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Giving birth to the impossible: theology and deconstruction in Johannes Climacus's *Philosophical Fragments*

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ABSTRACT

According to Roger Poole, theological interpreters of Søren Kierkegaard's indirect communication privilege content over form, whereas deconstructive interpreters privilege form over content. Here, I offer a reading of Johannes Climacus's *Philosophical Fragments* to illustrate how, in this case, the theology/deconstruction and form/content binaries both break down. The form of *Fragments* is as theological as it is deconstructive: Climacus's kaleidoscopic quotation of scripture, and his parabolic tropes both attest to this. Similarly, the content of *Fragments* is as deconstructive as it is theological: the deferral of names, the madness of the moment of decision, and Climacus's use of contradiction all unsettle any naïve theology. Ultimately, I suggest, the reason that *Fragments* resists the form/content and theology/deconstruction binaries is because it is a text about the incarnation – a paradigmatic combination of form and content, and a paradoxical reality that bursts apart any division between theology and deconstruction.

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Introduction

In this article I want to complicate Roger Poole's neat division between 'theological' and 'deconstructive' interpretations of Søren Kierkegaard's indirect communication by focussing on Johannes Climacus's *Philosophical Fragments*[1]. I wish to challenge Poole's categorisation in the case of *Fragments* by illustrating the *deconstruction* of his own binary division. To demonstrate this, I will also be seeking to show the collapse of a second division between the form and the content of the text. If purely 'theological' interpretations privilege content over form, whilst purely 'deconstructive' interpretations privilege form over content, then a *deconstruction* of the form/content binary will enable me to show that the theology/deconstruction binary is also untenable.

However, to show the limits of these binaries, I will need to dive deeper into the binaries themselves. I will therefore be treating the theological and deconstructive form of *Fragments* (Part I) separately from its theological and deconstructive content (Part II). Then, as the analysis proceeds, I will highlight where both the form/content and theology/deconstruction binaries break down. One common view is that Kierkegaard is

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communicating a theological message in a deconstructive form: the allure of the playful, rhetorical exterior tempts the reader to engage afresh with the otherwise straightforward truth of Christianity[2]. But I will be arguing that this is emphatically not the case. It is therefore a point of argumentative necessity that I demonstrate how the *form* of *Fragments* is also theological and its *content* is simultaneously deconstructive. In Part III, I then address the form/content binary head on and explain why Climacus himself gives us good reason to doubt this division. More ambitiously, I propose that *Fragments* resists the form/content and theology/deconstruction binaries because, ultimately, it is a text about the incarnation: a paradigmatic combination of form and content, and a paradoxical reality that bursts apart all binaries. The incarnation is both the form of God's message and its content. Climacus, in attempting communication about the incarnation has an impossibly impossible task. Not only is the subject of his message – the incarnation – a paradox, but the notion that he could safely convey the content of an incarnational idea about the indivisibility of form and content to us in his chosen form is absurd. Instead, I suggest, Climacus can only imitate Christ, with no cast-iron guarantee about the success of his communication. Climacus is, I propose, giving birth to the impossible.

Blunt theology and literary deconstruction

In Poole's taxonomy, blunt, 'theological' readings of Kierkegaard are those that privilege content over form. Such readings are based on a belief that there is a univocal message – a pure theological or philosophical truth – to be found if only one can cut through the layers of irony and pseudonymity. As Poole writes:

> Blunt reading is that kind of reading that refuses, as a matter of principle, to accord a literary status to the text; that refuses the implications of the pseudonymous technique; that misses the irony; that is ignorant of the reigning Romantic ironic conditions obtaining when Kierkegaard wrote; and that will not acknowledge, on religious grounds, that an "indirect communication" is at least partly bound in with the *pathos* of the lived life[3].

Note how Poole ascribes the failure of these interpretations to their *religious* starting points. Indeed, he blames the ubiquity of this blinkered approach on the fact that many of Kierkegaard's earliest English translators – people like Walter Lowrie and David Swenson – were theologians or philosophers of religion who subscribed to narrow views about the nature of truth[4]. Perhaps rather uncharitably, Poole suggests that the subtlety of Kierkegaard's communication 'was lost on the plain, honest mind of Walter Lowrie'[5].

'Deconstructive' readings, on the other hand, says Poole, tend to privilege form over content. They pay much closer attention to the 'sheer literary virtuosity' of the discourse to the extent that they may even deny that the text has any meaningful content at all[6]. The earliest example of such literary reading is Louis Mackey's *Kierkegaard: A Kind of Poet*. Mackey writes:

> Kierkegaard is not, in the usual acceptation of these words, a philosopher or a theologian, but a poet [. . .] the fact is, that if Kierkegaard is to be understood *as Kierkegaard*, he must be studied not merely or principally with the instruments of philosophic and theological analysis, but also and chiefly with the tools of literary criticism[7].

For Mackey, the blunt, analytical tools of 'theological' readers cannot do justice to a poet's nuance. There is a subtlety of expression and depth of thought that is missed if one tries to iron out the provocations and peculiarities of Kierkegaard's texts. Poole also places his own work, *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication*, in the same category. He suggests that 'Kierkegaard writes text after text whose aim is not to state a truth, not to clarify an issue, not to propose a definite doctrine, not to offer some 'meaning' that could be directly appropriated'[8]. In other words, Poole prioritises form over content to the point of denying graspable meaning altogether.

However, despite its major advances, Poole's monograph also falls short. Poole intimates that Kierkegaard had a specifically deconstructive 'aim' in mind, but such a clear authorial intention sits uneasily with the very deconstruction that Poole himself is advocating. Furthermore, this express preference for a deconstructive reading elides the real presence of theology in Kierkegaard's aesthetic works. For example, Poole concludes that Kierkegaard's semiotics reaches its natural climax in the God-Man, Jesus Christ. He writes, 'there is only one asserted instance [of Kierkegaard's theory of signs] in human history: Godhead incarnated in a Galilean carpenter'[9]. But for Poole, 'it is in many ways unfortunate' that this is the case[10]. He wishes theology could be kept at bay. At his most stretched he argues that 'Kierkegaard is doing his best to wrench the signifying activity away from the one single instance of the God-Man, and to include the God-Man as one example of a universally repeated phenomenon'[11]. Yet in *Fragments*, Climacus seems to focus on nothing but 'the wonder' of the incarnation and shows no interest in universally repeated phenomena[12]. Poole's purely deconstructive reading fails to do justice to the genuine theological substance of the text.

