

tutive for philosophical conceptions concerning the way reason cognizes the truth of existence through the genesis of self-consciousness. In his works, particularly the *Kritik aller Offenbarung* (1792) and the later *Anweisung zum seligen Leben* (1806), Fichte offers his respective answer to the question by presupposing an integral relation between historical religion and philosophy and by using John's Gospel, particularly its Prologue, as his exegetical basis.

This philosophical question concerning reality has two dimensions in Fichte's post-Kantian context. The metaphysical question can only be answered in view of epistemological parameters. For Fichte, knowledge begins with sensation (*Sinnlichkeit*). Cognition grasps the data of sense perception through a concept that is "dead" because it does not show up the dynamic interrelations of entities within the matrix of a living whole. In order to arrive at knowledge of the living whole in relation to its ground, reason must use sense perception as the point of departure for grasping the essence of that entity to be related to its ground in a relation of freedom and dependence. The metaphysical question includes the theological question of creation in its purview. This creation, however, is not a *creatio ex nihilo*. Rather, Fichte sees the transition from being to existence to be constituted by an imperative (*Sollen*); existence is the necessary externalization of God as its ground and its "inner" side.

It is in view of Fichte's metaphysics that the category of *revelation* is given a decisive determination. Revelation is not a miracle, but is epistemologically necessary, although it must be criticized according to reason's criteria. Religious revelation contains particular truths, yet it is philosophy's task to determine the criteria according to which religious truths can be accepted and believed as authentic witnesses to truth. Fichte offers such criteria in his own work (*Kritik aller Offenbarung*). In the *Anweisung zum seligen Leben*, Fichte turns to John's Gospel as the "purest source of revelation." Fichte's exegetical choice reflects a common nineteenth-century privileging of John's Gospel for metaphysical insights. Fichte differs from other treatments by focusing explicitly on the incarnation as the historical fact of revelation that reveals reason's knowledge concerning the relations between both being and existence, and existence and knowledge. Knowledge of metaphysical truth begins with the revelation of the word in the flesh: in Jesus' life and in his eucharistic presence in bread and wine. The particular unity between word and flesh reveals universal reconciliation between these two aspects. Ultimately Fichte's doctrine of blessedness (*Seligkeitslehre*) incorporates the theological doctrines of creation and reconciliation into the metaphysical insight that reality is based on and is oriented to love.

THE CONSUMMATION OF REALITY: SOTERIOLOGICAL METAPHYSICS IN SCHLEIERMACHER'S INTERPRETATION OF COLOSSIANS 1:15–20

Christine Helmer

Contentions concerning the relationship between past and present continue to press upon discussions of method, particularly if exegesis and systematic theology are brought into the ring. The study of the past, mainly by exegetical scholars, and the construction of the present-day constellation of self, world, and God, primarily by systematic theologians, remind, at best, that past and present cannot be naively brought into relation with each other. The difficulty of fit is partially due to the semantic difference between past and present, established by eighteenth-century criticism against Protestant Orthodoxy's semantic equivocation between the two. Difference, not sameness, qualifies the relation between biblical studies and systematic theology, with bridge disciplines, such as biblical theology, sometimes sent in to mediate the two.¹

One source of the contention seems to be its dual epistemological presupposition. If, on the one hand, historical reason is seen to be discontinuous with speculative reason, as in the Kantian paradigm, then a judgment arises that the study of the historical past by empirical reason cannot serve theological claims made by appealing to speculative reason. This dualist view can be challenged for the reason that it seems to insulate the study of history from any motivation by present concerns, whether as a hermeneutical pre-judgment or for the purpose of informing those concerns. History is for sheer, and mere, history's sake. If, on the other hand, historical reason is seen to be epistemologically continuous with speculative reason, then another criticism rears its head: speculative thinking is imposed onto past history. On this view, it seems as if the introduction of the speculative thinking required for systematic theology necessarily *distorts* the historical objectivity required for a "true" reading of the biblical text. To err on one side seems inevitable; which side is left to one's choosing.

1. On the bridge-building function of biblical theology, set with its origins in Johann Philipp Gabler's famous inaugural speech delivered at the University of Altdorf on March 30, 1787, see Christine Helmer, "Biblical Theology: Bridge Over Many Waters," *CurBS* 3 (April 2005): 169–96.

It is precisely the unresolved suspicion haunting systematic theology that I address in view of a theologian, philosopher, and New Testament scholar who continued to protest against accusations of the sort, but to no avail. My intention is to point out a way beyond the presupposed epistemological impasse by offering a new construal of the relation between exegesis and theology in view of the topic of this book, the question of reality. In this essay, I study Friedrich Schleiermacher's 1832 interpretation of one of the New Testament's christological hymns, Colossians 1:15–20.² I argue two points. By negative argument, I show that Schleiermacher's alleged dogmatic bias is not the result of his imposing theological doctrines onto the literal text. Rather, Schleiermacher takes great care to analyze the biblical passage's Greek terms and syntax. By positive argument, I show that Schleiermacher's exegetical work presupposes an idiosyncratic understanding of the relationship between the reality of the past and the reality of the present. This distinct understanding plays into his theological method that is applied in such a way as to collapse the historical distance between text and interpreter into a metaphysically construed temporal simultaneity between past and present. What Schleiermacher does is to take the historical feature of the text and transpose this into a transhistorical feature, thereby turning a historical claim into a speculative claim. The christological bias is not a result of dogmatic imposition, but is, in fact, a function of a soteriological metaphysics concerning the redemptive goal of creation. By rehabilitating Schleiermacher's philological precision, I hope to show that his hermeneutical insights can be appreciated, while also demonstrating that his operating metaphysic is open to criticism.

The first section, "Text and Context," summarizes the standard criticism directed against Schleiermacher's "christological bias." I point out that such a criticism does not take seriously enough Schleiermacher's own defense concerning his hermeneutical innocence and the historical privileging of both his exegetical theol-

2. "Ueber Kolosser 1, 15–20" was first published in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken: Eine Zeitschrift für das gesammte Gebiet der Theologie* 3 (1832): 497–537. It was subsequently reprinted in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. 1/2 (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1836), 321–59. (Hereafter referred to as SW.) The text has been recently reprinted in the *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 1/8, *Exegetische Schriften* (ed. Hermann Patsch and Dirk Schmid; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 195–226. (Hereafter referred to as KGA.) The English translation is by Esther D. Reed and Alan Braley, "On Colossians 1:15–20 (1832)," *New Athenaeum/Neues Athenaeum* 5 (1998): 48–80. (Hereafter referred to as NANA.) Esther Reed's detailed introduction to this text is in NANA, 33–47. In addition to publishing his commentary on Col 1:15–20, Schleiermacher also lectured five times on this book together with other shorter letters of the New Testament at the University of Berlin, during the winter semesters of 1811–1812, 1815–1816, 1818–1819, 1824–1825, and in the summer semester of 1832 (see Patsch and Schmid, "Einleitung der Bandherausgeber," KGA 1/8, xlii and n. 130). He also preached two sermons on this text in 1830: the first sermon on Col 1:13–18 on July 25 and the second sermon on Col 1:18–23 on August 8. These two sermons are part of a sermon series on Colossians that Schleiermacher delivered from June 13, 1830, to July 17, 1831 (*ibid.*, xlii and n. 143). For a record of the sermon, see SW II/6 (ed. Friedrich Zabel; Berlin: Verlag von Friedrich Aug. Herbig, 1835), 232–43 and 244–55.

