* is a system of empty, abstract, overwhelming obligation to elevate oneself to moral perfection by departing from evil and rising about sensuousness.²³³ Absent an understanding that ‘nothing can come into existence which does not already essentially exist, Kant’s moral obligation remains an unrealizable, empty illusion. Kant had simply failed to grasp the predetermining ‘necessity’ of Absolute Spirit as the single, *a priori* synthetic judgment that has always and already reconciled God and humanity.²³⁴

Strauß’ ‘Kantian,’ ‘religion of humanity’ in *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* presents a subtle but profound re-working of the ‘symbolic Christology’ of the *LJ* that focuses more on the ‘historical facts’ of Jesus’ ministry and teaching.

‘Salvation of humanity’ [*Seligkeit des Menschen*] is no longer a reconciliation between Hegel’s finite spirit and Absolute Spirit that has ‘essentially always and already occurred.’ Rather, salvation [consists of

[...] the possibility of its fulfillment of its condition by the development of its in-born powers and the experience of the corresponding quantity of satisfaction that arises from that development. The old Reimarus recognized that salvation cannot depend upon the acknowledgement of facts with respect to which among thousands hardly anyone can submit to a thorough investigation that would arrive at a conclusion of certainty. Rather, *as certain as it is that the human condition is universal and achievable by all, the conditions of their achievement must also be capable of achievement*.²³⁵ *apart from and before the will*

232. Strauß, *LJ*: 777.

233. Kant explicitly rejects the notion that evil is grounded either in sensuousness or in reason. See Kant, *Religion* VI: 34–35: “Sensuous nature [...] contains too little to provide a ground of moral evil in the human being, for, to the extent that it eliminates the incentives originating in freedom, it makes of the human a purely animal being; a reason exonerated from the moral law, an evil reason as it were (an absolutely evil will), would on the contrary contain too much, because resistance to the law would itself be thereby elevated to incentive [...] and so the subject would be made a diabolical being.”

234. Hegel claims that “[...] the Concept [...], without the variety of perception, is empty and without content, although Hegel’s own Concept is *the singular a priori synthesis*. Because it is this, it has determination and difference in itself. As the determinateness of the Concept, absolute determinateness, the uniqueness, the Concept is *the basis and source of all finite determinateness and multiplicity*” (*Wissenschaft der Logik* II [1832] GW VI: 2619; and Hegel claims that the ‘I’ and the Concept (One) are an *a priori* unity: “That I am the One and that I am active as thinking, setting unity, is, however, not so precisely stated in Kant. That which thinking produces is unity; thus, it produces itself, for it is the One [the Concept]. (The unity can also be called relation; insofar as a manifold is presupposed and this remains on one side as manifold, it is called related). This is transcendental apperception; *the pure apperception of self-consciousness is the synthesizing function*.” *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* GW XX: 344.

235. This sentence might be taken to be a seismic difference from Strauß’ understanding of morality in his earlier writings that are governed by Hegel’s “I should, but I can’t.” However, Strauß is not claiming anything differently than Hegel. He is only saying here that ‘moral duty’ is known ‘apart and before the will’. in the *LJ* and the *Glaubenslehre* where Strauß’ morality is shaped by the Hegelian ‘I

[!], which sets itself in motion towards the goal, the *knowledge of this goal itself, given to everyone, must not be an accidental knowledge of history coming from outside, but must be a necessary knowledge of reason, which everyone can find in himself.*²³⁶ (emphasis added)

Strauß retains his focus on Kant from the *LJ* that emphasizes Kant's dismissal of the 'factual history' of an individual savior and emphasizes the significance of the 'rational ideal' of morality:

Like Spinoza, Kant also distinguished the historical person of Jesus from the ideal that is found in human reason, of a humanity pleasing to God, or of the moral disposition in all its purity to the extent possible in a world dependent on needs and inclinations. It is the general duty of man to rise to this ideal [McG: by objective achievement]; but although we cannot imagine it otherwise than in the image of a perfect man, and, although it is not impossible that such a man once lived, because we should all resemble that ideal, it is not important that we know of the existence of such a man or believe in it, but only that we hold that ideal before us, recognize it as obligatory for us, and strive to make ourselves like it.²³⁷ (emphasis added)

However, here in 1864, Strauß profoundly modifies his position on morality from the *LJ* and the *Glaubenslehre*. For example, in the *LJ* he insisted that the individual is powerless over sensuous desires²³⁸ and in the *Glaubenslehre* he claims that Kant's moral theory only offers an 'empty, abstract obligation'²³⁹ whereby "[...] humanity, as long as it has sensualism struggling with its reason, that is, as long as humanity exists, [...] is incapable of salvation [*Seligkeit*] [...]"²⁴⁰ Philosophy, that is, Hegelianism, Strauß maintains, is, at least in part, to blame for mis-understanding t humanity's moral capacity, which is no perfectly achieved archetype either historically or philosophically but arises in and through the experience of the individual:

[... *Philosophers are in part to blame for mis-representing the archetype of human perfection because they*] speak as if the archetype of human perfection, according to which the individual has to orient himself, were *given in reason once and for all*; [...] as if this archetype, that is, the ideal Christ, could exist in us just as it does now, *even if no historical Christ had ever lived and worked.*²⁴¹ However, this is not at all the case in reality. The idea

should, but I can't'. Here in the *LJEGP*, Strauß continues to emphasize a universal knowledge of moral duty independent of the will, but its 'fulfilment' consists in the continued growth in knowledge of 'moral duty' *on the part of the community* (!) as it generates new moral principles to govern its new context. On the difference between Hegel's 'I should, but I can't' and Kant's 'If I should, I can,' see "Vol. II: Introduction:" "The Moral View of the World" 547 ff.

236. Strauß, *LJEGP*: 624.

237. Strauß, *LJEGP*: 624–625.

238. See Strauß, *LJ*: 774–776.

239. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 719.

240. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 719–720

241. In the *LJ*, Strauß insisted that the 'ideal Christ' in reason must already exist as an achievement of Absolute Spirit.

of human perfection, like other ideas, is initially given to the human spirit only as a capacity [Anlage],²⁴² which gradually receives its formation through experience.²⁴³ (emphasis added)

Although Jesus is in the front row when it comes to those who have cultivated the ideal of reason,²⁴⁴ the full meaning of the significance of his moral teaching was anything but pure among his followers. "However, the traits of tolerance, gentleness, and love of mankind, which Jesus made the dominant ones in [his teaching], nevertheless were not lost to mankind, and it was precisely from them that all that we now call humanity could germinate."²⁴⁵ (emphasis added) The Christ is neither an 'empty abstraction' as Strauß now understands the LJ, nor a 'genius' of internal piety as in "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity," nor is humanity powerless to achieve moral improvement as in the *Glaubenslehre*. Rather, *the Christ is a farmer planting seeds capable of sprouting in every individual*.

Jesus remains here in 1864 for Strauß a moral teacher of immense significance but no longer an unsurpassable,²⁴⁶ moral teacher as Strauß claimed in "*The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity*." Nevertheless, Jesus as a moral teacher is no source of external, heteronomous principles. He is an instructor of humanity's moral capacity that all of humanity must cultivate, internally:

[...] [T]he critic lives with the conviction [...] that he is doing a good and necessary work when he [sic.] removes all that which makes Jesus a superhuman being as a well-intentioned and at first perhaps charitable, but in the long run harmful and now downright corrupting delusion, and [when the critic] restores the image of the historical Jesus in his simple human features as much as possible, but refers mankind for its soul to the ideal Christ, to that moral model image, in which the historical Jesus first brought several main features to light, but which as a capacity [Anlage] belongs just as much to the general dowry of our species as its further development and completion can only be the task and the work of the whole of mankind.²⁴⁷ (emphasis added)

In *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*, Strauß remained true to his theme of the significance of factual history for grounding of faith that had required him to distance himself from the Hegelian 'indifference' to facts in order to emphasize the 'historical Jesus.' However, now it is not a 'historical Jesus' who had achieved God-consciousness as internal, rational piety but the 'historical Jesus' as agrarian, seed planter who 'sows' the 'moral ideal' not as an already accomplished achievement in

242. This formulation appears to be a reference to Kant, who spoke of transcendental consciousness consisting of capacities (*Anlagen*), which must be exercised and cultivated.

243. Strauß, *LJEGP*: 625.

244. See Strauß, *LJEGP*: 625.

245. Strauß, *LJEGP*: 626. One would think that one was reading Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) with its praise of Christianity as the formulator and preserver of rationality (*Logos*).

246. See Strauß, *LJEGP*: 626.

247. Strauß, *LJEGP*: 626–627.

a unique Christ figure but as a set of internal capacities capable of cultivation by each individual. Although this emphasis on internal capacities (*Anlagen*) in need of development by the individual sounds Kantian, *the focus of moral effort, according to Strauß, is external achievement, which is always imperfect. Hence, moral improvement shifts from focus on the individual to focus on the species as it incessantly seeks to negotiate new historical circumstances. Clearly, Strauß breaks dramatically here from any and all forms of Idealism. 'Essence' (Idea -perfection) does not precede 'actuality' (historical forms) as the case with Idealism (with the exception of Kant's Critical Idealism) but arises out of actuality by means of the cultivating of universal capacities.*

1865 *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*:

In 1865 Strauß turned, once again, to examine Schleiermacher's theology with his *The Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith*. In addition to repeating the criticisms of "Schleiermacher und Daub," here he adds the crucial rejection of Christ as a new event of ultimate, eminent causality. This work, when combined with "Schleiermacher and Daub" is a devastating dismissal of Schleiermacher's theology.²⁴⁸

No Ultimate, Infinite, Eminent Causality

In light of the thorough investigation and dismissal of Schleiermacher in the 1839 "Schleiermacher und Daub" essay, the return to a study on Schleiermacher in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* initially appears to be redundant and even ignores crucial aspects of Strauß' criticisms of Schleiermacher in the earlier work. From the perspective of *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*, though, it is crystal clear why Strauß 'needed' to return to the core theme of 'Perfect God-consciousness' in Schleiermacher.