This article, by contrast, attempts to illustrate the collapse of these binary interpretations of Kierkegaard's indirect communication in the case of *Fragments* by seeking to remain sensitive to theological and deconstructive elements simultaneously.

Defining 'theology' and 'deconstruction'

One of the principal weaknesses of Poole's division between 'theological' and 'deconstructive' interpretations is that he does not indicate what he means by 'theology' – and he appears to conflate two very different understandings. On the one hand, he uses the adjective 'theological' as a synonym for 'blunt' to describe any monological interpretation of the indirect communication. This stems from his observation that the early, blunt interpreters were primarily theologians. But, on the other hand, Poole also employs the more usual definition of theology as any talk about God. By sliding between these two definitions, Poole implies that *all* theological readings are necessarily blunt – but this need not be the case.

Here, I will be using the term 'theology' in the sense of talk about God and arguing that this is part and parcel of the deconstruction that Poole identifies. I take *Fragments* to be theological in three specific ways. First, it is theological in a biblical sense: Climacus uses and refers to biblical texts. He does not explain how to read the Bible, but rather demonstrates how it informs his own life and writing. Second, *Fragments* is theological in the motifs it employs: certain tropes – especially sin and faith – recur in a variety of guises. Finally, *Fragments* is theological because it is a book about the incarnation. In Christianity, Christ is the central subject matter of all theology.

When it comes to deconstruction, there is no easy way to define what deconstruction is or does. As Jacques Derrida writes, 'all the predicates, all the defining concepts, all the lexical significations, and even the syntactic articulations, which seem at one moment to lend themselves to this definition or to that translation, are also deconstructed or deconstructible, directly or otherwise'[13]. Deconstruction cannot be defined because deconstruction is precisely about revealing the limitations of any definition. Neither is deconstruction a method or a tool. (With this in mind, Poole's category of 'deconstructive' interpreters already looks a little brittle.) Deconstruction is something that simply happens; 'it "is" only what it does'; and it can merely be gestured towards[14]. Yet, if a tangible definition is demanded, Derrida does, in a weaker moment, describe deconstruction as 'an analysis which tries to find out how [. . .] thinking works or does not work, to find the tensions, the contradictions, [and] the heterogeneity within [a text]'[15]. I will therefore be suggesting that *Fragments* contains deconstructive elements inasmuch as I can point to such tensions, contradictions, and heterogeneities. I will be seeking to highlight the paradoxical content of Climacus's *Fragments* and its necessary entanglement with the paradoxical form in which it arises. I will also be aiming, not only to overturn theological readings with deconstructive ones and vice versa, but also to reveal the limits of any such binary distinction between these two categories.

Part I – Theology and deconstruction in the form of *Philosophical Fragments*

Theological aspects of Philosophical Fragments' form

Historically, Christian theology has taken a wide variety of forms, including creedal statements, philosophical arguments, and doctrinal treatises. *Fragments*, however, does not present us with abstract propositions, or even carefully reasoned doctrines. Rather, it is the Bible that provides the theological template for Climacus's literary form.

Jolita Pons describes Kierkegaard's use of the biblical text in his pseudonymous works, noting how 'he both appropriates its content and imitates its writing patterns'[16]. In *Fragments*, a work of barely more than a hundred pages in English translation, there are upwards of seventy separate references to specific biblical verses[17]. What is especially interesting is that, not only are almost none of these citations in quotation marks, let alone acknowledged, but also many of them actually 'deviate' from the original, standard translation of the text[18]. For Pons, however, Kierkegaard's use of the Bible is more creative than mistaken. Even though he was almost certainly quoting from memory, he was too well versed in Scripture for his 'errors' to be misquotations[19]. Instead, it seems, he was consciously splicing and weaving well-worn biblical snippets to produce a sophisticated tapestry. As Timothy Polk puts it, 'Kierkegaard [i.e. Climacus] does not so much talk about the Bible as kaleidoscopically use it'[20]. Climacus has so comprehensively ingested the biblical text that it has become effortless for him to deploy it throughout his writing, to the extent that it is sometimes hard to distinguish where his words end and the Bible begins. This process resembles the Jewish rhetorical figure known as a *charaz*, a stringing of textual pearls to make a brand-new necklace[21].

In two particularly intense passages, Climacus bombards the reader with clusters of these biblical quotations[22]. In the first, the reader is transported from the birth of Christ – 'he has no place where he can lay his head' – via his temptation in the wilderness, and his

healing ministry, to the crucifixion – 'be forsaken in death' – in little more than a paragraph[23]. In the second of these concatenations, Climacus repeats the mantra Christ came 'in the form of a servant', before assembling an array of practically impossible biblical recommendations: a disdain for food and drink, an aspiration to be as carefree as the birds of the air or the lilies of the field, a shunning of friends and family, and even a refusal to accompany the dead to their graves[24]. The central point is that Climacus's kaleidoscopic theological form is more than just a passive conveyor of canonical information because these lines from Scripture take on new meanings in each new context. As Climacus himself observes of his 'mixing of borrowed phrases': 'I do not deny this, nor shall I conceal the fact that I did it deliberately'[25]. The form is at least as important as the content when it comes to overall meaning, and it would be a mistake to privilege one over the other.

Even more striking, perhaps, is Climacus's use of parables. Like Christ in the Gospels, Climacus often employs provocative fictional narratives as his chosen mode of communication. For example, he offers a series of parables to illustrate the significance of making a decision[26]. If a child with some money can buy either a good book or a toy, they cannot later exchange the toy for the book without compromising the significance of their original choice. Similarly, a knight in battle, who is invited to fight for both armies, cannot later switch sides when they find themselves defeated and taken prisoner by the conqueror. Or, as Aristotle pointed out, one who throws a stone has power over it beforehand, but not once it is in the air, otherwise the act of throwing would have been an illusion. In between each of these parables is the recurring refrain: 'this is very strange indeed'[27]. The clearest and most sustained parable of all occupies most of Chapter II. 'Suppose there was a king', it begins, 'who loved a maiden of lowly station in life'[28]. Immediately, Climacus pre-empts a complaint about his chosen narrative form, justifying his 'fairy tale' on the basis that it allows him 'to unroll the tapestry of discourse'[29]. As the analogy continues it becomes clear that the only way for the king to ensure that the maiden reciprocates his love without coercion is for him to descend and appear as 'the lowliest of persons'[30]. So too with the incarnation: the god kenotically humbles godself in order to have a meaningful relationship with humanity. Yet, alongside these explicit parables, there is also a sense in which the whole of *Fragments* takes parabolic form. Climacus sets the work up as a 'Thought-Project', a narrative 'hypothesis' to be worked on throughout the book[31]. The teaching and learning that Climacus describes are really analogies for revelation and faith[32]. It is as if the whole work is prefaced with a 'let us suppose'[33].

