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# *Joakim Garff*
# SAK: Søren Aabye Kierkegaard. En biografi

*Copenhagen, Gads Forlag, 2000, 740 pp.*

## The Point of View for Garff's Biography

SAK has been Scandinavia's literary event of the year. Most Danish-reading subscribers to this journal will by now be familiar with Garff's fascinating and extraordinarily well-written book. Since the plaudits and media discussion can hardly have escaped those still to get through its seven hundred or so pages, rather than try to convey the detail here, I shall use the occasion to focus on more general matters. One of these concerns the work's place in the biography genre, another what sorts of biography we can expect of a writer, more particularly a writer like Kierkegaard. I will point out what readers will not find in Garff's biography, and possible reasons for that. I will also point to the role played by some of what they will find in it. My agreement with other reviewers that Garff's biography is a very good one will, I hope, remain clear throughout.

Garff's setup is appropriately chronological, salient years (from 1813 to 1855) doing service for chapter headings but with memorably titled subsections. The chronology is interrupted by flashes back and forward. Thus Kierkegaard's very early established scorn of Martensen is treated first in a comment on the publication in 1849 of the latter's *Den christelige Dogmatik* (p. 501). The closing 'chapter' looks beyond 1855 not just to the funeral but also to the posthumous publications and Peter Christian's sad fate. There is no attempt to extend the biography into a *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the works or their reception; nor is the life Garff recounts one in which the writings and their developing themes form an integral sub-narrative. In fact no real sense is conveyed of the subject himself outside the writings as contributing to a coherent story. Nor does it appear to be Garff's intention that it should be so. The book's title, as Garff himself says, 'means nothing' and so doesn't lead the reader 'to think of or expect anything in particular'. No narrative is anticipated, none given

English-readers brought up on Lowrie's »SK« (Walter Lowrie, *Kierkegaard*, London, Oxford University Press, 1938), a figure to whom the reader grew used to treating as someone deserving the same respectful admiration one is expected to show those referred to simply by their (usually only two) initials, will find in Garff's »SAK« – perhaps helped by

association with *sik-sak* (zig-zag) or even *saks* (scissors) – a welcome corrective. Even Josiah Thompson's anti-hero (*Kierkegaard*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), a corrective to Lowrie's religious hero, left us with something like a personality, however shadowy, furtive, and with few redeeming traits. Thompson's merciless eye was that of an academic author without theological baggage who subsequently wrote on the Kennedy assassination and later turned his talents to private detection in San Francisco. Garff, with the inside knowledge of a theologically trained native of a culture directly descended from Kierkegaard's own, and with the evidence at his finger tips, has produced less a portrait of someone in particular than a vast palette of facts, hints, and conjectures from which anyone interested in producing such a portrait might paint one. Of his own work Garff says it has been a labour of love (p. xvii) – though perhaps not exactly of its subject.

Among the flashes forward the longest is on the very first page. It transports us all the way to the funeral. From his window overlooking Frue Plads, a newly appointed primate watches mourners pouring out of Vor Frue Kirke. How is he, his church, to deal with this priest-baiter his relatives have insisted on having buried on a Sunday, yet who wrote like an angel and had left for posterity a body of writing of »unparalleled originality and pregnance« (p. xiii)? *SAK* is, we might say, the view from Garff's own window, also in Copenhagen, looking back at these events and what led to them. His view is not clouded by irritation and personal outrage, like Martensen's, but like all biographies (cf. Marianne Egeland's *Hvem bestemmer over livet? Biografien som historisk og litterær genre* [Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 2000]), Garff's too is written from a point of view.

Points of view are defined by what they focus on and what they find expendable, and that is usually due in turn to some motivating cause. One thing Garff has found expendable is any attempt to convey what those writings of unparalleled originality and pregnance say. There may be a special reason. Unlike literary biographers whose first meeting with their subject is in the texts, and whose interest in the life of the writer may in that case be no more than a form of incidental curiosity, Garff is dealing with a local heritage. Kierkegaard's ghost still haunts the streets that Garff and his readers themselves frequent. Perhaps then the urge that brought Garff to his window was the felt need to bring this insistent but still elusive figure to account, to force him from his cover, to prevent him from getting away any longer with what, under that cover, he has managed to make people believe about himself, and about his work.

If this is indeed Garff's point of view, we may understand both the focus on detail and the absence of any attempt either to approach Kierkegaard's life through the authorship or write its burden into the biography. The authorship gets tapped only where it throws light on or affects the life. Danish readers will in any case be relieved not to have to rehearse once again a body of writing that has already been quoted to destruction and has long been included in the national canon.

However, the same result might be due to a reason independent of the biographer's domicile, even if it begins in what seems the wrong direction: according to a still current ideology, due to writers like Barthes and Foucault, any idea that an interest in the *works* extends to the lives of their authors is misplaced. Texts owe nothing to what their authors have not succeeded in placing in them; you should never have to go outside a text to interpret it, for instance to a state of an author's mind or an intention that cannot be read on the text itself. But texts are infinitely interpretable, and if made the basis of biography would give birth to an endless number of biographies. If only for reasons of prudence a biographer, the teller of the *bios*, should stick to the latter however uneventful it may be.

Suppose we object that, in the case of a writer whose cultural significance lies so much in his literary or intellectual contribution, to omit the narrative of the works comes as close as can be – and in this case very close indeed – to rewriting Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. The answer may be: It requires considerable philosophical literacy on the part both of biographer and reader to follow an intellectual development, and in that case who is going to read such a biography? Moreover, biographies, whether of intellectuals, composers, or whatever, are about the human interactions that form a life, things that can be grasped without such special erudition. These I think are good answers, even if they complicate the notion of biography and also therefore the decisions biographers must take. But we may still wonder whether, had Garff, to our great loss, not been a native Dane or a member of the Copenhagen *literati*, his biography of Kierkegaard would have ignored the contents of the texts quite to the extent that it does.

The only remark of Garff's that I recall bearing on this question (and in connection chiefly with *Repetition*) is to the effect that, because the content is so closely integrated with Kierkegaard's preferred style – a lively scholarliness (*muntre videnskabelighed*) which is, 'a kind of anti-intellectual intellectualism which with the pressure of its parody plays mer-

ry hell with the concepts') – with any attempt at paraphrase everything vanishes (p. 298). Even if there is a lot of truth in that, surely it should still be possible to tell the reader what the concepts are that are played merry hell with and what becomes of them afterwards.

This remark of Garff's might have been developed into another reason for not focusing on the texts, namely the fact that Kierkegaard's preferred topic, or the thread he himself came to pick out in his authorship, is subjectivity, one of the reasons, after all, for his preference for the lively style. If subjectivity was the main burden of his writing life and the style is integral to the way in which this topic is to be conveyed to readers, then a biography of Kierkegaard should be doubly difficult. If the works figure largely enough in the life to come within the biographer's field of vision, not only will it be impossible to convey their content in any style suitable to biography as such, a large part of the subject's own life will be similarly elusive.

But perhaps Garff is simply disinterested in the intellectual content of Kierkegaard's work. His choice of words when telling us that, in saying the writings cannot be presented in paraphrase, he doesn't mean to imply that they lack »philosophical and theological weight [*pondus*]« might suggest that. But that may be no more than an instance of the gentle irony that pervades the work and may be added to the list of features that characterize Garff's biographical point of view.

Whether or not in confirmation of this, the 'truth is subjectivity' theme (now thoroughly threadbare, yes, but its first utterance still surely deserving a place in this writer's life and its interpretation of some consequence) gets its first and only mention in a reference to Rasmus Nielsen's eager acceptance of the notion – in a passage where Garff has Kierkegaard entering on a period of increasing paranoia (p. 507). Uncovering whatever psychopathological features may explain a choice of theme or its treatment, or just a choice of imagery, is indeed part of the literary biographer's task, but observations of this kind when torn from the context of the writing can give the biographer's reader a one-sided picture. In his references to *Fear and Trembling* Garff makes much of Kierkegaard's signing himself 'Farinelli' in a letter to Boesen from Berlin. The knife that made Farinelli a castrato becomes the knife that Abraham refrained in the end from letting fall on Isaac, and both knives become the metaphorical knife which Kierkegaard let fall on himself in the sacrifice of his desire to art (p. 179, see pp. 221 and 227). Excellent biography, admittedly; we are quickened to the occasion of the writing itself

and to how certain themes are dealt with or even come by. But if interpretation of the text is to be left for another occasion, or to someone else, that erudite reader, then the not necessarily erudite reader of this biography should not be misled into thinking of *Fear and Trembling* as nothing but a product of sexual repression. Of course if the biographer is an ironist we do not, and he is not inviting us to, take what he says too seriously. But as Kierkegaard points out, irony does not target itself, and a blind-spot appears in Garff's lightness when he says with what seems deep seriousness that »[i]n many respects it is this Farinelli who guides the pen in Kierkegaard's journals from the period, a castrated lover who *has* used the knife, but is none the less filled with longing for his lost desire« (p. 179). Has it not occurred to Garff that Kierkegaard's references to Farinelli might be rueful and themselves ironic rather than studied and confessional?

The focus on sexual repression comes together with a recurrent titillating factor in the biography. Garff (p. 95) brings Kierkegaard into the company of the hypochondriac H.C. Andersen and the sexually self-conscious Strindberg and makes him look a prude in comparison. But surely Kierkegaard's own admissions and reflections on his physical shortcomings demonstrate that he was no ordinary prude. The impression conveyed by presenting Kierkegaard in this company strikes this reviewer as an unnecessarily gratuitous concession to a modern readership. We may question whether our present-day obsession with sex (the pornographic society, voyeurism etc.) were as pronounced in Kierkegaard's day as they are in ours. Some will say that if they were not, that only shows that they were the more deeply repressed; but others may say equally that this judgment is just another expression of our latter-day preoccupations. But then biography is prone to anachronism. Viewers of soap operas will readily understand why Kierkegaard should be acutely jealous of P.L. Møller's physical attractiveness and »erotic recklessness« (p. 353). But was he? And if so at what level?

P.L. Møller's place in the biography is quite interesting. Why do his evaluations of Kierkegaard's works play such a dominant role, serving sometimes for want of alternatives even as introductions to their content and method (pp. 350-1)? It is high time that Møller received a better press, and Garff's view of him is much fairer than that left by Kierkegaard and his supporters. But at times an apparent affinity with Møller's views both of Kierkegaard and life leads one to wonder whether Garff might not be quite pleased to be seen sharing his window with Møller –

and perhaps Brandes too for that matter. Interesting possibilities both of them, but they do imply some departure from Kierkegaard's own *Point of View*.

It may not be incidental then that a work Garff focuses on (pp. 476-489) more than any other (except perhaps *Repetition*) is precisely this *Point of View*. In a section entitled »Administrator of his own posthumous fame« Garff criticizes Kierkegaard of gross oversimplification in its account of his relationship to the *Corsair* affair, and charges him with colossal hubris (indeed a form of contradiction) in casting himself in the role of self-denier in the service of Guidance (p. 488). Kierkegaard's attempt to design and ensure his own posthumous rebirth (see pp., xvi, 487, 692) is a recurring topic in Garff. If there is one single point, then, towards which the massive and impressive detail of Garff's biography tends us, it is the demolition of the image Kierkegaard tried to construct of himself from his own Copenhagen window, as he looked back in 1848, but also forward to his own posthumous reputation.

It is not incumbent upon a biographer to occupy the same point of view as the subject. Some distance may even be desirable even essential; it makes for a cooler, fresher, and fuller view. Besides, too little distance might leave important matters undiscussed, including that of the subject's own self-image. So in noting Kierkegaard's concern with his own posthumous reputation, Garff is certainly pointing to something of biographical importance. That is especially the case with writers, who are in such an excellent position to mislead their readers –as the distressing example of Sylvia Plath shows – and possibly themselves too, on this matter. On the other hand, the realization that a writer's self-descriptions need to be taken with more than a grain of salt does not license wholesale suspicion (a hint of which may be felt in the need Garff feels to concede that »only a cynic« can doubt 'the genuineness of the emotion' expressed in journal entries concerning Kierkegaard's relationship to his father [p. 493]). There are points of view from which the historical inaccuracies of *The Point of View*'s »altogether untenable« (p. 489) account and its contradictions are excusable and, if not altogether expungeable, at least open to sympathetic readings that leave its gist intact.

That, however, is not an adverse comment on Garff. It means only that, even if one sticks to the life and leaves the works to themselves, there are many windows from which to view the life. As sheer biography, however, it is unlikely that any future biographies of Kierkegaard's life can improve on Garff's. In his introduction he notes Hans Brøchner's

remark that in externals there was nothing worth saying about Kierkegaard's life, and Israel Levin's that the internal life was too full of contradictions to provide any one clear or coherent picture. Garff in his labour of love has brought about as many of the external facts to the fore as can be mustered, provided them with stimulating contexts, and given the internal contradictions which blighted his subject's life (but also in a way propelled it) at least some kind of a local habitation. The picture he gives us is worlds apart from (in Garff's own words) that »typical introductory« presentation that refers »with unmistakable condescension« to what it calls Kierkegaard's »private person«, and makes of his life just an »odd [*aparte*] appendix to the work of a genius« (pp. xiv-xv).

*Alastair Hannay*

## *Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Joakim Garff, Jette Knudsen, Johnny Kondrup, Alastair McKinnon (eds.)*
## Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter 17, K17

*G.E.C. GAD, Copenhagen 2000, 343 + 540 pp.*

Philology being the most humble form of philosophy, it is no wonder that even very important thinkers or philosophers often are read in astonishingly, well, lousy editions. This is most certainly *not* the case with the first volumes of Kierkegaard's journals and papers which have appeared in *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*. Indeed there were high expectations to be met: it was clear from the outset that the two areas where the new edition would contribute most to Kierkegaard research were the commentaries to the edifying discourses and – in the present, first volume of journals and papers – the new, or rather original, arrangement of the entries, the new and improved readings, as well as the accompanying commentary.

Kierkegaard's *Nachlaß* had a stormy history before it was added to the collections of the library of the University of Copenhagen in 1875 and eventually added to the Royal Library in Copenhagen, where it is now stored.[1] It was not only the library staff who knew the importance of Kierkegaard's *Nachlaß* when they saw to it that it was evacuated and hidden away in the Monastery of Esrom, North Zealand during World War II – Kierkegaard himself was keenly aware of its significance: he knew that every single line would be searched, and accordingly made

provisions for its future fate. But, alas, what are all human provisions! And so it was not Regine Schlegel, née Olsen, who came into possession of the manuscripts as intended, but Henrik S. Lund, Kierkegaard's nephew who received them after the death of his uncle in 1855. Although he wanted to edit the material himself, he managed only to draw up a – still valuable – inventory. In 1858 it was sent to Kierkegaard's brother, P.C. Kierkegaard, then bishop of Aalborg. His secretary H.P. Barfod edited a considerable part of the manuscripts from 1869-1881 (and for the last volumes, assisted by the German H. Gottsched).[2] He has often been harshly criticized for it, most deservedly for the state in which he left the collection after completing his task.