Strauß had cultivated a Christology of 'genius' in "The Transitory and the Permanent in Christianity' that already had strong echoes of Schleiermacher's Christology of 'Perfect God-consciousness.' In 1838, Strauß had skirted *the relational, causal question* of why an instance of 'Perfect God-consciousness' was required by focusing on religious 'piety' as internal awareness of *the divine, eternal, rational order within the self and in history* of Schleiermacher's *On Religion*,— not the 'feeling of absolute dependence' in Schleiermacher's own *Glaubenslehre (The Christian Faith)*. The issue of the 'feeling of absolute dependence' in contrast to 'reason' is the central theme of Strauß' criticism of Schleiermacher in the 1839 article on "Schleiermacher und Daub." With *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, though, *the relational, causal question was clearly front and center.*

248. See "Chapter 4: Why Schleiermacher was not an Option." 249 ff.

How is it possible for Jesus (or any other religious teacher) to *cause* a religious transformation in others? Unaddressed in "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity" as well as in "Schleiermacher und Daub," now it was inescapable because Strauß had not only left his archetypal (Hegelian) Idealism behind but also had come to embrace the Nominalist notion of ectypal ideas that arise out of empirical experience. Having come to understand the 'error' of Idealist philosophers that 'essence' must precede 'particularities' (a 'perfect' Idea precedes its 'imperfect' copies and shadows), Strauß now understood 'essences' to be entirely *a posteriori* as an achievement of abstraction on the part of the individual.

The slow-burning question that emerged for Strauß became: What, then, is the role of a 'savior' or 'founder of a religion' as the cause of 'salvation' if essences are a product of a universal, human capacity to generate reason out of empirical experience? Having already rejected the Hegelian account of 'ultimate causality' of the meta-narrative of a logic of Double Negation, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* is no 'return' to old Schleiermachian alley ways but far more the rejection of one of two options of 'ultimate' causality that Strauß considered in an attempt to answer this question.

The striking theme in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* that did not appear in his earlier criticism of Schleiermacher is the causal function of the Christ as Perfect God-consciousness for the attainment of Perfect God-consciousness by finite consciousness.²⁴⁹ While Strauß embraces the notion of the creator God as ultimate, eminent causality, he rejects Schleiermacher's claim for a novel exercising of ultimate, eminent causality at a point in time after the creation.²⁵⁰ Viewed from the perspective of this question, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* is not only an underscoring of faith grounded in factual history, the 'Jesus of History,' but also it is Strauß' dismissal of a 'new' event of eminent causality in the form of the 'Christ of Faith' as the requirement for the arising of Perfect God-consciousness in history. Schleiermacher is a representative of the option that 'essence' must precede 'particularities': perfection is what provides the ground for novelty²⁵¹ because it, alone, can rise above the limitations of finite reality to initiate something so radically 'new' as the possibility of achieving 'Perfect God-consciousness.

Strauß concludes *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* by observing with respect to Schleiermacher's emphasis on the need for a historical occurrence of Perfect God-consciousness that 'expunges sin:'

249. On Schleiermacher's Christology of Perfect God-consciousness as a new act of creation (event of eminent causality), see: 277.

250. Schleiermacher's Christology of Perfect God-consciousness as the condition required for the cultivation of God-consciousness in humanity is a classic example of a miracle: the intrusion in, and disruption of, the natural order of events.

251. Indirectly, this is Strauß' criticism of Anselm's 'vicarious atonement' by the perfectly moral Christ for sinful humanity. The role of a novel event of ultimate, eminent causality is shared by both Schleiermacher and Anselm.

Redemption, says Schleiermacher, consists in the fact that sin is expunged from our consciousness; therefore, sinlessness must become visible to us in the person of Christ. Only when we appropriate his sinlessness in the most intimate fellowship with him, ‘the way everything is common to friends,’ will we become participants in redemption and in its fruits. This is, as Schleiermacher furthermore expresses it also as God’s seeing the redeemed in Christ,²⁵² *only the old doctrine of the vicarious atonement*, even if weakened to a mere manner of speaking, His whole theory of redemption can be conceptualized to a certain extent only if one surreptitiously substitutes once more the dissolved church dogma for it [...]. Schleiermacher’s zeal for the personal Christ-ideal who existed was precisely only a personal one; it changed nothing in substance. *The ideal of the dogmatic Christ, on the one hand, [of Perfect God-consciousness] and the historical Jesus of Nazareth, on the other hand, are separated forever.* That, independently of one another, the one is to be evermore basically and relentlessly researched,²⁵³ while the other is to be ever deeper and more perfectly recognized and made ever more fruitful for human life—therein consists the task of theology for the immediate future, and therein lies the summons which humanity, in its present struggles to develop, awaits from it. It remains to be seen whether it awaits in vain.²⁵⁴ (emphasis added)

Strauß calls for a continued fundamental and adamant criticism of ‘the ideal of the dogmatic Christ’ as well as the ever-more ‘deeply and perfectly recognized’ investigation of empirical nature with the aim of the latter’s contribution consisting in the enhancement of human life. Unfortunately, as is clear with *The Old and the New Faith* of 1872, he limited the investigation of nature to empiricism and ignored the significance of finite transcendental consciousness not only for the understanding of nature (theoretical reason) but also for the assumption of personal responsibility for one’s creative agency (practical reason).²⁵⁵

252. Strauß footnotes to Schleiermacher’s *Glaubenslehre*: par. 104, sec. 3.

253. This is Karl Barth’s take on the historical study of the gospels. Historical scholarship has an open season for textual analysis because its conclusions can have nothing to do with the Christ of faith.

254. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, Leander E. Keck, trans. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977): 168–169.

255. Here, again, Strauß failed to grasp the significance of Kant’s philosophy. The relational, causal essence of practical reason, according to Kant, is the notion of *autonomous* freedom, which as a cause, Kant insists, is incapable of proof or disproof. Material nature is a closed system of merely, mechanical causality with one exception of which we are aware: transcendental consciousness. Because ‘all human beings think of themselves as having a will that is free’ (see Kant, *Groundwork*: AA IV: 455), the closest one can come to a ‘proof’ of creative freedom is to deny it, but, absent a proof, one must defend it or else deny the very capacities of transcendental consciousness that make one human. (See Kant, *Groundwork*: AA IV: 459) Kant’s ‘Ode to Freedom,’ Section Three of the *Groundwork*, is a whole symphony that celebrates that ‘place’ in the order of things where a finite, ‘super-’ or ‘above-natural’ causality, although not separable from nature, is able to accomplish things that nature cannot achieve on its own. In other words, Kant’s *autonomous freedom* is no Hegelian Absolute Freedom that is a denial (negation) of nature. Rather, *autonomous freedom* is complementary and non-contradictory of nature’s ‘determinism’. The system of nature, then, is not entirely a closed circuit. Autonomous freedom is the point of nature’s open-endedness, not Hegel’s ‘point of indifference’. Wherever there is transcendental consciousness, there is the possibility of novelty. Furthermore, only where there is the possibility of novelty is it possible for there to be anything close to an expectation of moral

1872 of *The Old and the New Faith*

‘Descriptive Naturalism’

A bottom-up Grand Narrative of Materialism

Replaces Hegel’s
Top-down Meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit

It took Strauß 30 years to come up with an alternative to Hegel’s top-down meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit becoming aware of Itself in finite spirit. In *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß embraces a bottom-up meta-narrative whereby nature (not Absolute Spirit!) turns inward on itself by finite consciousness to continue nature’s (not Absolute Spirit’s or finite spirit’s) *creative process*. In this bottom-up meta-narrative, finite spirit serves nature; not nature and finite spirit serving Spirit.²⁵⁶ Strauß ‘grand materialistic narrative is step-for-step a *materialistic mirror* of Hegel’s meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit. The time will come when the world will no longer sustain life and finite consciousness will cease to be,²⁵⁷ but finite consciousness has the satisfaction of serving nature’s creative advance.

Strauß has awakened from the ‘fantasy dream of the dove’ that history is for the service of Absolute Spirit’s Self-awareness, but now he fails to recognize that humanity is trapped in the mechanical, cold, dark, abasement of a mere servant of nature as nature allows. In Kantian vocabulary, Strauß is trapped in a different dream – the dream of subreption wherein objective nature is the explanation of all reality. History is no longer God playing with Himself, but now history is nature playing with itself. A grand narrative of pessimism replaces Hegelian optimistic spiritual divinization of humanity. Yet, this service is defined by its own indifference. To be sure, the non-difference of

responsibility, not to speak of its voluntary attainment. To be sure, the possibility of novelty by definition eliminates any heteronomous notion of responsibility. The individual must not only ‘think’ for her-/himself (Kant’s notion of ‘Enlightenment’) but also ‘self-select (or not!) the moral principles to guide her/his agency. Transcendental consciousness no more creates its moral principles than it creates nature and the system of causal lawfulness that governs nature. However, through experience, transcendental consciousness can learn of the requirement of lawfulness for both understanding and agency. Subsequently, transcendental consciousness can self-select (not self-create) the lawfulness that fits the world in order to achieve appropriate understanding as well as the lawfulness that governs one’s assumption of responsibility for one’s actions.

256. In light of his own acknowledgment of the epistemological gaps and their allowance on the basis of dictums (it must be so!) in this new grand narrative and given the meticulous and extensively detailed wrestling with, and, eventually, rejection of, Hegel’s meta-narrative, one is even tempted to take this formulation in 1872 to be a parody of Hegel as much as the formulation of a seriously materialist option to Hegel. Instead of consciousness being the point of indifference where Absolute Spirit becomes aware of Itself, consciousness is the location where nature turns inward on itself to continue its material advancement.

257. See Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 541.

Absolute Spirit has been rejected. However, remarkably, the affectless, equanimity of historical events remains.

Limited Knowledge and Limited Reason: A New Faith

When it comes to *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß acknowledges limits to human reason²⁵⁸, and insists that he offers no new knowledge in contrast to faith (that is, he offers epistemological certainty grounded in materialism) but, rather, a new faith. This new faith is materialistic not only with 'ideas' generated ectypally by human consciousness but also with an insistence on hylozoism, the teaching that life is a bottom up, emergent property of matter. Strauß speaks of humanity as that place in the order of things where nature 'turns inward' on itself to continue its intellectual development with the confidence that 'one day, yet to come' the physical sciences will provide an *explanation of how everything occurs naturally*.

Humanity is 'absolutely dependent,' but now its dependence is on nature and bottom-up causality. Humanity is the crucial 'turning point' of reality, but now it is the point where nature 'turns in on itself' to consciousness in order for nature to continue its on-ward progress. In other words, Strauß has turned Schleiermacher and Hegel upside down to reverse what is essential and what is accidental. Essential is no longer Schleiermacher's 'Perfect God-consciousness' for which humanity is a bundle of feelings focused on mystical union in consciousness. Essential is no longer Hegel's Absolute Concept, Absolute Knowledge, and Absolute Freedom with humanity being the accidental place where Absolute Being becomes aware of Itself. Now, for Strauß, essential is nature out of which everything arises – even the organic and consciousness. Consciousness is not for the service of Absolute Consciousness but for the service of nature's historical progress.