ogy and his dogmatic theology. The difficulty lies elsewhere. The second section, "Text and Interpretation," thematizes Schleiermacher's interpretation of the christological hymn in Col 1:15–20. I focus on analyzing Schleiermacher's hermeneutical results in relation to his soteriological determination of the realities reconciled by God in Christ. It is an underlying power/appearance metaphysic that determines the interpretation. The third section, "Text and Reality," summarizes my thesis regarding the metaphysics underpinning the exegetical method that Schleiermacher applies to Col 1:15–20. It is my contention that the soteriological metaphysics Schleiermacher uses to connect creation (stanza one in verses 15–16b) to redemption (stanza two in verses 18b–20b) is not a function of his hermeneutical insights, but is a result of his theological method that reads into the past what is probably best left in Schleiermacher's present.

1. TEXT AND CONTEXT

It is practically a platitude that a text is interpreted in a specific context. In this section, I take this platitude to show that Schleiermacher's own exegetical works tend to be interpreted in a context that presupposes an epistemological dualism between historical and speculative reason. By sketching his presupposed epistemological continuity between the two types of reason, I pave the way for explaining the "christological bias" in the Col 1:15–20 commentary as a function of his operating metaphysics.

Schleiermacher is considered to be one of the eminent New Testament scholars of his time.³ His exegetical work on the four Gospels and the deuteropauline corpus broke new ground, and his commentary on Col 1:15–20 is no exception. Until the present day, scholars acknowledge their own point of exegetical departure to begin with Schleiermacher's identification of the passage's parallel literary structure.⁴ In his study, Schleiermacher points out the "two unmistakable" literary parallels structuring the text "if one confines oneself simply to the text as the sole consideration."⁵ Verses 15–16b are parallel to verses 18b–20b by the repetition of ὅς and ὅτι in both parts: "He (ὅς) is the image . . . for (ὅτι) in him all things were created.' . . . 'He (ὅς) is the beginning. . . For (ὅτι) in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell."⁶ Schleiermacher contrasts his literary observation with Chrysostom's interpretation that allocates Christ's dignity to three sites: "the first above, the first in the

3. For a detailed discussion of Schleiermacher's exegetical achievements, see Christine Helmer, "Schleiermacher's Exegetical Theology and the New Testament," in *Cambridge Companion to Schleiermacher* (ed. Jacqueline Mariña; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

4. Christian Stettler, *Der Kolosserhymnus: Untersuchungen zu Form, traditionsgeschichtlichem Hintergrund und Aussage von Kol 1,15–20* (WUNT 2/131; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 1.

5. NANA, 52.

6. *Ibid.* Schleiermacher cites the following Greek: "ὅς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν . . . ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα . . . ὅς ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ . . . ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησε" (*ibid.*).

church, and the first in the resurrection.⁷ In spite of his respect for the Greek acumen of this church parent, Schleiermacher writes that he can find no literary evidence for this triple eminence of Christ.⁸ By dismissing Chrysostom's theology on philological grounds, the burden is on Schleiermacher to interpret the literary parallel to make a theological claim concerning the relation between Christ in creation (verses 15–16b) and Christ in redemption (verses 18b–20b). In his commentary, Schleiermacher begins by criticizing a christological imposition onto the text. But will he himself be found guilty of the same exegetical crime?

Scholarship seems to answer the question in the affirmative. From its earliest reception, criticism was directed specifically against what Schleiermacher insisted on in the opening paragraphs. Schleiermacher assures readers of his intention to proceed on the basis of hermeneutical rules alone, rather than out of dogmatic interest.⁹ In spite of the praiseworthy rhetoric, scholarship deemed that Schleiermacher did not carry through with his intention and, instead, tainted his hermeneutical inquiry with dogmatic claims. In his reminiscences of Schleiermacher published one year after the latter's death, Friedrich Lücke writes that Schleiermacher "belongs to the class of those who are far more strongly inclined towards a distinctive individuality of apprehension than to self-surrender; who rather draw over the author to their own position, then allow themselves to be drawn by him."¹⁰ Rather than "understanding particularly the written discourse" of the Apostle Paul "correctly," as was the objective Schleiermacher prescribed in his *Hermeneutics*,¹¹ Schleiermacher transformed the apostle into his own image.¹² In their introduction to Schleiermacher's commentary on Col 1:15–20, Patsch and Schmid write of reviews published immediately after Schleiermacher's death, which reiterate a similar criticism.¹³ In spite of some uncontained awe for the sensitive reading that Schleiermacher offers, reviewers raise the claim that Schleiermacher imposes his dogmatic opinion onto the text. In her informed introduction to her English translation, Reed too raises the question of a dogmatic bias, yet attempts to defend Schleiermacher on his statements

7. *Ibid.*, 53. In this and in other exegetical works, Schleiermacher engages the Greek fathers, such as Chrysostom and Theodoret, as dialogue partners because of their philological superiority in reading and writing Greek texts (*ibid.*).

8. "Yet, for our part we cannot find three equipollent sentences for these three members" (*ibid.*).

9. "It is so much concerned with the much discussed and disputed question concerning the higher nature and dignity of Christ, and concerning his relationship to God and the world that I think it is pertinent to state here and now my belief that this endeavor proceeds, not from any dogmatic interest at all but from a purely hermeneutical interest" (*ibid.*, 51).

10. Friedrich Lücke, "Reminiscences of Schleiermacher," in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology* (trans. William Farrer; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1850), 33. Cited in Reed, "Introduction," 34 and n. 6.

11. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings* (trans. Andrew Bowie; Cambridge Studies in the History of Philosophy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3.

12. Lücke, "Reminiscences," 34. Cited in Reed, "Introduction," 47 and n. 59.

13. Patsch and Schmid, "Einleitung der Bandherausgeber," KGA I/8, xlvi–l.

concerning the importance of grammatical interpretation.¹⁴ Yet Reed acknowledges that Schleiermacher is less defensible on the one charge that his possible unfamiliarity with early-nineteenth-century research on the gnostic, or λόγος, theological backdrop to Paul (who Schleiermacher supposes is the author of Colossians) led him to downplay possible Essene and gnostic influences on the apostle,¹⁵ and on the other charge that his exegetical portrayal of Jesus looks remarkably like the Redeemer of *The Christian Faith*.¹⁶ Could it be that Schleiermacher was so naive as to dismiss any possibility of a dogmatic equivocation with his exegesis?