Hence, Climacus's *Fragments* does not deal in propositional formulations or systematic elaborations, but rather takes on a specifically biblical theological form. Not only are scriptural phrases imbibed and interwoven, but Climacus also imitates Christ's provocative use of parables. These theological forms are so deeply embedded that it would be absurd to say that theologians can only ever focus on the content of *Fragments* at the expense of its form. The notion that theological interpretations privilege content over form must be overturned and rejected.

Deconstructive aspects of Philosophical Fragments' form

Four deconstructive aspects of *Fragments'* form merit further comment. What is especially important, though, is that they are each corollaries of certain theological concerns.

The first indication of *Fragments*' deconstructive form is found in the title: 'Philosophical Fragments or A Fragment of Philosophy'[34]. Originally, *Fragments* was the first in a series of projected works, all under the heading 'Philosophical Pamphlets'[35]. But the title was subsequently transferred to the solo work, and then 'Pamphlets' changed to 'Fragments'[36]. What was once a single piece in a series to come, is now itself presented as an assemblage of separate parts. Riffing on the pamphlet theme, Climacus goes on to explain that '[w]hat is offered here is only a pamphlet [. . .] merely a pamphlet [. . .] it is impossible for anyone to dream of attributing world-historical importance to a - pamphlet'[37]. Rather, 'to write a pamphlet is frivolity'[38]. On one level, this is a parody of Hegel's totalising, universal synthesis. In the wake of such hubris, all Climacus can give us are the remaining fragments after 'the hungry monster of the world-historical process' has had its way[39]. Climacus's leftovers do not constitute a philosophical or theological system; they are not logically coherent or exhaustively complete but comprise 'the scrapings and shavings of argument cut up into little bits'[40]. However, the title also has a deconstructive quality. Derrida's literary collage *Glas*, for example, is subtitled 'what is left over from or of absolute wisdom'[41]. These fragments could be either the remaining pieces of a shattered system or the leftovers that were ignored by the system in the first place. Either way, Climacus's chosen title serves as a deconstructive reminder of the incompleteness of *all* systems.

Yet these deconstructive fragments are simultaneously theological. Climacus's fragmentary pamphlet is reminiscent of the rabbinic *charaz* mentioned in the previous section – an overtly theological assemblage of textual pearls. Similarly, in Chapter IV, Climacus refers to the feeding of the five thousand[42]. Just as the disciples collected the crumbs after the feast, Climacus has scraped together some philosophical leftovers[43]. This is not because catching 'every syllable' makes you a better follower, but because there is simply no alternative; collecting crumbs is the only thing a disciple like Climacus can do[44].

The second deconstructive aspect is the use of hiatuses, which fractally pervade the structure of *Fragments*. These gaps are akin to Derrida's *différance*, a combination of temporal deferral and spatial difference that can only be recognised in its written form[45]. *Différance* provides the opening in which all signs have their meaning. Any sign indicates that the thing which it is a sign for is not present, temporally or spatially. It is only in reference to other words and by association with other concepts that ideas become possible. As Derrida puts it, '*différance* is thus no longer simply a concept, but rather the possibility of conceptuality, of a conceptual process and system in general'[46]. *Différance* is simultaneously a detour that aims to come back to a presence and a recognition of the impossibility of that presence[47]. In *Fragments*, Climacus introduces hiatuses both with and without resolution.

At the micro-level, Climacus opens these spaces of deferral with his use of the dash: a suspended space of uncertainty – before the significance of a decision comes crashing down. 'If, however, *the moment* is to have decisive significance (–), then this is certainly not the truth, for the learner owes the teacher everything.'[48] On this occasion, Climacus protects the moment of possibility by enclosing the dash in parentheses. One can also feel the suspense through the rise and fall of the 'if' and the 'then'. Climacus presents an even more agonisingly protracted hiatus in his anecdote about Chrysippus and Carneades: 'one could pause for a moment in the reckoning, and then, then – then one could

understand it better.'[49] These punctuated pauses are reminiscent of the opening ellipsis and the dashes preceding every paragraph in Derrida's essay *Sauf le nom*[50]. Furthermore, the anecdote about Chrysippus and Carneades is itself a larger pause, a diversionary suspense within the flow of Climacus's writing. So, too, are Climacus's bizarre references to the passing of time. Repeatedly, he assures us that '[w]e shall take our time – after all, there is no need to hurry'[51]. These meso-scale gaps are the second level at which Climacus creates openings.

Largest in this series of hiatuses is the 'Interlude', a macro-scale chasm of eighteen hundred and forty-three years dividing Chapters IV and V, the supposed timespan between 'The Situation of the Contemporary Follower' and 'The Follower at Second Hand'[52]. 'For the sake of the illusion I ought to take plenty of time', he writes[53]. This, in textual form, is a representation of Climacus's famous leap: the period of suspense that follows the offense at the paradox of Christ. Note, again, though, that this deconstructive spacing is simultaneously theological: it exists because of our distance from Christ. Chapter V hardly resolves the would-be follower's predicament, but rather maintains their offense and deferral in the face of the paradox.

The third deconstructive aspect of *Fragments'* form concerns the death of the author. Derrida sees beyond texts as mere transmitters of data, or expressions of authorial opinion, or sites for the reader's interpretation, to the text itself. As he puts it, there is an 'absence of the sender, of the receiver, from the mark that he abandons, and which cuts itself off from him and continues to produce effects independently of his presence and of the present actuality of his intentions, indeed even after his death'[54]. Yet there is still communication in their absence. A letter is still a letter even if both the sender and the recipient die whilst it is in the post. Written signs have a power that extends beyond any one context of composition or reception[55].