Furthermore, all of the portrayals of Jesus in the tradition are called into question: Jesus is not the founder of a new Jewish Messianic order in Palestine to re-establish the Davidic monarchy. He is not the rejuvenator of Judaism who shifted the focus of theonomy away from external observance of divine law to an internal piety (Ebionism, Peter & James in Jerusalem, and/or Matthew's gospel). He is also not the prototype of martyrdom as in Mark's gospel. He is not the temporal center-point of history as an event in Jerusalem to which all history led and from which all of history will be transformed throughout the ages as in Luke-Acts – either establishing a perfect, material order in the next life or as the lynch-pin to achieve mystical union with Christ/God in this life. He is, therefore, not the incarnated Logos Messiah of Christian Platonism as in John's gospel or the spiritual Christ of the pre-gospel 'apostle Paul. He

258. Although again, this affirmation of reason's limits ignores Hegel's dismissal of rational limits as 'weakness' precisely because it fails to acknowledge Absolute Knowledge.

is no longer the Early Church's new event of divine, eminent causality who serves as a 'ransom' either of deception of the Devil²⁵⁹ to free humanity from captivity in sin or a 'ransom' as an act of justice owed to God in order to restore God's honor violated by humanity's failure to exclusively honor God.²⁶⁰ Jesus is not a new event of divine, eminent causality as the source of Perfection (complete fulfilment of divine law) as the superabundant source to pay the debt that is the result of humanity's imperfect obedience to God, which, even if there could be an achievement of lawful perfection by an imperfect individual as of a specific point in time, cannot generate the surplus to cover the imperfection of the past (Anselm of *Cur deus homo*). Yet, for Strauß in 1872, Jesus is surely no longer taken to be the savior of 'speculative philosophy' who is Absolute Spirit's 'point of indifference' by which Absolute Spirit comes aware of itself in the God/Man (either beyond history with the resurrection – Hegel, or in the 'historical body of Christ' that is the singular 'people' of the Christian church – F.C. Baur, or Strauß's own universal, inclusive Christology of all of humanity in the world in the *LJ*). Also for Strauß, Jesus is not the new event of divine, eminent causality of 'Perfect God-consciousness that all humanity seeks to achieve (Schleiermacher) in and through the Christian community. Finally, for Strauß in 1872, Jesus is not even the prototype of the "religion of reason" that celebrates the eternal in every moment (Strauß' "Transient and Permanent in Christianity" of 1838); or who is merely a teacher among teachers but whose teaching is unsurpassable if yet capable of being supplemented as the founder of a new 'religion of humanity' (Strauß' *LJEGP* of 1864).

Here in *The Old and the New Faith* of 1872, Jesus is not the source of any objective knowledge about God, salvation from sin, achievement of human divinization, Absolute Spirit, or Perfect God-consciousness. Jesus, at the most, as one among many is a teacher of morality. Unlike the Jesus of the *LJEGP*, who was an example of humanity's task of discerning the 'moral order' of reality that society must construct in order to respond appropriately to ever new, historical circumstances (religious, but also among social contexts, political circumstances, and economic realities), here in *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß emphasizes that the moral improvement of humanity is not merely a matter of individual moral development, which is always imperfect from the perspective of his retained Hegelian "The Moral View of the World." Rather, Strauß expands the meaning of the role of the *species* (*Gattung*) to be more than the source of the social construction of 'moral' principles to guide human agency in a changing world. Now, moral improvement applies to the *species* (*Gattung*) as the necessary community for supporting the sustainment of moral effort.²⁶¹

259. On the theme of the deception of the Devil in a cosmic dualistic world-order, see the summary of F.C. Baur's analysis in Chapter 5: "Traces of an Intellectual Crisis:" 592, n. 120.

260. See the summary of F.C. Baur's Christian atonement theories in Chapter 5: "Traces of an Intellectual Crisis:" the section "Significance of Baur's work on Atonement:" 591 ff.

261. See Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 236, 246–247.

One might be tempted to view this social dimension of moral improvement to be what Kant calls 'culture that promotes the (moral) will' that is complementary to the 'culture of skills' in the *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment*.²⁶² However, Kant's 'culture that promotes the (moral) will' could not be more different than Strauß' identification of the role of the species (*Gattung*) for moral improvement although Kant prizes the role of the species (*Gattung*) for morality, as well. Strauß' appeal to the 'idea of the species' (*Gattung*) to serve as a supporting environment to imperfect humanity's efforts at achieving objective moral aims as it encounters ever new, historical, social, political, and economic contexts reflects more the 'sociological,' Hegelian notion of 'people' (*Volk*) in relation to 'religion' than it does to Kant's 'culture that promotes the (moral) will.'

Hegel and Carl Daub employ a pre-'scientific disciplinary,' nonetheless 'sociological' notion of religion not merely as a set of doctrines or rituals but as a people (*Volk*) or community (*Gemeinde*), which places external expectations (and pressures) on the individual to conform to the community's social expectations.²⁶³ This is precisely how Strauß speaks of the species' (*Gattungs*) role in ethics. He speaks of 'the *concept* of species,' not merely as a '*feeling for one's species*' that distinguishes humanity from other animals.²⁶⁴

The idea of the species works as a feeling also in the animal, as it works in man; but only humanity has it at the same time as a thought in his consciousness. The feeling of the species does not prevent the predator from tearing others of his kind to pieces, the tomcat from occasionally eating his own young; just as it does not prevent men [*sic.*] from murdering each other. Admittedly, consciousness of the species does not prevent humans from doing so either. If we were always sure of our lives with every human being who is capable of forming the generic concept, human being, and of understanding ourselves by means of the generic concept as human, then all would be good. However, there are different ways of thinking this concept, and it is precisely for this reason that humanity must think it in the right way. At first, it is only an [...] hollow sound, which can have no effect at all. It must first be filled with its entire content in order to be effective. In the generic concept of humanity occupies its[...] position at the pinnacle of nature; its ability to resist the sensual stimulus by comparing and thinking. Further, however, the unity of the human species lies not only in the way that every animal species belongs together by means of descent and equality of organic unification. Rather the unity of the human species lies in the way that only through the cooperation of humans can humanity become human. *The human species forms a community of solidarity in a completely different sense than any animal species. Only with the help of fellow human beings has humanity risen above nature.* Only in so far as humanity recognizes and treats others as beings equal to itself can it maintain and further itself on its pinnacle of nature. Whoever thinks of the generic

262. See Kant, *The Critique of the Capacity of Judgment* AA V: 431–432.

263. For a discussion of Hegel's and Daub's notion of 'Volk'/'Gemeinde' and religion, see below: 647, n. 324 and 648, n. 326.

264. On the distinction between *hypothetical* and *categorical* imperatives, see, especially, the "Preface:" 56, n. 61.

concept of humanity in this way, and understands it according to its full content, has a firm basis for moral conduct.²⁶⁵ (*emphasis added*) (Note: ‘rising above nature’ means to ‘resist the sensual stimulus’)

The ‘concept of the species’ is the abstract idea for the significance of social interaction and the source of social pressure for ‘making humanity human’ that *rises above nature by resisting sensual stimuli*. The ethical principles that the species constructs in response to its ever-changing historical contexts are the necessary social rules and technical imperatives that are required to achieve specific, objective ends, and the individual’s success or failure is empirically obvious by the achievement or non-achievement of the end toward which the agency aimed.

Strauß’ and Hegel’s account of ethics begins right where Kant’s leaves off: at the moment of establishing a teleological goal of agency. Kant turns his eyeglass around to examine the conditions and capacities required for the individual, in the first place, to be able to aim to accomplish a goal. In dramatic contrast to Strauß in *The Old and the New Faith*, for Kant the ‘culture that promotes the (moral) will’ is *neither* merely, *heteronomous*, external pressure on the individual to act on the basis of a solidarity with others because of the ‘idea of humanity’ that unites the species *nor* merely a set of *a posteriori* socially constructed rules that govern success or failure empirically or ethically through one’s agency. For Kant, the ‘culture that promotes the (moral) will’ is concerned with the *cultivation of internal capacities* through education’s (*Bildungs*) negative discipline and culture’s positive encouragement to examine and take responsibility for one’s agency.²⁶⁶

Already in his *Vorlesung zur Moralphilosophie* of 1774/1775, Kant distinguished between education (*Bildung*) and art (*Kunst*) with both required for culture.²⁶⁷ The former is the ‘development of *internal*, natural capacities’ whereas art involves an *external* ‘addition’ to the individual. Whereas education (*Bildung*) requires discipline, discipline teaches a child nothing new but only limits lawless freedom that the individual already possesses. However, discipline is only to be applied to the extent that autonomous freedom, which as a causal system presupposes a lawful order, and the development of all of the individual’s internal, natural capacities are preserved and exercised responsibly.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, ‘discipline’s’ negative function is formulated not in terms of external impositions. Kant writes: “Towards the development of a talent, which has already in itself an impulse to manifest itself [by autonomous freedom], discipline will [...] contribute in a negative, whereas culture and doctrine contribute in a positive, fashion.”²⁶⁸ In the *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment*, education’s

265. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 246–247.

266. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 738.