The much more comprehensive edition of *Papirer* by P.A. Heiberg, V. Kuhr and E. Torsting was the next very important step in making this significant part of Kierkegaard's heritage accessible.[3] Possibly partly influenced by the then recently published edition of Hermann Diels' *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, the editors chose to follow a partly chronological, partly topical organization of the vast mass of material. This led to a most unfortunate partitioning of original textual units into 3 groups: A) a group with the character of journal entries, B) preliminary studies, drafts and comments to his works and C) a group related to study and book excerpts. C in particular was divided further into groups with theological, philosophical and aesthetic contents.

Thus, both *EP* and *Pap.* split up the original textual units, thereby eliminating a substantial feature of the texts which is often crucial for the interpretation of a particular passage. The reconstruction of these original textual units is the most important innovation of the new edition in *SKS* as far as the text is concerned – many a note which has been interpreted as autobiographical turns out to belong to a literary context.

What, then, are the other features? The first thing which strikes the reader is that text and commentary are in separate volumes. Everyone who has ever read a commented edition will appreciate this. Another remarkable feature is the double-column formatting, which reflects Kierkegaard's habit of folding his paper and writing on the inner column, thus leaving the other for marginal notes and corrections. Together with the textual criticism and genetic notes, this provides a unique insight into Kierkegaard's literary workshop and the very process of the genesis of his texts. One can sometimes literally see Kierkegaard's thoughts taking shape. One can see the free flow of his imagination as well his hesitations and deliberations when choosing another expression or grammat-

ical construction. Since no markers appear in the text to refer to the comprehensive commentary, the reader is not distracted from following the flow and minute modulations of his prose. As far as the content is concerned, it shows us Kierkegaard in his formative years. The manifold interests of the young Kierkegaard appear in a variety of personal records, theological and philosophical reflections, literary studies, stylistic exercises and even a student comedy. Many a note throws light on topics he later will treat in his published works. A long, long bibliographical list on the topic of Faust helps to explain his disappointment when H.L. Martensen published a study on the very same topic in 1836 and also partly explains the animosity towards him which became so important in Kierkegaard's clash with the church. And in the same volume, one also finds another root of this conflict with the church: one sees Kierkegaard as a reader and competent translator of the Greek New Testament into Latin. Of course here one finds among other things a partial translation of the Epistle of James which will become so dear and important to him later on and which seems to be crucial for his understanding of his »Christianity of the New Testament.« The commentary to the Bible translations sheds insightful light on Kierkegaard as a reader of the New Testament.

Now to the commentary volume about which Kierkegaard might have been quite skeptical, for he writes, »following the path of the commentators is often like traveling to London; true, the road leads to London, but if one wants to get there, he has to turn around.« (*Pap.* I A 55/ *JP* 203). However, apart from the not too few typographical errors, especially in the German quotations, this volume is a piece of good craftsmanship and scholarly undertaking which will prove extremely valuable for any informed Kierkegaard research and, no less important, for any »common« reader – the celebrated »*menig mand*.« There is one item, however, I really miss in this otherwise solid work: the very character of Kierkegaard's journals, manifold notes and comments makes them almost inaccessible to non-Kierkegaard scholars. Here, much more so than in the more or less well-structured published or posthumously published works, indices would support the reader in using the wealth of material which has been collected. Separate indices of persons, names, works and geographical designations would greatly assist one in finding a way through Kierkegaard's textual labyrinth. And make no mistake about it, not even the proposed sophisticated electronic version can fully compensate for these valuable research tools, because, to quote the better half of the well-known »pugnacious proposition«: »a person cannot possibly

seek what he knows.« The need for indices like these is even more pressing since, surprisingly, no table of contents or chronology like one finds in *EP* and *Pap.* can guide the reader.

But let me move on to the positive content of this volume. It contains a critical account of the texts and valuable information on their dating and chronology. The commentaries are designed to illuminate only *Realia*, which means the commentaries are very cautious – sometimes too cautious I think – in order to avoid the obtrusion of any interpretation upon the reader. In this way both reader and text maintain their own rights. The commentaries show that to an astonishing degree Kierkegaard is embedded in and indebted to contemporary discussions. Thus, they are also highly relevant for the cultural history of Golden Age Denmark in general. A hitherto unforeseen wealth of references to primary and secondary literary sources and information on contemporary events and persons will enable the reader to meet Kierkegaard on his own ground. Many explanations of now unusual words or words which have changed meaning since Kierkegaard's time will not only assist the Danish reader but also prove invaluable for any future translation. This is not the place to delve into the relative merits and shortcomings of particular pieces of semantic information or of particular commentaries – suffice it to say that with this work, historical research on Kierkegaard has risen to a new level and that it is indispensable as a groundwork for criticizing and clarifying the very issues mentioned here. The reader will also be grateful for numerous illustrations in the commentary volume of *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* 17. This holds true especially for the facsimiles of the manuscripts, which not only have an illustrative function but also an explanatory function when even the refined formatting technique fails to bring the hermeneutical character of the spatial arrangement of some notes to the fore. Maps of contemporary Copenhagen and North Zealand allow the reader to trace the movements of the »Nordic Socrates« in the streets and market-places, and on his journeys outside Copenhagen. The circumspection of the editors and commentators shows up precisely here in seemingly irrelevant details. The maps, together with a calendar for 1835-1839, allow one to place Kierkegaard's writings, and thus the man himself, in exactly the time and space they belong. The collation of entries with *Pap.* is also important as it helps one to find the relevant passages in translations and to take advantage of references in earlier secondary literature; (the equivalent references from the published works in *SKS* to *SV1* are unfortunately omitted in the relevant volumes).

With regard to the editorial state of Kierkegaard's texts, Walter Lowrie once remarked that »S. K. has been shabbily treated in Denmark.« This dictum is finally vigorously refuted by the admirable work of the *Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre*. It is certainly no exaggeration to call this edition brilliant; it constitutes not only a landmark for text-critical editions of Kierkegaard's work, but it will also set new standards in the field of philology as it serves as a model for new historical-critical editions in general.

*Richard Purkarthofer*

1. For a charming and richly illustrated history of the manuscripts, see N.J. Cappelørn, Joakim Garff, Johnny Kondrup *Skriftbilleder. Søren Kierkegaards journaler, notesbøger, hæfter, ark, lapper og strimler.* Copenhagen, G.E.C. Gad, 1996. For a brief history of previous editions, see *Søren Kierkegaards Journals and Papers*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, vol. 1-7. Bloomington and London 1967-78, vol. I, p. XIII-XIX.
2. *Af Søren Kierkegaards Efterladte Papirer*, ed. by H.P. Barfod and H. Gottsched, vol. I-IX, Copenhagen, C.A. Reitzels Forlag 1869-1881 (*EP*). For the project as a whole, see vol. I, p. V-XVII. For the principles of edition see p. X-XII and XIVf.; see also vol. III, p. V-XV and vol. VI, p. 633-644. For a (favorable) comparison of Barfods *Efterladte Papirer* to the later *Papirer* see Henning Fenger *Kierkegaard-Myter og Kierkegaard Kilder*, Odense, Odense Universitetsforlag, 1976, pp. 41-50.
3. *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer*, ed. by P.A. Heiberg, V. Kuhr & E. Torsting, vol. 1-11, Copenhagen 1909-1948; 2. ed., ed. by N. Thulstrup, vol. 1-16, 1968-78; index by N.J. Cappelørn, vol. 14-16, Copenhagen, Gyldendal, 1968-78 (*Pap.*).

## *Niels Nyman Eriksen*
## Kierkegard's Category of Repetition. A Reconstruction

*Niels Jørgen Cappelørn & Jon Stewart (eds.),*
*Kierkegaard Studies, Monograph Series 5*
*Berlin, New York, Walter de Gruyter, 2000, 182 pp.*

»Life must be lived forwards.« This well-known passage from Kierkegaard's papers seems to be the unspoken creed of Niels Nyman Eriksen's reconstruction of Kierkegaard's category of repetition. Thus Eriksen's dissertation begins with the declared objective of reconstructing Kierkegaard's category of repetition and it ends with the conclusion that Kierkegaard exposes the need of salvation (p. 169). Eriksen proceeds, then, on two levels. He wants to achieve a renewal of the existential interpretation of repetition and, included in this interpretation, an existential

orientation toward redemption. Thus his interest in a reconstruction is not limited to Kierkegaard's understanding of repetition; he also wants to bring about a revaluation of the category as such. Eriksen therefore uses an analysis of Kierkegaard's complete works and the history of European philosophy after Kierkegaard – »especially the thematization of nihilism in Nietzsche and Heidegger« (p. 3) – as a means to an end.

This study distinguishes itself through an especially clear structure in which the three guiding questions of the work are presented with much insight. »The Question of Historicality,« »The Question of the Other« and »The Question of Becoming« serve as interpretative guides for repetition; these three questions share a common feature as they each deal primarily with time-related existential structures.

The question of the degree to which repetition and time-consciousness mutually presuppose and influence one another is investigated with an eye to the philosophical and theological implications. In the concluding section, the three guiding questions are once more compared and discussed »on the basis of the distinction between repetition and recollection« (p. 16). Eriksen himself describes the method in his dissertation as a »close reading of the relevant texts« (p. 15), where »most of the chapters are focused on one or two relatively short passages from Kierkegaard's writings.« The selections of text refer not only to *Repetition*, but to the entire authorship, including Kierkegaard's journals and papers. Thus Eriksen turns to texts which take up the theme of repetition even if the concept of repetition often is not explicitly examined.

With his selection of texts, the author shows a reliable talent for locating the philosophically and theologically relevant passages, which he analyses thoroughly. Eriksen places a particular emphasis on »the existential meaning of repetition« (p. 39), which appears among other places in relation to Kierkegaard's presentation of Biblical figures. He analyses Job, Anna and Paul from *Eighteen Edifying Discourses* and points out the thematic connection between Constantius' experiments and the *Discourses* which belong to the same period. The texts serve as a guide and framework for Eriksen's argumentation. Kierkegaard's references to his own alleged literary and philosophical motives are also thoroughly examined, and with this knowledge, Eriksen here opens up new horizons of understanding. This is particularly successful in the analysis of »Ingeborg's glance,« in Haufniensis' well-known introduction to the moment in *The Concept of Anxiety*. Through his recapitulation of the *Saga of Frithjof*, Eriksen succeeds at an original and innovative interpretation: »Her glance

belongs to the realm of expectancy, rather than that of wish, to the fullness of time rather than temporal fulfillment. It does not trace the other, it *is* the trace of the other« (p. 71). While the narrative context of Ingeborg's glance is almost too fully developed, the analysis of Constantius' short reference to Leibniz is unfortunately less detailed (compare p. 118f). The consequences of the conclusion, »With Leibniz [...] the question of repetition becomes important as the question of identity in time and space,« (p. 119) are not sufficiently investigated. Perhaps a comparison with Kierkegaard's fragment *Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est* would have had a place here.

In contrast to the detailed interpretation of Kierkegaard in the work, the sketches of Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Bultmann, Lévinas, Derrida and others appear as large-scale overviews. Thus a curious contrast arises which leaves the proportions of the presentation open to question. Additionally, the goal of engaging Nietzsche and Heidegger in discussion, which was expressed in the foreword, is fulfilled in an unbalanced way. Eriksen's reconstruction sets a frame for understanding Kierkegaard's contribution to Heidegger's Dasein analysis. In particular, the focus on Heidegger's *Being and Time* corresponds to Eriksen's primary theme of temporality and the experience of time. The discussion with Nietzsche, though, is facilitated by Heidegger's Nietzsche interpretation (in Chapter Six) and Bultmann's dependence on Heidegger is clearly emphasized (in Chapter Five). Perhaps it would have been useful to have pointed out this primary theme already in the title and introduction instead of arousing different and less-fulfilled expectations.

In his comparison of Kierkegaard's idea of repetition with Heidegger's Dasein analysis, Eriksen succeeds in tracing their respective points of departure to differing understandings of temporality: »Whilst Heidegger grounds historicality in Dasein's relation to death, Kierkegaard grounds it in the relation to the absolute Other« (p. 41). Not least, this conclusion is the result of Eriksen's analysis of Ingeborg's glance.

In the context of his analysis of *The Concept of Anxiety*, Eriksen writes: »That history begins in the moment of vision, means that it originates in the fragmentation of an original unity. Temporality is grounded in a fall« (p. 76). Thus Haufniensis' psychological analysis does not lead to an ontological conception of temporality – and the difference from Heidegger is emphasized – but rather it analyses the doctrine of sin, leading to the religious acts of repentance and expectancy (cf. p. 77).

Eriksen briefly compares his summarizing presentation of *Being and*

*Time* with Lévinas' work *Time and the Other*. Here the contraposition of the two thinkers, especially concerning the meaning of death, is underscored. While Heidegger defines death as »the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all« (reference from *Being and Time*, in Eriksen, p. 78), and thereby in principle as a possibility of Dasein, Lévinas on the other hand insists that death excludes all possibility whatsoever. According to Lévinas, death is »the impossibility of possibility« (quotation from *Time and the Other*, in Eriksen, p. 79). In connection with this discussion, it is Eriksen's objective to demonstrate to what degree the two thinkers – Heidegger as well as Lévinas – are *not* arguing with Kierkegaard. He writes, »Fallenness, not mortality is for Haufniensis the ground of temporality« (p. 80). In Part Three, »The Question of Becoming,« this discussion with Heidegger is continued within another constellation of questions. Here, among other things, Eriksen discusses Bultmann's theology of existence, again working at defining clear boundaries in relation to Kierkegaard: »Bultmann, whilst being clearly indebted to Kierkegaard in his conception of the meaning of revelation as repetition, ends up translating repetition back into the paradigm of recollection« (p. 132). Alternatively, Eriksen recommends that one understand Kierkegaard's determination of the relationship between repetition and recollection in light of Luther's distinction between law and gospel rather than Heidegger's distinction between the ontological and the ontic (cf. p. 133).

Eriksen thus works out the implications of repetition for the history of redemption in clear distinction from existentialism. In doing so, he succeeds at getting beneath the existentialist reception of Kierkegaard which blazed a trail for interpretation, and thus opens new roads for interpretation. A first – decisive – step on the road to a reconstruction of Kierkegaard's idea of repetition is thus achieved.

*Dorothea Glöckner*

*Søren Kierkegaard*
Die Wiederholung
Übersetz, mit Einleitung und Kommentar
herausgegeben von Hans Rochol
(Philosophische Bibliothek; Bd. 515; Einheitssacht.: Gjentagelsen [dt.])

*Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 2000, XCIII + 238 s.*

This edition is an excellent tool for (German) readers who are interested in a scholarly engagement with Kierkegaard's category of repetition. Hans Rochol has not only translated Kierkegaard's work, *Repetition*, with great sensitivity to the language but he has also made available to the German reader for the first time the texts from Kierkegaard's *Journals and Papers* which refer to *Repetition* as well as a commentary on the matters pertaining to *Repetition*. This translation is supplemented with a detailed introduction which, in particular, develops the implications of Kierkegaard's concept of repetition for the philosophy of history and which includes the editor's commentary to the work, *Repetition*. The strength of the commentary lies in its concentration of philosophically relevant themes which at the same time does not neglect other necessary explanations.

## The Translation

Hans Rochol's translation is based on the second Danish edition of *Samlede Værker*, edited by A.B. Drachmann, J.L. Heiberg and H.O. Lange, Copenhagen 1920-1936. He compares this edition of the text to the original manuscripts (S.K. *Papirer*, volume 8) with an eye to Kierkegaard's punctuation, among other things. Here Rochol picks up on something which was an issue for Kierkegaard himself. The placement of Kierkegaard's commas consciously followed the rhythm of his language and he frequently had to defend it against well-meaning typesetters. Rochol's sensitivity to the rhythm of the language makes reading this translation an aesthetic experience. The text – if not itself euphoric – at least reads as if it were written in a state of euphoria, and thus allows us to share in an experience which Constantin Constantius, the pseudonymous author of the text, speaks of: namely, that there was a writer so overwhelmed by a wealth of ideas that it was impossible for him to get

something down on paper since he could not write quickly enough (cf. p. 30; *Repetition*, 156). For his part, Constantin, with the help of a diligent secretary, succeeded at transferring to its opposite this vicarious sensation of being overwhelmed, while his own writing, *Repetition*, is a mad read. Moreover, Rochol's preservation of the rhythm of the language also makes one aware of mental associations which could otherwise easily remain buried. Also worth mentioning is the translator's good sense for Kierkegaard's textual images, not least, in his translation of the Danish *gjen-tage* as *wieder-holen* and *wieder-nehmen* which does justice to the ambiguity of the Danish term.

In the appendix, a selection of Kierkegaard's notes on *Repetition* are gathered, which consists of *Papirer* volume IV B, 97-124 in the Danish edition. For the most part, the appendix is made up of a translation of the journal entry IV B 110 ff., a »Public Letter to Herr Professor Heiberg, Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog, by Constantin Constantius.« The editor changes and supplements this public letter to correspond to Kierkegaard's own notes in *Papirer* IV B 112, »A Small Contribution by Constantin Constantius, the author of *Repetition*.« Rochol thus does justice to the matter at hand without providing an entirely faithful translation. Making these changes and additions known, however, would have been recommended.

In addition to these primary texts, several more entries from the papers are translated: IV B 108, IV B 109, IV B 119, IV B 120, IV B 121. This selection appears to be well-considered and it explains the background of *Repetition* in a readable manner. An alternative, however, would have been to exchange readability for thoroughness. Why, for example, should the differences between drafts of the title pages not be of interest as well?

## The Introduction

In his introduction, Rochol follows the two part structure of *Repetition*. In an introductory chapter on the roll of repetition in recent philosophy, the author, referring to the first part of the text, analyzes Constantin's secular concept of repetition and its failure. Then, with an eye to the second part of the text, he asks about the »pregnant« meaning of repetition. This likewise happens in two steps as he next analyzes Job's significance and, in connection with it, asks about the pregnant understanding of repetition in the Faustian Western mind.

In general, the introduction is characterized by an inquiry into the fundamental understanding of freedom. At the beginning of the introduction, the author therefore cites from Kierkegaard's »open letter« to Heiberg in which the question of repetition is translated into the question of »the relationship of freedom to the phenomenon of Spirit.« With this angle to the central constellation of problems for repetition, Rochol also sets the stage for a discussion of actuality.

With a glance back at Kant's understanding of freedom and Schelling's *On the Essence of Human Freedom*, Rochol defines repetition as freedom by virtue of a miracle, whereby he differentiates between:

1. Repetition *sensu strictissimo* as the miracle of redemption (XXI).
2. A shallower expression of repetition as a new beginning for an improved point of departure – with repetition as a prototype (XXII).
3. A »lowest case group« (least common denominator) of repetition as a religious movement of the individual where the individual has only arrived at the border with God and the miracle (cf. XXV).

The hierarchy is completed with a reference to a secondary repetition which takes place in a continual process of becoming, dissolution, and re-becoming (XXVIII).

In a glance at contemporary philosophy, Rochol concludes that the absolute point of departure for contemporary philosophy lies in repetition *sensu strictissimo* inasmuch as he ties contemporary philosophy to a notion of reconciliation which does not, however, recognize reconciliation as miracle (cf. XXIX). For contemporary philosophy, the matter thus becomes an attempt at a better repetition for fallen human nature in which this goal should now be achieved approximately.

Secularization, Marxist progressive thought, and existentialistic atheism are approaches whose failures are traced back to the fact that they are said to be unaware of their own premises: reconciliation as miracle. The Marxist belief in progress failed because of its attempt at reconciliation without original liberation (XXXIII). The ideology is condemned to be a *contradictio in adiecto* of the secularized miracle (XXX). Existentialism remains, in the end, a modern empty morality for saints without God (cf. XXXVI).

In another approach, Rochol compares the secular self-misunderstood history of decline to a »pregnant« repetition. Again taking up Job's significance in the second part of the text, the author emphasizes the sig-

nificance of transcendental freedom. The eternal self thus appears as the primary object of representation and the unchangeable content of repetition. The Occidental, West-European internalization of the task of a first complete coming-to-consciousness is thus said to be posited. Whether his pregnant repetition can succeed for a Faustian West-European mind remains, in any case, open.

## On the Commentary

In the commentary, Rochol also explores the philosophical issues in the text as well as the connections of the text to the history of philosophy. Thus the detailed commentary on the theme of movement (p. 150), for example, provides information on the connection between movement and freedom, including references to positions in Antiquity (Aristotle), Schelling, Kant, and Schopenhauer, among others. The author not only places special emphasis on Kant's critiques, including his discussion of the freedom of the will, Rochol repeatedly calls attention to the claim that precisely the problemetization of the freedom of the will is a premise which Kierkegaard already has from the Ancient discussion, and thus from Socrates.

Also commentated in detail is »Kierkegaard's maturity concerning the history of philosophy.« The consequences of Kierkegaard's understanding of repetition and recollection are thus developed in comparison with Hegel's and Spengler's histories of philosophy, among others.

Another especially detailed commentary discusses the understanding of guilt as presented in the text (p. 199) where Rochol has also incorporated the problem of freedom of the will and thus brings new aspects into the discussion. Furthermore, the commentary includes informative cross-references to other works by Kierkegaard, especially *Concept of Anxiety*, and *Sickness unto Death*. Less prioritized is the text's biographical background. Even the commentary to Constantin's trip to Berlin avoids historical references – which allows for further observations of the meaning of the movement in connection to space and time, again in relation to Kant. An argument against the prioritization of repetition could be made given that the Biblical background of Kierkegaard's work is hardly considered. In any case, when Rochol discusses the young man's reading of Job, it would have been appropriate to refer to the edifying discourses which offer interpretations of Job and which were published simultaneously with *Repetition*. But other than that, Rochol's

commentary, with its specific points of emphasis, is a valuable key to understanding the category of repetition as the central problem of the work of the same name.

All in all, the author has been successful at connecting an especially well-written translation with informative reflections on the content and contemporary significance of repetition. If there is anything one could ask for, it would be a re-working of the table of contents. The headlines to the individual introductions could justifiably have been included in the table of contents since it would be helpful to be able to see an overview of the texts in the journals and papers which are included in the appendix. For the sake of completeness, it would also have been reasonable to include *Johannes Climacus or de omnibus dubitandum est*, which were likewise published in the papers.

*Dorothea Glöckner*

## *Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Hermann Deuser and Jon Stewart (eds.) together with Christan Fink Tolstrup*
## Kierkegaard Studies: Yearbook 2000

*Berlin, New York, Walter de Gruyter 2000, XI + 447 pp.*

Featuring papers from no less than three international events, *Yearbook 2000* mirrors the ongoing activities of the *Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre* in the year of 1999. A major event was the annual Research Seminar in Copenhagen. For the first time in the new history of reception, researchers from different parts of the world gathered to discuss Kierkegaard's early discourses published in the years 1843-1845. The first and largest section of the book contains twelve articles from this event (pp. 1-239). In the following section, *Jun Hashimoto, François Bousquet, Pia Søltoft, Eberhard Harbsmeier* and *Mark Lloyd Taylor* present the history of reception in Japanese, French, Danish, German and English language scholarship, respectively. The reader is carefully introduced to books and articles on the edifying works as well as to various translations of the discourses (pp. 240-299). The third section consists of papers given by *Jacques Lafarge, Jacques Colette* and *François Bousquet* at a francophone seminar entitled »Silhouttes des Kierkegaard.« The seminar was held in Copenhagen and arranged by the Centre (pp. 300-340). The fourth sec-

tion features papers by *Zoltán Gyenge*, *Ágnes Heller* and *István Czakó* from another major Conference in Budapest entitled »Crossroads in Kierkegaard's Thinking.« The Conference was arranged by the Centre in Copenhagen in cooperation with the Department of Aesthetics at the Eötvös University in Budapest in order to promote Kierkegaard research in Hungary. On this occasion, the Kierkegaard Cabinet – a resource centre and library – was inaugurated (pp. 341-382). The last section of the book is dedicated two important issues. *Begonya Sàez Tajafuerce* writes on the problem of translating a Kierkegaardian text into a foreign tongue and *Tonny Aagaard Olesen* sheds light on the relatively unknown but growing field of commentary (pp. 381-421). With the exception of the five articles in the second section, a short abstract in English accompanies each article. *Yearbook 2000* concludes with a list of »Abbreviations« and »News from the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre« (pp. 422-447). Since it is impossible to present each article in this kind of review, I would like to call attention to three very recommendable studies in the first section.

In his article »Das erbauliche im Gedanken an den Tod. Traditionelle Elemente, innovative Ideen und Unausgeschöpfte Potentiale in Kierkegaards Rede »An Einem Grabe« (pp. 40-73) *Michael Theunissen* underscores that the three discourses – *Drei Reden bei gedachten Gelegenheiten* – from 1845 »im strengsten Sinne des Wortes sind *gedacht*.« Taking his point of departure in the word »gedacht,« Theunissen unfolds the third discourse – »An einem Grabe« – and compares Kierkegaard's notion of death and dying with the perception of death and dying in Plato's *Phaidon* and Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*. Theunissen shows how the concept of death in the first part of the second section of Heidegger's book owes much to Plato and Kierkegaard. And yet there are crucial differences. A thorough examination of this chapter exposes Heidegger's position: »Nirgends in Heideggers frühem Hauptwerk erweist sich seine undialektische Trennung von ontologischer und ontischer, existenzialer und existenzieller Dimension als so fragwürdig wie hier«. In a critical discussion of Heidegger's »Ganzheitskonzept,« Theunissen points out that death as »gedacht« in Kierkegaard's discourse is dialectical. However, the dialectics in the edifying discourse is not of the same kind as the dialectics in the pseudonymous writings: »Sie geht mit der von Hegel vorgegebenen Denkform freier um als die pseudonymen Schriften und passt sie gleichzeitig genauer ihrem eigenen Inhalt an.« With regard to edification, this particular discourse stands out: »Die Grabrede scheint wiederum die zu

sein, in der die spezifisch erbauliche am besten ausgearbeitet ist«. Theunissen calls attention to the central theme of the discourse, anticipation: »Sich selbst tot denken, sich mit dem Tode zusammendenken – das bedeutet durchaus auch: ihm durch seine Einübung eine gewisse Realität verleihen.« »Gedacht« only receives its proper meaning when it is taken into existence. In this way Theunissen manages to link together anticipation and edification: »Das erbauliche im Gedanken an den Tod arbeitet sie in dem Bestreben heraus, die Erwartungen zu enttäuschen, die ein solches Thema weckt. Erbaulich an diesem Gedanke ist gerade nicht, dass er die sentimentale Sehnsucht nach Erlösung von allen Mühen des Lebens befriedigt. Erbaulich an ihm ist, dass er ins Leben zurückstösst.« Edification is indeed a matter of the relation to the other. Theunissen also clears up a small, but very interesting detail. In a famous note in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger states that there is more to be learned philosophically from Kierkegaard's edifying writings than from his theoretical work with the exception of the treatise on anxiety. Scholars often quote this passage, but what exactly did Heidegger refer to? Theunissen has found out: »Wüssten wir nicht aus verborgenen Quellen, dass Heidegger insbesondere an die Rede »An einem Grabe« denkt, so könnte uns dieses Kapitel« – the above mentioned chapter in *Sein und Zeit* – »selbst darüber belehren.« However, the hidden source is for the reader of *Yearbook 2000* to discover.

The question of time is also a key issue in the study of *Arne Grøn*. In his article »Temporality in Kierkegaard's Edifying Discourses« (pp. 191-204) he points out that the discourses are not reflections on time or temporality; in fact »time does not reveal what edification is about.« However, time is an indirect theme. The problem of temporality is hidden in phenomena like patience and anticipation. These phenomena are made visible to the reader through Kierkegaard's use of different characters. Grøn's opening question is: »What does inwardness mean?« This question is difficult to answer because we often presuppose the meaning of »inwardness.« Grøn underscores that in these discourses, Kierkegaard may leave us with the impression that inwardness and temporality are opposites. One way of challenging this view is to confront inwardness with temporality and thus Grøn's opening question is followed by a second question: »But what if inwardness is a relationship to time?« With reference to *The Concept of Anxiety*, Grøn points out that »the self is not only a synthesis *of* time, but also a synthesis *in* time.« The synthesis of the self »implies dual conceptualizations of temporality.« Inwardness does not

take place in »a world for itself.« Inwardness and temporality are two sides of the same coin. In a careful examination of what we might call Kierkegaard's phenomenology of time, Grøn displays the relationships of various character to the past, present and future. Exposed to time, the human being as a self may experience time as a burden and try to escape it through busyness and distraction, but he or she may also courageously be patient in faith and hope. The fact that inwardness cannot be described as »a world for itself« indicates that the problem of time is »fundamentally ethically defined.« First and foremost, the ethical has to do with the first person perspective, which cannot be »transferred to the other.« But what then is edification? To edify, says Grøn, is to »*grant time*,« not to oneself, but to another.« Linking this point to Works of Love he concludes: »To believe in and hope for the other person is to grant time to the other, time to show himself as another.« Edification is about courage, courage to have faith – in the other.

