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This chapter sets out the late eighteenth-century background to the emergence of 'faith and reason' as a composite pair, framed by the apparent Kantian disjunction between faith and reason. The author shows first that Kant's denial of knowledge is far from a clear-cut statement of an either/or contrast of faith and reason, and, second, that it is the characteristically Kantian gesture of 'making room' that sets the agenda. The second section traces the relation of faith and reason as a dyadic pair in Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche. A final section considers the legacy of the nineteenth-century model, notably the extent to which it provided the groundwork for the self-perception of the generation who came of age at the turn of the century that theirs was a time of crisis in which the composite model of 'faith and reason' split open into the distinctively twentieth-century model of 'faith or reason'.

Chapter 9 - Faith and Reason

Russell Re Manning

> Reason has always existed, just not always in a reasonable form.
>
> Karl Marx, Letter to Arnold Ruge, 1843

Modelling Relations of 'Faith and Reason'

There is a standard story told of the relation of faith and reason in the nineteenth century—one of conflict. This accepted narrative has a lot in common with the related story of the relation between religion and science in the same period. And, just as the latter has recently—and persuasively—been exposed as an ideological myth, so too the 'conflict thesis' of faith and reason should be abandoned. If, as this chapter proposes, we let go of the untenable hypothesis of a nineteenth-century conflict of faith and reason, then so too ought we to jettison that other prevalent trope of histories of the period, notably that of 'challenge and response'; wherein the challenges are always those of advancing or encroaching reason and the responses those of accommodating or resistant faith.

Perhaps instead a 'complexity thesis' commends itself: such were the many and various relations between faith and reason in the period from Waterloo to Verdun that no one single organizing narrative can be adequate.

Of course, no one can deny the distinctive local colourings of nineteenth-century Christian thought—a period in which Christian thought became truly global and subject to a previously unprecedented range of contexts and circumstances. As the editors of a late twentieth-century standard collaborative work on nineteenth-century religious thought in the West (in three volumes) put it, 'the nineteenth century tells no single story' (Smart et al. 1985, 1.2). A truly representative account of the myriad engagements with faith and reason in this period would surely necessitate the spinning together of numerous diverse and by no means mutually compatible strands, all appropriately contextualized to make clear the complexity of the subject. Unfortunately, such a treatment is not only beyond the scope of this chapter—and the competence of any one author—but is equally unsatisfactory, in as much as its interpretive usefulness would be severely limited. Without doubt it is crucial that discussions of abstract notions, such as faith and reason, and of their relations in any given historical time frame, be appropriately contextualized and cognizant of the very real divergences within the period. And yet, if the—admittedly conventional and artificial—periodization is to be anything other than simply an administrative line in the sand, then something more must be said about the relations between faith and reason in nineteenth-century Christian thought than simply that they were many and complex.

Accordingly, it will be the burden of this chapter to suggest an alternative intellectual history of this topic. In short, my argument will be that the relation between faith and reason—in the predominant senses in which they were understood during the nineteenth century—was one of a composite pair. In other words, the terms 'faith' and 'reason' and the composite 'faith and reason' in nineteenth-century Christian thought are not instances of perennial notions caught in the spotlight of a historical enquiry restricted only by the scope of its time frame. Rather, to put it perhaps more provocatively, the very idea of 'faith and reason' as a composite or coincident pair is a distinctive invention and further a defining characteristic of nineteenth-century Christian thought. 'Faith and reason' belongs to nineteenth-century Christian thought just as distinctively as 'justification by faith' belongs to Reformation thought and *fides quaerens intellectum* belongs to (early) medieval Christian thought.

This chapter will proceed by first setting out the late eighteenth-century background to the emergence of 'faith and reason' as a composite pair, framed by the apparent Kantian disjunction between faith and reason famously encapsulated in the Preface to his *Critique of Pure Reason*: 'I had to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith' (Kant 1977, B xxx). In this section, I show first that Kant's denial of knowledge (not reason) is far from a clear-cut statement of an either/or contrast of faith and reason, and, second,

that it is the characteristically Kantian gesture of 'making room' that sets the agenda for the development of the relation between faith and reason in the century following his announcement of a Copernican revolution in philosophy. My second section will trace the relation of faith and reason as a dyadic pair in some of the key voices in nineteenth-century Christian thought, i.e., Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche. A final, brief section considers the legacy of the nineteenth-century model of faith and reason, notably the extent to which it provided the groundwork for the self-perception of the generation who came of age at the turn of the century that theirs was a time of crisis in which the composite model of 'faith and reason' split open into the distinctively twentieth-century model of 'faith or reason'.