267. See Kant, *Moral Verlesung*: 360 ff.

268. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 737–738.

discipline (*Bildung*) is called a ‘Theory of Epigenesis’ ‘on top of’ raw nature on account of autonomous freedom that is a ‘formative drive’ (*Bildungstrieb*) in humanity.²⁶⁹ The culture that promotes the (moral) will, “[...] which could be named the culture of training (discipline), is negative, and consists in the liberation of the will [NOTE: Kant doesn’t call for their annihilation²⁷⁰] from desires.”²⁷¹ *Its purpose is to encourage [...] education to make us receptive to higher ends than nature itself can accomplish* [CUP gives: ‘can afford’].²⁷² (emphasis added) Culture is

[...] the production of the aptitude of a rational being for any and all ends (as a product of its freedom). Thus only culture can be the ultimate end that one has cause to ascribe to nature in regard to the human species (not its own earthly happiness or even merely being the foremost instrument for establishing order and consensus in irrational nature outside of him).²⁷³ (Parentheses from Kant) [McG modification of CUP]

In other words, whereas Strauß takes the purpose of the idea of the species in *The Old and the New Faith* to be restraining of sensuous interests through external, social pressure, Kant takes the culture that promotes the (moral) will to be the understanding and encouragement of the imperceptible conditions (autonomous freedom and a *priori* synthetic judgment) possessed by every transcendental consciousness because of its capacities, which include not merely instrumental reason but the moral capacity to give oneself permission to exercise one’s agency. All of these *a priori* elements are ‘above’ nature and make humanity the ‘ultimate goal of nature’ – although not as capricious exploiter of nature solely for its self-interest.²⁷⁴

269. See Kant, *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment* AA V: 429.

270. Kant no more calls for the annihilation or escape from sensuous desires than Plato in the *Republic* 439c-3 (see as well, 580d-e) called for reason’s snuffing out of the appetites or rage [θυμός θυμοειδής (hot-tempered, passionate Republic Book IV 441a) in his ‘hypothesized’ account of the soul’s three parts. His ‘mythic’ account in Book IX IX 588b-e of the multicolored, many-headed beast (gentle to savage) (appetites), lion (θυμός), and human being (νοῦς) makes it clear that the task of ‘reason’ is to obtain an ordered balancing among the three elements, not escape any of them.

271. Kant, *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment* AA V: 432.

272. Kant, *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment* AA V: 433.

273. Kant, *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment* AA V: 431.

274. Kant describes the steps that lead from animality to humanity as: 1) governed by *animal instinct*; 2) the discovery of its *freedom above animal instincts*; 3) the *reflective expectations over the future*; and, finally 4) discovery that *this animal is the ‘goal of nature’* accompanied by the recognition that no human being can be treated as mere means, which leads to *limiting of one’s freedom to establish a society*. See Kant, *Conjectural Beginning of Human History* AA VIII: 111–115. See as well Kant’s discussion of humanity as the ‘final end of nature NOT because it successfully acts in accordance with the moral law (*Critique of the Capacity of Judgment* AA V: 488*), that is, not because it has achieved ‘contentment, but because its culture is above contentment as a culture that promotes the moral will (AA V: 431–432). In other words, the goal of nature requires more than the mere ‘setting of goals’ (AA V: 453–454), which is the culture of skills not the culture that promotes the moral will. Rather, *the final end of the world/cosmos is an ‘as if’ concept of practical reason* that embraces the capacity (not the actual achievement) on the part of transcendental consciousness to act according to moral principles. See AA V: 454–455. Humanity as the ‘goal of nature’ is a challenge to transcendental consciousness that arises

The species cannot be a substitute for the effort of moral improvement on the part of the individual. As important as the hypothetical imperatives of teleological agency (Kant's 'Doctrine of Right') are, they are distinct from the broader, categorical imperatives (Kant's 'Doctrine of Virtue')²⁷⁵ that the individual must employ to grant her-/himself permission to act. Strauß' emphasis on the ideal of the species as the necessary communal element that makes it possible for a human to be human overlooks that only the individual for her-/himself can experience, understand, and grant her-/himself permission to act.

Kant's Critical Idealism remains a neglected option for *understanding* the human condition and religion. Strauß, though, never undertook a serious study of Kant²⁷⁶ so that he cannot be said to have rejected him in any adequate sense. Even though he rejected Hegelian, archetypal Idealism and ectypal Nominalism itself is a form of 'constructive idealism,' *Strauß retained the conviction acquired from Hegel and his other early mentors that Kant was a 'subjective constructivist' for whom humanity creates the 'empty' ideas that it capriciously applies to, phenomena.*

More explicitly: for the anti-Kantians of the 19th C, Kant's *a priori* 'ideas' of synthetic judgment were either *a priori* archetypal absolutes or *a posteriori* ectypal constructions that arise *after the encounter with phenomena*. In other words, they accused Kant of taking ideas to be either merely 'empty abstractions' independent of any and all experience or subjectively, relative, *a priori* constructions arbitrarily *imposed on* experience. This criticism of Kant is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of what Kant means by an *a priori* synthetic judgment,²⁷⁷

To take ideas to be *archetypal* is to claim that ideas are *a priori* as the eternal thoughts of a 'God.' To take ideas to be *ectypal* is to claim that the individual subject creates the 'idea' as a 'merely *a posteriori* abstraction' *only after having experienced phenomena*. Archetypal ideas is a claim that, with our ideas themselves, we experience

within transcendental consciousness by its awareness of its *a priori* conditions and capacities, which depend upon 'pure' religion. On 'pure' religion, see Vol. II: "Introduction:" 558, n. 109.

See the concluding two paragraphs of Vol. II: "Appendix III: Grounds for Skepticism in Christian Doctrine."

275. On Kant's distinction between the "Doctrine of Right" and the "Doctrine of Virtue," see Chapter 7: "Practical Reason Elevates Theoretical Reason:" 739, n. 63, as well as, Chapter 8: "Strauß' Reading of Kant Over His Career:" 835, n. 114 and 845, 152.

276. Acknowledged both by his biographer, Theobald Ziegler, II: 701), and by his superficial opponent, Nietzsche. About the only accurate conclusion that Nietzsche draws regarding Strauß is that Strauß didn't really read Kant. See Friedrich Nietzsche, "David Strauß. Der Bekenner und der Schriftsteller:" 164.

277. Hegel astonishingly mis-represents Kant's notion of synthetic judgment. Hegel takes 'synthesis' exclusively to mean a 'dialectical synthesis,' which obviously can only be *a posteriori* because it presupposes a thesis and an antithesis – with, of course, the one exception for Hegel of the *a priori* synthesis of Absolute Spirit. See for example, Hegel, "Glauben und "Wissen" GW II: 304–305. For Kant, *a priori* synthetic judgment is 'supplemental' and 'elucidating' (or an *adding to* phenomena) unlike analytic judgments that are merely 'clarifying.' See for example, Kant, *Metaphysik Mrongovius* AA XXIX: 968, 970.

the mind of God. Ectypal ideas is a claim that all that is 'real' in experience is objectively empirical, and ideas are merely subjective abstractions. When it comes to ectypal ideas, though, we only experience appearances of particulars, not ideas-in-themselves. In order for us to abstract the ideas out of particular phenomena, not only must ideas already have to be structuring the phenomena in order for us to 'abstract' the idea out of the phenomena but also imperceptible, *a priori* capacities of finite, transcendental consciousness are required to experience phenomena, in the first place.

Critical Idealism points out that it is a wild, speculative 'leap of fantasy' (*Schwärmerei*) to claim either that ideas are 'in' God archetypally (Idealism) or that they are derived out of phenomena ectypally (Materialism). Rather, for Critical Idealism, whereas the 'pure' ideas of God, freedom/the cosmos, and enduring identity of the self (soul) are entirely imperceptible assumptions, concepts of understanding *can only be understood by the individual subject as an always and already 'given,' objective, imperceptible order that governs phenomena.* Only when confronted with phenomena is it possible for a transcendental consciousness to seek out (mathematically or conceptually) the order that governs the phenomena and only *subsequently apply it to phenomena.* As far as we have experienced, no other form of consciousness than finite, transcendental consciousness is able to 'see what is not directly given in the phenomena,' that is, the conceptual order that governs the phenomena. Much less deduce the 'pure' ideas of reason. Only a transcendental consciousness is capable of *adding an imperceptible order* to phenomena. The possibility cannot *a priori* be denied or confirmed that there is not transcendental consciousness elsewhere in the universe. However, if it is capable of understanding and acting responsibly, then it's a *a priori* capacities 'must' be the same as ours because without them there can be no understanding and responsible agency.

Transcendental consciousness' understanding of phenomena is driven not by the certainty that Absolute Knowledge is achievable but by *a conviction that* imperceptible ideas (or causes) are able to be grasped *a priori* and added to the phenomena. A *a priori* understanding is grounded in a 'required' faith in an imperceptible, lawful, causal order both physical (theoretical reason) and moral (practical reason). This is no wild, speculative fantasy that ignores phenomena and/or the limits to finite, transcendental consciousness. This faith that is theoretical and practical reason is required because without it there can be no finite experience, understanding, and/or intentional, responsible agency.

Kant's Critical Idealism, then, is not claiming to provide an empirical *explanation* of reality. Rather, it is a *description* of the conditions required for a finite, transcendental consciousness to exist. Our inability objectively to be prove or disprove those inescapable, imperceptible capacities is what makes transcendental consciousness and it's a *a priori* synthetic judgment a matter of *metaphysics*, neither merely subjective speculation or abstract logic nor merely objective materialism.

Two themes, especially, in *The Old and the New Faith* stand in stark contrast to "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity" although the shift to materialism is already clear in the latter.

1) Strauß' commitment to the physical sciences is unequivocal here, but it is indicated, ironically, by a citation that he makes to Tertullian. Speaking of the 'soul,' Strauß writes:

[...] [S]ouls are [...] immaterial beings, whose persistence after death has been proven precisely from the fact that they are not composed and do not occupy any space, thus they will not find themselves confined by the native inhabitants of other world bodies. However, then they could just as well remain on earth; or rather they have no relation to space at all and are everywhere and nowhere. In short, [souls are] no real, but imaginary beings. For in this respect the word of a somewhat mad but equally spiritual church father²⁷⁸ has become *the principle of the most modern science: 'Nothing is incorporeal but what is not.'*²⁷⁹ (emphasis added)

The touchstone of truth for Strauß in 1872 is (historical) corporality. All that is, was, and will be is the product of material processes, and this 'all' includes living things and consciousness.

The new perspective of *The Old and the New Faith*, though, is not to establish certain, historical knowledge but to articulate a new understanding of 'faith.' In "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity," Strauß claims to 'know' on the basis of 'historical knowledge' of the Christ that there is no chance that "humanity will ever be without religion any more than it will be without Christianity."²⁸⁰ This kind of historical certitude based on the gospel evidence is now indefensible because the text doesn't live up to the standards of empirical science.

278. Strauß appears to be quoting Tertullian here. F.X. Dieringer says: "[...] Tertullian [...] uses the word 'body' in different meanings, and the same generally designates to him everything that has reality in contrast to nothing, which is why also of God it is not said that he has a body, but that he is a body. In this sense he teaches: 'Its own substance is the body of every thing;' 'Everything that is is a body in its kind, and nothing is incorporeal except what is not'. [Dieringer footnotes to: *De carne Christi* c. 11].'" (F.X. Dieringer, *Lehrbuch der katholischen Dogmatik* (Mainz: Verlag von Franz Kirchheim, 1858)

279. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 130–131. The reference to Tertullian as a 'spiritual church father' is a reference to Tertullian's adherence to The New Prophecy Movement (the 'Pentecostal,' spiritual enthusiasm) of Montanus, Maximillia, and Priscilla.