In the face of insidious suspicion and recurrent criticism, the charge of dogmatic imposition cannot be easily dismissed. Nevertheless, it is the bias of the charge itself that demands a second look. The epistemological continuity between historical and speculative reason that Schleiermacher advocates in his *Dialektik* seems to preclude the charge of imposition.¹⁷ As he argues, a concept acquires its predicates solely by historical investigation, not by speculative fantasy. Furthermore, no bifurcation between history and speculation is admissible in view of his theological systematicity. In fact, Schleiermacher sees exegetical and dogmatic theology as two of three subdisciplines of historical theology, distinguished solely by virtue of the historical epoch under consideration. Exegetical theology considers the origins of Christianity, dogmatic theology its present state.¹⁸ Given Schleiermacher's own defense of hermeneutical innocence, his epistemological continuum, and his subsumption of both exegetical and dogmatic theology under historical theology, could it be that Schleiermacher is meriting the attack of dogmatic imposition on different grounds? In the following section, I argue that there is nothing inherently dogmatic about the application of Schleiermacher's hermeneutical rules. It is, rather, his soteriological metaphysics that should be the object of contention, not the christological reading of the Colossians passage.

2. TEXT AND INTERPRETATION

Since Manfred Frank's edition of Schleiermacher's *Hermeneutik und Kritik* was published in 1977, it has been an established thesis that Schleiermacher privileged

14. Reed, "Introduction," 34–40.

15. *Ibid.*, 40–44. Reed argues that Schleiermacher's dismissal of sources "renders him vulnerable to the charge of prejudice in interpreting Paul's Christology in terms of ecclesiology and ethics" (*ibid.*, 41).

16. *Ibid.*, 44–46.

17. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Vorlesungen über die Dialektik*, in KGA II/10,2 (ed. Andreas Arndt; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), 541 (1822; 43rd lecture).

18. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of Theology as a Field of Study* (trans. Terrence N. Tice; Schleiermacher Studies and Translations 1; Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1990), § 85 (48–49). (Page numbers are indicated in parentheses.)

the grammatical side of the interpretative task for arriving at a text's meaning.¹⁹ This commitment to the text's formal elements is explicitly reiterated in the Col 1:15–20 commentary.²⁰ In this section, I restrict myself to a few examples of Schleiermacher's literary-linguistic analysis of the Colossians commentary in order to show that he must be taken at his intended word. Nevertheless, a difficulty seeps into the interpretation as I suggest in this section and analyze in the next section.

According to Schleiermacher's hermeneutical rules, determining a text's authorship is integral to interpreting the text correctly. Produced by an author—or school—a text is a record of that respective author's experience of reality as it is shaped by a particular authorial intention. In his work on Colossians, Schleiermacher makes some claims about the text's author that, although not any more agreed upon by contemporary scholars, must be mentioned in order to understand how these claims structure his interpretation. Unlike twentieth-century commentators on Colossians, Schleiermacher assumes Pauline authorship for the entire letter, including its christological hymn (Col 1:15–20).²¹ By assuming Paul to be the author for the entire work, Schleiermacher also reads the passage as a literary integrity.²² These assumptions are key because they explain why Schleiermacher determines the passage in the context of Paul's theology as a whole, and especially in view of passages that he deems to refer to a similar content: Eph 2:12–16 and Rom 11:36.²³ Paul's authorial intention is read by Schleiermacher to constitute the simi-

19. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutik und Kritik* (ed. Manfred Frank; STW 211; Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1977). Frank's edition has recently been translated into English by Andrew Bowie (see n. 11).

20. "Now, undeniably this is the case here to such a degree that one cannot evade the demand to probe into the extent to which the meaning of the formal elements can be detected from the logical and grammatical relationships among the sentences in which they occur; and this is the task I have set myself here" (NANA, 51).

21. For an example, see Stettler, *Kolossierhymnus*, 43. Also unlike contemporary interpreters, Schleiermacher does not determine the passage's genre to be a hymn. Contemporary consensus claims that the letter's author reworked an already existing hymn into the text. See *ibid.*, 79, 100–103. The Pauline authorship of Colossians was first called into question by Ernst Theodor Mayerhoff, *Der Brief an die Colosser mit vornehmlicher Berücksichtigung der drei Pastoralbriefe* (Berlin: H. Schulze, 1838), as Reed notes in her "Introduction," 37 and n. 19.

22. Hofius rejects Käsemann's claim that the passage includes two interpolations: the *genitivus appositivus* in verse 18a (τῆς ἐκκλησίας), and verse 20b (διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ). On the other hand, Hofius notes two other interpolations: the four powers in verse 16 and the δι' αὐτοῦ in verse 20. See Otfried Hofius, "Erstgeborener vor aller Schöpfung"—"Erstgeborener aus den Toten": Erwägungen zu Struktur und Aussage des Christushymnus Kol 1,15–20," in *Paulustudien II* (WUNT 143; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 217–19.

23. Schleiermacher explicitly appeals to both these passages in the Colossians commentary. For example, Schleiermacher asks the classic question of whether Colossians should be cross-referenced with Ephesians (NANA, 51 n. 67). He argues for the chronological priority of Colossians because of its more systematic arrangement and sustained argument. "That is why I am puzzled whenever I hear it conjectured that this letter was based on the letter to the Ephesians; that would have to imply that in the present letter Paul was trying to produce an improved version of the other one" (*ibid.*). For reference to

larity between the passages. For Schleiermacher, all of Paul's works are stamped with a particular construal of reality, given decisive shaping in Paul's conversion. In his works, Paul's authorial intention is the explication of a dramatic transition from one kingdom to another that is effected by Christ.²⁴ Thus the subject matter thematized by all New Testament authors, "the higher nature and dignity of Christ, and concerning his relationship to God and the world,"²⁵ is idiosyncratically articulated by Paul as a transition.

Schleiermacher demonstrates this transition in the Colossians text by analyzing the textual milieu of verses 15–20 and finds the interpretative clue in verse 13: "He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."²⁶ The transition is itself evident in the text's syntax. Schleiermacher acknowledges that the opening passage of Col 1 is divided into two full sentences: verses 3–8 and verses 9–23.²⁷ In the second sentence, two transitions indicate two subjects of activity. The first articulates a shift from God as the subject of the main text (verses 9–23) to the subject of Christ in verse 15, and the second describes the transition from Christ back to God in verse 16 and then in verse 19 of the main text.²⁸ From this textual analysis, Schleiermacher concludes that the main point in the hymn is the transference of "us" (καὶ ὑμᾶς in verse 21) into the kingdom of the Son. Thus Schleiermacher sees Paul's particular authorial intention in the syntactical structure of the entire passage that has as its content "our" transition from darkness into the kingdom of Christ. Conversion is a transition from one reality to another.