Patience and expectancy, another word for anticipation, are key terms in the study of *Andrew J. Burgess*. In his article »Patience and Expectancy in Kierkegaard's Upbuilding Discourses 1843-44« (pp. 205-222) Burgess imagines a book consisting of the middle works of the 1843-1844 discourses. The third, fourth, and fifth discourses in the collection become »the book of patience and expectancy of the eternal,« where Kierkegaard develops »a distinctive picture of patience, expectancy, and the conceptual relationship between the two.« Burgess works at the boundary of pseudonymous and edifying writings as he explores the concepts of patience and expectancy, and skillfully uses the pseudonymous writings from 1844 and »the writing history« of the imagined book. Burgess claims that »the upbuilding discourses and the pseudonymous philosophical works are part of the same intellectual achievement« and he thereby questions the »not uncommon misconception about the discourses (...) that they are, at best, reworkings of philosophical material.« On the contrary, the discourses broaden and expand the notion of three important themes: »the teacher, the understanding, and the nature of time.« On the one hand *Philosophical Fragments* may be »a much more focused argument,« but on the other hand the discourses »taken as a group, can give a much fuller, richer picture of human life in its religious setting.« But why does Kierkegaard focus on patience and expectancy in these discourses? At first glance, Burgess explains, they appear to be »examples of virtues.« However, this point can be taken further: »patience and expectancy are virtues with special characteristics needed for clarifying what

virtues are.« In other words: the edifying discourses reveal an ethical dimension. In a short discussion of Kierkegaard's debt to the classical tradition in the field of ethics, Burgess links Kierkegaard with Plato. They are said to »share a common spirit.« Taking his point of departure in a comparison of a passage from the first discourse in the first collection from 1843 and the famous myth of the cave in Plato's *Republic*, Burgess points out differences and similarities in Kierkegaard's and Plato's ethical universe. They both use »visual imagery to describe the practice of contemplation,« but »unlike Plato, Kierkegaard does not tie his idea of virtue to class distinctions.« The most remarkable and fundamental similarity is that patience and expectancy in Kierkegaard is complimentary to justice and self-mastery in Plato. Each pair of virtues »define what it is for any virtue to be a virtue, in the eminent sense.« The most remarkable and fundamental difference is that the theme of the imagined book and the pseudonymous writings from 1844 deals with one central issue: time. According to Burgess »none of these books abandons the temporal for the eternal; instead they look for the eternal in the temporal.« In other words: Kierkegaard does not »seek to escape to a timeless Platonic reality.«

Though there is not space for a discussion of each article, I would like to make a very brief presentation of the rest of the articles in the first section. *Sylvia Walsh* reads the discourses from the years 1843-44 through »the eyes of a modern feminist.« *Pia Søltoft* questions theories that link the upbuilding with indirect communication as she advocates a new reading based on »the equality of the receiver and the communicator.« The upbuilding is not a concept, but rather »an action,« which takes place between two people. In a comparative study, *George Pattison* points out similarities and differences between the sermons of Mynster, Martensen and Schleiermacher and discusses the notion of time in the discourses of 1843-1844. *David Kangas* deals with the specific character of the upbuilding. In a close reading of the second discourse from the third collection of the 1843 discourses, he unfolds Kierkegaard's interpretation of James 1:17, »every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.« Acoording to Kangas, gift is »neither a metaphor nor a concept, but a third thing that precedes the opposition between the two.« *Flemming Harrits* brilliantly links Kierkegaard's idea of language with his use of biblical language: »Darin besteht Kierkegaards Bibeltreue, darin besteht das auf-bauende in den Reden, in einer stetig kritisch-analytischen Konfrontation mit dem vergeblichen Dichten und Trachten der menschlichen Sprache.« *Bo Kampmann Walther* sets out to characterize »the voice

which is heard or resonates within Kierkegaard's upbuilding discourses.« In a comparative investigation of some edifying discourses and the sermons of J.P. Mynster, *Richard Purkarthofer* points out differences between Kierkegaard's use of images in the early discourses and the discourses published after 1845. In a very well-composed article *Hermann Deuser* demonstrates how Kierkegaard's early edifying discourses can shed light on the incommensurable dimension of contingency. The discourses provides the reader with an answer to the inevitable question of the relation between subjectivity and contingency. Last, but not least, language is a central issue in the study by *Helle Møller Jensen*, who demonstrates how the discourses from 1843-44 can be used in pastoral care.

According to the editorial »Preface,« Kierkegaard's early discourses »have been generally neglected in the history of the scholarship.« The content of the second section of *Yearbook 2000* certainly confirms these words. Without diminishing the research to which these very informative articles refer, it must be said that the research mirrors years of limited interest. The question is whether the general lack of interest in Kierkegaard's early edifying discourses can be justified? It does not seem to be the case. A close reading of the twelve articles reveals that in these discourses Kierkegaard deals with vital issues such as ethics, time, the other, language, and image. In addition, it becomes clear that the relationship between the pseudonymous writings and the discourses sheds further light on these issues. In their own way, each of the twelve articles reveals the potential of Kierkegaard's early edifying discourses. Anyone in search for answers to the two questions »what is the edifying?« and »what is an edifying discourse?« may find what they are looking for here. At the same time, these studies point toward a more coherent view of the authorship and they might challenge researchers to leave behind the old static division between the pseudonymous and edifying writings. These twelve articles deserve to be studied by anyone who takes an interest in this part of the authorship and indeed they ought to be studied by researchers who generally take little or no interest in this part of the authorship. There are good reasons to congratulate the editors and the publisher of *Yearbook 2000*.

*Søren Bruun*

## *Klaus Wivel*

### Næsten Intet. En jødisk kritik af Søren Kierkegaard

[Almost Nothing (alternatively: The Neighbor is Nothing): A Jewish Critique of Søren Kierkegaard].

*C.A. Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen 1999. 212 pp.*

Klaus Wivel's *Næsten Intet* has the sharpness and narrowness of focus possible only in a polemic, with all the strengths and weaknesses this entails. It is the work of a bright and accomplished university student, and it bears the marks – both positive and negative – of its origin.

It is important to note at the outset that Wivel has much evidence on his side. Kierkegaard often does emphasize the individual and appears to neglect placing equal emphasis on the community. And especially toward the end of his career, Kierkegaard did tend to concentrate on the otherworldly and to write off this world.

Still, Wivel's case would have been stronger if he had presented it more straightforwardly and had avoided using what can only be called debater's tricks. Two signal examples of this sort of thing come to mind immediately.

First of all, one of Wivel's principal Jewish »accusers« of Kierkegaard is Franz Rosenzweig. But the problem is – as Wivel himself must admit – that Rosenzweig rarely mentions Kierkegaard directly, and almost never in a negative light. It is true that Rosenzweig's and Kierkegaard's fundamental approaches to man and God are very different, but Rosenzweig was profoundly influenced by Kierkegaard (an influence of which Rosenzweig was deeply appreciative) and did not depict his differences with Kierkegaard in the polemical – indeed, radical – light in which Wivel seeks to place them. Only with interpretive sleights of hand – the re-using of one brief Rosenzweig phrase several times, the imposing of Levinas' much later reading of Rosenzweig upon Rosenzweig's original language, etc. – is Wivel able to achieve his result, and even then the weaknesses in his case are apparent. Wivel's tendentious presentation of Rosenzweig's view of Kierkegaard is certainly a case of the fabled five chickens produced from a single feather.

Secondly, the other rhetorical gimmick which mars Wivel's presentation is his decision to use only two of Kierkegaard's works, the pseudonymous »aesthetic« work *Fear and Trembling* (1843) and the significantly

later and very different »religious« book *Works of Love* (1847), which Kierkegaard published in his own name. The reasons for choosing these two particular works seem clear enough: Interpreted in the one-sided and arbitrary manner Wivel prefers, these two works can be used to make Kierkegaard appear a radically misanthropic, totally otherworldly Christian, who had no use for ethics or for this world at all.

To advance his argument, Wivel makes the tactical decision to treat these very different sorts of works on the same plane, and then to reverse their chronological order, so that his case against Kierkegaard becomes a simple one-two punch: *Works of Love* (according to Wivel) demonstrates that Kierkegaard is so otherworldly as to be uninterested in any form of ethics or human community – *and therefore* (according to Wivel), *Fear and Trembling* depicts the knight of faith as totally incommunicado, a solitary individual obsessed with his religious relationship to God and oblivious to the world and to all the people around him. Voilá – Kierkegaard the misanthropic hermit-monster!

But it's a trick. *Fear and Trembling*, of course, was written long before *Works of Love* and as part of a very different project. *Fear and Trembling* was written as a sort of sequel to *Either/Or* in order to argue that if we take our religious language and our Bible stories seriously, we will see that the sphere of faith transcends the sphere of the human community and social reciprocity as completely as the sphere of human community (what Judge William would call »ethics«) transcends the sphere of egoistic enjoyment (»aesthetics«). But just as Judge William himself points out in the case of »ethics« vis-à-vis »aesthetics,« this transcendence of the religious sphere is *not* a negation of the ethical, but is another instance of a »lower« manifestation being enveloped within a »higher concentricity.« Kierkegaard's point, of course, is to show that Hegelians who insist on the primacy of the human community are going to be just as annoyed at being relativized by the higher concentricity of the religious as were romantic aesthetes when *their* standpoint was relativized by Hegelians who insisted upon the superior status of »ethics.« Thus, although it rejects the smug Hegelian deification of the social order, *Fear and Trembling* does not utterly reject the notion of ethics and community. A part, at least, of the message of *Fear and Trembling* is that just as we retain the *relative* good of the life of individual pleasure (»aesthetics«) after we acknowledge the higher authority of the community (»ethics«), so also do we retain *both* »lower concentricities« – the relative goods of individual satisfaction and of social solidarity – after we acknowledge the *absolute* transcendence of

God. As in the case of egoistic satisfactions, *all* social concretions are only partial, relative goods. H.L. Martensen and other Hegelians to the contrary notwithstanding, there can be no such thing as a »Christian society.« »Christendom« is bunk. *That* is the message of *Fear and Trembling*.

It was with this early pseudonymous work in the (rather distant) background that Kierkegaard wrote *Works of Love* as the exposition of a Christian ethics from which all taint of self-interest is purged. True, *Works of Love* is radical, but it is not anti-neighborly. In fact, it could be argued that the primary focus of the book is precisely our duty to our neighbor and specifically our obligation to help our neighbor get his/her priorities in order: *first* God, *then* social and ethical concerns. Wivel may not like this order, but in emphasizing these two points, *and in this order*, Kierkegaard is merely reiterating the most important and most concentrated statement of human obligation that Jesus Christ offers in the gospels:

> 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' And he [Jesus] said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets' (Mt. 22.36-40).

(And of course, in producing this summary, Jesus chose to cite two key passages from the Hebrew Bible, Deuteronomy 6.5 and Leviticus 19.18.)

It is this order – *first* God, *then* your neighbor – which is the central point of *Works of Love*, and it is this very order that Wivel finds so distressing. Indeed, in his discussion of Kierkegaard's book Wivel tips his hand, revealing that this position is central to Kierkegaard because it is central to Christianity. In fact, Wivel comes right to the verge of admitting that his real complaint is not so much against Kierkegaard as against Christianity itself – the Christianity which, on this question at least, Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* faithfully represents. But if Wivel's principal case is against Christianity, then his quarrel with Kierkegaard suddenly becomes a mere sideshow, a skirmish devoid of interest.

However all that may be, in the end, Wivel's use of debater's tactics (omissions, misplaced emphasis, dubious constructions and interpretations, reversed chronological order, etc.) actually weakens his presentation, and the reader becomes weary of the repetitive language and suspicious of the devices employed. This is a shame because there is, in fact, a case to

made here: Christianity does have a radical, world-denying, otherworldly side, and Kierkegaard, especially in his later years, was wont to dwell upon it, sometimes to the exclusion of other aspects of the faith. Judaism, by contrast, has a warm, this-worldly, communitarian notion of »salvation.« Wivel presents this side of the case well, but the caricaturish and slipshod nature of his presentation of the other half of the argument weakens his entire effort. We still await another, more balanced, less *studentikos* presentation of the entire confrontation between Kierkegaard and Judaism.

*Bruce H. Kirmmse*

## *Flemming Christian Nielsen*
## Alt blev godt betalt.
## Auktionen over Søren Kierkegaards indbo

*Lyngby: Forlaget Holkenfeldt, 2000, 63. pp.*

## *Nathaniel J. Hong, Kathryn Hong & Regine Prenzel-Guthrie*
## Cumulative Index to Kierkegaard's Writings

*Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000, XIX + 561 pp.*

## *Julia Watkin*
## Historical Dictionary of Kierkegaard's Philosophy
(Historical Dictionaries of
Religions, Philosophies, and Movements, No. 33)

*Lanham, Maryland & London, 2001, XX + 411 pp.*

After Kierkegaard's death on November 11, 1855, the task began of registering all his possessions so they could be sold at two auctions that were held in April of the following year. One of the auctions was for his books. A catalog was created for this event, printed in 278 copies, and in the protocol in which the auctioneer's kept a record of the sales, one can see who purchased the books and how much they paid. This record has of course played – and continues to play – an important role in Kierkegaard research. It was published by Niels Thulstrup in 1957, and again

by H.P. Rohde in the current standard edition from 1967. The second auction was held for the remainder of Kierkegaard's possessions which were registered with a bit less care than for the books and which were registered in a catalog printed in 87 copies. This record which had not been reprinted since that time has now been published by Flemming Christian Nielsen.

This is the same who a few years ago published *Ind i verdens vrimmel* (1998), which treats Kierkegaard's somewhat unknown brother, Niels Andreas, who traveled to the United States in 1932 and died there. One of the pieces of detective work in the book was to identify the etching, *The Emigrants*, which hangs at the Copenhagen City Museum today. It turns out that Kierkegaard had probably kept it as a memento of Niels Andreas. This discovery led the author to Kierekgaard's remaining possessions.

In *Alt blev godt betalt*, the original catalog has been supplemented with information from the hand-written auction protocol, which means that the 280 entries include the sales price and when possible, the buyer's name. Some individual items are described with more information which either stems from Kierkegaard himself or from the literature written about Kierkegaard's person which we know from Bruce H. Kirmmse's valuable collection, *Encounters with Kierkegaard* (1996). In addition, 39 items have been added which, according to tradition – and with more or less probability – have belonged to Kierkegaard.

It is always possible to discuss whether this interest in Kierkegaard's belongings has any relevance whatsoever to Kierkegaard research or whether, to the contrary, it will only provoke indignation. This was certainly the case in 1935 when Frithiof Brandt and Else Rammel published *Kierkegaard og pengene* in which the two mined every document which had anything to do with something so prosaic as Kierkegaard's private economy. The book became a classic: with the help of simple documentation, a series of established myths were called into question. One might attribute this same function to *Alt blev godt betalt* even if a debate as to whether or not a particular item had belonged to Kierkegaard only rarely sheds any light on Kierkegaard's character.