Before 'Faith and Reason'

'Reason then Faith'

The eighteenth century bequeathed to the nineteenth a profoundly ambiguous understanding of the relations of faith and reason. More precisely, two (incompatible) approaches dominated Christian thought in the period from the Glorious Revolution in 1688 up to the French Revolution in 1789; two approaches that became fused in the nineteenth century into the composition of 'faith and reason'. We might name the two eighteenth-century alternatives the 'faith then reason' and the 'no relation' approaches, both of which are

themselves clearly reactions to the previously dominant model of what we might call 'reason then faith'; epitomized by the so-called *praeambula fidei* of late-medieval Scholasticism, in which reason was used to demonstrate the existence of God and other such truths knowable to unaided human reason as a preliminary to the faithful articulation of those truths knowable only by revelation. Most famously associated with Aquinas and his characterization of philosophy as the 'handmaiden' of theology (*ancilla theologiae*), this approach to faith and reason had survived the upheavals of the Protestant Reformation and remained unchallenged as one of the foundational pillars of the characteristic 'natural theology' that grew to prominence through the seventeenth century in response to the ever-developing capacity of 'scientific' reason. Their science may have been different ('experiential' rather than 'book-learned'), but the early modern natural theologians shared with their Scholastic predecessors the conviction that reason is a necessary but insufficient preliminary to faith. Referring to the former as 'natural religion', Robert Boyle, for instance, insisted that

> Natural Religion, is the first that is embraced by the mind, so it
> is the foundation, upon which revealed religion ought to be
> superstructe . . . as it were the stock, upon which Christianity
> might be ingrafted. For I readily acknowledge natural religion

to be insufficient, yet I think it very necessary. (Boyle 1690–91,

2nd part, 685–6)

This view of the relations between faith and reason as a progression was

defended explicitly at the outset of the eighteenth century by Gottfried

Leibniz, who appended a 'Preliminary Discourse of the Conformity of Faith

with Reason' to his 1710 *Essais de théodicée*. Here Leibniz reaffirmed the

'reason then faith' approach against an alternative position that had arisen as a

consequence of the Reformation and which he assigned to the Calvinist Pierre

Bayle. Leibniz wrote:

> I begin with the preliminary question of the *conformity of faith*
>
> *with reason*, and the use of philosophy in theology, because it
>
> has much influence on the main subject of my treatise, and
>
> because M. Bayle introduces it everywhere. I assume that two
>
> truths cannot contradict each other; that the object of faith is the
>
> truth God has revealed in an extraordinary way; and that reason
>
> is the linking together of truths, but especially (when it is
>
> compared with faith) of those whereto the human mind can
>
> attain naturally without being aided by the light of faith.
>
> (Leibniz 1951, 73)

What Leibniz objects to in Bayle is the latter's denial that reason (philosophy)

has any place in theology on account of our total depravity as a consequence

of the Fall. For Bayle, human reason was 'a principle of destruction, and not of edification' (Bayle 1697RRM: No need for volume number for Bayle quotations., 2026), which could not but lead humanity astray in its inconstancy. Precisely because of reason's tendency towards scepticism and its ability to be put to use to prove apparently contradictory claims, he characterized it as 'a true Penelope which during the night unravels the fabric weaved during the day' (Bayle 1697, 740), and hence refused to allow it any role in settling substantive theological questions, such as those of the existence and nature of God. Far from a necessary but insufficient prolegomenon to faith, for Bayle and others influenced by the total depravity strand of Reformed theology, reason was considered a superfluous and potentially harmful unnecessary addition to faith. Bayle's fideism (if indeed he held fast to its implications) represented a firm rejection of the previous 'reason then faith' model; it also paved the way for the two models more characteristic of the eighteenth century, which in turn set the scene for the emergence in the nineteenth century of the distinctive 'faith and reason' model: 'faith then reason' and 'no relation'.

'Faith then Reason'

Much has been written about the theological views of David Hume, and his use of the dialogue format only serves to compound the confusion. What is clear, however, is that Hume is no straightforward atheist, and that his primary

concern in his writings on theological matters is to warn against excessive confidence in the use of reason—whether in the form of Demea's rationalism or Cleanthes' reliance on the findings of the new natural philosophy. For Hume, the dictums that 'reason alone can never be a motive to any action of the will' (Hume 2007, 413) and 'reason can never oppose passion in the direction of the will' (Hume 2007, 413) apply just as much to matters of religion as they do to morality (we will see later how morality and religion are brought together, albeit in a very different estimation, by Kant), such that it is faith—a passionate conviction—that has priority in religion, to be followed by reason. Effectively reversing the order of progression of the natural theologians, Hume famously contends that

> On the whole, *we may conclude*, that the *Christian religion* was not only at first attended by miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity, and whoever is moved by FAITH to assent to it is conscious of a *continual miracle in his own person*, which subverts all the principles of his understanding and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and practice. (Hume 1975, 10.2.41)

