Theodor Haecker and Alexander Dru: A Contribution to the Discovery of Kierkegaard in Britain

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The present popularity of Kierkegaard shown in Britain would not have been possible had it not been for the pioneering work of Alexander Dru as a translator and expositor of Kierkegaard[1]. Exactly how Dru had become aware of Kierkegaard's work is not clear; but what is clear is that his consuming interest in Kierkegaard began and developed through his acquaintance with Theodor Haecker[2].

Theodor Haecker was well established in Germany as a translator and editor of Søren Kierkegaard when Dru first visited him in Munich in the early summer of 1929[3]. On that occasion Theodor Haecker presented him with a copy of his translation of *Sören Kierkegaard: Die Tagebücher. In zwei Bänden ausgewählt und übersetzt*, which Ludwig Ficker had published in the Brenner-Verlag Innsbruck in 1923. Dru also bought a copy of the collection of essays Haecker had published in 1927 with the title *Christentum und Kultur* and dedicated to Carl Muth, the Munich editor of the progressive Catholic periodical *Hochland* who had become a personal friend. The volume contained the two essays of Haecker on Kierkegaard which Dru would translate and publish in 1937, a year before the appearance of his own selection and translation of Kierkegaard's journals, which acknowledges its indebtedness to Haecker's. Both these volumes were printed by Oxford University Press, the publisher responsible for making Kierkegaard available in Britain.

Haecker, whose own literary and scholarly career had never had the benefit of a university education completed to the stage of an academic qualification, had made his reputation in the field of Kierkegaard studies through the books his friends Ferdinand Schreiber in Munich and Ludwig Ficker in Innsbruck had published since 1913. His slim

study *Sören Kierkegaard und die Philosophie der Innerlichkeit* (1913; 1914) had been followed by the little volumes of translations *Kritik der Gegenwart* (1914; 1922; 1934) and *Der Pfahl im Fleisch* (1914; 1922). The major volume *Der Begriff des Auserwählten* (1917/18; 1926) had contained a very substantial 'Nachwort' by the translator which was also published separately as the influential little book *Ein Nachwort* (1918; 1920). Dru would later try unsuccessfully to incorporate both the *Kritik der Gegenwart* and Haecker's *Ein Nachwort* into a volume on Kierkegaard.

The series of Haecker's translations had continued with *Die Krisis und eine Krisis im Leben einer Schauspielerin*, subtitled 'Mit Tagebuchaufzeichnungen des Verfassers' (1922), *Religiöse Reden* (published by Wiechmann in 1922; reprinted by Hegner in 1936), *Am Fuße des Altars. Christliche Reden* (Beck 1923) and had culminated in the two volumes of *Die Tagebücher* (Brenner 1923; 2nd edition Hegner 1941 in one volume). In 1932 Haecker published the small volume *Der Begriff der Wahrheit bei Sören Kierkegaard* (Brenner) which Dru would later attempt to translate and publish as part of a bigger volume. During the period of enforced silence under Hitler, post-1936, Haecker worked between December 1942 and October 1943 on the volume *Der Buckel Kierkegaards* which his friends saw into print after his death in 1945. It was first published, with an introduction by Richard Seewald, in Zurich in 1947 (Thomas Verlag).

In 1929 Dru, visiting Haecker in his flat, above the shop, of the humorous paper *Fliegende Blätter*, probably saw himself as the uninitiated visiting the master[4]. It became his intention to ensure that the English-speaking world would share his discovery of Haecker's work, as an interpreter of Kierkegaard but also as a Christian writer against the times. Alexander Dru's success was so impressive and influential that it has not been appreciated how difficult a task it was. Nor has the closeness of the link with Haecker been recognised. Thus Dru persuaded T. S. Eliot to invite Haecker to contribute to *The Criterion*, and the April issue of 1934 would publish his 'Theodicy and Tragedy' in Dru's translation[5]. In 1936 Dru and Haecker would work from July to October on the final version of *Theodor Haecker: Sören Kierkegaard. Translated, and with a biographical note by Alexander Dru* which Oxford University Press brought out in 1937. The following year Haecker was able, thanks to Dru's invitation, to visit London in a welcome escape from the claustrophobic situation in Germany.

The war years made contact increasingly difficult, with Dru work-

ing in the British Army and Haecker, unwittingly, inspiring the Munich students' resistance in 1942/43[6]. Dru's interest in his former mentor continued after the war, after Haecker's death in April 1945. He wrote the introduction for C. van O. Bruyn's translation of *Kierkegaard the Cripple* published by the Harvill Press in 1948. A year later the same publisher brought out Dru's translation of Haecker's secret diaries of the years 1939 to 1945 in a fine edition as *Journal in the Night*, the only edition of it ever published in English. Its extensive introduction was a good example of Dru's own scholarship. By then he had become an established Kierkegaard scholar himself.