280. Strauß, "Über Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum." 131.

2) Strauß is even more clear at the end of his life that, historically, little is known of Jesus:

[...] *in earlier writings* [...] I took a lot of trouble to put together the features scattered in the Gospels into a picture that could give us a humanly appealing idea of the nature and will of Jesus [...]. I [would have to] say that in relation to what we really know about Jesus, *I had still drawn much too bold and determined [conclusions]*. That is why I complained in the Concluding Dissertation of that book [the LJ] about the deficiency and uncertainty of our historical knowledge about Jesus, and meant that *no knowledgeable and sincere person would contradict me when I said 'that we are so insufficiently informed about few great men of history as we are about him.'* Also, at that time the speeches of Jesus about his resurrection in the clouds troubled me, and, therefore, I knew I could only with difficulty and artificially ward off from him the reproach of enthusiasm and self-conceit. When I now explain in my latest writing that we should continue to recognize in Jesus the center and point of reference of our religious life, we find ourselves held back mainly by two circumstances: *For the first, we know far too little coherent about him, and for the second, in what we know about him, we notice a rapturous-fantastic [schwärmerisch-phantastischen] trait.* This conclusion is, obviously, not apostasy, but merely the quite normal result in the development of scientific convictions that *I have now given complete room to certain doubts, which I thought I could still avoid earlier.*²⁸¹ (emphasis added)

As is clear in *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*, Strauß' emphasis on empirical history led him to identify the 'probable' historical elements in the life and teaching of Jesus. On the foundation of those 'historical' elements, he saw in 1864 the construction of a 'religion of humanity' in contrast to the 'religion of Christ'. In 1872, he no longer defends either.

By the time of *The Old and the New Faith*, the historical evidence with respect to Jesus is taken to be too sparse to ground any faith in a 'religion of Christ,' and Feuerbach's criticism of equating religion with reason has undermined Strauß' notion of a 'religion of humanity.' If "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity" was aimed at establishing the historical foundation of Christianity as a 'new religion' grounded internally in the 'religious genius' who lived out of a God-consciousness that consisted in an internal harmony with eternal reason, *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* insisted that the 'historical' evidence in the gospels was sufficient to ground a Christianity no longer in 'reason' but in the cultivation and assumption of moral responsibility by the individual. However, the 'moral religion' of *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* becomes in *The Old and the New Faith* a new 'faith' in the bottom-up, ultimate source of all rationality and communal (not individual) moral responsibility. *The new 'faith' is a faith in nature itself.*

Seven years after the publication of *The Life of Jesus for the German People*, Strauß offers his alternative account of 'ultimate' causality that is neither Hegelian Idealism, rejected already in 1841, nor Schleiermacher's eminent causality of Perfect

281. Strauß, "Epilogue" to *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: "Epilogue:" 33–34

God-consciousness, rejected emphatically in 1865. The 'ultimate' cause of all 'that is' is 'bottom-up' Materialism even if we cannot explain how ..., yet.

The Feuerbachian criticism of religion as 'feeling' and 'wishful thinking' as well as Feuerbach's questioning any and all equation of 'reason' with 'religion' left Strauß with little option. He had concluded "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity" by praising 'reason' and the significance of the religious 'genius' who 'turned inward' to concentrate on the internal harmony between humanity and God. To be sure, there was no hint of the Hegelian meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit in this text. Yet, Strauß equated the 'essence of Christianity' with reason as an objective, imperceptible, lawful order in nature and emphasized the significance of the call of the religious genius to seek an inward harmony with that 'eternal order.'

In "Schleiermacher und Daub" of 1839, as well, Strauß embraced a Feuerbachian, ectypal notion of reason in which reason itself is the product of an *a posteriori* abstraction by human consciousness that ultimately arises in, and out of, nature as a natural product of nature. What, then, is left for a 'religion of reason'? Other than a sense of awe that there is something enduringly 'eternal' in the natural order of physical laws, *there is very little left!*

In Hegel (and Daub), 'religious faith' was equated with a 'people' (*Volk*) as the manifestation of an 'idea.' In light of the collapse of the faith that is the objective 'religion of the Christian people,' for Strauß the only option was to contribute to articulating the 'Idea' that serves as the self-identification of a 'people' (*Volk*) who embraces 'faith' in the lawfulness of nature and in humanity's extraordinary 'location' as the awareness of physical lawfulness. This is why Strauß used 'we' in *The Old and the New Faith* as the moniker for the 'new faith.' This is not the subjective, imperial 'we' by which Nietzsche derisively chides Strauß.²⁸² Strauß' 'we' is a new religion/faith in the natural order. Strauß experienced personally with the limited reception of his *Glaubenslehre* that without a community, the significance of any insight into the presence of the 'eternal' in experience evaporates in dry desert sands. There were very few in the Christian community that he sought to address in the *Glaubenslehre* who were open to the new 'faith' that was increasingly Strauß' focus.

Here in *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß ridicules the anthropomorphisms of 'the new philosophy,' that is, Schelling and Hegel.

In the context of questioning creation as a free act of the will by a 'Personal Deity' whose goal is the 'glorification of God' and the 'delight of His creatures' while simultaneously emphasizing that God's perfection and holiness require no 'addition,'²⁸³ Strauß turns to what he, ironically, calls the 'new philosophy's' portrayal of 'highest perfection.' Schelling said

282. See Nietzsche, "David Strauß. Der Bekenner und der Schriftsteller:" 150, 166, 171, 173.

283. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 217–217.

[...] [God] would have had no reason for creating so many things on account of which He could only become less perfect because they prevented attainment of a higher stage of perfection. One cannot explain how such a strangely confused whole as the world, although brought into order, could arise from such a clear and transparent intelligence as ordinary theism conceives of the divine being before the creation of the world.²⁸⁴

Strauß, then, turns to Hegel where the anthropomorphic portrayal is even more transparent: "According to Hegel, [...] the World Spirit has had the patience to take on the immense work of world history only because It could not achieve consciousness of Itself through any lesser work."²⁸⁵

Schopenhauer spoke even more coarsely of Hegel as Strauß points out:

[... It] would have to be an ill-advised God [...], who would have to seek no better fun of Himself than to transform Himself [according to the conception of Hegel's Double Negation] into such a hungry world as this one, in order to endure the form of numerous millions of living, but tormented and anxious beings, who all exist, only transiently because one eats up the other, in misery, hardship and death without measure and aim.²⁸⁶

Strauß, then, offers Schopenhauer's conclusions with respect to Schelling's and Hegel's anthropomorphism:

[...] if God had had a consciousness before creation, then this would have been an inexcusable crime: [1]) Only as the result of a blind will would creation be pardonable. [2]) The whole world process would also be a bottomless folly if its sole goal of an independent consciousness had already existed before creation. *The first statement reminds the reader more of Schelling's doctrine of world creation as the work of God's dark reason, whereas the second reminds the reader more of the Hegelian statement about the meaning of world history.*²⁸⁷ (emphasis added)

In addition to the anthropomorphic element of divine consciousness as the framework for the formulations of the 'personal theism' of Personal Theism as well as for Schelling's and Hegel's 'immanent theism,' Strauß addresses in this context the theodicy issue.

Whereas in his *Glaubenslehre* Strauß drew from Jakob Böhme for his take on theodicy,²⁸⁸ here in *The Old and the New Faith* he turns to a lesson from Schopen-

284. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 217.

285. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 217.

286. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 217–218.

287. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 218.

288. Strauß introduces his discussion of Böhme's theodicy in the *Glaubenslehre* so: "With Jakob Böhme's help, who also here forms the natural complement to Spinoza, we want to try to avoid it [the conclusion of evil's meaninglessness and Indifferentism] in a scientific way." Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 378–379. The core theme for theodicy that Strauß identifies in Böhme is that: "Evil belongs to formation and movement, and Good belongs to love, and rigor and loathing belongs to joy. Namely, evil or loathing causes good as the will, that it urges against its original condition as well as against God and that the

hauer and its 'correct' understanding in Lessing. The lesson from Schopenhauer is that worldly experience teaches us that 'fermentation' is required to bring about 'all movement and progress.'²⁸⁹ 'Overcoming obstacles is complete pleasure.'²⁹⁰ Lessing had pointed out, though, that "[a]ll movement [...] develops and destroys, brings life and death; brings death to this creature by bringing life to another one: shall there be no death and no movement? or, rather, death and movement?"²⁹¹

Strauß's answer to the rhetorical question is clearly that there should be death because it enables movement, development, progress. He, then, turns to Lessing's aphorism on truth: "If God were to hold all Truth concealed in His right hand, and in His left only the steady and diligent drive for Truth, albeit with the proviso that I would always and forever err in the process, and to offer me the choice, I would with all humility take the left hand."²⁹² Strauß writes that the aphorism always fascinated him because he "[...] heard in it the echo of an objective meaning of infinite importance behind its subjective meaning."

If we are no longer able to misplace in God the choice between existence without pain and death (but also without movement and life) and existence in which life and movement are bought by pain and death, then we are confronted with the choice whether we want to try to understand the latter [a life bought by pain and death], or, in unfruitful denial of what is the case, insist on preferring the former [a life without pain and death].²⁹³

Rather than God's Absolute Spirit playing with Himself by an anthropomorphic logic of Double Negation as Hegel claimed, the universe for Strauß now is taken to consist of endless matter in motion, which develops by means of distinctions and combinations to generate the greatest abundance of life of ever higher forms and function that consists in an eternal cycle of emergence, reformation, and restructuring. "This life

Good, as the good will, desires; for a thing, which is only good in itself and has no torment, desires nothing because it knows nothing better in itself or for itself after which it could lust. (Strauß, *ibid.*: 379–80; see the entire discussion of Böhme's theodicy in Strauß, *ibid.*: 378–381.

289. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 218.

290. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 219. Whereas Schopenhauer emphasizes the 'pleasure of overcoming obstacles', Kant speaks of a 'negative method' that views all pain as the prod to responsible creative agency. On Kant's 'negative method' in contrast to Stoic indifference, Epicurean concupiscence, Cynic view of pain as a lesson to toughen oneself, 'melancholy' (the belief that 'pain is fundamental to all life), Strauß' indifference to truth with the sole aim of 'winning' mystical escapism from the world, drunkenness as illusory hope, as well as warning against passively waiting on divine grace, see "Kant's 'Negative Method' at 45, n. 2828.

291. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 219. Strauß does not give the citation for this quote, but it comes from Lessing's *Anti-Göze*, *Vierter* (Braunschweig; 1778): 12–13.

292. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 219. Lessing's quote comes from Section I of "A Response" (*Eine Duplik* [Braunschweig: Buchhandlung des Fürstlichen Waisenhauses, 1778]): 11.

293. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 220.

appears to us to be incessantly developing, extending, and rising, and, even in the decline of the individual, as only preparing a new ascent."²⁹⁴

Nonetheless, Strauß does not hesitate to say that the time will come when 'the earth no longer will sustain life,' and when consciousness will disappear. However, the earth has always and already achieved its goal even if the earth ceases to be: "Either the earth failed to achieve its end [...], or the goal of its preservation was not to be part of what is to endure, but *its goal is already achieved in every moment of its historical development.*"²⁹⁵ (emphasis added) Strauß concludes:

If we have to hold on to the fact that every partial whole in the universe, such as the life of our earth, achieves its purpose in ever higher manifestations, but in itself in every moment, then the latter applies to the universe as an infinite whole just as well. *The universe is not more perfect in any following moment than in the preceding one, nor vice versa, there is no such difference between earlier and later in it at all, because in it all stages and phases of development and re-development, of ascending and descending, becoming and passing away exist next to one another and complement one another infinitely.*²⁹⁶ (emphasis added)

As much as here there remains a whiff of Schleiermacher in Strauß' employment of the aphorism of 'experiencing eternity in the present' for understanding immortality, Strauß is expressing allegiance neither to Schleiermacher's mysticism nor to Hegel's meta-narrative of Double Negation. Rather, *The Old and the New Faith* is precisely a statement of 'faith,' not a knowledge claim, as Strauß himself insisted,²⁹⁷ rather, a faith that fully recognizes the 'limits' to our present understanding of the world.²⁹⁸ In other words, Strauß remains committed to a non-epistemic faith, not mystical (Schleiermachian) or metaphysical (Hegelian) certainty. For Strauß, the experience of 'eternity' in the 'present moment' is the claim/belief that the universe is always a completed totality as it undergoes constant change. In other words, Strauß' faith is an objective claim about the nature of the physical universe.

This faith is 'Nominalist' in that, like Feuerbach, Strauß already in 1839 and now in *The Old and the New Faith*²⁹⁹ takes ideas to arise out of nature, not as the eternal, archetypal Logos of Christianity or the 'new speculative' philosophy of the 19th C. That

294. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 220.

295. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 222.

296. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 223.

297. See Strauß, "Nachwort als Vorwort" to *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 38.

298. See Strauß, *Ibid.*: 43. In light of the fact that Hegel attacked the 'weakness' of reason for Kant because Kant acknowledged the limits to reason (Hegel, "Glauben und Wissen:" GW 287–288; "pure madness," *ibid.*: GW: 304) and in light of the fact that Hegel calls Kant a 'dogmatist' because he acknowledges that there are some things that we cannot know (Hegel, *ibid.*: GW II: 313), this recognition of gaps in human understanding by Strauß is by no means insignificant.

299. Consciousness and thought arise out of matter. See *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 206–207; 208–209; 210–213; 222–223. "Life is only a special and, to be sure, the most complicated kind of mechanics [...]" *Ibid.*: 171; see as well, 173, whereas 'spirit' (consciousness) is only a difference in degree from animals, who themselves have arisen out of the mechanics of nature (see *ibid.*: 202).

is, ideas arise *a posteriori* out of the material world.³⁰⁰ Although Nominalism appears to be compatible with Strauß objective claim for the perfection of the universe in every moment, these two claims involve serious conundrums because they are merely descriptive claims that are taken to be explanatory.

Strauß' physical 'eternal' in every 'present moment' is grounded in a conviction based on a description of the way the universe is in-itself. However, it is a subreptive claim about the universe whose 'reality' is forever inaccessible to us because we can experience the universe only as a set of appearances, not as it is in itself. Furthermore, although his Nominalism appears to be an explanation of the origin of ideas, it, as well, is ultimately a descriptive account of how finite consciousness comes to *experience* the imperceptible physical and moral orders, by no means an explanation of the origin of the organic and moral orders. Nominalism only pushes the relational, causal question of the origin of ideas and laws off the screen because in order to 'abstract' ideas out of sets of particular phenomena, the phenomena have to already be ordered by the ideas and laws that we abstract 'out of them.' Both in the case of claiming to 'know' the way the universe is in-itself and of claiming to give an account of ideas/laws as 'merely' human abstractions, Strauß and Feuerbach are caught in a *μετάβασις εις ἄλλο γένος* (the substitution of one category for another).³⁰¹ In their case, they are substituting a description for a causal explanation.

Strauß writes of *The Old and the New Faith*: "It was not a question of what Christianity has done for mankind? Rather, it may have worked what it wants – and it will continue to work in any case – but can one, with certain conviction, still belong to it as a church?"³⁰²

300. In 1839, Strauß flagged his ectypal/Nominalist conviction. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 172–173 as well as his complaint with respect to both Schleiermacher and the Hegelian Daub that "[b]oth lack the true mediation of dogma with the concept, of the historical with the ideal." (*ibid.*: 208). See also, Strauß' *Glaubenslehre* I: 389–390.

301. Ironically, Feuerbach accuses Hegel of succumbing to a *μετάβασις εις ἄλλο γένος* by his turning the essential into the unessential and the unessential into the essential. In the 1847 edition of his *Gedanken über Tod und Unsterblichkeit* (Leipzig, Verlag von Otto Wigand), he presents sequentially two aphorisms:

God's Incomprehensibility

"God is incomprehensible," of course, he is only the steam.

Of the powder, which was unfortunately! Shot in vain (146)

μετάβασις εις ἄλλο γένος

Away with you, boring priests, you dry philistines!

To you, O beautiful humanity, I consecrate spirit with love. (147)

These aphorisms apply especially to Hegel in Feuerbach's judgment. God's incomprehensibility is the Hegelian essentialization of the unessential. It is a *μετάβασις εις ἄλλο γένος* that Feuerbach 'overcomes' by emphasizing the essential (finite predicates apply to finite subjects).

Yet, Feuerbach's materialism and Nominalism equally succumb to *μετάβασις εις ἄλλο γένος* because they are a claim to explain matter and of ideas when in fact they are merely a description.

302. Strauß, "Epilogue" to *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: "Epilogue:" 38.

Ziegler reports that Strauß rejected the option of equating Christianity (or religion in general) with morality (practical reason) as a path to overcome the conflict between (traditional Christian) faith and knowledge in that traditional Christian faith is world denying and 'our world-oriented life' is world affirming:

It has often been believed, and still is, that the gap between faith and knowledge can be filled by practical reason [ethics], and that one would do well to substitute a practical Christianity for dogmatic Christianity by which faith and knowledge would be conveniently united. Strauß has shown, and the history of Christian ethics has proved him right, that the same opposition between faith and knowledge exists in ethics as in theoretical reason. Our world-oriented life practice and culture is diametrically opposed to the world-negating direction of Christian morality. Only by acting like an ostrich and forcibly closing one's eyes against theoretical reason can we make the dichotomy [between secular ethics and Christian ethics] subjectively bearable and pretend that their difference does not exist. However, may we worldly people [...] rejoicing over victory and triumph and busy with worldly work, day after day, still call ourselves Christians? [In 1872], Strauss had the courage to deny it. "My conviction is," he says, "if we do not want to look for excuses, if we do not want to twist and deceive, if we want to let yes remain yes and no remain no, then we must confess: We are no longer Christians."³⁰³

The question then arises, "Do we still have religion?:" "We' today no longer believe in the old theistic sense of a Personal God and personal immortality.³⁰⁴ Strauß' 1872 *The Old Faith and the New Faith* presents Strauß' 'resolution' to the intellectual crisis that accompanied his theological project in 1864, *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*. In 1872, Strauß writes:

What remains for us in any case is the fundamental element of all religion, the feeling of an unqualified [*unbedingten*] dependence. Whether we speak of God or the universe: we feel ourselves absolutely [*schlechthin*] dependent. With respect to the latter, we know ourselves as 'part of a part' [*Teil des Teils*], our power is nothing in relationship to the omnipotence of nature, our thought is able only slowly and with effort to grasp the smallest part of that which the world presents to us as knowable."³⁰⁵

Strauß identifies the 'enduring' in religion to be "the feeling of unqualified dependence," but this dependence is not on a mystical union, as with Schleiermacher. Rather, it is a dependence on nature. Just as Strauß substitutes nature's 'turn inward on itself' for Hegel's 'point of indifference to Absolute Spirit,' so, too, he substitutes *absolute* dependence on nature for Schleiermacher's *absolute feeling of dependence* on God. Strauß uses the term *unbedingte* (unqualified) as well as Schleiermacher's *schlechthinige* (absolute) dependence. Is this terminology significant? I think so. However, *this recognition that we are not merely a part of a whole but also our knowledge is limited to*

303. Ziegler, II: 685–686. The quote from Strauß comes from *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 90–91.