To twenty-first-century readers this may seem nothing other than a damning exposé of the credulity of the believers (which it may well be), but what is striking here is the way in which Hume, like Boyle, affirms the insufficiency of reason, but with the crucial distinction that for Hume it is reason that is the 'superstructe' and faith that is the necessary foundation for Christianity. Consistent with Bayle's fideism, Hume's scepticism stands firmly against the pretensions of the natural theologians to come to theological conclusions through the use of reason without recourse to faithful embrace of revelation; against Bayle's insistence on the invulnerability of revelation to reason (reason being too weak ever to dispute the truth from God), Hume extends his scepticism to the articles of faith. After all, Hume both affirms that the Christian religion was founded and is sustained by miracles and that 'there is not to be found, in all history, any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned good-sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves' (Hume 1975, 10.2.14–15). For Hume, 'belief in revealed religion could only amount to fideism' (Antognazza 2014, 152), and given the inability of reason to establish religious certainty, such fideism (faith then reason) is the only approach to religion. Reason is not wholly banished from theological reflection, but its role is certainly limited.

Hume clarifies the role of reason in religion in his earlier *Natural History of Religion* (1757), in which he clearly distinguishes two questions:

the 'foundation of religion in reason, and that concerning its origin in human nature' (Hume 1993, 135). In this work, Hume claims an 'obvious' and 'clearest' solution to the first question in his assurance that 'the whole frame of nature bespeaks an intelligent author; and no rational enquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief a moment with regard to the primary principles of Theism and Religion' (Hume 1993, 135)—an assertion which he seemingly retracts in the closing section of the *Dialogues* with Philo's famous admission that 'a purpose, an intention, a design strikes everywhere the most careless, the most stupid thinker, and no man can be so hardened in absurd systems, as at all times to reject it' (Hume 1993, 116). What these apparent concessions to reason conceal, however, is that the philosophical foundation of religion is not the same as its origination in human nature. Reason may—just—be able to discern the 'primary principles' of the existence and nature of God, but this 'attenuated deism' (what Hume seems to mean by 'true religion') can hardly account for the historical reality of religion. Here, once again, it is emotion that is key—specifically, for Hume the emotions of hope and fear—and as before, it is clear that reason's role is decidedly secondary to that of faith:

> Examine the religious principles, which have, in fact, prevailed
> in the world. You will scarcely be persuaded, that they are
> anything but sick men's dreams: Or perhaps will regard them

more as the playsome whimsies of monkies in human shape,

than the serious, positive, dogmatical asseverations of a being,

who dignifies himself with the name of rational. (Hume 1993,

184)

'No Relation'

While Hume's position is a distinctive eighteenth-century reversal of the traditional Christian order of progression of 'reason then faith', perhaps the dominant model of the relations between faith and reason in that century was one of 'no relation'. According to this widely held view, faith and reason should not really be considered together as a relatable pair at all. Spinoza set the tone for this rejection of any relation of faith and reason:

[B]etween faith and theology on the one side and philosophy

on the other there is no relation and no affinity . . . they are as

far apart as can be. The aim of philosophy is, quite simply,

truth, while the aim of faith . . . is nothing other than obedience

and piety. (Spinoza 2002, III.519)

For Spinoza, faith as characteristic of theology has nothing whatsoever to do with reason—and hence with the knowledge and understanding that come from philosophical enquiry. Theological questions, such as the existence and nature of God are, accordingly, removed from the domain of theology per se

(in which they are simply matters of pious obedience to alleged—and unsubstantiable—revelation) and become instead proper to philosophy. In effect, the epistemic status of faith is evacuated and the distinction between faith and reason collapsed into reason alone. What remains for faith is nothing more than a subjective assent to revelation—precisely the dangerous enthusiasm that was held responsible for the deadly wars of religion that followed from the Reformation.

Similar to Spinoza, John Locke too rejected the idea that faith and reason were in any way comparable, even as opposites. For Locke, faith was reduced simply to 'the assent to any proposition, not thus made out by the deductions of reason, but upon the credit of the proposer, as coming from God, in some extraordinary way of communication. This way of discovering truths to me, we call revelation' (Locke 1975, 4.18.2). By contrast, reason was a kind of 'natural revelation' (Locke 1975, 4.19.4), in effect taking on the positive epistemic role of faith and removing almost any place for faith in theological questions—neither 'reason then faith' nor 'faith then reason', but simply 'no relation' between faith and reason. This model is further developed by those known to history as 'deists', notably John Toland and Matthew Tindal. Toland's 1696 work *Christianity not mysterious; or A Treatise Shewing, That There Is nothing in the Gospel Contrary to Reason, Nor above It*, as its title indicates, rejects even the limited epistemic status Locke had

reserved for faith in his rejection of the carefully wrought distinction between 'contrary to' and 'above' reason. For Toland and Voltaire after him, faith has become entirely supplanted by reason and banished from the realm of theological enquiry: 'What is faith? Is it to believe what appears evident? No. It is evident to me that there is a necessary, eternal, intelligent being. This is not a matter of faith, but of reason' (Voltaire 1971, 208).