Climacus too seems to be acutely aware of the ambiguities of authorship. Not only is he a distant pseudonym of Kierkegaard, but he is also at pains to absent himself from the text. 'But what is my opinion? . . . Do not ask me about that [. . .] nothing can be of less interest to someone else than what my opinion is', he writes[56]. The author's own position is not what matters. Later, as he converses with the reader at the end of each chapter, Climacus completely revokes his authorship of the poem in Chapter II: 'forgive me my curious mistaken notion of having composed it myself', he says[57]. Yet if Climacus has plagiarised his work, as his accuser suspects, 'who then is the poet? [. . .] If there is no poet when there nevertheless is a poem – this would be curious, indeed, as curious as hearing flute playing although there is no flute player.'[58] Then, a few pages later, Climacus points out the fallacy in this argument. Napoleon's existence certainly explains Napoleon's works, but Napoleon's works do not *demonstrate* his existence[59]. To label something flute playing is to presuppose a flute player. As such, it seems we should honour Climacus's express wish to be ignored.

But what about Christ? Surely Christ's presence is decisive for the learner to reach the truth? Yet, Christ is also an author who dies, who absents himself from the text of the world[60]. His teaching is 'terminated by the departure of the god from the earth'[61]. Climacus points to Christ's words in John's Gospel: 'it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you'[62]. There is a strange tension here between Christ's presence and his absence – one that is not unambiguously resolved by the sending of the Holy Spirit. Even though we are 'absolutely distanced'

from Christ's authorial presence, we are still confronted with the scandal of Christ and we can still be believers[63]. The death of the author does not make the text any less theological.

The final deconstructive tension is the most extreme: Climacus is describing Christianity without being a Christian – a feat which he says himself is completely impossible[64]. As Stephen Evans writes, 'the very content of the hypothesis that he pretends to be inventing has as one of its essential features the impossibility of its invention by any mere human'[65]. Climacus wants us to believe that he cannot teach us how to believe. His metaphor for this is birth: 'This matter of being born – is it thinkable? Well, why not? But who is supposed to think it – one who is born or one who is not born?'[66] His answer is that birth can only be described by one who is already born; if you do not exist, you do not exist to describe your coming into existence. Consequently, faith, conceived of as rebirth, can only be described by one who is already reborn. Climacus must be mad; he is talking about the rebirth of faith without himself being reborn; he is conceiving of the inconceivable. This is also reflected in Climacus's opening epigraph: '[b]etter well hanged, than ill wed'[67]. In other words, Climacus was aware that *Fragments* seems to be entirely self-defeating. He says that it is impossible for a non-Christian to communicate Christianity, he admits to not being a Christian, and then he presents Christianity anyway. This, in a Derridean idiom, is the '(impossible) possibility of the impossible', and, as I will pick up in Part III, is a direct outcome of Climacus's theology of the incarnation[68].

In Part I, then, I have focussed on the *form* of Climacus's *Fragments*, in order to overturn, and ultimately reject, the theology/deconstruction interpretive binary in this instance. Climacus's kaleidoscopic quotation of Scripture and imitation of Gospel parables are strikingly biblical in form, subverting any notion that *Fragments* is merely a rhetorical, deconstructive husk for a true, theological kernel. At the same time, the form is undeniably deconstructive: this fragmented, suspended, and apparently authorless text is ultimately self-undermining. Yet even these deconstructive aspects have a theological flavour: the fragmentary shards of meaning are not unlike the crumbs the disciples gather after the feeding of the five thousand; the suspense relates to the two-thousand-year gulf between us and Christ; the death of the author resembles the death of Christ; and the paradoxical presentation is an incarnational move. Thus, the theology/deconstruction binary *deconstructs*.

Part II – Theology and deconstruction in the content of *Philosophical Fragments*

Theological aspects of Philosophical Fragments' content

The theological content of *Fragments* is barely concealed below the surface of the text. As Climacus's interlocutor puts it, this is some of the 'shabbiest plagiarism' ever seen[69]. For example, the theme of revelation is introduced in Climacus's opening thought-project. Here, Climacus proposes a contrast between two modes of teaching. 'Religiousness A' involves a pedagogical model that he attributes to Socrates: the role of the teacher is to enable the student to discover the truth that was already latent within them. As such, the teacher can be likened to a midwife who supervises the

birth of ideas within the mind of the student. On this model, says Climacus, '[t]he temporal point of departure is a nothing, because in the same moment I discover that I have known the truth from eternity without knowing it'[70]. The student's historical moment of understanding is relegated to arbitrariness and insignificance; the transcendent can be made immanent at any time. 'Religiousness B', however, posits a totally different sort of comprehension, whereby the moment in time is of the utmost significance:

> A moment such as this is unique. To be sure, it is short and temporal, as the moment is; it is passing, as the moment is, past, as the moment is in the next moment, and yet it is decisive, and yet it is filled with the eternal. A moment such as this must have a special name. Let us call it: the fullness of time[71].

No amount of recollecting, maieutic cajoling, or contemplation of the world could ever have produced this moment of truth. Instead, the truth has been presented out of nowhere by a teacher of the greatest possible significance. The transcendent has become immanent at one supremely important moment in time. This, to put it plainly, is a traditional, theological understanding of *revelation* – though Climacus does not get round to naming it as such until Chapter II. For Saint Paul, this moment of revelation, 'the fullness of time', is none other than the incarnation itself, when 'God sent his Son'[72]. The fullness of time is not just the eventual fulfilment of a languishing promise, but an instant that is completely saturated with God. The incarnation is *the* revelation. This is the linchpin on which everything hangs, and this is why the incarnation is so crucial for Climacus.

There are also theological correlates for many other attributes of this pedagogical parable. In the case of Religiousness B, the learner is not merely ignorant, but living in 'untruth'[73]. If, for Climacus, it was merely that we knew we did not know the truth, then the moment of discovery would simply confirm the truth that we had always known we were searching for. In this case, the Socratic model would be correct, and the moment of revelation would be insignificant. Instead, it must be the case that we had no idea that we were looking for the truth. We do not even understand the truth when it is presented to us. Yet we cannot have been like this originally, reasons Climacus, because then we would have been mere animals[74]. We must have forfeited the necessary condition for understanding the truth ourselves. 'But this state – to be untruth and to be that through one's own fault – what can we call it? Let us call it *sin*.'[75] With feigned innocence Climacus has led us inexorably to a second, vital theme of Christian theology. What is more, he has made it clear that we are both fully responsible for our sinful predicament, and yet unable to free ourselves.

The other aspects of this parabolic analogy now come tumbling forth. If the teacher saves the learner from self-imposed untruth, then we should call the teacher a *saviour*[76]. If 'he does indeed deliver the person who has imprisoned himself' we could rightly call him a *deliverer*. If we are guilty of erring, then the teacher performs the function of a *reconciler*. Once someone has received both the condition and the truth 'he becomes a person of a different quality'[77]. His life is 'turned around', so '[l]et us call this change *conversion* [...] for it [this word] seems to be created for the very change of which we speak'[78]. Furthermore, our sense of regret at having previously been in untruth might correctly be called *repentance*.