In his introduction to the book, however, Nielsen calls into question – almost as a afterthought, the inherited claim that after Kierkegaard's death, everything was found in Kierkegaard's room – including manuscripts – was ordered as if he was going to travel. It turns out that this order was the work of those who took charge of the estate, which means the important registration of all of Kierkegaard's works undertaken

shortly thereafter by Henrik Lund must be read with this in mind. This discovery is not insignificant since Lund's record might play a decisive role when the new text-critical edition, *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*, one day arranges all the loose often undated papers which are part of Kierkegaard's journals and notebooks. It would thus have been helpful if, in addition to the factual material, Nielsen had also included in his little book a discussion of some of the consequences of his discovery as for example an extension of the presentation made by Cappelørn, Garff and Kondrup a few years ago in *Skriftbilleder* (1996).

One finds another type of registration work in the so-called editorial index which is of great significance in every area of research, not least in Kierkegaard research. None of Kierkegaard's individual works were originally published with an index, and none of the Danish editions have one. A. Ibsen produced an index of names and topics for the second edition of *Samlede Værker*, but this has never been republished, and today it is as good as forgotten. What the Danish primary texts lack, however, Howard V. and Edna Hong supply – in English translation. Each of the 25 volumes in *Kierkegaard's Writings* which – published from 1978-1998 – have name and topic indices, and with this extensive material as a foundation, the series has finally been completed with the last volume, *Cumulative Index* to *Kierkegaard's Writings*.

This volume consists of two parts: first, the general index and second, the »cumulative collation« of the rich supplementary material which was published in the 25 volumes. The material in the general index alone has been organized into a series of more or less manageable categories, which means that six categories, »Kierkegaard, Søren Aabye,« »Bible,« »Christianity, Christian(s),« »God,« »Love,« and »Analogies« have become so comprehensive that they appear in separate sections.

When using this index, one must keep in mind that *Kierkegaard's Writings* contain more than what one ordinarily calls »Kierkegaard's works,« but less that what one in the strict sense calls »Kierkegaard's writings« – which includes journals and notebooks. In other words, one cannot rule out that in one place or another Kierkegaard has spoken of a person who does not show up in this index. Conversely, the index covers more than what one finds in Kierkegaard's own texts. When one finds Louis Mackey, Friedrich Nietzsche, and T.H. Croxall, or handbook authors like T. Vogel-Jørgensen and Ewald Tand Kristensen, it is not because Kierkegaard names these people, of course, but because they ap-

pear in the many editorial introductions and commentaries to Kierkegaard's texts. Without question, it would have been better if the index had used a typographical sign to differentiate between Kierkegaard's text and editorial text with.

While as a rule, name indexes usually do not cause major problems, preparing a topical index is of course a much more difficult matter. What should be included or, said differently, what should be left out? In this sense, the index is an ambitious affair. One finds not only light categories like »animal(s),« »experience,« and »wrong,« but also heavy categories »anxiety,« »irony,« »doubt,« »sin,« »sinner,« and »self.« If the index proves to be completely exhaustive – which the undersigned reviewer has not yet explored – one has then in the central categories the entire outline for a thematic investigation, of which every researcher must take account.

With the special category, »Bible,« one has a useful overview of biblical references in Kierkegaard's works, though one can always debate how much one can make use of the almost impossible categories »God,« and »Love.« One thing is certain, though: without an index, research would be much worse off which is why one can be pleased that *Kierkegaard's Writings* have been concluded in such an excellent way. Even though one can surely find mistakes in the index, it is also the case that Kierkegaard research has no better index than this one.

Even more reference tools are found in Julia Watkins' *Historical Dictionary of Kierkegaard's Philosophy*. At the beginning of the book, one finds a map of Denmark from 1850 and a map of Copenhagen from 1839, but unfortunately the reproductions are formatted on such a small scale that one has a hard time reading them. Next one finds a short chronology of Kierkegaard's life and works, followed by the author's »Introduction,« which is a 10-page summary of Kierkegaard's life, historical context, authorship, and thoughts. At the very end of the book, additional information about kings, historical events, and Kierkegaard's residences are included. While some of this can be useful for every reader of Kierkegaard, it nonetheless seems aimed at the curious beginner. The book's center of gravity lies in the two primary sections, though, namely the »Dictionary« itself and a detailed bibliography.

Kierkegaard research has lacked a solid dictionary for many years. In 1936 in connection with the publication of the second edition of Kierkegaard's *Samlede Værker*, Jens Himmelstrup published a »terminological

register« which despite its shortcomings was a useful tool for many Danish readers. It was reprinted many times and was later supplemented with Gregor Malantschuk's »basic concepts,« which were developed in connection with the Hong translation of Søren Kierkegaard's *Journals and Papers* (1967-1978). In 1992, they were published together as *Nøglebegreber i Søren Kierkegaards tænkning*. Since these editions were far from satisfactory, Niels Thulstrup took the initiative to create an ambitiously-devised Kierkegaard encyclopedia which was to be published in English in ten volumes and which had no less than 70 international contributors. After ten years of work, the project was abandoned, though a number of articles were published in the series *Bibliotheca Kierkegaardiana* (1978-1988). With this background, there can be little doubt that Watkin's dictionary can fill a great abyss in the Kierkegaard literature.

Watkin's dictionary contains around 285 entries which fill 265 pages. With the relatively limited number of referenced words, the very choice of selections is of course important, and precisely on this issue it is difficult to find Watkin's rationale. This is true with regard to the people who are listed, for example. There are only three Danes who lived before Kierkegaard's lifetime, namely, N.E. Balle, H.A. Brorson and L. Holberg, which in and of itself is fine, though Balle seems to be a bit over emphasized; (one could also have named T. Kingo, J. Ewald, J. Wessel or J. Baggesen). More puzzling, however, is the selection of only four German philosophers (Lessing, Schelling, Hegel and Strauss); and one wonders why people after Kierkegaard's time are included, not least when the only people named are Barth, Bultmann, Heidegger, Jaspers and Sartre. The rest of the names (about eighty of them) are Kierkegaard's contemporaries, and they are – in all shades – richly represented.

But when the level is so ambitious that it extends far beyond the inclusion of those people whose significance for Kierkegaard's thought is in one way or another appreciable, it seems to be an oversight that one cannot find authors like S.S. Blicher, C. Bernhard and C. Hauch, or Kierkegaard's Hegelian opponent A.F. Beck, the actress Anne Nielsen, his friend Kolderup-Rosenvinge and Kierkegaard's secretary P.V. Christensen, who among other things made fair copy of parts of *Either/Or*. These people – and one could certainly name more – are at least as important as many of those who appear – more important than J. Dampe and B.S. Ingemann.

The entries for individual people are often detailed, but the information should probably have been edited with stricter attention to its

relevance for Kierkegaard. For example, the detailed article on J.P. Mynster should have mentioned more than one title from his authorship, just as it would have been appropriate to include P.M. Møller's lectures on Greek philosophy, or H.L. Martensen's important review of Heiberg's *Nye Digte*. Hegel and Hegelianism are treated in a total of two pages and the result naturally reflects it; that is, the entries are highly deficient and almost useless. And since Schelling is thought to be deserving of a four page article, one might at least demand that Kierkegaard's important notes on Schelling's Berlin lectures be mentioned. But even if there are a number of imperfections and inconsistencies in the articles on persons, one can nonetheless be pleased that it is now possible to find, in English, a short presentation of a series of people Kierkegaard associated with.

If we now turn to the remaining articles, we find that many of them treat Kierkegaard's works. Typically, there entries contain information on the publication of the work and its reception among Kierkegaard's contemporaries, but nothing on the work's process of creation. Furthermore, one finds a short summary of the content, but it is here especially that the articles seem uneven and are often plagued by debatable interpretations which do not belong in a dictionary. And when one reads in the somewhat meager summary of *The Concept of Irony* that the novel *Lucinde* was written by Friedrich Schlegel's brother, August Wilhelm, one's confidence in the trustworthiness is not strengthened. Some works – though far from all of them – are accompanied by a few more or less arbitrary comments on the recent history of influence. Thus we are informed in the entry on *Concept of Anxiety* that it played a role for Heidegger and Sartre, and that Kierkegaard would have taken Freud's place in the history of phychology if he had written his works in French, German, or English. This and similar forms of conjecture do not belong in the lexical genre.

When one is interested in assembling a dictionary, an important piece of preparatory work is the establishment of its relationship to the genre of *realkommentar*, which one finds admirably developed, for example, in *Kierkegaard's Writings* or more completely in *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*. While *realkommentar* is always limited to a concrete passage of text, the perspective in a dictionary in necessarily more general and focused on the abstract relevance since it is aims at a much greater quantity of text. An entry in a dictionary has the advantage of limiting itself to simple, central topics which it can then develop with an eye to the entire authorship. Naturally, this points out once again the importance of topic

selection, which is evident in the fact that a single volume of commentary in *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter,* for example, contains thousands of dense and informative entries. Typically, the framework of a *realkommentar* is too narrow and specific to appear in a dictionary – unless of course one wants to bring out a dictionary in five or ten thick volumes.

Unfortunately, Watkin has not paid sufficient attention to this distinction in her dictionary. One finds far too many entries that belong in *realkommentar* but absolutely do not belong in a less encompassing dictionary. It is almost comical when one runs into so many entries like »Bird King,« »Magistrate's Moonlight,« »Moving Day,« »Right of Way,« »Try the Next House,« »Snowdrop and Winter Fool,« »Third Person,« and »Wonder Stool.« Furthermore, when one finds information on insignificant institutions like »The Polytecnic,« one could at the very least expect a bit of information about the Royal Theatre or about the churches that were significant for Kierkegaard. Among the entries that are tailor-made for a dictionary, such as »Acoustical Illusion,« »Animals,« and »The Voluntary,« each seems in its own way to contain too little general relevance while, conversely, entries on »God« and »Love« – cf. the index to *Kierkegaard's Writings* – are so loaded with the danger of becoming verbose that it is almost better to leave the topic out altogether. The space that could have been saved through stricter editing could have been used advantageously by expanding the central topics. The entries on »irony« and »humor,« for example, are not satisfactory and there are grounds for wonder when an entry on »the comic/the tragic« does not even mention *Postscript* and when the entry on »recollection« does not name *Philosophical Fragments* or *Repetition*. Despite all its imperfections, however, Watkin's work offers a freshness and originality which can be a useful help for the beginner and, here and there, a good dialogue partner for the advanced scholar.

The second major part of Watkin's book is a comprehensive bibliography. This is followed by appendices with various useful categories such as Kierkegaard's »pseudonyms«, which, unfortunately, have been saddled with some heavy interpretations. The bibliography itself is divided into well-arranged sections and anyone interested in Kierkegaard can find relevant secondary literature – both good and not-so-good. One might wish a bit more consistency and accuracy in the distinctions between »edition« and »impression« in the overview of the Danish editions of Kierkegaard's works. One wonders that the incomplete manuscripts of the so-called »Book on Adler« and the records »The Ethical and the Eth-

ical-religious Dialectic of Communication« are published for the first time, partly by Watkin and partly by Poul Müller, for neither of these editions are independent, text-critical editions but rather are taken directly from individual parts of *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer*. Finally, under some headings, there is great uncertainty about a series of anonymous Danish articles which certain people once thought were possibly written by Kierkegaard. But this hypothesis seems to have long since been abandoned, and one can thus be disappointed that it now shows up in a dictionary, not least since it appears in the introductory »Chronology« as a fact.

Although the *Historical Dictionary of Kierkegaard's Philosophy* is not without mistakes, it ought nonetheless be given a warm welcome. It is neither a decidedly »historical dictionary,« nor is it strictly philosophical in focus, but rather a combination of these, plus a bit more. As such, it lends itself pre-eminently for use as a handbook: it gives those interested in Kierkegaard an initiation into his historical context and an introductory taste of his otherwise wildly-growing corpus of concepts.

*Tonny Aagaard Olesen*

## *Mark C. Taylor*
## Journeys to Selfhood: Hegel and Kierkegaard

*New York, Fordham University Press, 2000, xxi + 298pp.*

Most of the readers of this journal are doubtless already familiar with Mark C. Taylor's work on Kierkegaard and not least of all with his excellent study, *Journeys to Selfhood: Hegel and Kierkegaard*, which was first published by the University of California Press in 1980. This important work has recently been reissued by Fordham University Press as volume number 14 in the series Perspectives in Continental Philosophy, edited by John D. Caputo. This new publication is effectively an identical reproduction of the first edition. The pagination is the same, and as far as I have been able to detect no changes or corrections have been made in the text. The only difference between the two editions is a 12 page preface with the title »Returnings,« which Taylor has added to the second edition (pp. ix-xxi).

To put Taylor's book in its proper perspective, one should recall that at the time *Journeys to Selfhood* was first published, the standard work on

Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel was Niels Thulstrup's highly influential *Kierkegaards forhold til Hegel og til den spekulative idealisme indtil 1846*, Copenhagen, Gyldendal, 1967. (English translation: *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel*, translated by George L. Stengren, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980. German translation: *Kierkegaards Verhältnis zu Hegel und zum spekulativen Idealismus 1835-1846*, Stuttgart, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1972.) Thulstrup's rabid anti-Hegel polemic throughout the work was characteristic of the general understanding of the issue which had been dominant for years and served to entrench it even further in the research.

When Taylor's study appeared in 1980, it marked a refreshing break from the long series of partisan studies of the issue, virtually all of which inevitably concluded that Kierkegaard had nothing but disdain and animosity for Hegel. Taylor's neutrality and genuine interest in exploring the two thinkers with a comparative study was an extremely positive turn away from the paradigm represented by Thulstrup, whose wounded vanity could not suffer any study on the issue that ventured to put forth a view different from his own (see Thulstrup's embittered »A Ghost-Letter Caused by Mark C. Taylor's Journeys with Hegel and Kierkegaard,« in *Liber Academiae Kierkegaardiensis*, Tomus V, 1983, edited by Niels Thulstrup, Copenhagen, C.A. Reitzel's Forlag A/S, 1984, pp. 94-101).

Instead of merely taking up Kierkegaard's side on each of the issues as Thulstrup does, Taylor offers a much more balanced assessment in an effort to bring the two thinkers into a genuine dialogue. He writes, »My goal, in sum, is to bring Hegel and Kierkegaard closer together so that their differences can emerge more clearly« (p. 21). Taylor selects what he sees as an underlying theme which he uses throughout the book as a fixed point to compare and contrast the works of Hegel and Kierkegaard. »The central thesis underlying our investigation,« he writes, »is that Hegel and Kierkegaard develop alternative phenomenologies of spirit that are designed to lead the reader from inauthentic to authentic or fully realized selfhood« (p. 13). By this he understands above all the modern problem of creating and discovering oneself in the modern context of fragmentation, estrangement and alienation. Appropriately, he takes the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as the paradigmatic text from Hegel in regard to this theme. His procedure is to compare the *Phenomenology* with a number of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works where, he argues, the same issue is treated.