For Rousseau likewise:

The greatest ideas of the divinity come to us from reason alone. View the spectacle of nature; hear the inner voice. Has God not told everything to our eyes, to our conscience, to our judgment? What more will men tell us? (Rousseau 1979, 295)

Making Room: Kant

The two eighteenth-century models of the relations between faith and reason—'faith then reason' and 'no relation'—come together in the thought of Immanuel Kant, surely the most important background to any aspect of nineteenth-century Christian thought. On the one hand, Kant was famously roused from his dogmatic slumbers by Hume and by his insistence that knowledge begins (non-cognitively) with experience. On the other hand, Kant took from his rationalist training the conviction, drawn from Christian Wolff, that natural theology—the only kind of theology that was concerned with

questions of our knowledge of God—was defined as 'the science of those things which are possible *per Deum* [for and through God]' (Wolff 1736–37, pt. 1, 1). As a branch of metaphysics, natural theology had no place for faith or revelation, with the latter limited, in effect, to meaningless beliefs (Wolff insists that whilst divine revelation is indeed possible, 'it is clear that God does not reveal anything which we can discover by reason' (Wolff 1738, 624–5), that is to say, anything that generates knowledge). Here, as elsewhere, Kant's genius consisted in combining these two seemingly irreconcilable approaches to faith and reason into an unstable alternative that set the terms of the question for nineteenth-century Christian thinkers.

In brief, Kant sought to accept the 'no relation' model of faith and reason in his critique of natural theology, and simultaneously to affirm a version of the 'faith then reason' model in his moral philosophy. Kant's demolition of the natural theological arguments for the existence of God is well known and rightly marks a watershed in any discussion of Christian philosophy of religion. What is significant in the current context though is not so much Kant's negative conclusion about our ability to come to knowledge of the existence of God through speculative (pure) reason, but rather that Kant is clear that theological questions—of our knowledge of the existence and nature of God—are properly matters of reason and not faith. For Kant—as for Wolff—divine revelation, though possible, is not the source of our knowledge

of God. Unlike Hume, at no point does Kant concede the role of faith as foundational to the Christian religion. And yet, of course, he famously 'den[ies] knowledge in order to make room for faith' in the context of his explanation of his 'moral turn'—namely, of his turn from speculative or theoretical reason to practical or moral reason as the means to come to knowledge of God *through* faith.

For Kant, it is not revelation that grounds and enables theology, but practical reason. In the *Conflict of the Faculties*, in the course of distinguishing between the faculties (or disciplines) of theology and philosophy, Kant contrasts the 'biblical theologian', who is concerned with 'ecclesiastical faith', with the 'rational theologian', whose concern is with 'religious faith'. For Kant, the biblical theologian's authority is based upon his acceptance of the authority of divine revelation in Scripture (in other words, faith without knowledge), whereas the rational theologian's authority is grounded in practical reason (or, rational faith):

> A rational theologian . . . is one *versed in reason* with regard to *religious* faith, which is based on inner laws that can be developed from every man's own reason. The very concept of religion shows that it can never be based on decrees (no matter how high their source); for religion is not the sum of certain teachings regarded as divine revelations (that is called

> theology), but the sum of all our duties regarded as divine
>
> *commands*. (Kant 1979, 61)

 To return to the famous words from the preface of the second edition of *The Critique of Practical Reason*: through the turn to practical reason, Kant sought a way to make room for faith by going beyond knowledge but not beyond reason. The existence of God—the recognition of our moral duties as *divine* commands—is for Kant a necessary hypothesis (postulate of practical reason) that grounds the subjective certainty of faith; a faith that is a rational presupposition without being a *praeambula fidei*. Kant, we might say, combines the 'no relation' model (faith as assent to divine revelation has no epistemic status) and the 'faith then reason' model (faith is a presupposition for rational theology) whilst clearly rejecting the traditional 'reason then faith' model. In other words, what he endorses—and what he bequeaths to the nineteenth century—is a new model: one of 'faith and reason'.