304. See Ziegler, II: 687.

305. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 138–139.

a fragment is not Schleiermacher's claim that our 'feeling of absolute dependence' shuts down reason and mystically unites us with God in God-consciousness.³⁰⁶ Rather, we become aware of physical and ethical lawfulness that is the material universe:

This recognition [... of our being a part of the whole] leads us to another result. We perceive in the [physical] world a ceaseless change. Quickly, however, we discover in this change a lasting, order and law. We perceive in nature tremendous contrasts, terrible struggles; but we find how through them the continuance and harmony of the whole is not disturbed but is preserved in its entirety. We continue to perceive a gradual development, an emergence of the higher from the lower, of the subtle out of what is coarse. Furthermore, we find ourselves promoted in our personal as well as in our social life that the more we succeed in subjecting the capricious to an [ethical] rule in and around us the more we develop what is superior out of the inferior, what a tenderness out of brutality.³⁰⁷

Quoting from Strauß' *The Old and the New Faith*, Ziegler writes that Strauß' response over against those who want to 'reduce' religion to morality or identify religion with Schleiermacher's mystical 'feeling of absolute dependence,' that

[r]eligion flows from an even deeper source, goes back to an even more primal ground [than Schleiermacher's mystical feeling of absolute dependence or Hegelian meta-narrative]. "Do not forget at any moment that you are a human being and not a mere natural being; do not forget at any moment that all others are also human beings, i.e., with all individual differences, nonetheless, the same as you, with the same needs and demands as you – this is the epitome of all morality. Do not forget for a moment that you and everything you perceive in yourself and around you, *what happens to you and to others*, is not an incoherent fragment, not a wild chaos of atoms or coincidences, but that it *all emerges according to eternal laws from the one source of all life, all reason and all good – that is the epitome of religion*. Whether all this together does not really give the full concept of religion in the subjective sense of the word? I don't know what is missing."³⁰⁸

Can one, with certain conviction, still belong to it as a church?"³⁰⁹ Strauß had already answered:

In the title [*The Old and the New Faith*] [...] I have not contrasted the old faith with a new knowledge, but with a new faith. For the formation of a comprehensive world view, which is to take the place of the equally comprehensive faith of the church, we cannot be content with that which is to be proved strictly inductively, but must add many things,³¹⁰ which from this basis result for our thinking partly as a prerequisite and partly as a conclusion. In the same sense, I have called my writing a confession [...]³¹¹

306. Unlike Ziegler, who sees Strauß combining Schleiermacher and Hegel. See footnote 201.

307. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 139.

308. Ziegler, II: 688. The quote from Strauß comes from *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 238–239.

309. Strauß, "Epilogue" to *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: "Epilogue:" 38.

310. The 'adding of many things' is no reference or embracing of Kant's *a priori* synthetic judgment that *adds things* to perception not directly given in perception.

311. Strauß, "Epilogue" to *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: "Epilogue:" 31–32.

Strauß' formulation here is intriguing. A 'worldview' cannot be unequivocally established by inductive knowledge 'but must add many things' both with respect to prior assumptions and when it comes to its conclusions. This formulation is neither a denial of materialism nor an affirmation of his 'enduring Hegelianism,' but it recognizes that 'reductionist' materialism, as with any other worldview, involves assumptions and conclusions that are not empirical.

Ziegler claims that Strauß remained a Hegelian/Schleiermachian down to the end of his career.³¹² Ziegler's formulation of Strauß' worldview in the end was:

He saw in materialism [...] "the equal brother of Hegelian idealism, the truth was therefore only attainable through the conflation of the two;" the former saw the world from below and from the outside, the latter from above and from within, and so they were basically only two views of one and the same, which must finally meet and coincide. He also remained faithful to the Hegelian panlogism, as the belief in the *reason ruling in the universe*.³¹³ (emphasis added)

However, Strauß' position is more complicated than Ziegler wants to acknowledge. The quotation that equates Hegelian idealism and materialism as 'brothers,' comes from Strauß letter to Alois Emanuel Biedermann from 21 January 1869.³¹⁴ Ziegler takes the quote to mean that Strauß embraced both Idealism and Materialism. That is not what Strauß actually says. Strauß writes:

Where my inner perception leaves me, I also run out of thoughts. Now there are without doubt areas where nothing can be looked at anymore, even inwardly, but still should be thought: and in those areas nature fails me. To your [Biedermann's] construction of the concept of God, I can only say: "I hear the message, but I lack faith." Perhaps what has contributed to this inability is that *I was not secured against the siren voices of materialism as you are by the firm support of a philosophical system*. As an unskilled vineyard worker, as an involuntary drifter, I fell into all kinds of traps. *Materialism often wanted to appear to me [wollte mir erscheinen] as the equal brother of our Hegelian*

312. See Theobald Ziegler, "David Friedrich Strauß. a) Zum 27. Januar 1908" in *Menschen und Probleme. Reden, Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1914): 235: In 1872, Ziegler claims: "In this book [*The Old and the New Faith*] he [Strauss] denied that we still have the right to call ourselves Christians. However, that we still have religion he held to tenaciously *as a Hegelian and Schleiermachian, which he always remained*." (emphasis added) I take Ziegler's claim that the later Strauß was a Hegelian, a Schleiermachian, or both to be a serious error. See as well, Ziegler II: 338: Strauß "[...] broke with one of Hegel's basic views and yet did not cease to be a Hegelian; that is why he was able to be a materialist and a Hegelian at the same time in his last book and thus return to his first love here, as well." The issue, as I will demonstrate, hinges on what the later Strauß means when he speaks of 'reason ruling the universe.' I maintain that it has nothing to do with Hegel's pure reason of Absolute Spirit, which is archetypal, and the later Strauß' ectypal understanding of reason from Feuerbach.

313. Ziegler, "David Friedrich Strauß. a) Zum 27. Januar 1908:" 236.

314. See Ziegler, II: 697. Alois Emanuel Biedermann was the 'liberal' theologian who, after the Liberal government returned to power in Zurich, was appointed to the Chair of Biblical Theology, Church History, and Dogmatics that Strauß has been given in 1839.

idealism with *the truth appearing* [*die Wahrheit erscheinen*] to be attainable only by conflation of both. In any case, with Darwinism I welcomed the first real liberator from the concept of creation. I throw this out only in such a way so that you know approximately in which area of the spiritual sea map you have to look for the 'retired' veteran.³¹⁵ (emphasis added)

Strauß' formulation is in the *subjunctive*, not *declarative* mood, and Ziegler misses the point that Biedermann himself saw clearly. Especially with his eye on Strauß' 'materialism,' Biedermann wrote to Vatke in 1872 shortly after the publication of *The Old and the New Faith*: "I would cut off a finger on my right hand, were Strauß not to have written this ominous book."³¹⁶

Although Ziegler acknowledges that others read Strauß as a 'materialist,' he himself takes the later Strauß to be a 'monist' who combines Hegelian 'Idealism' and 'materialism:'

Strauß is a monist [...]. [He] sees in the universe, as naturalistically as he grasps it, not merely a raw superior power,³¹⁷ but at the same time order and law, reason and goodness.³¹⁸ In such a life- and reason-filled universe, however, there is still the *Logos*, an ideal and spiritual, thus Strauß remains here again faithful to idealism and Hegelian panlogism, remains also as a materialist still a Hegelian [...].³¹⁹

Ziegler complains, though, that Strauß 'didn't articulate [his monism] more clearly,' and he acknowledges that there are passages in Strauß' text that make his monism 'really look like materialism:'

[...] [I]t is not a lapse [...] when he talks about 'our' Hegelian idealism in that letter to Biedermann. Only that this idealist and logical side of the new faith did not express itself clearly and strongly enough, that, of course, cannot be denied. Strauss was blinded by the new light emanating from the natural sciences [...]. His idealism was no longer firm enough to protect him against the siren voices of materialism. His monism really looked like materialism in some places.³²⁰

315. From J. Websky, "Zu Theobald Zieglers Strauß-Biographie" (Part V) in the *Protestantische Monatshefte* (1909): 244–245. J. Websky provides the complete letter.

316. Ziegler, II: 722.

317. Strauß calls this materialist aspect "the monstrous world machine with its iron toothed wheels." See Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 365.

318. Strauß speaks of 'lawfulness,' not the *Logos*, and he refers to the lawfulness *internal* to nature, not *eternal* either in the 'mind' of a Personal God or as the anthropomorphic, logic of dialectic that brings about the material order in order for Absolute Spirit to become aware of Itself 'above' the material order: "Not only merciless wheels move in it [nature], but also soothing oil pours out. Our God does not take us in his arms from the outside, but he opens up sources of comfort within us." Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 365.

319. Ziegler, II: 698.

320. Ziegler, II: 698–699.

Ziegler follows this quote by turning to §66 of *The Old and the New Faith* where Strauß calls the ‘common enemy’ of both Materialism and Idealism to be dualism, especially the dualism of Christianity’s Personal God.³²¹ Yet, Ziegler fails to see that what he calls Strauß’ Spinozan/Hegelian ‘Panlogism’ stands in the same corner with the anthropomorphic, ‘Intellectualist’ wing of Medieval Scholasticism although the Spinozan/Hegelian ‘Panlogism’ denies the Personal God of Medieval Scholastic, Platonist Christianity. Both the ‘dualistic,’ *Logos* tradition of Christian Platonism as well as the ‘*logic of dialectic*’ of Hegelian ‘Panlogism’ claim to explain ‘creation’ based upon analogies to human capacities. As such they both succumb to a μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος that substitutes explanation for description. Furthermore, Ziegler appears to have no grasp of the Nominalist *ectypal* account of the ‘origin’ of ideas that drives Feuerbach’s criticism of Hegel.

However, Feuerbach (and Strauß) equally succumb to a μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος when they take the *ectypal* account of ideas to be an *explanation* of the creation of ideas rather than as a *descriptive* account of how finite consciousness comes to be aware of ideas. Consequently, wherever Ziegler reads ‘reason’ in Strauß, he can only hear Hegelian ‘Panlogism.’

Strauß’ Ethics in 1872

Strauß’ this-worldly morality/ethics in which moral duty arises out of nature and nature, for its part, limits the ethical achievement of the individual remains consistent with Hegel’s “The Moral View of the World” in the *Phenomenology*. Hegel’s understanding of morality is that it is not to be simply identified with empirical ethics measured by consequences. In contrast to ethics as concrete ‘Form,’ morality is the awareness of the absolute duty that is the ‘Content’ or abstract ‘Idea’ demanded by the moral law. Ethics is the always inadequate and insufficient effort to apply the abstract, moral law to one’s concrete situation.

However, Strauß’ understanding of Hegel’s notion of ‘morality’ was transformed into the relative, social construction of ethical norms the more Strauß distanced himself from Hegel’s ultimate goal of the meta-narrative of Double Negation. Hegelian Absolute Knowledge ‘conquers’ the short-comings of ethical failure by the negation of sensualism (phenomenal experience in the world) by means of the Second Negation of ‘the point of indifference’ in finite consciousness. As of *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People*, Strauß emphasized the cultural development of ‘moral’ duty as reflected in the changed social condition of the moral ‘geniuses’ who articulate the moral insights required for the ‘new’ age.³²²

321. See Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 267.

322. See Strauß, *LJEGP*: 626 where Strauß emphasizes that Jesus ‘laid the foundation’ (626–627) but did not comprehensively address all aspects of human moral life. For example, he ignored family

Although Strauß also discarded his own universal, *inclusive* Christology that takes all of finite human consciousness to be the historical actualization of the God/Man, which he defended in his early writings before the *Glaubenslehre*, his 'new faith' of *The Old and the New Faith* is a commitment to that lawfulness (both physical and moral) that 'flows out of the ultimate, material source of all' and governs human agency in this world.