The soteriological determination cannot be judged an alien imposition. According to Schleiermacher, the New Testament as a whole grounds the entire Christian tradition by relating "everything in" Christianity to the "redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth."²⁹ A basic agreement attributing the work of redemption to Jesus of Nazareth qualifies the central perspective of both the New Testament and the subsequent history of the Christian church.³⁰ In view of this attri-

Eph 2:12–16, see *ibid.*, 73; for Eph 2:16, see *ibid.*, 75–77. For reference to Rom 11:36, see *ibid.*, 64–65, n. 88, and *ibid.*, 68.

24. See SW I/8, 147 (*Einleitung ins neue Testament*), in which Schleiermacher argues for the key significance of Paul's conversion in determining his *Tendenz*.

25. NANA, 51.

26. *Ibid.*

27. In this paragraph, I am summarizing Schleiermacher's argument in *ibid.*, 50–51.

28. *Ibid.*, 72.

29. This understanding of reality is the concept of the essence of Christianity given in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart; trans. D. M. Baillie et al.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), § 11, proposition (52): "Christianity is . . . essentially distinguished from other such faiths by the fact that in it everything is related to the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth." (Hereafter referred to as CF. Page numbers are given in parentheses.)

30. A religion's determining characteristic is an original intuition of the deity, as Schleiermacher describes it in the fifth speech. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*

bution, Paul's distinctive understanding of that reality is in agreement with the soteriological claim of Christianity as grounded in the texts of the New Testament.

Attention, however, must be drawn to the way Schleiermacher attributes work to person. In his Colossians commentary, Schleiermacher follows his own dogmatic theological logic by relating soteriology to Christology: only as much as is experienced as Christ's effect can be attributed to the dignity of Christ's person.³¹ By this rule, Schleiermacher avoids the speculative tendency to attribute docetic predicates to Christ that are not warranted by the redemptive effect of his person. Schleiermacher follows this same rule when determining Paul's Christology in the Colossians passage. In order to do this, however, Schleiermacher must solve an interpretative difficulty presented by the literary parallel that appears to distinguish between Christ as mediator of creation in the first stanza and Christ as mediator of redemption in the second stanza. If the passage is read according to the classic two-natures dogma of Christ, then the first stanza must be predicated of a preexistent λόγος, at least according to classic theological consensus.³² Schleiermacher disagrees with this consensus, denies the referent to be the second person of the Trinity, and reads the subject of the entire passage as "the whole Christ."³³ With this designation, the passage's two stanzas cannot refer to a metaphysical division in Christ according to his two natures: stanza one as attributed to the divine nature, stanza two to the human nature. Rather, both stanzas are referred to the "whole Christ."

The question, however, as to what is meant by "the whole Christ" is the controversial matter. At this point, Schleiermacher's exegetical-theological results differ from the traditional doctrinal interpretation regarding the preexistent Christ. In order to understand what is meant by the unity of Christ's person in two works, Schleiermacher focuses on the literary connection between the parallels. As Schleiermacher argues, the literary parallels must refer to the same subject.³⁴ Christ's relation to creation is determined solely from creation's redemptive *telos*, which is already indicated by the transfer idea in verse 13. On the basis of this soteriological restriction, Schleiermacher prohibits any cosmological speculation regarding τὰ πάντα (verses 16 and 20), preferring to read this term in view of the καὶ ἡμᾶς (verse 21).³⁵ All aspects of the passage refer to Paul's message concerning the universal

(trans. Richard Crouter; Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 107.

31. "If the peculiar dignity of the Redeemer can be measured only by His total activity as resting upon that dignity . . . then the dignity of the Redeemer must be thought of in such a way that He is capable of achieving this" (CF § 93, 1 [377]).

32. Hofius interprets the first stanza to refer to the preexistent Christ. See Hofius, "Christushymnus," 223.

33. "[R]ather Paul can have been thinking only of the whole Christ, and we must therefore also be content to interpret the sentence in a way that can be applied to the whole Christ" (NANA, 55).

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*, 54.

redemptive outcome of creation in Christ.³⁶ The reality of universal reconciliation is precisely the metaphysical question inherent in the soteriological claim.

The metaphysical question concerns how Schleiermacher understands Christ's person in relation to his activity in creation. Given his soteriological determination of the whole Christ as the historical Jesus of Nazareth, Schleiermacher cannot attribute this activity to a preexistent and nonembodied Christ as the second person of the Trinity. Rather, he conceives the role of the historical Jesus in creation in a way that avoids claiming Jesus' preexistence. By analyzing the Colossians passage in view of this question, Schleiermacher addresses a question not investigated in Part I of *The Christian Faith*.³⁷ If soteriology is the lens through which Christ is viewed, then the Colossians passage explicitly raises the unavoidable question concerning Christ's relation to creation.

In order to answer this question, Schleiermacher turns to the verb "to create." In his Colossians commentary, Schleiermacher reads the phrase ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα" (Col 1:16a) to refer "only to the founding and establishing of something that will continue to exist and develop in the future."³⁸ On philological grounds, Schleiermacher argues that the verb κτίζειν does not denote the creation of something not previously existing. For this meaning, both Paul (Acts 17:24) and the LXX use the term ποιῆσαι. According to Schleiermacher, κτίζειν refers to the incorporation of disparate elements into one reality. From the verb's meaning, there is no requirement to posit a temporal priority of a *creatio ex nihilo* over which a second person of the Trinity presided.³⁹

If the text is read without reference to a *creatio ex nihilo*, then the question arises regarding the relationship between past and present. Schleiermacher begins to answer this question by advancing a claim concerning the metaphysical continuity of entities from past to present by noting the literary parallel between κτίζω (verse 16a) and συνίστημι (verse 17b).⁴⁰ Both verbs are embedded in clauses containing

36. Schleiermacher mentions Paul's idea concerning the universality of Christianity in SW I/8, 147.

37. In this first part of his dogmatic theology, Schleiermacher thematizes the doctrines of creation and providence as statements derived from religious self-consciousness as abstracted from the consciousness of sin and the consciousness of grace. The entire section is ordered to divine causality, without reference to Christ. Explicit soteriological claims are only made when Christ is discussed in section 2 of part II under the consciousness of grace. See CF §§ 92–105 (374–475).

38. NANA, 57. See the entire philological argument in *ibid.*, 57–61.

39. This philological point dovetails with Schleiermacher's well-known thesis in the CF concerning the absorption of creation into preservation (cf. CF § 38, 1 [146]). Creation is a doctrine of divine activity only to the extent that the essences which endure through time are explained as having their origin and their preservation in divine activity. If reason attempts to conceptualize a *creatio ex nihilo* as a moment distinct from preservation, then it risks capturing God in the antithesis characterizing finite thinking. See CF § 41 (152–56), which tries to avoid making God's creation from nothing part of finite activity in time and also the *Dialektik* that rejects the *creatio ex nihilo* altogether on philosophical grounds because a rational conception cannot extricate God from the antitheses marking finite thinking. See KGA I/10, 2, 535–37 (1822; 42nd lecture).