'Faith and Reason'

Maria Rosa Antognazza, in her own survey of reason and revelation in the eighteenth century, neatly summarizes the Kantian legacy for nineteenth-century Christian thinkers as regards faith and reason:

> Supporters of natural theology might well have thought that
>
> [William] Paley's valiant and seemingly successful efforts

opened the nineteenth century on a high note. By this time, however, plenty of people had reached the conclusion that, all considered, theoretical or speculative reason did not lead to God . . . Far from regarding reason as the source of truth which leads to salvation, a broad range of thinkers saw theoretical reason as structurally incapable of leading anywhere near the divine realm. Morality rather than dogmas and doctrines paved the way to God. (Antognazza 2014, 160)

In this section I will trace the impact of this moral turn in establishing and cementing the new model of relation between faith and reason as 'faith and reason'. Of course, not all nineteenth-century Christian thinkers explicitly endorsed this Kantian framework of theological enquiry, and exponents of the previously sketched models abounded. And yet, key nineteenth-century Christian thinkers, notably Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche, are all to a great extent marked by their shared estimate of the relations between faith and reason as a composite conjunction of 'faith and reason' in ways that often belie their more (in)famous pronouncements on one or the other.

'Feeling of Absolute Dependence': Schleiermacher

The impact of Kant's vision of a moral faith that leads to God via practical reason is perhaps most clearly seen in Friedrich Schleiermacher's insistence that theology, in order to be adequate to its subject matter (God), must take into account the role of the experiencing subject in its relation to the Absolute. For Schleiermacher, God cannot be an object of knowledge for human reason, as to make God into an object of cognition would be precisely to misidentify the reality of the divine as an object conditioned the human subject. Any object of knowledge becomes an object *for* a subject, and hence is placed in a conceptual space in which it can be compared to and differentiated from the knowing subject, as well as becoming subjected to the a priori conditions of consciousness. Therefore, Schleiermacher is clear:

> Any possibility of God being in any way given is entirely excluded, because anything that is outwardly given must be given as an object exposed to our counter influence, however slight that may be. The transference of the idea of God to any perceptible object . . . is always a corruption. (Schleiermacher 1999, §4.4)

Redolent with classic Protestant iconoclastic warnings against the human temptation to reverse Genesis 1:27 and fashion God after our own image, Schleiermacher's warning against the claims of reason to be adequate to the task of responding to the divine (a concern repeated in the twentieth century in

starker terms in Paul Tillich's insistence that God does not exist) does not, however, lead him to deny reason and turn to faith alone. Instead it is to a form of practical reason that itself expresses faith that Schleiermacher turns. For Schleiermacher, whilst we cannot speak directly of God (without thereby making God into an object of our subjectivity), we can—and must—speak of ourselves as conditioned by God. This awareness of our being conditioned is not itself an object of knowledge—we do not know that we are conditioned—but is the ground or presupposition of all consciousness; it is what he calls 'immediate self-consciousness', and it is identical with what he calls 'God-consciousness'. For Schleiermacher, this awareness of God that is at the same time our self-awareness is faith, the ground of all religion, or, as it is better known, 'the feeling of absolute dependence'. To be clear, Schleiermacher insists that whilst this feeling must accompany all moments of consciousness (since it is that which grounds self-consciousness itself), what is given to consciousness is not a direct consciousness of God but rather a consciousness of the self as absolutely dependent, in particular regarding the self's own spontaneous activity in the world—in other words, its freedom or, in Kantian terms, moral autonomy. Precisely because consciousness of God is not given directly in immediate self-consciousness but is nonetheless coincident upon the consciousness of the self as absolutely dependent, this feeling is described by Schleiermacher as faith. God is not known or knowable through reason;

rather, God's existence and nature are necessary postulates of the activity reason: 'The transcendental ground precedes and succeeds all actual thinking, but does not come to an appearance at any time. This transcendental ground of thought accompanies the actual thinking in an atemporal manner, but never itself becomes thought' (Schleiermacher 2002, 568).

For Schleiermacher, faith and reason are co-dependent; all human reasoning is ventured on the gesture of making room for faith.

'Faith and Knowledge': Hegel

No one more explicitly endorsed the model of 'faith and reason' than Hegel, whose 1802 article 'Faith and Knowledge' underlined their composite relation, even as he took issue with the particulars of Kant's account. Hegel, in this article, takes Kant to task for failing to recognize the full potential of Kant's own account of reason (as intellectual intuition) to accommodate (or make room for) faith without having thereby to deny knowledge. Whilst God, for Kant, is not an object of knowledge but of ethical faith, for Hegel it is precisely because our knowledge of God is a participation in God's own self-knowledge that God is at the same time an object of knowledge and an object of faith.

He [Hegel] differs from Kant in that for Kant, the 'reason' that asserts intellectual intuition differs from the intellectual intuition it asserts, and thus

asserts it as it were 'from outside,' or from the point of view of man. As a result, the assertion remains, in its cognitive use, a merely regulative maxim for both determinant and reflective judgements; and in its practical use, it is a postulate or belief. For Hegel, on the other hand, the 'reason' that asserts intellectual intuition is intellectual intuition itself: God's knowledge. This means that God's knowledge is accessible to finite consciousness (Longuenesse 2000, 263).