The later Strauß offers no metaphysical 'explanation' for the origin of this lawfulness, and he never embraced Hegel's substitution of the 'cunning of reason' for the 'grace' of the Personal Deity of traditional Christian theology.

To be sure, Strauß unequivocally rejects the label 'Christian' in *The Old and the New Faith*. However, his rejection of the label 'Christianity' involves more than merely turning away from the notions of a Personal Deity from whom Immortality is made possible by a unique sacrifice of the life of God's only Son. This is because Strauß' definition of the 'Christian' religion involves more than Church teaching but a 'religion' is taken to refer to a 'people' (*Volk*).

Hegel employs an anthropomorphic analogy to talk about a 'people' (*Volk*) as 'sociological,' 'ethical totality.' A 'people' is *the concrete agency of a community as a whole*.³²³ Anticipating the framework that he unpacks more fully in "The Moral View of the World" in the *Phenomenology* of 1807, Hegel proposes already in 1802 in his "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" that the abstract principles of duty, the 'true' content (*Inhalt*) that is 'morality,' is distinct from the 'actual' concrete actions (*Form*, actual representations) for which humanity is capable of assuming responsibility as 'ethics'. He describes a people (*Volk*), 'sociologically' not just as an aggregate of individuals but as the 'actual,' concrete events of its particular 'history.' In other words, *peoples as an ethical totality are analogous to 'individuals*. Their 'ethical totality' is what distinguishes them from other individuals (*Völker*, peoples). Without the identification of an ethical totality, a people would be *an empty abstraction* (an 'empty identity'/leere Identität).³²⁴

It is important to note, though, that Hegel's definition of a people as an 'ethical totality' is a classic example of what Kant means by subreption³²⁵ (*Verwechslung*), which treat 'appearances' as if they were the 'thing itself'.

life and economic development (e.g., the industrial revolution), not to speak of the human arts However, already in his "On the Transient and Enduring in Christianity, Strauß not only identifies Jesus as a 'religious genius' (109), but he places him as 'one among many' (124–125).

323. Hegel is employing an anthropomorphic analogy for a *people* just as he has employed an anthropomorphic analogy for his meta-narrative dialectic of Double Negation. Whereas the former anthropomorphic analogy explains the emergence of an ethnic culture that arises out of the tension between 'moral duty' and 'ethical context,' the latter anthropomorphic analogy he uses to explain the causal origin of all 'that truly is' (the realm of ideas) and 'actuality' (the realm of sense perception).

324. See Hegel, "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" GW II: 481.

325. For the definition of subreption, see the "Preface:" 64, n. 84.

In "Schleiermacher und Daub," Strauß presents the Hegelian Daub's definition of religion from Daub's 1805 article "Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy: A Contribution to the Teaching of Christian Confessions" ("Orthodoxie und Heterodoxie. Ein Beitrag zur Lehre von den Symbolischen Büchern"). Daub's definition appears to draw on Hegel's understanding of a people (*Volk*). Religion, according to Daub, is not merely a 'teaching' but is a 'people' (*Volk*) or 'sociological' group (*Gemeinde*). *One can be an apostate or a disbeliever, but one cannot but 'participate' in the religion of one's 'people' (Volk): "The individual has the option to decide to participate or to remain unfaithful and superstitious, but, given that it is the possession of a community, the individual has no option other than to participate in a religion."*³²⁶ Both Daub and Strauß employ this notion of an 'ethical totality' for their understanding of the 'religion' of a particular 'people.' However, in *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß finally shatters this parochial notion of a merely 'sociological,' 'cultural' religion. However, his new 'universalism' is not his, granted narrow, universal, *inclusive* Christology of the *LJ* but now is *the universal 'religion' of the 'new' faith in nature.*

Immediately following his claim that "we are no longer Christian"³²⁷, Strauß begins his Chapter II of *The Old and the New Faith* with the question: "Do we still have Religion?" by echoing the Hegelian Daub, that: "[...] the formation of religions goes hand in hand with the cultural values of peoples."³²⁸ When he concludes, then, that 'we are no longer Christian,' he is making an observation about a relationship to a people (*Volk*) not merely to a set of doctrinal teaching: "We cannot seek support for our actions in a faith that we no longer have, in a community whose premises, whose moods we no longer share."³²⁹ In short he is rejecting his understanding of religion as inseparable from a people as was articulated by the title of Strauß' 1864 work, *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People (Volk)*.

Strauß is consciously addressing a new 'people' (*Volk*) as he rejects the community of Christians and turns to his 'new understanding of faith' (religion). He views the new faith to be as much, if not more, a worldview of a new human community than a set of religious doctrines. In his "Afterword as Foreword," Strauß stresses:

My writing [...] is [...] a confession, not a historical treatise. It was not about the question: what has Christianity worked in mankind? but about the question: it may have worked

326. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 60. In his "Über die Theologie und ihre Encyclopädie, im Verhältniß zum academischen Studium beider. Fragment einer Einleitung in die letztere" of 1806, Daub stressed that theology requires "a sense of a living rootedness in [...] its] community [*Volk*] and [...] respect for its religion;" that theology "does not view the church as a means to some goal (for example, education of the people, morality, etc.), but views the church as the external reflection of the highest culture of a people [*Volk*] as its own goal; and is "as instrument [*Organe*] for the life of the people [*Volksleben*]." (*ibid.*: 68)

327. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 90.

328. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 92.

329. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 85.

what it wants – and it will continue to work in any case – but can one with certain convictions still belong to it as a church? [...] [I]n a large number of our contemporaries, the force of new insights, on the one hand, and the weight of old convictions and habits, on the other, balance each other out precisely with the standpoints of Old Catholicism and Protestantism. If I do not place myself on one of these sides with those who think alike, then this can only have its reason in the fact that I do not grant them the logical right to exist, i.e. that I consider them only as points of passage [...] beyond which the development of our insights has already actually progressed.³³⁰

However, [I seek no] dispute with dissenters, only understanding with like-minded people [...].

Nonetheless, *I did not only want to make those like-minded people aware of what we have but also to make them aware of what we do not have, yet.* By presenting to them our current state of insights and views, impulses and reassurances, I also wanted to draw their attention to the points where we are still lacking, and to urge them to help us cultivate those resources, as well. Not only our conception of the world still has its gaping holes, but *we are even more behind when it comes to the construction of our grasp of duties and virtues.* Here I have only been able to point to the places where the foundation stones are to be laid, rather than being able to point to something that has been completed [...]. [W]e must be clearly aware of the untenability [...] of our old] ideas in order to force us to search for and find the solid points of reference for our moral behavior on the basis of our new worldview, i.e. in the recognized essence of man, instead of in a supposed superhuman revelation.³³¹ (emphasis added)

Strauß' 'new' people (*Volk*) is not limited to a particular culture but is humanity as a totality:

In the generic concept of humanity lies its [...] position on the pinnacle of nature, its ability to resist sensual stimulus by comparing and thinking. Further, however, the unity of the human species lies not only in the way that every animal species belongs together, through descent and similarity of organic structure; but in the way that only through the cooperation of humans is a human being capable of becoming human. The species forms a connected community of solidarity in a completely different sense than any [other] animal species. Only with the help of other human beings has the individual human being risen above nature; only in so far as the individual recognizes and treats others as beings equal to her-/himself can s/he maintain and further cultivate her-/his skills. Whoever thinks of the generic concept of humanity in this way, understands humanity according to its full idea [*Inhalt*] and has a firm basis for moral conduct.³³²

Humanity is 'religious,' according to Strauß, because it is an incomplete, objective project in the world that requires a community. Strauß has universalized religion in that the

330. Strauß, "Ein Nachwort als Vorwort" of *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 38–39.

331. Strauß, "Ein Nachwort als Vorwort" of *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 42–44.

332. Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 246–247.

people (*das Volk*) of 'religion' is the entire human species with all of its creative capacities that distinguish it in the natural order.

Yet, Strauß continues to define religion objectively under the category of subreption. 'Practical reason' is taken by him in the Hegelian sense of the consequences of actions or the external effects of agency.

When it comes to Strauß' new grand narrative of bottom-up nature, Lyotard is correct! Grand narratives are dreams that need to be rejected in all their forms. Here is where Kant's Critical Idealism offers an otherwise overlooked optimism. Granted, it is no blind optimism! It is an optimism grounded in an *a priori* set of capacities and, especially, a creative, efficient causality (autonomous freedom), that the individual can ignore. However, it is a set of conditions and capacities that elevate humanity 'above' nature, make humanity the 'ultimate end of nature,' and constitutes a break in the blind, mechanical causality of nature. Here in finite, transcendental consciousness nature is open, not closed! The price, though, is that, unlike any other species we've encountered at least in degree, finite transcendental consciousness is capable of taking responsibility for its agency – although it can choose to ignore it and act lawlessly. Humanity's maturity (Enlightenment) is no demand of either Absolute Spirit or nature. It is a self-imposed Enlightenment that rises to the challenge of be(com)ing the understanding and responsible (!) agency that we find, in degree, nowhere else in nature.

When finite, transcendental consciousness exercises its *a priori* capacities by its own effort, it experiences a satisfaction not always of successful achievement but of an internal awareness unavailable to any other being that can come only because one has attempted to do something oneself out of one's autonomous freedom. That satisfaction becomes immeasurable when one knows that one has done one's best not out of merely self-interest but on the basis of a 'wide,' categorical imperative to give oneself permission to act and to guide one's application of 'narrow,' hypothetical imperatives to achieve a particular end. Here nothing is over until its over. As long as finite transcendental consciousness exists it is not helpless or determined by either nature or Absolute Spirit's 'cunning of reason.' Rather, finite transcendental consciousness is its own sovereign. Again, though, the cost of this sovereignty is that no one can experience, understand, act, give permission to act, or accept responsibility for anyone else *but the self*. Optimism here is grounded in a very precarious position.³³³

The task now is to examine just what Strauß' mentors as well as Strauß himself got so wrong about Kant, and why it matters. Critical Idealism offers an ignored, profound option for understanding the human condition in terms of a new 'faith.'

333. For Kant's description of this 'precarious position,' see the "Introduction:" 92, n. 42.