Yet it is the incarnation that is the most important theological theme of all. This is the central topic of the whole book, as well as the explicit focus of the parable of the king and the maiden. Just as the king needed to humble himself to win the love of the lowly maiden, so too the god, moved by love, has emptied godself and become human[79]. It is also the only historical point of departure for our eternal consciousness; for Christianity, the incarnation is the nail on which everything hangs[80]. As the model of Religiousness B makes clear, it is *this* moment in history that contains the fullness of time. This is *the* meeting point between the temporal and the eternal. What is especially intriguing about Climacus's intense focus on the incarnation is what he leaves out. The incarnation is not presented as one stage within the arc of the Christian metanarrative; other, significant theological themes, such as creation, crucifixion, resurrection, and eschaton, are never mentioned. Instead, *everything* depends on the historical incarnation. Climacus's theology all flows from the one, revelatory moment of the incarnation.

Deconstructive aspects of Philosophical Fragments' content

Having sketched the theological content of the text, I now want to turn attention to three deconstructive aspects. The first of these is deferral – and it soon becomes clear how this is a simultaneously theological notion. Following his presentation of the absolute paradox (the bridging of the infinite qualitative difference between creator and creature in the incarnation), Climacus describes the understanding's paradoxical passion for encounter with this paradox[81]. He notes that 'this passion has another name, or, rather, we must simply try to find a name for it'[82]. But in the following appendix he is no clearer, referring to it as: 'the passion to which we as yet have given no name and which we shall not name until later'[83]. Five pages later Climacus is still prevaricating: 'that happy passion to which we have not as yet given a name [. . .] that no doubt will receive a name, but [. . .] does not have a name'[84]. This last clause even casts doubt on the likelihood of us ever being given a name at all. When Climacus finally ends the suspense, he does so by completely deflating the importance ascribed to names in the first place: 'that happy passion to which we shall now give a name, although for us it is not a matter of the name. We shall call it *faith*.'[85]

On one interpretation, the seemingly endless deferral of meaning is plugged by a secure, religious word: faith. This is 'the name of this bottomless collapse'[86]. But this would not do justice to Climacus's insistence that, in the end, the name is illusory or unimportant. An alternative reading would be that Climacus is unable to indulge in the apparent stability of names and concepts because words only gain meaning in relation to other words, and never fully find purchase on an absolute reference point. As Derrida writes, 'nothing remains for you, not even a name or a reference.'[87] We are left with just the trace of a name. Similarly, when the interlocutor is looking for the true source of Climacus's plagiarised project, we are told that 'this „Go to the next house' does not halt and cannot be halted„[88].

This perpetual ambivalence about names also applies to God. When we come up against the limit of what we can understand, says Climacus, 'let us call this unknown *the god*', and yet, he continues, '[i]t is only a name we give to it'[89]. The importance of the name is immediately deflated. Within the text of *Fragments*, it is Christianity that receives the longest deferral of all: it is not mentioned by name until the penultimate page of the

book[90]. The deconstructive slipperiness of these names is not simply because Climacus has planned an elaborate ruse to keep us guessing, but because the very concepts he wants to pin down – faith, God, and Christianity – are eluding him. If, or when, the names do finally arrive, it feels like they do not really mean anything. The crucial point is that Climacus's traditional theological themes are not nearly as stable as orthodox theology might expect. Rather, theology exists as a trace; the theological is simultaneously deconstructive.

There is also a second deconstructive element to the faith Climacus describes. A recurring invocation in Derrida's work is that 'the instant of decision is madness'[91]. In *Fragments* we have: 'the moment of decision is foolishness'[92]. When Climacus talks of foolishness, he is citing Saint Paul: 'we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles'[93]. For Paul, the foolishness is 'Christ crucified', the idea that the divine came to earth only to be killed – it is this that looks like utter madness to the Jews and the Greeks. But for Climacus, the foolishness is slightly different – namely that an individual believer might proceed to *trust* the crucified Christ. This is the madness of faith itself. And it is this personal decision that Derrida picks up on:

> These are the only decisions possible: impossible ones. Think here of Kierkegaard. The only decision possible is the impossible decision. It is when it is not possible to *know* what must be done, when knowledge is not and cannot be determining that a decision is possible as such. Otherwise the decision is an application: one knows what has to be done, it's clear, there is no more decision possible; what one has here is an effect, an application, a programming[94].

In other words, a decision worth its name should be something other than a mechanical operation. No knowledge, no rational thought, no possible preparation can equip an individual for the decision of faith. It is in this sense, then, that Derrida can say with Climacus that 'the instant of decision is madness'. And note, once more, how a biblical line from Paul and the theological concept of faith have been made to reveal their reliance on a deconstructive moment of madness.

The third deconstructive motif in the content of *Fragments* is Climacus's baffling use of contradiction. He paradoxically relies upon, then undermines, and finally re-asserts, the principle of contradiction; he contradicts his contradictory remarks about the contradiction. To begin with, he is scrupulously clear that Hegelian contradiction (a relation of opposites that can be dynamic and creative) is not what he has in mind. Instead, he often uses formal contradiction – two propositions that are fundamentally incompatible – as part of his argument. For example, 'it is a contradiction that something inferior would be able to vanquish something superior'[95]. To allow this would be to overturn the very definitions of the words inferior and superior.

However, Climacus then undermines this principle of contradiction. He writes: 'It is well known that the most honest and truthful people are most likely to become entangled in contradictions [...] whereas non-contradiction in one's lies is reserved only for the depraved criminal'[96]. There is something too smooth about a flawless argument, something that is at odds with the more ambiguous nature of reality. So perhaps we are supposed to reject all his earlier arguments as the fabrications of a 'depraved criminal', not least because Climacus's formulation of the absolute paradox 'specifically unites the contradictories'[97].

Yet, at the end of the book, Climacus re-asserts formal contradiction. He bemoans those who think that they have surpassed Aristotle's law of non-contradiction: 'the thesis that the principle of contradiction is canceled is based upon the principle of contradiction, since otherwise the opposite thesis, that it is not canceled, is equally true'[98]. To undermine the principle of contradiction and assert that the logic of formal contradiction is inconsistent with the non-binary nature of reality, he must paradoxically rely on the fact that the opposite is not the case, thereby assuming the principle of contradiction. Hence, the principle of contradiction is the condition of possibility for contradicting the principle of contradiction. What is especially fascinating is that Climacus does not simply convey Aristotle's insight, but by moving from relying on, to undermining, to reasserting the principle of contradiction he enacts what he describes. Climacus's deconstructive understanding of contradiction is performed in an incarnational (theological) mode.