What Hegel argues, in effect, is that Kant does not sufficiently recognize the implications of his critical idealism. For Hegel, Kant rightly rejects the claims of speculative reason to provide us with knowledge of God; as Hegel famously affirms in his later *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (1822–23):

> We know, to be precise, that God does not offer himself for observation, that he cannot be perceived through the external experience of the senses as a given thing or object, but also that he cannot be found in inward experience, as experience of ourselves. Outside there is the natural world; inwardly there is our world, where *we* are. What we find in this inner experience is therefore our subjectivity, our finite subjective activity apart from God. In this perspective God is neither within us nor outside us. (Hegel 2007, 167)

And yet, Hegel avers that Kant is wrong thereby to deny any possibility of knowledge of God, especially given Kant's own recognition that moral faith is not a fideistic wager but a requirement of (practical) reason. What Kant fails to appreciate, according to Hegel, is that the God postulated by Kant at the end of his philosophy belongs instead at the beginning of all philosophy as its only content:

> The highest idea which [Kantian philosophy] happened upon in its critical occupation, and which it treated as an empty lubrication and an unnatural scholastic trick which consists in extracting reality from concepts, it then posits, but at the end of philosophy, as a postulate which is supposed to have subjective necessity, but not the absolute objectivity which would lead us to begin philosophy with it and acknowledge it as the only content of philosophy, instead of ending with it, in faith. (Hegel 1977, 67)

For Hegel, philosophy should begin with and as faith: God is not so much posited as the conclusion of reason as accepted as the necessary precondition of thought, which whilst never 'about' God as an object is nonetheless 'the presentation of God, as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and of a finite spirit' (Hegel 1976, 50). Of course, this does not mean that Hegel's God is to be equated to the classical Boethian deity in possession

tota simul of eternal simplicity anymore than with Kant's ideal of the *ens realissimum*. Hegel's God has as eternal essence the Trinitarian 'spiritual activity' that creates out of nothing, which is to say, out of God's self. This is not the divine *actus purus* attainable by scholastic trickery but the living God whose very being consists in the eternal Trinitarian movement of externalizing himself, interiorizing what has been externalized, and remaining in all these identical with himself.

'Faith with Reason': Kierkegaard

Søren Kierkegaard's thought was more influential on twentieth-century Christian thinkers than in his own day; yet nonetheless, Kierkegaard's own distinctive approach supports the characteristic general nineteenth-century model of the relations between faith and reason as 'faith and reason'. For Kierkegaard, Hegel is correct in his assertion that philosophy must begin in faith and take as its 'first and only content' the highest idea (God); and yet, Kierkegaard worries that Hegel can only escape the Kantian constraint of taking God as an idea by overstepping the possibilities of temporal human subjectivity. For Hegel, philosophy combines with faith when it accepts that absolute knowledge is not a product of the human subject but is the knowledge that God has of God-self. However, Kierkegaard wonders:

> Of what help is it to explain how the eternal truth is to be
> understood eternally when the one to use the explanation is
> prevented from understanding it in this way because he is
> existing, and is merely a fantast if he fancies himself to be *sub*
> *specie aeterni*? (Kierkegaard 1992, 192)

For Kierkegaard, Hegel's knowledge of the Absolute is a delusion: not
because God can never be an object of knowledge but because the subject is
never be able to grasp eternal metaphysical truths. Instead, for Kierkegaard,
the subject exists in time and as such is always in motion, always becoming,
directed towards its future. Reason yearns for abstract timeless truth, and
Hegel aims to show that we have the capacity for universal thought because of
our participation in the eternal becoming of the Absolute. For Kierkegaard, by
contrast, Hegel's ambition obscures the essentially relational character of our
knowledge of God. We, as finite temporal subjects, can never hold the eternal
truth; however, for Kierkegaard, this does not mean that we cannot be in a
relation to such truth. Such a relation to truth does not come about through an
examination of the objects of our subjective consciousness (this much Hegel
would agree with), but through a recognition of the incompleteness of the
subject in its infinite striving, or what Kierkegaard in the *Concluding*
Unscientific Postscript calls 'infinite passion'. An individual finds God
'subjectively': 'not by virtue of any objective deliberation, but by virtue of the

infinite passion of inwardness' (Kierkegaard 1992, 200). This, for Kierkegaard, is not to abandon reason (as the portrayal of Kierkegaard as fideistic caricature wholly misrepresents); but it is to bring reason and faith together. Existential human reason is—or ought to be—passionate.