40. This paragraph summarizes the argument found in NANA, 59–61.

ἐν αὐτῷ and τὰ πάντα. The difference between them lies in the different verb tenses. Schleiermacher resolves the discrepancy by arguing that what is contained in the perfect συνέστηκεν is also contained in the aorist passive ἐκτίσθη. The aorist past is absorbed into the perfect tense, thereby emphasizing continuity along a historical trajectory. Schleiermacher notes a further connection between past and present by the literary parallels in verses 17a and 18a. Both phrases are formulated in the present tense (καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν πρὸ πάντων and καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ). First, Schleiermacher claims an analogy between the absorption motif of the aorist and perfect verbs and the two phrases in the present tense. The phrase “before all things” is also to be absorbed into “he is the head” by virtue of the analogy that one reality is brought into another reality. Second, Schleiermacher determines the object of the verbs in light of the intransitive συνέστηκεν. He appeals to a rule stipulating that the intransitive must be read in conjunction with its transitive form.⁴¹ The application of this rule results in determining the object as that which is brought together with another. What is brought together is not the “continuation of existence” but the “becoming established, the being consolidated of conditions and institutional arrangements.”⁴² Third, Schleiermacher determines the reality in which all “conditions and institutional arrangements” are brought together. That one reality is given in verse 18: “Christ is the head of the body, of the church.” Through this soteriological determination, τὰ πάντα are determined to have their foundation in him.⁴³ All is dependent on Christ, not as the mediator of creation, but as its consummation. Creation has its purpose to be related to Christ in such a way that it “further[s] his kingdom in one way or another.”⁴⁴ If all things are to be transferred into the kingdom of the Son, then even the metaphysical question concerning the absorption of past into present can be determined soteriologically.

After Schleiermacher soteriologically determines Christ’s relation to creation, he then turns to the more specific metaphysical question concerning the nature of the realities dependent on Christ. Schleiermacher’s word study of the terms in verse 16 designating heavenly and earthly realities (τὰ πάντα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς), unseen and seen realities (τὰ ὄρατα καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα), and the four Greek terms in verse 16c (εἶτε θρόνοι εἶτε κυριότητες εἶτε ἀρχαὶ εἶτε ἐξουσίαι)—as well as his general determination of τὰ πάντα—yields a decisively embodied metaphysical picture. Schleiermacher rejects not only any spiritually disembodied entities

41. Ibid., 60.

42. Ibid.

43. “Paul is not saying something inappropriate but is saying exactly what we would have had to wish him to say, namely that conditions on earth for human beings are related to Christ and how they are so related” (ibid., 64). Cf., “That is to say, he [Paul] could have affirmed this providing that redemption through Christ, and one can also just as correctly say Christ himself, is the key to all the divine institutions that refer to humankind, and consequently that he is the one foundation of all” (ibid., 65).

44. Ibid., 66.

as denotations of these terms,⁴⁵ but any links Paul might have had with gnostic, speculative, or wisdom teaching in which those spiritual realities play a metaphysical role.⁴⁶ Although Schleiermacher’s rejection of the spiritual realities denoted by these terms seems to be discredited by scholarship,⁴⁷ his results are grounded in philological observations. Schleiermacher documents his scholarly opinion with arguments about the text’s historical continuity with Judaism, as well as with considerations of syntax and literary parallelism. In verse 16, Schleiermacher determines τὰ πάντα by first arguing against correlating the invisible with heaven and the visible with earth. Rather than taking Paul’s contrasts as equal parallels,⁴⁸ Schleiermacher takes “heaven” in the “wider messianic sense” of the “kingdom of heaven,” together with the “narrower” Pauline sense of the “kingdom of the Son.”⁴⁹ “Heaven” refers to the *telos* of creation, its redemption. Furthermore, the pair “invisible/visible” are referred to the proximate term earth, not heaven, as its precise specification.⁵⁰ Schleiermacher construes the distinction between the invisible and the visible pertaining to earthly things in terms of Paul’s soteriological *Tendenz*. Earthly conditions, whether invisible or visible, have as their end and goal the heavenly realm of Christ’s kingdom.⁵¹ These earthly conditions are referred to by the four terms in verse 16: thrones, dominions, principalities, and authorities.⁵² The exegetical result of this philological study is a soteriological designation of the heavenly as the goal of the earthly.

It is at this exegetical juncture that Schleiermacher’s operating metaphysics makes its entrance. The ontology operating in his exegesis is not that of an ontological dualism between heaven as an invisible reality and earth as a visible reality. Rather, the location of the invisible/visible distinction within earthly reality is characteristic of a monistic ontology. The language is explicitly Leibnizian. Schleiermacher refers to the terminology of power (*Kraft*) and appearance (*Erscheinung*) in order to make his point.⁵³ Earthly reality has both an inner invisible reality and an external manifestation. The inner is the power which comes to appearance

45. Ibid., 61–67.

46. For example: “how little we can assert that the expressions . . . regarded as designations for superhuman existence, would have been known and in current use” (ibid., 61). See also CF §§ 42–45 (156–70) on Schleiermacher’s agnosticism concerning the existence of angels and devils.

47. Reed, “Introduction,” 42.

48. Schleiermacher appreciates Paul’s “pendant for contrasts” (NANA, 63), but claims that the *Tendenz* determines the meaning, not the contrast (ibid., 64).

49. On this point, Schleiermacher refers to continuity with Jewish thought (ibid., 63).

50. Ibid., 64.

51. “. . . [N]amely that conditions on earth for human beings are related to Christ and how they are so related” (ibid.).

52. Ibid., 62, 64. According to Schleiermacher, both the invisible/visible earthly realities and the four terms in verse 16 are earthly conditions related to Christ (ibid., 64).

53. “Indeed, even anywhere on earth only external things are visible, effects and deeds, whereas what is internal, the movement of the will, power, is invisible” (ibid., 63).

in physical, external reality, and which drives that visible reality to its heavenly consummation. The invisible dimension is the power that becomes visible as physical reality is infused with it; the spiritual is embodied in the physical, and infuses it with eternal life. It is precisely a metaphysical picture of a spirit/body or heaven/earth unity informed by a power/appearance metaphysic that Schleiermacher uses to interpret the text's grammar. Schleiermacher's soteriological metaphysics points forward from the power of invisible reality to its visible consummation in Christ.

At this point in the commentary, it seems as if Schleiermacher is viewing the salvific *telos* of Christ's work from the perspective of a power/appearance metaphysics. The "inner" redemptive power established in Christ on the Earth is permeating the "outer" heavenly realm through its expansion. This heavenly realm, however, is not geographically separate from the earth. Rather, it is understood as the earth's *telos* according to the metaphysics implicit in Schleiermacher's idea of soteriological expansion.