By analyzing everything in terms of this one theme, Taylor has considerably limited the scope and importance of his study. Moreover, this

theme, even though broadly conceived and having the advantage of providing a measure of continuity to the study, nonetheless tends to force many different analyses into a scheme where they do not always fit cleanly, and thus the continuity that is provided is often only apparent. Perhaps what is most problematic is the way in which this theme hinders the author from treating specific discussions on their own terms. For example, although it might be insightful to view Hegel's analysis of world history, political theory or religion as a journey to selfhood, this is clearly not the way Hegel conceived of these discussions himself. The problem of modern self-identity or of the individual's self-conception, at least so formulated, is more important for Taylor's philosophical agenda than for Hegel's.

Despite Taylor's attempt to bring Hegel and Kierkegaard into a genuine dialogue without taking sides or viewing the matter from the perspective of the one thinker or the other, his methodology tends to undermine this goal. In his various discussions, Taylor breaks up his analyses into two parts, one on Hegel and one on Kierkegaard. This sort of procedure, which seems natural enough in a comparative study, does not engender a dialogue but instead gives rise to two different accounts of a given issue. His long Chapter 6 provides a good case in point. There he first summarizes the entirety of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and then goes on to do the same for Kierkegaard's *Either/Or* to the ostensible end of demonstrating the similarities between these two works. The summary of the two texts may be interesting in itself, but by breaking up these extended discussions in this way, Taylor leaves open many questions about the actual points of contact. Thus, his treatment of the commonalties and differences between the two thinkers is impeded by a procedure which produces what at times seems to be two different discussions with little more than superficial similarities.

Taylor is not interested in outlining any sort of development in Kierkegaard's relationship to Hegel since he is only tracing a single theme. This leads him to view Kierkegaard's *oeuvre* as a monolithic whole and to cite in the same context various passages from different periods and texts without regard to the issues of pseudonymity, periods of development, etc. This is misleading since by this procedure one is able to create patchwork positions, which it is not clear that Kierkegaard ever actually held. Moreover, Kierkegaard's thought was not born in a single instant but rather developed over a period of time. But Taylor's procedure does not allow him to distinguish different positions or periods in Kierkegaard's

development. The relation of Kierkegaard to Hegel is more complex and differentiated than has often been thought due in part to the fact that it changed over time. Thus, to explore the question of Hegel's influence on Kierkegaard, one must first put the specific subject-matter of the study into a determinate context by designating what period or work is at issue. Taylor's theme-oriented procedure can thus be seen as distorting in individual analyses and does not allow him to take into account the intellectual-biographical development of Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel.

Given this theme-oriented methodology, it can perhaps be said that Taylor's work explains more about his own philosophical views on the self and the modern problem of alienation than about the actual historical relation between Kierkegaard and Hegel. The character of Taylor's study can be gleaned from his own statements about his motivation for reissuing the work after some twenty years. One might imagine *a priori* that the reason for making a second edition of a work would typically be that there had been some important event in the research that had taken place in the interim since the publication of the first edition, for example, that some new manuscript by Kierkegaard had been discovered where he discusses his views on Hegel's thought, or that new information had surfaced about the Danish sources of Kierkegaard's understanding of Hegel, e.g. Johan Ludvig Heiberg, Hans Lassen Martensen, et al. Taylor's motivation to publish a second edition has absolutely nothing to do with new historical or philological research on Hegel or Kierkegaard which has taken place since 1980, but instead it concerns exclusively his own assessment of the current state of philosophy. He explains in his new preface »Returnings« that he believes that the Kierkegaard-inspired post-structuralist movement in philosophy has failed to come beyond a negative critique and to offer any positive solution to contemporary ills (p. xviii). By contrast, he claims, »Hegel's philosophy provides invaluable resources for addressing many of the critical questions we are currently facing« (p. xix). Thus, the reissuing of *Journeys to Selfhood* is a plea to return to Hegel in search of answers to the problems which have been left open in the wake of post-structuralism. This can be very interesting as a diagnosis of the current state of things in philosophy and literary theory, and for those readers interested in Hegel and Kierkegaard applied to contemporary philosophy, Taylor's book will certainly be a fascinating and suggestive piece of work. It will, however, be of less help to those seeking to understand better Kierkegaard's actual historical relation to

Hegel, which would require a different methodology than that used by Taylor. But this is another issue, and it is not Taylor's primary interest.

When all is said and done, it must be recognized that Taylor's book is and will remain a landmark in Kierkegaard studies. It signals a major paradigm shift from the days of Niels Thulstrup. We can thus be glad that *Journeys to Selfhood* will, thanks to this new edition, continue to be used and read by the next generations of students and scholars.

*Jon Stewart*

## *Wenche Marit Quist*
## Den enkelte og det mellemmenneskelige – den etiske betydning af det mellemmenneskelige forhold hos Søren Kierkegaard

*Copenhagen, C.A.Reitzels Forlag, 2000, 117 pp.*

Wenche Marit Quist has delivered a well-written and readable book, a revised master's thesis which is pleasantly free of academic arrogance – thank you!

The back cover of the book tells us that the basic conditions of human life apply to everyone – which could only surprise readers who, following Martin Buber or K.E. Løgstrup, inadmissibly accuse Kierkegaard of »acosmism and solipsism.« In such a case it is inconceivable that he would take the trouble to write several million words.

Even though Quist clearly rejects Løgstrup, in my opinion she is a bit too inclined to a procedure which constructs a »Kierkegaardian philosophy« – which does not exist – only then to call it into question. One simply cannot take such things seriously.

Quist thus entrusts the critical perspectives to rather incompetent hands while her own readings of Kierkegaard's primary works, especially *Sickness unto Death* and *Concept of Anxiety*, are very elegant and clear, both in form and content. I am naturally in complete agreement with her attempt to clarify the balance of the synthesis in becoming a self and she offers a nice treatment of the fact that one can wander down many twisted paths. It is likewise clear that the figure of Abraham is a teleological suspension of the ethical (which unfortunately has become a theological suspension) and thus stands in opposition to Judge William (p. 70).

By contrast, the line of thought is less clear when it comes to the interpretation of *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Quist's primary aim is to »clarify the relationship between subjectivity and inter-subjectivity in Kierkegaard's thought« (p. 9), an aim she has in common with Pia Søltoft in her book *Svimmelhedens Etik* [The Ethics of Dizziness] and with Merold Westphal in *Becoming a Self*. The term inter-subjective is apparently contagious, but it does not clarify the problem which is to be analyzed. To the contrary, it is unclear whether it simply means »*det mellemmenneskelige*« in general – that which happens »between people« as the title of the book hints – or whether it has the specifically Kierkegaardian meaning »*mellembestemmelsen*« – which is God. If the latter is the case, the problem disappears when viewed philosophically. The existential movement can then only move from »the individual« to »the other« and possibly, as Quist suggests, back again *through* God or »the medium of love.«

Quite simply, *mellembestemmelse* means »medium,« Kierkegaard says, and thus it makes no sense to ask about the meaning of »the other« in this context. Of course one *can* only reach »the other« as in »one's neighbor,« *through* loving one's neighbor, through love. God is not an object but spirit, the spirit of love.

As far as I can see, Quist rejects Gregor Malantschuk because »he does not see the *mellemmenneskelige* situation as an element which makes a decisive intrusion in the self-relationship (p. 25). But which »element« is she talking about? This is crucial. Is it one which does not include God? Quist's grounds for rejecting the notion that self-appropriation is a *condition* for the relationship to »the other,« are located in the dialectic of communication which, even in its indirect dialectical form, »incorporates the being of other people in its determination of the existing individual (p. 63).« Much of what is said here may be right, of course, and the issue approaches the problem of »what comes first, the chicken or the egg?« But unfortunately Quist does not cite from *The Works of Love* where Kierkegaard hypothetically claims, »if a person living on a desert island cultivated his mind according to the commandment ... he could be said to love his neighbor (*SV3* 12, 27 / *WL* 27). Thus, interaction with »the other« *cannot* be constitutive of the self.

According to Quist's note, however, this is what Merold Westphal claims: »insofar as the self is constituted inter-subjectively, it is just as true of Cliamcus as it is for Hegel that 'I am who we are'« (88). Whoa. Why then does Kierkegaard always emphasize »the individual«? Is it because he is speaking of plurality? The very name »Hegel« ought to suggest that

Kierkegaard disagrees. For Kierkegaard, mental fusions are illusions or abstractions because »it is impossible that two spirits can becomes one spirit« (Pap. VIII1 A 231, my reference). Human beings are *more* than computers which can be programmed with identical data. Quist declares herself »in agreement with Westphal's interpretation.« She should not have done so! Becoming psychologically pregnant with someone is at least as serious as becoming physically pregnant with someone. Only personal responsibility exists in the Kierkegaardian universe.

The author of the book should also have avoided using the word »mutual,« which is burdened with Hegelian connotations, when the issue at hand is judging one's neighbor. When one person judges another, he judges himself since he is unloving to exactly the same degree. It is of course correct, but *this* is not a »mutual« activity since the other has no influence on the relationship.

In chapter five, Quist's views are founded upon Kierkegaard's statement that the individual is himself *and* the race (100). This is of course correct but this does not make the other the constitutive factor. She also claims that if the relationship to the other is not successful, it is because »the divine relationship which posits the neighbor is not established in the right way« (101). But it is thus revealed that the relationship to the divine *has* logical priority: it is presupposed [*(forud)sættes*], or else it cannot be posited [*sættes*].

The same priority is presupposed when she claims that »based on an understanding of the self's relationship to the divine and to itself, the self attends to the demand of loving one's neighbor,« (107) which I can only agree with. But the lack of clarity continues inasmuch as »the middle term holds the God- and neighbor relationship together by qualifying the way the self views the neighbor on the basis of and toward the relationship with God« (109).

Thus Quist does not believe that »Kierkegaard divides the two commands of love« (109), and, as far as this goes, she is right. But there are *two* commands and not only one? As she correctly adduces, love is not »a result of human capacities, but is placed in human beings by God« (100) – and not, then, by the other. For my part, the conclusion must be that there *is* a logical priority to God before the other, and that there *can be* a temporal difference as well. The poor man on a deserted island who has cultivated his mind in the spirit of love must wait a while in order to put it into practice.

The point for Quist seems to be that »the other« works itself dialec-

tically back into an individual's relationship to God so that there is intersubjectivity – viewed from the outside, objectively, as with Hegel. But this is not Kierkegaard's perspective since he always has his perspective in »the individual« and not in »the other,« who, from his own perspective, is »the individual« in relation to »the other.«

Thus I disagree with the author's conclusion on this point, but I fully agree that it is absurd to accuse Kierkegard of »acosmicism and solipsism.« Despite our differing interpretations, it has been an enjoyment to read the book, both from the perspective of language as well as content – and also because it is an exciting problem. A fine effort!

*Birgit Bertung*

## *I. Adinolfi (ed.)*
## NotaBene. Quaderni di studi kierkegaardiani. Vol. 1: Leggere oggi Kierkegaard

*Città Nuova, Rome, 2000, 224 pp.*

Among the principle initiatives of the Italian Society for Kierkegaard Studies, founded in 1999 with the aim of promoting Kierkegaard research in Italy, is the annual publication of a journal whose first issue appeared in December 2000. The journal's title, *NotaBene*, reflects the signature which Kierkegaard placed on each of his 36 notebooks dating from 1846 to 1855 in which he gathered annotations and extracts from his readings. The distinguishing feature of the journal is that the various ideas expressed in Kierkegaard's multifaceted production preserve a vitality that may be observed from a comparison with present-day cultural issues. Each edition of the journal will be monographic: the topic chosen for the first one, »Reading Kierkegaard Today«, reflects the aim of emphasising Kierkegaard's strong presence in current cultural debate, especially in philosophical and theological circles. The journal is edited by Isabella Adinolfi and offers a rich and stimulating selection in two sections: »Contributions« (papers by J. Garff, V. Melchiorre, M. Iiritano, S. Davini, S. Givone, G. Garrera, A. Giannatiempo Quinzio, E. Rocca, U. Regina, B. Forte and I. Adinolfi) and »Various« (essays by C. Fabro and S. Quinzio, the first complete Italian translation of *Post-Scriptum til Enten-Eller* [*Pap.* IV B 59] by A. Scaramuccia and a valuable bibliography

of Italian translations of Kierkegaard's writings from 1907-2000 by S. Davini, E. Rocca and I.Z. Sørensen).

Among the many questions tackled in the papers section, two merit special mention. The first is Kierkegaard's relation with the thought tradition that precedes him, modernity in particular, and the light that his work can throw on our contemporary age. The second is that of the centrality of the irrational in Kierkegaard's thought and his interpretation of Christianity.

On the first question, Quinzio and Iiritano remind us that Kierkegaard's crucial polemical target is the tendency of modern philosophy, from the Cartesian *cogito* to the Hegelian System, almost to dissolve being into pure thought and to model a subject that is at the same time impoverished and hypertrophic, reduced to the cognitive functions which culminate in the arbitrary possession and manipulation of the real. Quinzio observes that Kierkegaard grasped with an almost prophetic intuition the first stages in the secularisation and aesthetization process of reality typical of our contemporary age. Quinzio subtly suggests that Kierkegaard's own avowed incapacity to be an authentic witness of faith and his exceptional aesthetic sensitivity turned out to be an advantage in that they allowed him to communicate with an era in which the categories of truth and goodness were beginning to lose their currency. In his paper, Rocca suggests a new link between Kierkegaard and the theme of the contemporary. According to Rocca, the vigorous demands by Primo Levi in his books that we should never allow ourselves to forget the Holocaust find a parallel in Kierkegaard's exhortations to seek out the almost »animal-vegetative« peace of complete self-oblivion with the condition that we constantly remind ourselves of the passion and crucifixion of Christ. Christ's martyrdom and the Holocaust are to be identified with the absolutely Unforgettable since they possess that terrible solemnity of sacred events that inaugurate and render profane history possible.

On the second major theme which emerges from the essays, namely the presence of the irrational, Davini stresses that Kierkegaard sees judgement as an act of will that life continually calls on us to make in favour of a proposition or action for which there are reasons both for and against and which reason presents as equally valid. Where reason sanctions a perfect balance leading to a stalemate which existential concern rebels against, the extra-rational sphere of desires and passions introduces the imbalance of decision. As Melchiorre observes, the very structure of man is irrational and paradoxical and is a synthesis of finite and infinite,

of temporal and eternal. Adinolfi reminds us that the constituent ambiguity of man had already been noted by Socrates, Plato, Montaigne and Pascal, but that only with Kierkegaard did it become the object of a rigorous definition, and she builds her paper on the Kierkegaardian idea that it is precisely the disproportion between the two components of the human which is at the origin of both the comic and the tragic. But, says Melchiorre, the absolute apex of the paradoxical is of course given by incarnation, and Giannatiempo Quinzio insists on Kierkegaard's conviction that no human mind has ever succeeded or will ever succeed in formulating the idea of the real unity of God with an individual living person. Melchiorre's contribution defines the weight of the irrational and rational in Christianity respectively as conceived by Kierkegaard. On the one hand, faith falls under the sign of the irrational because it is essentially belief in a historic event and as such participates in the very paradox of historic reason which is concerned with ungraspable data insofar as they contain the ambiguity of becoming which has non-being at the origin. As Davini states, if belief is always the giving of one's own assent to one of two opposite possibilities with no guarantee of certainty, Christian faith turns out to be doubly hazardous and unfounded because it believes the inconceivable, namely the coming in time of the eternal like a man doomed to meet an infamous death. But on the other hand, as Melchiorre points out, God is Reason itself, the Foundation which is always already there and which renders every event and every argument possible – and therefore also every lofty attempt to prove existence.