The overall argument here has mirrored that of Part I. Numerous theological themes are readily apparent in the text: revelation, sin, conversion, repentance, faith, and most importantly the incarnation, are all woven tightly into Climacus's account. Yet this is not a stable presentation of orthodox Christianity. The deferral of names, the madness of the moment of decision, and Climacus's use of contradiction all illustrate how *Fragments'* content is as deconstructive as it is theological. This unravels the assumption that deconstructive readings necessarily privilege form over content, and further undermines the view that *Fragments* is merely theological content presented in a deconstructive form. The theology/deconstruction binary continues to crumble.

Part III – Form, content, and communication: theology and deconstruction in the incarnation

Deconstruction of the form/content binary

The initial move of this article, to divide the analysis of *Fragments* into form and content, is in keeping with many previous readings[99]. Yet we have already begun to see the extent to which form is always entangled with content. Indeed, Derrida warns of those who 'would remain prisoner of a problematic opposition between form and content'[100]. My task now is to highlight how the deconstruction of this problematic opposition proceeds in the case of *Fragments*.

One argument for separating form and content is that it is apparently what Climacus himself suggests in his 'review of the review', a lengthy footnote in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* that deals with Andreas Frederik Beck's comments on *Fragments*. He writes:

> The contrast of form, the teasing resistance of the imaginary construction of the content, the inventive audacity (which even invents Christianity), the only attempt made to go further (that is, further than the so-called speculative constructing), the indefatigable activity of irony, the parody of speculative thought in the entire plan, the satire in making efforts as if something altogether extraordinary, that is, new were to come of them, whereas what always emerges is old-fashioned orthodoxy in its rightful severity[101].

The suggested purpose of the strange form is to make traditional Christianity appear anew to those who think they know what it is about. And yet, this is not the whole story. As Climacus continues, this pretence only lasts 'until the knower manages to assimilate

the knowledge by overcoming the resistance of the form'[102]. But this is still Climacus speaking. Why would he be giving us the key to demystify the peculiar form of *Fragments* if its very purpose was to unsettle us? If we know that Climacus is just trying to get us to swallow the same, old Christianity, then surely the ruse is up? A preferable approach, therefore, would be to refuse to divide between form and content. In this case, Climacus has not slipped up because he is not in the business of providing new packaging for the same, old truth. As he writes in a draft for *Postscript*, '[*Fragments*] is no lecture about Christianity as the truth'[103]. There is something rather more serious going on than a debate about the presentation style.

Within *Fragments* itself, Climacus provides further indications of the entanglement between form and content. In the model of Religiousness B, the form is of the utmost importance. As Climacus writes: 'the god's presence is not incidental to his teaching but is essential. The presence of the god in human form – indeed, in the lowly form of a servant – is precisely the teaching'[104]. Nobody else is able to convey the god's teaching because the god taking on the human *form* of a servant – that repeated biblical mantra discussed above – is itself the *content* of the teaching. Christ not only transmits, but embodies, the message of Christianity. The form of the incarnation *is* the content of the incarnation. Later in *Fragments*, Climacus sounds another note of warning: 'That form was no incognito [...] let no innkeeper or philosophy professor fancy that he is such a clever fellow that he can detect something'[105]. The very idea that there might be a separable kernel of truth that is revealed to us, let alone one that we can extract for ourselves, is misguided. Still less can we take Christ's content and package him in a form of our own choosing: 'When an oak nut is planted in a clay pot, the pot breaks; when new wine in poured into old leather bottles, they burst.'[106] Climacus uses biblical imagery to remind us that the incarnation shatters our divisions between form and content.

In fact, the incarnation is a paradigmatic example of why the form/content binary will always deconstruct. All signs – and this is Poole's conclusion about Kierkegaard's semiotics, even though he tries to play down its theological precedent – are a paradoxical combination of passive vehicle for conveying information and participation in the signified[107]. As Steven Shakespeare writes:

> It is not merely a question of Kierkegaard taking a circuitous and slightly more tortuous route to the same destination as that reached by the dogmatic theologian [...] The mode in which faith, for example, is encountered and communicated, is inextricable from what faith is construed to be[108].

As a result, it does not make any sense to distinguish between form and content; it is a false, albeit pragmatically useful, dichotomy. Instead, Climacus's paradoxical communication reflects, and is intertwined with, his paradoxical content – namely, the incarnation itself.

Theology and deconstruction in the incarnation

In the previous section, I suggested that the deconstruction of the form/content binary in *Fragments* reflects the intertwining of form and content in the incarnation. Meanwhile, in Parts I and II, I demonstrated the disintegration of the theology/deconstruction binary amongst interpretations of *Fragments*. My suggestion here, therefore, is that the incarnation itself – at least as Climacus presents it to us – can also be read as simultaneously

theological and deconstructive. Since the former is obvious, the burden of my argument rests on the latter.

The principal way in which Climacus's incarnation could be said to be deconstructive is its reliance on the aporetic tension between presence and absence. For example, prior to the incarnation, we see God's desire to be both present and absent simultaneously. In the Hebrew Bible 'to see the god was death'[109]. This refers directly to the occasion when the Lord promises to Moses that '[m]y presence will go with you', yet immediately follows this by saying, 'you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live'[110]. Climacus 'grasps the contradiction of this sorrow', namely that 'not to disclose itself is the death of love; [yet] to disclose itself is the death of the beloved.'[111] Before the incarnation, it seems we die if we see God's face, and yet our desire for relationship dies if we do not.

In a similar way, Climacus plays with presence and absence after the incarnation. He draws attention to two specific resurrection appearances: doubting Thomas and the road to Emmaus[112]. In the first instance, the tangible and the intangible are held in oscillatory tension. Thomas demands tactile evidence; Christ makes a ghostly appearance from the other side of a locked door; Thomas apparently receives the evidence he asks for; and then Christ blesses those who have not seen and yet nonetheless believe[113]. In the second case, the travellers on the road to Emmaus do not initially recognise Christ. Over dinner that night, even though they suddenly get a glimpse of him, it too is fleeting: 'their eyes were opened, and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight' in a single movement[114]. Presence is far from permanent. In fact, Christ's presence is predicated on the absence of the empty tomb that the travellers have already described[115]. Hence, both of Climacus's post-incarnation examples play on the dialectic of presence and absence.