The questions that remain concern the determination of the precise reality that is reconciled and the agent of that reconciliation. Schleiermacher's exegetical move seems to be a look at the position of the subordinate clauses in relation to the main clauses to arrive at the meaning of the entire passage (verses 18b–20b).⁵⁴ The main clause in verse 18 (Christ is the head of the church, the firstborn from the dead) is related to the two subordinate clauses in verse 19 (fullness dwells in Christ) and verse 20b and c (the two elements, things on earth and in heaven, are reconciled). Schleiermacher relates the parity he detects in the subject of the subordinate clauses to God, the subject of the verbs in these clauses (to dwell, to reconcile, to make peace).⁵⁵ According to a common predication in the New Testament, God is pleased to dwell, to reconcile, to make peace.⁵⁶ This observation dovetails with an earlier insight indicating God as the subject of the transference theme in verse 13. God is the agent of salvation.

The next issue concerns the object of reconciliation. Schleiermacher first clarifies the meaning of the verbs by syntactical association. According to the argument, "making peace" has no apposition and is absorbed into "to reconcile."⁵⁷ Schleiermacher then handles their object, the referent of τὰ πάντα. From contextual information, verse 21 gives one warrant for associating τὰ πάντα with the Colossians as the referent of καὶ ὑμᾶς ("you who were once set at enmity having been

54. I am attempting to reconstruct the argument found in *ibid.*, 72–73. In his *Hermeneutics*, Schleiermacher gives the following interpretative rule: "If we pursue the canon that has been established further we must, in order to proceed organically, *first and foremost distinguish main and secondary thoughts in relation to the elements of an utterance which can be controversial.*" Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 64 (italics in original).

55. *Ibid.*, 73.

56. *Ibid.* Schleiermacher argues that fullness (πλήρωμα) cannot be the subject of indwelling, of reconciling, or of making peace (*ibid.*, 72).

57. This is the main point of a complex argument on *ibid.*, 73.

reconciled").⁵⁸ The next warrant is given with the literary parallel between the first "good pleasure," the fullness dwelling in Christ (verse 19), and the second "good pleasure," reconciling all things (verse 20). According to Schleiermacher's interpretation, the parallel indicates an equality of meaning, which gives the reconciliation in Christ of two elements as the content of the fullness.⁵⁹ Schleiermacher then finds the second element reconciled to the ὑμᾶς (verse 21) in the analogical passages of Rom 11:12 and 25: "the uniting of Jews and gentiles in the kingdom of the Son and under his lordship" is the resulting interpretation.⁶⁰ The elements joined in Christ are neither heaven and earth, nor cosmic powers, but two personal realities: Jews and Gentiles.⁶¹

The final question concerns the divine agency in view of the soteriological goal of reconciliation. Here Schleiermacher concentrates on the two divine pleasures (verses 19 and 20) in order to determine how these pleasures are related to the one reconciliation in Christ. From syntactical association, Schleiermacher deems that God's second pleasure (verse 20) is the reconciling work that is accomplished in Christ's cross.⁶² Although he glosses over the impact of his claim, Schleiermacher states that the cross is the means by which the two realities at enmity with each other are reconciled with each other in relation to it.⁶³ The type of relation between the two pleasures accomplished by the cross is one of a "mutual conditioning."⁶⁴ The condition of reconciliation, which is the first pleasure, is the indwelling of the fullness in Christ, yet the unification of Jews and Gentiles in Christ, the second pleasure, precedes and determines this condition. Conversely, the fullness in Christ, the first pleasure, presupposes peace between the two factions, the second pleasure.⁶⁵ Reconciliation in Christ refers back to the subject of both pleasures, and reveals the

58. *Ibid.*, 74.

59. This is the summary of the argument found in *ibid.*, 75–76. Schleiermacher rejects Chrysostom's interpretation of fullness as standing for deity, and opts for Theodoret's interpretation for the term as the church (*ibid.*, 74).

60. *Ibid.*, 75. According to Schleiermacher, the difference between the Colossians hymn and the Romans passages is the universalistic outlook of the former. Colossians 1 describes the uniting of Jews and Gentiles in the "totality of Israel." See also *ibid.*, 75–77, on Eph 2:6.

61. Schleiermacher asserts this point on grammatical grounds. Although τὰ πάντα is a neuter noun, Schleiermacher argues against a literal interpretation on the grounds of the passage's context. The context of enmity and reconciliation implies a personalist interpretation (*ibid.*, 77).

62. *Ibid.*, 79.

63. Although he asks, "Again, how were we supposed to imagine that such a reconciliation is conditioned by an establishment of peace by virtue of the cross?" Schleiermacher does not dwell on an analysis of the cross and the blood (*ibid.*, 77). In the CF, Schleiermacher argues for a correlation between the person and work of the Redeemer, rather than for a theory of vicarious satisfaction. On Schleiermacher's understanding of Christ's priestly office, the classical locus of the theory of atonement, see CF § 104 (451–66).

64. NANA, 75.

65. "This is obvious, for the dwelling of this totality in Christ is the definitive, constant condition; it is the complete unification that must necessarily precede that condition and that determines it; yet, in

glory of the one who initiated and accomplished creation's goal. The universalistic reconciliation of personal entities is a result of the divine pleasure in ordaining creation toward its goal of consummation in Christ.

Schleiermacher's careful philological work permits, at the very least, a defense against the charge of a christological imposition onto the text. It is in view of his soteriological metaphysics, however, that the verdict might be another one. It seems that Schleiermacher is reading the literary parallel in Col 1:15–20 with a soteriological restriction in mind that opens up the question regarding Christ's relation to creation. It is this relation that is determined as the consummation of creation. And from this perspective, the divine agency in view of creation is seen in analogical proportion to Christ's consummating function. When analyzing the parallel terms εἰκῶν and πρωτότοκος in verses 15 and 18, Schleiermacher concludes that as God takes precedence over the world in creation, so too does Christ take precedence over the world in his soteriological function of consummating creation.⁶⁶ Schleiermacher implies that with Christ's consummation of creation, reality is to be determined soteriologically. Schleiermacher summarizes his explanation concerning the equivalence of εἰκῶν and πρωτότοκος: "Thus, this explanation appears fully to satisfy the requirement indicated above, that the whole passage must refer to the progress of Christianity, and to the arrangement for gathering the gentiles into it."⁶⁷

To his readers, Schleiermacher's interpretation might seem suspect. In order to guard against a hasty rejection of his exegesis, I have shown in the above section that Schleiermacher's primary determination of the passage's central concern is fleshed out in view of careful grammatical work. Given this analysis of Schleiermacher's exegetical praxis, the question remains. Is he overdetermining the concept by importing more into the text than is permitted by the predicates? I conclude this essay by briefly arguing that Schleiermacher's overdetermination results from his soteriological metaphysics.

3. TEXT AND REALITY

It was Schleiermacher who posed the question of reality from the literary parallel in Col 1:15–20. Rather than allocating the parallel to two distinct spheres of

the same way this unification is conditioned by the fact that both parts must have become peaceable" (ibid., 75).