*Marco Fortunato*

## *Jørgen Husted*
## Wilhelms brev – Det etiske ifølge Kierkegaard
[Wilhelm's letter – The Ethical According to Kierkegaard]

*Copenhagen, Gyldendal, 1999, 307 pp.*

Jørgen Husted has resolved to present an ethics which is accessible by and applicable for the modern individual who wishes to be able to explicate and gain a deeper understanding of the central existential themes that the individual faces. This is at the same time a comprehensive, admirable and difficult task which Husted carries out with both persistence and substantial breadth of view. The central aspect of modern ethics which Husted offers the existing person *anno* 2000 is – as the title reveals

– from *Either/Or*, namely Wilhelm's letter to A entitled, »The Balance between the Esthetic and the Ethical in the Development of the Personality.« *Wilhelms Brev – Det etiske ifølge Kierkegaard* is a representation of Wilhelm's search for the answer to the question, »what is a human being to do in life?« (p.19) and with this search, Husted's book is a reading and reinterpretation of the main Kierkegaardian themes which the letter brings into focus. Husted's book can thus be viewed as an introduction to Wilhelm, the authorship's only explicit ethicist, an introduction which is carried out by continual references to Descartes, Kant, hedonism, utilitarianism, existentialism (Sartre) and the recent moral philosophy of Thomas Nagel, Griffin and others.

*Wilhelms Brev* is framed by questions such as, »what is the good life?,« »what does is mean to live an aesthetic life?,« »What is freedom?« etc. These questions are answered through a dialogue between Wilhelm and representatives of the positions mentioned above, and Husted thus argues that Wilhelm is capable of expressing a convincing and coherent view of what it means to be a human being. Husted articulates this view in order to illuminate what he takes to be the most important ethical Kierkegaardian issue: the task of choosing oneself. At first glance, Husted makes Wilhelm's position seem reliable and insightful, but one might ask if any of the themes Husted uses to characterize Wilhelm's position with point over and above themselves. When Wilhelm tries to make the despairing aesthete face the consequences of his fragile condition and stresses that »I, too, have despaired,«[1] or when he describes repentance as a task that already lies in his past, it is difficult to know how to understand his persistent claim that the task is to become oneself. If despair is brought to an end, existence is no longer in movement and the individual is no longer becoming. Wilhelm thus seems to be done with the assignment, i.e. his subjectivity, before he ought to be. Generally Wilhelm possesses a tranquillity that one would not expect from an existing person who is pulled between 'finitude and infinitude, temporality and eternity, freedom and necessity.' Assessor Wilhelm thus separates himself from Kierkegaard's other thinkers of existence such as Vigilius Haufniensis, Johannes Climacus and Anti-Climacus by focusing more on the right movement and path to the self than on the wrong way(s). There seem to be good reasons for this: since Wilhelm has completed the movement, he is obviously aware of what this is all about. The problem is that even Wilhelm's own analysis raises doubts about what the judge has really done and what he really knows.

The book is therefore – without explicitly wanting to be – a contribution to a ongoing discussion about whether the meaning of the ethical in Kierkegaard's authorship can be derived from reading a single work such as *Either/Or* (or parts of it), or whether the relationship between first and second ethics causes a human ethic to break down from within, and thus whether a first ethic contains the premises of a second ethic as a precondition. In the light of this question, there may be good reasons for going behind Wilhelm and the self-interpretation he formulates – there might be more to Wilhelm's letter than meets Husted's eye. The book is presented as a reading of the letter on its own terms and Husted has no doubt that the reader is thereby also presented with Kierkegaard's view of the ethical: »Behind the following interpretation of Wilhelm's position lies the understanding that this position is Kierkegaard's account of what one can say about the issue from a universal human point of view – the ethical [point of view]« (p. 13)[2] and he stresses, that »the ethical is capable of standing on its own feet in the strictly human sphere. It does not need God, heaven or hell. It is a kingdom in itself« (p. 181).[3] Husted nevertheless acknowledges that there is more to be said, for »beyond the ethical, a totally different world of experiences seems to open up, even experiences that demand that one set aside or even eliminate the ethical and thereby eliminate 'the teleological' in the single individual« (p. 285).[4] The question now becomes whether the rest of the authorship really stresses something »beyond the ethical.« Now the question is whether the ethical is a kingdom in itself or whether one must rather speak of a qualification of the ethical by which it is allowed to retain what Husted calls an »embarrassing superstructure«[5] (p. 181) of a dogmatic character which thus ends the resemblance of Wilhelm's ethical position to Kierkegaardian ethic. *Either/Or* itself suggests this possibility with Wilhelm's admission of a lasting darkness in existence: »But even the person in whose life this movement occurs most calmly and peacefully and at the right time will still always retain a little repression, but this is linked to something much deeper, to hereditary sin and is rooted in this, that no human being can become transparent to himself«.[6] In spite of the fact that Assessor Wilhelm has reached »the other side« of despair and now stands in the right self-relationship – even »possesses himself,«[7] – he cannot gain self-transparency. This tension allows one to ask what Husted does not ask of Wilhelm's ethical standpoint: does Wilhelm actually suspect that there are more conditions of existence than his otherwise so convincing rhetoric seems to express and, in extension of this idea, does

Wilhelm himself provide the point of departure for an ethic that points beyond Either/Or; an ethic in which a thematizing of the self also implies a differently qualified thematizing of the self's relationship to God, an ethic in which the human viewpoint – that »the individual is the absolute«[8] (p. 279) – does not lead to self-harmony but rather to something completely different, i.e. despair.

This does not change the fact that Wilhelms Brev is in many ways is a commendable beginning, which in a modern and sober tone of voice, that does not risk – or allow a hope of – seduction, carefully orients its reader to a large number of the Kierkegaardian concepts. The danger lies – as implied – in the risk that the first ethic will close upon itself and that the reader will thereby not be urged to carry on with that significant part of the authorship which emphasizes that there is more to be said about being a »self which relates to itself.« In Husted's depiction, Kierkegaard is both accessible and understandable and is very likely to seem reasonable and amenable to a modern reader – i.e. according to Husted, a reader who is not familiar with religious concepts and dogmatic theology. The reader is, however, left with the suspicion that that which makes any Kierkegaardian ethic really interesting – comforting and challenging for both the modern as well as the »outdated« reader – is precisely the authorship's thematizing of intractable existential difficulties and demands – difficulties and demands which might not seem to be immediately accessible and reasonable to a modern human being, but which hardly can be characterized as just being reserved only for uncommon or 'outdated' readers.'

*Wenche Marit Quist*

1. *KW* 4, 208; *SKS* 3, 200. »Ogsaa jeg har fortvivlet.«
2. »Bag den følgende fortolkning af Wilhelms position ligger den opfattelse, at denne position udgør Kierkegaards redegørelse for, hvad der ud fra en almindelig menneskelig forståelsesramme er at sige om emnet – det etiske« (my translation).
3. »Det etiske formår at stå på egne ben i det rent menneskelige. Det behøver hverken gud, himmel eller helvede. Det er et rige i sig selv« (My translation).
4. »Hinsides det etiske synes der at åbne sig en helt anden erfaringsverden, tilmed erfaringer, der fordrer en tilsidesættelse eller ligefrem ophævelse af det etiske og dermed »det teleologiske« i det enkelte menneske« (my translation).
5. »pinlig overbygning« (my translation).
6. Hong, *KW* IV, s. 190/*SKS* 3, s. 184: »Men selv det Menneske, i hvis Liv Bevægelsen skeer roligst og fredeligst og betimeligst, vil dog altid beholde lidt Tungsind, men det hænger sammen med noget langt dybere, med Arvesynden, og ligger i, at intet Menneske kan blive sig selv gjennemsigtigt«
7. Hong, *KW* IV, s. 233/*SKS* 3, s. 221 »nu eier jeg mig selv«
8. »individet er det absolutte« (my translation).

## *Poul Houe, Gordon D. Marino and Sven Hakon Rossel (eds.)* Anthropology and Authority. Essays on Søren Kierkegaard

*Rodopi, Amsterdam-Atlanta 2000, 190 pp.*

Many of the twenty contributions to this collection of essays, including the very instructive editorial introduction, were initially presented in 1997 at the 2nd International Kierkegaard Conference at St. Olaf College, Minnesota. Together they reflect the state of Kierkegaard research, which is characterized by detailed attention to the specificity of Kierkegaard's concepts and discourse. The essays display a general agreement about Kierkegaard's view on anthropology and authority, though the essays are written with many different methodological backgrounds including philosophical, literary, philological/historical, and more or less deconstructive. The relationship between the pseudonymous and the edifying parts of Kierkegaard's oeuvre is not viewed as one of demarcation, but rather, in most essays, as complimentary. Of course one find new questions relating to Kierkegaard interpretation and one naturally finds disagreements as well.

The editors of *Anthropology and Authority* have succeeded in establishing an inner consistency when ordering the different essays. Part One on Kierkegaard's anthropology opens with Arthur A. Krentz's essay, »The Socratic-Dialectical Anthropology of Søren Kierkegaard's *Postscript*« which compares the role of passion in *Postscript* and eros in *Symposium*. Passion is said to be a unification in the structure of human existence of »the infinite and the finite« and »the eternal and the temporal.« The comparison with Socratic dialectics results in an emphasis on the self as becoming instead of being and a close connection between Socrates and the pseudonymous author of the *Postscript*, Johannes Climacus.

The next contributor is Arne Grøn who takes his point of departure in a fundamental philosophical consideration of what he regards as an essential, or perhaps the essential, concept in Kierkegaard's conception of the self: the human synthesis. In the essay entitled »The Human Synthesis,« Grøn argues that the finitude of the human self is not only a part of the synthesis but makes up the character of synthesis: »man is an intermediate being by himself being an intermediate.« The experience of oneself is thus an experience of this finitude as negativity; one can be other than oneself. *The Sickness unto Death* is regarded as the decisive account of Kierkegaard's anthropology.

Several essays focus on the many aspects of love as the passionate and inter-subjective side of the human self. The theme and title of Arnold B. Come's article is »The Implications of Søren Kierkegaard's View of Sexuality and Gender for an Appraisal of Homosexuality.« He argues that the limitations associated with sexual relationships, including limitations based on gender, are transcended in *Works of Love*. He writes, »in the relationships at the level of spirit or selfhood, where every human being stands equally cast in the image of God, the gender and sexual distinction is not only irrelevant but actually 'vanishes.'« We meet a »second immediacy« in sexuality with, among other things, a sense of humor as indicated in remarks on sexuality in *The Concept of Anxiety*.

*Works of Love* is also the cornerstone for the interpretation of Kierkegaard's anthropology and in the two next articles. Under the heading *Anthropology and Ethics*, Pia Søltoft writes of »The Connection between Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity as the Basis of a Kierkegaardian Anthropology« and M. Jamie Ferreira undertakes a closer reading of the chapter on mercy in »Works of Love: Impotent Mercifulness in *Works of Love*.« For Pia Søltoft, *Works of Love* is an answer to a problem was posed from the very outset of Kierkegaard's authorship. Already in the *Concept of Irony*, the phenomenon of irony asks for a new kind of ethics inasmuch as the liberation of subjectivity and the critique of Hegelian objectivity make room for intersubjective obligations. *Either/Or*, *Fear and Trembling* and *Repetition* come closer to the answer as they treat the theme of the ethical against the religious. In *Works of Love*, however, religious duty, which is established in subjective inwardness which constitutes the self, cannot be separated from the inter-subjective self-realization in fulfilling the ethical duty to the other. Kierkegaard is defending a »moderate dialogical view« of the self.

Within the same fundamental lines of interpretation, M. Jamie Ferreira takes up Kierkegaard's seemingly provocative statements on mercy: »from the point of view of eternity, that someone dies is no misfortune, but that mercifulness is not practiced certainly is.« Ferreira draws attention to the ambiguity in the principle of loving thy neighbor as exemplified in mercy: on the one hand one cannot measure mercy from the external result as such since the consequences of our actions are subject to things outside our control. On the other hand, it is not a one-sided question of morally good intentions: mercy only exists in its actions, in its actualization. Therefore, Kierkegaard's statements about mercy do not mean that acting mercifully is unimportant; to the contrary: it is presupposed.

In opposition to the stress on the ethical side of the religious subjectivity, Vanessa Rumble in »Søren Kierkegaard and the Uncanny: The Endangered Moral Agent« finds a tension between freedom as individual autonomy and the desire for fusion with the divine other. The desire for the fusion with the Other is marked by the *uncanny*. She sees Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac in *Fear and Trembling* as a sacrifice that is the end of all sacrifices, a longing for a mediation or *Aufhebung*. Rumble's position is placed in contrast to that of Jacques Derrida, who considers the sacrifice a refusal of finitude that suspends the moral striving and the autonomy of the moral agent.

Another way of discussing a second ethics and a second immediacy is found in Udo Doeden's investigation, »The Notion of »Simplicity« and the word *Eenfold*: A Central Idea in Søren Kierkegaard's Authorship.« This essay describes the various ways the concept »simplicity« appears in Kierkegaard's works, with the Christian understanding of simplicity as the primary source: simplicity is what constitutes the equilibrium between eternity and temporality.

In »Søren Kierkegaard and Silence,« Ettore Rocca views silence as a link between Kierkegaard's anthropological philosophy and the concept of authority. Silence is »Janus-faced« since it can be demonic, as seen in *Fear and Trembling* and *The Sickness unto Death*, for example, or it can prepare a place for faith as an opening up to the Word, as seen in several of the edifying discourses. In particular, the woman who is a sinner, portrayed in the third of the *Three Discourses at the Communion on Fridays*, is silent as she does »nothing« and thus represents the complete openness of forgiveness. To attain true silence is not an imitation of divine silence or the indirect communication of Christ, but it is an admission that one is without authority, which in the edifying discourse becomes a writing where Kierkegaard is not viewed as the author of his text, but rather its reader.

Part Two, which treats the concept of authority, opens with another reflection on the women in Kierkegaard's edifying discourses with Mark Lloyd Taylor's »Practice in Authority: The Apostolic Women of Søren Kierkegaard's Writings.« Again the female sinner is, as in Rocca's article, a remarkable figure concerning the question of speaking or being without authority. But Taylor describes other women, as well, the apostolic women. The question of gender as such is not raised, but it is nevertheless significant inasmuch as these women have an authority that points beyond themselves.