Just as Schleiermacher defined faith (or piety) as 'the consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or which is the same thing, of being in relation to God' (Schleiermacher 1999, §4), so Kierkegaard stresses that our being in relation to God is a (faithful) requirement of reason. The recognition and acceptance that our knowledge of God as a subjective relation is both necessarily incomplete and a necessary precondition for any 'objective' knowledge is basic to Kierkegaard's thought. His term for this composition of faith and reason is paradox: 'we can know truth through the absolute paradox, which unites faith with reason.' (Kierkegaard 1980, 526)

Here again we must be careful not to leap too quickly to a fideistic interpretation of Kierkegaard. It is not faith that is the absolute paradox but its unity with reason. What is absurd, according to Kierkegaard, is that faith and reason do belong together, in spite of the temptations of both separately to deny the other. For example, in *Fear and Trembling* it is the knight of infinite resignation—not the knight of faith—who gives up on all she loves most in the world, so much so that she is never at home in the world again. It is infinite resignation that is fideistic. By contrast, the knight of faith can return

to the world after the movement of infinite resignation and take delight once again in earthly things, much to the bafflement of the knight of infinite resignation. It seems that the knight of faith denies reason through faith and yet instead it is precisely the knight of faith who is able—paradoxically—'to express the sublime in the pedestrian absolutely' (Kierkegaard 1985, 70). By affirming the ordinary, the knight of faith confirms that the religious transcendence of the ethical (the domain of universal reason) leads to its teleological suspension and not its annihilation. Faith and reason belong together in the individual—that is what is so scandalous, according to Kierkegaard.

'Faith in Reason': Nietzsche

It may seem surprising to include Friedrich Nietzsche in an account of the characteristic model of the relations between faith and reason in nineteenth-century Christian thought, given his vehement rejection of Christianity (and by implication the accuracy of its claims to knowledge of God). Indeed, Nietzsche is clear in his dismissal of the claims of the Christian theologians, as in this statement from *Antichrist*: 'Whatever a theologian feels to be true *must* be false: this is almost a criterion of truth' (Nietzsche 1971, 576). Yet, as the allusion to Schleiermacher suggests, Nietzsche is keenly aware that faith and reason cannot be held apart from one another—after all, how could the

feelings of the theologians be either true or false if they were merely a matter of subjective faith? Indeed, it is central to Nietzsche's whole body of work to expose, in a way that he argues has not sufficiently been recognized, the conjunction of faith and reason. As part of doing so, he takes aim at many of the claims of establishment Christianity (in which he had much common cause with Kierkegaard), precisely because he discerns in religion a tendency to obscure the deep-seated identity of faith and reason in the promotion of an irrational piousness or an irrational scientism. For Nietzsche, our finite existence is marked not only by temporality but also by instinctual drives that put us into a situation of irresolvable conflict, not only with our environment and those we encounter, but also with ourselves: 'Animosity, cruelty, the pleasure of pursuing, raiding, changing and destroying—all this was pitted against the person who had such instincts: *that* is the origin of "bad conscience"' (Nietzsche 2006, 57).

This alienation from our own animal instincts is, for Nietzsche, the birth of self-consciousness, through which process we become aware of ourselves—not as absolutely dependent but as absolutely contested. According to Nietzsche, religion was offered as balm to this necessary sickness, with the priests projecting God as 'the ultimate antithesis . . . to his real and irredeemable animal instincts' (Nietzsche 2006, 63). However, Nietzsche claims that the cure was far worse than the illness: in affirming God, the

priests invite us to deny ourselves. Theology, then, is nihilism; the affirmation of God is the nihilation of human finitude. As such, Nietzsche's rejection of religious theism chimes with Kierkegaard's rejection of Hegel's confidence in our ability to know the eternal truth. Nietzsche's denial of God puts in question the therapeutic (or salvific) character of the very idea that truth requires a break from our finite subjectivity in the attainment of an impossible 'view from nowhere'. For Nietzsche, it is only because of the interdependence of faith and reason that we can be misled into thinking that saving knowledge (i.e., knowledge of the existence and nature of God) can come from the denial of our subjective existence; indeed that we need to be saved at all. Importantly, Nietzsche insists that his diagnosis applies as much to modern science as it does to the Christian religion. The person who affirms that science has sole access to the truth '*affirms another world* from the one of life, nature and history' and must 'deny its opposite, this world, *our* world' (Nietzsche 2006, 112). It is faith and reason working together that justify the false confidence in science: 'our faith in science is still based on a *metaphysical faith*' (Nietzsche 2006, 112). Science, just as much as religion, combines faith and reason to pass judgement on our world and to find it wanting.