66. "Furthermore, as the 'because' (ὅτι) shows, Christ is here so named because his relationship to this microcosm is exactly the same as God's relationship to the whole world; on this account, he takes precedence over everything in the world; he is the head of the community whereby everything else is first established in its true value, and through him the human spirit attains its full stature" (ibid., 71). "Christ is 'the firstborn image of God' . . . because God has created all things in relation to him; and Christ is 'the beginning, the firstborn from the dead' . . . because God has willed that the 'fullness' . . . should dwell in him" (ibid., 72).

67. Ibid., 71.

reality, Schleiermacher interprets the passage in view of the same reality. Reality has an inner power manifesting itself gradually in appearance. The entrance of redemptive power into human history begins with the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, and the consummation of creation is accomplished in Christ. This divine goal for creation is achieved when all personal entities are transferred into the kingdom of the Son.

Nevertheless, consensus is still critical of Schleiermacher's reading. The problem, however, that I raise is not one of dogmatic imposition; the Colossians text's soteriological imprint is clear. Rather, Schleiermacher's soteriological metaphysics seems to overdetermine the text by applying a particular conception of reality to it. How might Schleiermacher have methodologically arrived at this exegetical result?

A close look at Schleiermacher's exegetical praxis reveals that his interpretative method is characteristic of his theological method in general. On the basis of reason's capacity for concept formation, concepts are formed by making judgments concerning the respective concept's predicates.⁶⁸ Predicates glean concepts from experience that are then attributed to a concept that stands for a subject. By oscillating between a "speculative" grasp of the concept and an "empirical" determination of the predicates, the concept is saturated with predicates; the essence of that concept is gradually approximated by concept and judgment formation operating simultaneously. Schleiermacher's trademark oscillation method between conceptual and empirical reason is itself founded on a nondualist epistemology; speculation and empirical reason are joined to each other as two ends of a minimum/maximum continuum. What is predicated of the concept by empirical reason is also determined by the product of speculative reason. In his exegesis of Col 1, Schleiermacher follows the methodological procedure that he stipulates in the *Dialektik*. The text's concept is soteriological, determined from the passage's context and Paul's theology as a whole; its predicates are gleaned from the text's syntax, grammar, and terms. Nevertheless, a specific predicate seems to be attributed to Paul's concept that seems not to belong there.

The soteriological concept Schleiermacher selects for Paul is one that has a christological justification. It is here that Schleiermacher makes a metaphysical claim of sameness with respect to the "whole Christ." The Christ as agent of redemption is the one who makes an experiential impact on Christian self-consciousness in such a way as to free it from the inhibitions of sensible self-consciousness. For Schleiermacher, this whole Christ is the one experienced as a bodily presence in the first century and then as a spiritual presence in the church. Experienced in terms of "simultaneous contemporaneity,"⁶⁹ it is the same Christ who continues to impart

68. I summarize the mechanism of concept and judgment formation that Schleiermacher gives in Part I of the *Dialektik*. My argument is to take the epistemology of the *Dialektik* and to apply it to the theological method that Schleiermacher uses in the CF.

69. On this concept, see CF § 14, 1 (69): "But the impression which all later believers received in this way from the influence of Christ, i.e. from the common Spirit communicated by Him and from the

redemption to those coming into his proximity by virtue of his continuous personhood. The biblical merit of Schleiermacher's Christology consists of his selecting the christological criterion as the sole experiential center of the New Testament. The doctrinal merit of Schleiermacher's Christology consists of the attribution of redemption to Christ whose person is the vehicle of redemption, whether as bodily or as spiritual presence.

Nevertheless, the problem rests on Schleiermacher's determination of what belongs essentially to Christ's simultaneous contemporaneity. For Schleiermacher, what belongs to this concept is Christ's historical personhood. The christological concept is informed by the sameness of Christ's person from his historical appearance onward. Here, Schleiermacher elevates the self-identity of person to the concept that corresponds to the self-sameness of Christ's historical personhood through time. When Schleiermacher's soteriological metaphysics is linked to this Christology, it prohibits an alternative, speculative reading of Christ's preexistence before his historical appearance in time. On Schleiermacher's historically determined soteriological ground, the speculative determination cannot belong to the self-identity of the person of Christ. The result is that Schleiermacher's conceptual grasp of the essence of Christ's person renders him unable to entertain that concept of self-sameness as itself a historically situated predicate. The conceptual grasp claims the historical predicate so that it is rendered integral to the concept. Rather than allowing his own understanding of reality to enter into the dialogue with Paul as a historically situated predicate, Schleiermacher's soteriological metaphysics reads a predicate of Christ's person as belonging essentially to the christological concept.

The application of the oscillation method to attribute a predicate to the conceptual grasp of reality results in an overdetermination of the text. By determining the concept as essentially stable between Paul and his own Christology, Schleiermacher is prevented from seeing historical difference between biblical authors and his own perspective. He does not reckon with the possibility of a *λόγος* theology or a theory of speculative wisdom in Paul because he cannot include a speculative, nonpersonalist dimension in his transhistorical soteriological metaphysics. Schleiermacher's own construal of reality, necessary to his soteriological understanding, ends up claiming transhistorical stability, when, in fact, difference between past and present should have been posited. As the conceptual parameter for interpreting the text, Schleiermacher's soteriological metaphysics of sameness misses an appreciation for the historical difference between Paul's theology and his own.

whole communion of Christians, supported by the historical representation of His life and character, was just the same impression which His contemporaries received from Him directly."⁷

4. CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have addressed the classic criticism hurled at dogmatic theologians by their biblical colleagues in my analysis of the exegetical work of a theologian who is representative of such a controversy. By studying Friedrich Schleiermacher's commentary on Col 1:15–20, I have shown that the classic criticism does not hold water, at least in Schleiermacher's case, for a number of reasons. A nondualist epistemology funds Schleiermacher's scientific method oscillating between conceptual and empirical reasoning. On this basis, the New Testament texts are to be viewed according to a christological criterion that has warranted their production in the first place. This hermeneutical key is not an importation into the text, but a teasing out of the christological impulse behind the texts. Furthermore, Schleiermacher's own adherence to the grammatical side of interpretation confirms his own conviction that the empirical study of literature's formal elements does yield textual meaning. Meaning is gleaned from the text; it is not a random transfer of subjective opinion to authorial intention. These reasons expose the initial criticisms against Schleiermacher in particular, and dogmatic theology in general, to be one-sided.

Nevertheless, if conceived correctly, the criticism does serve to tease out a factor in Schleiermacher's exegetical practice that results in an overdetermination of the text. I have studied this difficulty as one of a conceptual overdetermination, not of a flawed hermeneutical application or of an uncritical dogmatic imposition. The conceptual overdetermination results from, although is not necessarily a function of, speculative reason that grasps the essential determination of the concept in a way that overrides historical predicates. This grasp predicates of the past Schleiermacher's own soteriological restriction that determines his Christology along with a power/appearance dynamic of soteriological expansion emanating from Christ's person from the point of his historical appearance onward. Grasped in the concept as its transhistorical determination, Schleiermacher's soteriological metaphysics blurs the possibility of conceiving Paul's predicates of reality on their own. The soteriological metaphysics that Schleiermacher attributes to Paul functions as his transhistorically stable concept, when, in fact, it is a feature of Schleiermacher's own temporally located understanding of reality.