Michael Plekon, in »Søren Kierkegaard at the End: Authority in the Attack on the Church,« and Robert L. Perkins, in »The Authoritarian Symbiosis of Church and Crown in Søren Kierkegaard's *Attack upon Christendom*,« both deal with the complexity of the concept of authority when one focuses on Kierkegaard's attack on the Danish church. To Michael Plekon, the seemingly anarchistic, nihilistic inwardness of Kierkegaard's Christianity – or the »religionless« Christianity (citing Dietrich Bonhoeffer) – is still is under an authority. It is the authority of the »one who is infinite love,« as Kierkegaard expresses it during the public attack on the church in *The Unchangableness of God*. Robert L. Perkins connects the historical and contemporary discussions of the relation of church and state. Perkins defends Kierkegaard's religious attitude – which is so to speak too religious when viewed from a secularized and modern perspective – and the contemporary significance of the Kierkegaardian point of view. Christianity must be separated from political and ideological purposes, he argues, for by dissolving of the symbiosis of church and crown, personal responsibility is cultivated against the authoritarianism of the hedonism in modern society.

In »Søren Kierkegaard's Concept of the Authority of the People: Can Democracy Be Excused Before God?,« András Nagy poses the same sort of question, but his approach is directly political. András Nagy, who is from Eastern Europe, stresses the main points in Kierkegaard's social and political critique, specifically the way in which the development of the masses, the tyranny of the media, and the will of the people as mere quantity all come at the expense of spirit of the single individual. Kierkegaard thoughts do perhaps represent »a new vision of community.«

Between the contributions of Plekon and Nagy, readers find theoretical considerations of authority, or rather the possibility of speaking with authority. John Lippett and Anthony John Rudd each consider the »revocation« of Climacus in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Lippett and Rudd both argue against James Conant and Stephen Mulhall especially, who have compared Kierkegaard's use of pseudonymous authors to Wittgenstein's strategy in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, where Wittgenstein undermines his own text. Kierkegaard's pseudonyms, like Wittgenstein, are said to draw up the ladder after using it and thus interpretation of the foregoing text ends in simple nonsense. Against this common philosophical fear and trembling for paradoxical maneuvers and non-unambiguous thinking, John Lippett, in »On Authority and Revocation: Climacus as Humourist,« develops a less common phenomenon in traditional philos-

ophy which is nonetheless central to the *Postscript*, namely humor. Anthony John Rudd argues in »On Straight and Crooked Readings: Why the Postscript Does Not Self-Destruct« against the narrow concept of rationality of James Conant's interpretation which sees anything but abstract and objective thinking as sheer irrationality. For Climacus, a rationality is situated in existential self-examination.

Bruce H. Kirmmse considers the same question in connection with the statement of Anti-Climacus in »*Practice in Christianity*: I Am Not a Christian – A Sublime Lie? Or: Without Authority, Playing Desdemona to Christendom's Othello.« As the title indicates, Bruce H. Kirmmse connects many threads in the question of the relation between authority and revocation. Kirmmse argues that Kierkegaard is a »sublime liar« and shows a parallel between the role of Desdemona in Shakespeare's *Othello* and the role of this same expression with Mynster and Kierkegaard. Socrates knew that he didn't know; likewise Kierkegaard is no Christian, but he is Christian in so far as he knows he isn't.

Alastair McKinnon's article, »Authority in Søren Kierkegaard's Journals: The Main Changes,« could not have appeared in an anthology on Kierkegaard fifteen years ago because it investigates the occurrence of the term authority with help of a computer program. It raises some questions of its own: what can statistical-linguistic facts tell us about the changes in Søren Kierkegaard's conception of authority?

The three last contributions in the book examine the concept of authority in the relationship between author and authority. Della Rae Zurick connects the discussion to Thomas Hobbes' distinction between the natural and artificial person. She regards Kierkegaard as an »artificial« person, a displaced person, so to speak, in his position as an author. His authority is displaced by the different pseudonymous writers as well as the religious writer, though in different ways. The key to interpreting Kierkegaard is simply this broken relationship between the author and authority.

The last articles underscore this aspect in a more deconstructive direction. In »Two Minor Ethical-Religious Essays (by H.H.) in H.H.-Poet or Martyr?« Jacob Bøggild investigates how one ought to understand the kind of irony in a text that is »ambiguous to a magnificent degree.« In the first of his essays, H.H. asks whether one has the right to let oneself be put to death for the truth, but though he seemingly and unambiguously answers »no,« in Bøggild's reading the dialectical or reflexive performativity of the text perpetually reverses itself. Attention to the literary and rhetorical aspect of the text is *not* a kind of relativism he

suggests, but rather gives depth to the question of content. The dubious authority of H.H. is perhaps fundamental: »does the text revoke itself in order to preserve the reader's freedom, or in order to leave the backdoor open for what it explicitly prohibits: becoming a martyr?«

In disagreement with several of the other contributors of the anthology – Geoffrey A. Hale, in »Fragmentary Prodigality: Søren Kierkegaard, Language and Authority, asserts even more radically the fundamental »non-authority« within any authority in Kierkegaard's texts.« The meaning of the text is its finite incompletion and fragmentation through which it exceeds itself and encounters the unknown via incalculable effects in the reader. The pseudonymous texts reveal the conditions of the non-authority of the author as such and thus affects for Hale an understanding of the religious authorship as the »truth« behind the pseudonymous authorship.

This short account of an anthology is certainly not fair to the richness of the book. Though many of the contributors have developed their points of view elsewhere, the short, well-written articles offer a high degree of clarity. As a mirror of the wide range of Kierkegaard research, the anthology is outstanding. But if one should add critical remarks, the peaceful co-existence is perhaps too peaceful and, except for the aforementioned exceptions, the historical-textual interest overshadows contemporary questions too much. On one side, the book only indirectly gives one clues as to why we read Kierkegaard today. On the other, the historical dimensions of Kierkegaard's authorship are held apart from his philosophical position, especially with regard to the history of philosophy as such.

*Kirsten Klercke*

## *Lis Lind*
## Søren Kierkegaard Själv. Psykoanalytiska läsninger

*Carlssons, Stockholm, 2000, 210pp.*

The Danish-Swedish psychoanalyst Lis Lind has written a remarkably irritating and offensive book. It is a psychoanalysis of »Kierkegaard himself« based on his more or less private papers as well as statements from his contemporaries. Her analytical procedure has two major limitations: for obvious reasons the dialogue involved in analytical practice is absent

since the deceased participant is very effectively unable to respond. In other words, the analysis consists of »readings.« Less obviously, with few exceptions Lind's method excludes the essential part of Kierkegaard expressed in his works despite – or perhaps because of ? – their considerable psychological insight. Lis Lind claims to come close to the person Kierkegaard, though without the naiveté of pretending to deliver the conclusive picture of »Kierkegaard as he really was.«

Why and in what ways is the book so offensive? First, *Søren Kierkegaard Själv* will offend everybody who, along with Wittgenstein, might think that Kierkegaard *was a saint*. In this sense, it is a good contribution to the literature since it avoids sanctifying Kierkegaard. Secondly, it is provocatively offensive inasmuch as she presents a very problematic approach to Kierkegaard's biography (or psycho-graphy) even for readers who, like the undersigned, have (or thought they had) a positive disposition towards psychoanalysis. Kierkegaard – a so-called personal thinker like Nietzsche – invites a reading that connects life and work. Kierkegaard might agree with psychoanalysis insofar as it maintains that *no production of ideas avoids reflecting the personality of its originator* (p. 9), but he would not agree with it in the form of a primitive psychological reductionism which Lis Lind's approach seems to indicate. Precisely because she refuses to consider the connection between work and life, one is left with the impression that the possibly problematic character of Kierkegaard's private life totally overshadows his productions of ideas.

Freud's analyses of Leonardo da Vinci and various fiction-writers, for example, were not limited by his own personal preferences; Freud did not simply remove the powerful aspects of his subject's personalities just because he did not appreciate them. And the »biographical« reading of Kierkegaard as seen in Joachim Garff's *Den Søvnløse* uses the biographical material as a widening, not a narrowing of Kierkegaardian thinking. But as Lis Lind develops her diagnosis of Kierkegaard, the author herself seems offended in one way or another inasmuch as the psychoanalysis of Kierkegaard has normativity or normality as its presupposition. The book is not only analysis but also evaluation or condemnation. In fact, one of the strengths of the book – even if it is not wholly deliberate – is that with its psychoanalysis, it raises doubt about the relevance of biographical methods for Kierkegaard studies. Lis Lind's book makes one wonder if a biographical approach always implies that a more or less unconscious personal battle takes place between the biographer with the object of the biography.

*Søren Kierkegaard Själv* in turn makes one suspicious about what drives Lis Lind. What is the desire which drives the psychoanalyst? Part of the motivation behind the book might be a defense of psychoanalysis against Kierkegaard and the perhaps somewhat exaggerated contemporary worship of Kierkegaard as an exponent of *existential-religious inwardness*. In my opinion, it would have been much more interesting if Lis Lind had used her unmistakably professional psychoanalytic skills in a direct confrontation with the phenomenological-existentialistic psychology which Kierkegaard has in some ways introduced. An example of this approach is Kresten Nordentoft's *Kierkegaard's Psychology* which is very fruitful even though it is written with a less professional background. Instead we get a new version of what has been tried before: a pathological sketch of Søren Kierkegaard.

Nonetheless, many of Lis Lind's psychoanalytic readings of Kierkegaard are sensible and some of them are good if one can get beyond the *prima facie* harsh terms of psychoanalysis. Kierkegaard is not in the hands of Freudian dilettantism which chats a bit about sexuality and an authoritarian father. Here, one is confronted with a solid theoretical foundation it seems, and as far as I can judge, a thorough study of the textual and historical sources. Lis Lind's view of Kierkegaard is generally grounded in Kierkegaard's relationship to his father. She suggests that Kierkegaard received »a permanent masochistic expectation of punishment and discipline, corresponding to an unmistakably latent homosexual bond to the old man, which indirectly intensified his feminine identification« (p. 22). To some degree, she has a point here. Of course she analyzes Kierkegaard's relation to his fiancée, Regine Olsen, in terms of a conflict between homosexual and heterosexual libido and includes the problematic of the father in considering the relation to Regine Olsen's father. Her »treatment« of Kierkegaard's relationship to his elder brother Peter and to some of his contemporaries also follows along these lines. In particular, the description of the role of bishop Mynster is a detailed study of some of the psychological traits manifested in Kierkegaard's battle with the Christian church during the fifties. Here, the term paranoia often appears, just as it does in the works of Kierkegaard researchers without affinity to psychoanalysis. In this study, we are given the clinical basis of paranoia and its connection to forbidden homosexual impulses as Freud describes it. Kierkegaard's opposition to the church and his understanding of Christianity at the end of his life are, not surprisingly, the culminating point of Lis Lind's psychoanalysis. She treats Kierkegaard's »long-

ing for love towards a sadistic God, whose demands he constructs in correspondence to his personal psychopathological needs (p. 54). The status of religion in (dogmatic) psychoanalysis is an issue which does not allow the possibility of dialogue and so, as I see it, is beyond comment: »Psychoanalytically interpreted, Kierkegaard's conception of Providence comes quite close to the system of the Unconscious, which in a similar manner influences the choices of the individual« (p. 200). I am, however, tempted to invert the sentence and suggest that the Unconscious – in capital letters – and unconscious motives are themselves taken to be firm and substantial forces by those who have a pseudoreligious belief in psychoanalysis.

Even before going that far, however, Lis Lind's approach has already involuntarily, and unfortunately, made the reader doubt the status and reasonableness of the flourishing psychoanalytic vocabulary as one sees, for instance, in the aforementioned analysis of Kierkegaard's relation to the Danish bishop Mynster. »Even if you're paranoid, you might be right in regarding yourself persecuted,« the saying goes in Denmark. If you look at Mynster's conception of Christianity and his powerful position in Copenhagen at that time, one would naturally supply psychoanalytic considerations along with the historical data. One would ask if, as a matter of fact, Mynster lacked an understanding of and respect for the Kierkegaardian authorship. One would think about what consequences Mynster's opinions had for Kierkegaard's reputation. The psychoanalytic term »paranoia« becomes strangely empty, or simply a pejorative term in diagnostic disguise, if it is used to describe something common instead of a problematic clinical phenomenon. When one wants the recognition of another person and does not get it, of course one initially has a certain ambivalence insofar as a refusal in the process of recognition is experienced in the background of and for some time is clinging to an original thrust.

Another term, homosexuality, is also used widely and loosely. Kierkegaard – in his private papers, not working-papers – describes his meeting with Regine Olsen's father in the street: Regine's father almost runs away from Kierkegaard. In Lis Lind's here somewhat exaggerated interpretation, this meeting becomes a veritable exchange of unconscious homosexuality from both sides. Likewise with Kierkegaard's conversation with the Danish King. But then one finds homosexual impulses in any kind of same-relationship – of course, and why not? – and there is no real informative point in labeling Kierkegaard homosexual.

On one hand, psychoanalytic conceptualization done in this way becomes overkill: in Kierkegaard you meet psychosis, homosexuality and heterosexuality, masochism, sadism, exhibitionism, voyeurism, narcissism, megalomania, paranoia, and perversion in general to such an extent that it convinces one that these elements must be everywhere, including within oneself. Is this genuine psychoanalytic insight? If that is the case, none of these seemingly harsh words are very illustrative in Kierkegaard's case. On the other hand, Lis Lind's psychoanalytic reading »between the lines« is strangely hostile and unnecessarily solipsistically orientated. In almost any of Kierkegaard's actions or relationships to others, she takes a stand toward Kierkegaard without further notice of the role of the others or the historical circumstances. At times even considerably normal phenomena like heterosexual impulses or the presence of unconscious motives become critical in the evaluation of Kierkegaard. The diagnostic concepts become tools for blaming Kierkegaard for his lack of normality which only God or the psychoanalyst may know how to find.

Let me repeat: some of the observations in this book say something reasonable and interesting about Kierkegaard. But Lind says too much, so to speak. In a certain sense the book invalidates its own insights and this is why it points to some fundamental and interesting questions. One begins to wonder why it is necessary to use psychoanalytic concepts that have lost descriptive content and are too often applied only as terms of abuse. Why translate the words of Kierkegaard »himself« who was very well aware of his problems realizing the Universal (i.e. normality) and who knew all about self-deception and, to some degree, the unconscious? And what kind of revelation does the biographer bring forth by pointing out that Kierkegaard could deceive *himself* – unless the biographer *herself* believes in *saints*? Why not find something fruitful in the striving of the subject, Søren Kierkegaard? The methodological limitations become fatal as Lis Lind is unable to transform the psychoanalytic practice into a balanced reading of Kierkegaard. She fails to account for his own works, his background and fails to take account of the phenomenon of transference that is present in any reading, including that of Lis Lind. Though some of the concrete »readings« show a differentiated understanding of Kierkegaard, for the most part we end up in with very normative version of psychoanalytic theory.

*Kirsten Klercke*