So, is there anything more concrete about the incarnation itself? 'Look there he stands – the god', says Climacus, 'Where? There. Can you not see him?'[116] Even here, at the centre of Climacus's account of the incarnation, there remains an ambiguity about God's presence. This deconstruction of the concept of a stable presence in the incarnation is closely tied to Derrida's observations about the death of the author. Just as a text has a life beyond the presence of the author, so too the incarnation has a power independent of the presence of Christ. Perhaps, as Climacus puts it, a concise 'nota bene' of his existence is more than enough[117]. Indeed, the whole of Chapters IV and V aim to show that the incarnation is as significant for the follower at second hand, in the absence of Christ, as it is for a direct eyewitness. Death – of the author or of Christ – might even be preferable for the life of the text and the life of faith[118].

There is therefore a clear sense in which Climacus's presentation of the incarnation is deconstructive. Not only is it figured as the ongoing interplay between God's presence and God's absence, it also reflects Derrida's death of the author. Ultimately, it is these deconstructive features of Climacus's understanding of the incarnation that explain why *Fragments* itself must be theological and deconstructive at the same time. The subversion of the form/content and theology/deconstruction binaries in the incarnation are why Climacus's communication about the incarnation also undermines the same binaries. In short, Climacus must imitate Christ.

Imitation of Christ

The absolute paradox – that Christ spans the infinite qualitative difference between creator and creature – makes the direct communication of Christianity impossible. Christ does not convey information. Rather, he embodies truth in a paradoxical entanglement of form and content. As another of Kierkegaard's pseudonyms, Anti-Climacus, writes, '[the God-Man] is a sign, the sign of contradiction; he is unrecognizable – therefore any direct communication is impossible'[119]. Climacus therefore follows the only option available: rather than claiming to have comprehended the God-Man, or believing that he has extracted a nugget of theological truth from the God-Man that he can reliably communicate, he imitates the paradox with a paradox of his own. That is, he attempts to communicate the incommunicable. The indirect communication of *Fragments* is an imitation of Christ because it is a contradictory sign of the sign of contradiction. It is because Christ is the absolute paradox that communicating about or believing in him must also be paradoxical.

Joel Rasmussen suggests that what we have in *Fragments* is a 'Christomorphic poetics', that is, an incarnational poetics whereby the author introduces themselves into their work to fulfil their creation[120]. God enters into the world in the incarnation, and Climacus enters into his text. As Rasmussen argues: 'Climacus's attempt „to poeticize„ the god's appearance in the form of a servant, no less than the prologue to the Gospel of John, is a piece of incarnational theology'[121]. Just as John deals with the absolute paradox of the incarnation – that 'the Word was with God', and 'the Word was God' – so too Climacus presents a self-contradictory account[122].

Indeed, this incarnational mode of communication – what Louis Mackey refers to as sacramental transmission '"in, with, and under" the poetry' – has already become apparent at various junctures in this article[123]. In Part II, I showed that Climacus does not simply state Aristotle's principle of contradiction but enacts it for the reader within the text. Similarly, in Part I, I argued that the introduction of Climacus's status as a non-Christian set up the paradox of his communication about Christianity, directly imitating Christ's paradoxical introduction into the world in the incarnation. Stephen Mulhall concludes that 'to follow [the god] is not to follow him around but to live as he did, to imitate him'[124]. Imitation is the only conceivable way to communicate Christ's incarnation.

Yet, as highlighted in Part I, *Fragments* is full of biblical reminders about how impossibly difficult it is to imitate Christ[125]. 'One should never expect to imitate Christ perfectly', says Rasmussen, because we always fall short of that ideal[126]. Climacus, too, knows he has not made it. He does not even consider himself a Christian[127]. So has he even managed to attempt to imitate Christ at all? I suggest that he has. Both Climacus and Christ tell parables; both attempt to communicate truth; and both ultimately 'die' in the process. In a draft of the Preface he writes: 'I can stake my own life, not the lives of others. What I offer thought is not learning but a human life, which, whenever a difficulty appears, is willing to lay down life simply in order to solve it.'[128] Despite his apparent shirking of responsibility – his claim that '[e]very human being is too heavy' for him – Climacus nevertheless *does* stake his own life on the thought-project he gives us[129]. Climacus, like Christ, has been crucified. As discussed in Part I, Climacus considers himself 'well hanged' in the epigraph to *Fragments*[130]. Two years later, in the preface to

Postscript, 'the hanged, indeed, the well-hanged, author has remained hanging'[131]. He has foolishly laid down his own life in an attempt to communicate a truth that no one could ever believe on the basis of reason or evidence, and which he knows he cannot safely deliver. As he writes, '[the historical object of faith] cannot be communicated by one person to another', at least 'not in such a way that the other believes it'[132]. The only conceivable outcome is ridicule and mockery. This is reminiscent of the crucifixion: Christ was mocked for laying down his life[133]. Yet Climacus has followed Christ's injunction that one should 'lay down one's life for one's friends' by imitating Christ's sacrificial movement[134].

Climacus therefore only 'succeeds' in imitating Christ because he fails. *Fragments* 'aroused no sensation, none whatever' – exactly as he had wished[135]. Three years after publication, only 229 copies had been sold from a print run of 525[136]. The paradoxically incarnate, embodied communication in *Fragments* repeats the paradoxically incarnate, embodied communication of Christ. Climacus witnesses to the incarnation and appears to fail. If the absolute paradox is an impossibility, and imitation of Christ is a communication of the impossible, then this imitation – especially for Climacus as a non-Christian – is 'the very experience of the (impossible) possibility of the impossible'[137]. No-one can ever guarantee that the arrow hits the mark, and yet its failure is still a communication. Climacus just might, therefore, have given birth to the impossible: he has enacted the impossible possibility of communicating that which cannot be communicated.

Conclusion

This article has had two main aims: a more modest one and a more ambitious one. In Parts I and II, I have shown that Poole's division between 'theological' readings of Climacus's *Fragments*, that tend to privilege its content over its form, and 'deconstructive' interpretations, that tend to privilege its form over its content, cannot be maintained. In so doing, I have highlighted the *deconstruction* of the form/content and theology/deconstruction binaries that Poole's division relies on. Much of the problem stems from Poole's reduction of the theological to the monological, and his reified understanding of a 'deconstructive' approach. As I have illustrated, there is no such thing as a purely 'theological' reading of *Fragments* that is not always already entangled with deconstruction, and vice versa.