In spite of a reading of Paul that goes against the grain of scholarly consensus, Schleiermacher's exegetical practice discloses the merit of conceiving exegetical work in close connection to the concepts derived from dogmatic theology and philosophy. By considering the philosophical question of reality as determined theologically, Schleiermacher shows the significance of posing precisely these questions of the biblical text. The unique theological perspective of reality is not one that should be monopolized by the metaphysicians. Rather, theologians too make claims about reality that commit them to a particular vision of creation's *telos*, the hope that redemption will be actualized for all. In order to argue for the truth of this claim, interdisciplinary work is required to flesh out its different facets. It is the integrity of this commitment that Schleiermacher embodies as a biblical scholar, theologian,

and philosopher in his own right and one who, in spite of the results, studies scripture with the purpose of deepening his own understanding about the truth of universal redemption. As he preached in his own sermon on Col 1, in the study of scripture, "[W]e only study it in the right way . . . in order that the study leads to edification, that we make clear for ourselves the blessedness to which we are called, that we are taught concerning who we are in the body, the head of which is Christ, and what we are and what we should do in the body. This is the aim of all study of the Holy Scriptures."⁷⁰

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Essay über Schleiermachers Auslegung von Kol 1,15–20 ist der Frage nach der Beziehung zwischen einem Wirklichkeitsbegriff und einem biblischen Text gewidmet. Von den ersten Rezensenten seiner exegetischen Arbeit bis heute wird Schleiermacher derselbe Vorwurf gemacht: Schleiermacher trage sein christologisches Vorverständnis in die biblischen Texte ein. Dieser Vorwurf wird hier bestritten, indem 1. Beispiele für eine sorgfältige grammatische Auslegung des christologischen Hymnus' im Kolosserbrief gegeben werden, und indem eine präzise Analyse einiger Wörter im Text des Hymnus und eine Deutung seiner Syntax durch Schleiermacher dokumentiert werden, und indem 2. gezeigt wird, wie Schleiermacher seine theologische Interpretation von dieser grammatischen Analyse her zu gewinnen versucht. Auf diese Weise bestätigt die vorgelegte Untersuchung die These, daß Schleiermacher—der Vater der modernen Hermeneutik!—den Sinngehalt des Textes aus dem Text selbst erschließt.

Wenn dieser Vorwurf gegen Schleiermacher aus philologischer Sicht nicht korrekt ist, dann muß er von einer anderen Seite her analysiert werden. Die Anwendung der theologischen Methode Schleiermachers, nämlich der Oszillation zwischen empirischer und spekulativer Vernunft, projiziert seine soteriologische Metaphysik in den Begriff. Dabei wird Schleiermachers eigener Begriff als transhistorischer Wirklichkeitsbegriff gesetzt.

In einem ersten Schritt "Text und Kontext" möchte ich zeigen, daß Schleiermacher in den neutestamentlichen Fragen seiner Zeit ein führender Exeget war. Seine Forschung über die Synoptiker und Johannes, wenn auch bestritten, trug im 19. Jahrhundert zur Diskussion über die Entstehung der Evangelien bei. Mit seinem Kommentar über den 1. Timotheusbrief hat Schleiermacher die deuteropaulinische Forschung begründet und mit seiner Entdeckung eines literarischen Parallelismus in Kol 1 (Verse 15–16b und 18b–20b) hat er der Auslegung dieses Briefs eine neue Richtung gegeben. Vom Parallelismus ausgehend interpretiert Schleiermacher den Text im Blick einerseits auf seinen Zusammenhang mit der paulinischen Theologie—Schleiermacher hält den Kolosserbrief für paulinisch—und andererseits im Blick auf die theologische Frage nach der Beziehung von Schöpfung und Erlösung. Das Verhältnis zwischen einem soteriologisch bestimmten, historischen Jesus und seiner Beteiligung an der Schöpfung wird dadurch problematisiert, daß Schleiermacher in Kol 1,15–16b keine *creatio*

70. "[D]aß wir es nur auf die rechte Weise thun mögen . . . daß es gereiche zur Erbauung, daß wir uns die Seligkeit, zu der wir berufen sind, klar machen, daß wir uns belehren über das, was wir sind an dem Leibe, dessen Haupt Christus ist, was wir an diesem sein und thun sollen. Das ist der Zweck alles Forschens in der heiligen Schrift" (SW II/6, 240 [on Col 1:13–18; July 25, 1830; trans. Helmer]).

ex nihilo findet und gegen einen präexistenten Christus als zweite Person der Trinität argumentiert.

In einem zweiten Schritt "Text und Interpretation" gehe ich einigen exegetischen Beobachtungen Schleiermachers im Detail nach, um zu zeigen, wie er seine soteriologische Metaphysik im Blick auf das Verhältnis Christi zur Erlösung und zur Schöpfung versteht. Von einer Kraft/Erscheinung-Dynamik her konzipiert Schleiermacher eine soteriologische Ausbreitung, die von Christus ausgeht und sich über Juden und Heiden bis zur Allversöhnung erstreckt. Dabei erklärt er, daß der Bezug des "ganzen Christus" zur Schöpfung darin besteht, daß Christus der Vollender der Schöpfung sei.

In einem dritten Schritt "Text und Wirklichkeit" beschreibe ich das hermeneutische Problem: Schleiermacher versteht seine soteriologische Metaphysik als eine, die wesentlich zur Begrifflichkeit des Paulus gehört. Dabei benutzt Schleiermacher seine eigene Begrifflichkeit, um weitere Prädikate darein zu setzen. Diese Methode ist an sich nicht problematisch. Sie setzt ein Kontinuum zwischen empirischer und spekulativer Vernunft voraus. Und ein solches Kontinuum wird auf die Begriffsbestimmung angewendet. Indem aber Schleiermacher den Begriff spekulativ nach seiner eigenen soteriologischen Metaphysik vorstellt, stellt er eine historische Nähe zu Paulus her. Statt einer durch die kritische Methode gewonnene Wirklichkeitsdistanz wird eine Wirklichkeitsnähe zwischen Schleiermacher und Paulus methodologisch hergestellt. Eine angemessene Distanz hätte sich ergeben, wenn Schleiermacher seinen eigenen Wirklichkeitsbegriff für seine eigene Gegenwartsdeutung gebraucht hätte, und den Wirklichkeitsbegriff des Paulus aus dem Kontext des 1. Jahrhunderts herausgearbeitet hätte. Was aber an dieser Auslegung wertvoll ist, ist Schleiermachers theologisches Ergebnis, eine universale und individuelle Deutung der Allerlösung in Christus.