For Nietzsche, faith and reason belong inextricably together, even when we do not acknowledge their coexistence. In both religion and science,

faith and reason work together in antithesis to life: it is only by being

'metaphysical faiths' that religion and science can persuade and insidiously

undermine our humanity. In other words, it is only because both creeds feel

reasonable that they command our allegiance. This recognition, however,

enables us to overcome religious and scientific nihilism in an embrace of our

finitude. For Nietzsche, such perspectivism is not a rejection of faith and

reason, but an acknowledgement of their identity. Indeed, the passage from

Genealogy of Morality quoted earlier continues:

> [W]e godless anti-metaphysicians, still take *our* fire from the
>
> blaze set alight by a faith thousands of years old, that faith of
>
> the Christians, which was also Plato's faith, that God is truth,
>
> that truth is divine . . . But what if precisely this becomes more
>
> and more unbelievable . . . and what if God himself turned out
>
> to be our oldest lie? (Nietzsche 2006, 112–13)

Part of the reason, of course, why for Nietzsche the death of God, though a

past occurrence, also still lies in the future is that theology (i.e., that Christian

faith that was also the faith of Plato) lies at the very foundations of Western

thinking itself:

> Much less may one suppose that many people know as yet *what*
>
> this event really means—and how much must collapse now that
>
> this faith has been undermined because it was built on this

> faith, propped up by it, grown into it; for example the whole of
>
> our European morality. (Nietzsche 2001, 199)

More importantly still, Nietzsche suggests that the theological is lodged even within the very ways of thinking that philosophy makes use of in its attempt to think through the death of God: '"Reason" in language—oh, what an old deceptive female she is! I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar' (Nietzsche 2005, 170).

What Nietzsche recognizes here is that faith and reason are too intimately intertwined to enable a true atheism, even in the wake of God's death. Nietzsche's alternative, then, is perhaps the attempt to do without both faith and reason; to take up a position somehow outside of grammar. Not to dissolve the composite pair of faith and reason—that would be impossible— but rather to attempt to leave them both behind in the stance of a truly godless anti-metaphysician who believes nothing, who values nothing, and who knows nothing. Perhaps this is the promise of the eternal recurrence of the same: the 'greatest weight' to those seeking eternal truth but a gift to those 'well disposed' enough to life and to themselves 'to long for nothing more fervently than for this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal' (Nietzsche 2001, 195). Such is the entanglement of faith and reason for Nietzsche.

'Faith or Reason'

This chapter has presented the model of the relations between faith and reason in nineteenth-century Christian thought as 'faith and reason', as distinct from the previously dominant models of 'reason then faith', 'faith then reason', and 'no relation'. By discussing Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche, I have sought to highlight how these very different nineteenth-century Christian thinkers share a common model of the relations of faith and reason as 'faith and reason', even as they disagree radically with each other. That these four are characteristic of nineteenth-century Christian thought has been assumed and does, admittedly, reflect a certain (German) parochialism. Of course, a full account of the relations between faith and reason in this period would need to engage not only with English and French Christian thinkers, but also widen its horizons within and beyond Europe. Notwithstanding, I suggest that the voices surveyed in this chapter are representative of the determining characteristic of nineteenth-century Christian thought about the relation between faith and reason—largely on account of their influence on subsequent discussions and the accepted historiography of the century that their early twentieth-century interpreters established in the course of the development of their own characteristic model of the relations between faith and reason.

In brief, I suggest that twentieth-century accounts of the relation between faith and reason are characterized by a rejection of the synthetic

composite accounts of the nineteenth century. Whereas for Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche faith and reason are held unavoidably together, for the Christian thinkers who determined the intellectual character of the twentieth century, faith and reason are more frequently held in opposition as an either/or disjunctive pair.

In part, I suggest this is due to a general rejection of nineteenth-century Christian thought in the early twentieth. In the situation of perceived moral and intellectual crisis leading up to and following the First World War, Christian thinkers looked elsewhere than their immediate predecessors for new answers to apparently new questions. For some this meant a retrieval of pre-modern theology (as in Protestant neo-Orthodoxy and Catholic neo-Scholasticism and later *nouvelle théologie*), for others it consisted in a re-engagement with the seminal thinkers of modernity itself (as in the 'back to Kant' slogan of neo-Kantian philosophy). At the same time the early twentieth century was marked by the establishment of the experimental sciences as the dominant paradigm of epistemic authority. In light of the success of 'modern science', a new form of philosophy took shape, which would evolve into the 'analytic' tradition, and which wasted little time in allocating claims to knowledge about the existence and nature of God to the realm of the strictly meaningless. Even for those philosophers who remained consciously indebted to their nineteenth-century forebears, the coincidence of faith and reason was

held to be profoundly problematic. Martin Heidegger's project of overcoming metaphysics as onto-theology is precisely a commitment to a kind of disciplinary purity that distinguishes and separates out faith (theology as the positive science of revelation) and reason (philosophy as fundamental ontology). There are, of course, exceptions, notably Paul Tillich, Ernst Bloch, and those associated with the Frankfurt School—indeed it is notable that Adorno and Horkheimer's 1944 *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* was at heart a critique of the twentieth-century thinkers' mistaken attempts to hold faith and reason apart, and their failure to recognize their entanglement, with tragic consequences.

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