My more ambitious aim has been to show, in Part III, that the reason why *Fragments* includes simultaneously theological and deconstructive gestures is because it is mirroring the very incarnation it is talking about; Climacus is imitating Christ. Just as Christ performs his message, so too Climacus performs his[138]. Just as the incarnation is an absolute paradox, so too Climacus's indirect communication is a paradox. Just as it was impossible for Christ to be born, so too *Fragments* has given birth to the impossible: a non-Christian's account of the Christian incarnation.

Notes

1. Poole, "The Unknown Kierkegaard," 58–72.
2. Evans, *Passionate Reason*, 18, 82; and Law, *Kierkegaard as Negative Theologian*, 5, 65–7.

3. Poole, "The Unknown Kierkegaard," 60.
4. Poole, "The Unknown Kierkegaard," 58–9.
5. Poole, "The Unknown Kierkegaard," 59–60.
6. Poole, "The Unknown Kierkegaard," 48.
7. Mackey, *Kierkegaard*, ix–x.
8. Poole, *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication*, 7.
9. Poole, *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication*, 253.
10. Ibid.
11. Poole, *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication*, 250.
12. Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (hereafter PF), 36.
13. Derrida, "Letter to Japanese Friend," 4.
14. Derrida, "Afterword," 141.
15. Caputo, ed., "The Villanova Roundtable," 9.
16. Pons, *Stealing a Gift*, 70.
17. See PF, 352–3 for an index of biblical references in *Fragments*.
18. Pons, *Stealing a Gift*, 100. For example, in his reference to Philippians 3:13–4, Climacus replaces *forgetting* the past in order to move on, with *remembering* and repenting. See PF, 19 and Pons, *Stealing a Gift*, 103.
19. Pons, *Stealing a Gift*, 106.
20. Polk, *The Biblical Kierkegaard*, 17.
21. Pons, *Stealing a Gift*, 181.
22. PF, 32, 56–7.
23. PF, 32 referencing Luke 9:58; and Matthew 4:6, 24; 27:46.
24. PF, 56–7 referencing Philippians 2:7; John 4:34; and Matthew 6:25–8; 12:49; 8:22.
25. PF, 109.
26. PF, 16–7.
27. PF, 16.
28. PF, 26.
29. Ibid.
30. PF, 31.
31. PF, 9, 17, 22, 89, 107, 109.
32. PF, 9.
33. See the opening of the parables in PF, 66, 92.
34. PF, 1.
35. PF, xvii.
36. PF, 177.
37. PF, 5–6.
38. PF, 109.
39. Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (hereafter CUP), 351.
40. CUP, 3.
41. See Llewelyn, *Margins of Religion*, 52.
42. PF, 60.
43. *Philosophical Crumbs* is perhaps a better translation of the title than *Philosophical Fragments*.
44. PF, 60.
45. Derrida, "Différance," 3.
46. Derrida, "Différance," 11.
47. Derrida, "Différance," 19.
48. PF, 30.
49. PF, 43.
50. Derrida, "Sauf Le Nom," 35–88.
51. PF, 16. See also PF, 20, 25, 40, 47, 106.
52. PF, 72–88.
53. PF, 72.

54. Derrida, "Signature Event Context," 5.
55. Derrida, "Signature Event Context," 9.
56. PF, 7.
57. PF, 36.
58. PF, 35.
59. PF, 40.
60. PF, 63, 65.
61. PF, 105.
62. PF, 105; John 16:7.
63. PF, 91.
64. CUP, 466, 617.
65. Evans, *Passionate Reason*, 17.
66. PF, 20. See also PF, 11, 19–21, 34.
67. PF, 3.
68. Derrida, "Sauf Le Nom," 43.
69. PF, 35.
70. PF, 13.
71. PF, 18.
72. Galatians 4:4.
73. PF, 13.
74. PF, 15.
75. Ibid.
76. PF, 17.
77. PF, 18.
78. Ibid.
79. PF, 24.
80. PF, 109.
81. PF, 47.
82. PF, 48.
83. PF, 49.
84. PF, 54.
85. PF, 59.
86. Derrida, "Sauf le Nom," 55.
87. Derrida, "Sauf le Nom," 49.
88. PF, 22.
89. PF, 39.
90. PF, 109.
91. Bennington, "A Moment of Madness," 103–27.
92. PF, 52.
93. I Corinthians 1:23.
94. Derrida, *Points: Interviews, 1974–1994*, 147–8.
95. PF, 15.
96. PF, 92.
97. PF, 61.
98. PF, 108–9.
99. See Poole, "The Unknown Kierkegaard," 58–72 and examples therein. The form/content binary also mirrors Climacus's discussion in *Postscript* of the 'how' and the 'what'. CUP, 610–1.
100. Derrida, "Sauf le Nom," 49.
101. CUP, 275.
102. Ibid.
103. See PF, 220.
104. PF, 55.
105. PF, 64.

106. PF, 34 referring to Mark 2:22; and Luke 5:37.
107. Poole, *Kierkegaard: The Indirect Communication*, 253.
108. Shakespeare, *Refusal of Transcendence*, 45.
109. PF, 30.
110. Exodus 33:14, 20.
111. PF, 30.
112. PF, 57, 65.
113. John 20:24–9.
114. Luke 24:31.
115. Luke 24:22–4.
116. PF, 32.
117. PF, 104.
118. See John 16:7.
119. Kierkegaard, *Practice in Christianity*, 134.
120. Rasmussen, *Between Irony and Witness*, 2–3.
121. Rasmussen, *Between Irony and Witness*, 69.
122. Rasmussen, *Between Irony and Witness*, 82; John 1:1.
123. Mackey, *Kierkegaard*, xi.
124. Mulhall, "God's Plagiarist," 30.
125. PF, 56–7.
126. Rasmussen, *Between Irony and Witness*, 141, 145.
127. See note above 64.
128. See PF, 185.
129. PF, 8.
130. PF, 3.
131. CUP, 5.
132. PF, 103.
133. Matthew 27:29–31.
134. John 15:13.
135. See note above 131.
136. See PF, xix. Ironically, *Fragments* has sold rather better since 1847.
137. Derrida, "Sauf le Nom," 43.
138. Mackey, *Points of View*, 102.

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