It seems clear from Dru's correspondence with Haecker and from his published work that it had been his intention to write a substantial book on Kierkegaard. A strong-minded scholar of very definite views, he was essentially a very modest person and until the publication of *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard* in 1938 he had not published anything of his own on Kierkegaard. The exposition of Kierkegaard then begun was completed in the book he wrote between 1971 and 1974, with the title *Søren Kierkegaard's Conversion. The Clarification of a Task. A Companion to the Journals.* Despite warm support from the publisher's reader, sadly, this was never published. However, his own translation of a selection from Kierkegaard's diaries, *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard. A Selection edited and translated* had helped to make Kierkegaard accessible and understood in Britain. It was a Kierkegaard initially mediated by Theodor Haecker.

Kierkegaard's Papers had been properly edited only in this century and that over a period of forty years from 1909[7]. The editors Heiberg and Kuhr had noted (*Papirer* I p. x) that the manuscripts fell naturally into three groups, the first of which had the character of journal entries – ranging from independent utterances and notations to travel sketches; and this group they designated A. This forms the first section of the Papers. As the standard edition of the Papers had appeared over a long period, there were a few volumes which contained only group A entries. However, no edition of the Journal (or Diary as some later editors described it) had appeared until Haecker published his *Sören Kierkegaard: Die Tagebücher* in 1923. This was Dru's model and his inspiration as he prepared *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard.* He says: 'The selection is based on Theodor Haecker's translation published by the Brenner Verlag in 1923. It was through Theodor Haecker that I first heard of Kierkegaard and ... the selection and translation which was often facilitated by

him ... owe much to his work and advice. Without his help the book would never have been completed and in the dedication I am happy to be able to acknowledge my lasting debt' (*Journals*, p. xi).

There are three distinct aspects to the interaction between Dru, Haecker and Kierkegaard during the last fifteen years of Haecker's life and beyond. Dru's discovery and view of Kierkegaard owe much to his German friend, as the unpublished letters in the Haecker collection of the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach and in the family archive show. That story is in turn intertwined with Dru's attempts to act as mediator between Haecker and the English-speaking public. Haecker had a powerful influence in Germany as a translator of John Henry Newman and, to a much lesser degree, of Francis Thompson. Newman's influence on Haecker was indeed so powerful that the translation in 1921 of the *Grammar of Assent* (to be followed by many other translations, the last published in 1940, with two further posthumous volumes in 1948 and 1951) was closely related to Haecker's conversion from his pietist Protestantism to the Catholic Church[8]. Dru's own contribution to Kierkegaard scholarship was ultimately independent of the friendship with his former mentor in Munich and deserves consideration in its own right. The Haecker connection, however, is of the utmost importance for Dru's own development as something of a Kierkegaardian figure within the English and indeed European Catholic intelligentsia.

Tracing the developing friendship and exchange between Dru and Haecker, it appears that Dru returned from Munich in 1929 with the intention of finding 'the best publisher' for the volume *Christentum und Kultur*, a collection of Haecker's most important essays to date, which had appeared in 1927 after strong encouragement from Carl Muth. The title of the volume reflected Muth's and Haecker's conviction of the interdependence between Christianity and European culture. That conviction had led Haecker to speak out against Italian fascism in the autumn of 1923 in a little piece, 'Die Bestie' (The Beast) which opened and closed with the statement that the deification of the state amounts to the 'beastification' of man[9]. Haecker's first contribution to Carl Muth's journal *Hochland* which appeared at the same time as that attack on Mussolini and all he stood for[10], had given the first collection of Haecker's essays its programmatic title. Haecker saw early on what National Socialism meant and his bitter attack on the cult of the swastika in his 'Re-

flection on Virgil, Father of the West' of 1932 led to his temporary arrest once Hitler had come to power the following year.

Dru intended to add three other essays by Haecker from *Hochland* to the English version of *Christentum und Kultur*, 'Dialog über Christentum und Kultur', 'Der Begriff der Wahrheit bei Sören Kierkegaard' and 'Wahrheit und Leben', to achieve a volume more substantial than the mere 273 pages of the small German original[11]. Haecker accepted the idea of an enlarged version, but despite Dru's many attempts to interest a publisher, nothing came of it. Dru tried Faber & Faber, but T. S. Eliot, although 'very interested [...] did not think that the public which bought Galsworthy by the yard and Wells by the pound (or should it not be weighed in tons) would not [!] take so quickly to „Christentum und Kultur".' In July 1930 Haecker received two of T. S. Eliot's books through Dru. His first reaction, in September, was cautious, the volume of poetry eliciting the response: 'I don't suppose these are great works of art, but they do express moods which are most familiar to me and to my generation.'

After Faber & Faber Dru suggested Sheed & Ward as a likely publisher for the enlarged version of *Christentum und Kultur*. He also asked his German mentor: 'What book of Kirkegaard [!] ought first to be translated into English?'. In October Tom Burns of Sheed & Ward had asked Dru to enquire of Haecker whether he would consider contributing to a new series of essays. Dru sent Burns Haecker's two latest little books *Wahrheit und Leben* (1930) and *Dialog über Christentum und Kultur* (1930) which Jakob Hegner published that year. Haecker's letter of June 1931 offered a planned '„War" Essay' as his contribution to the projected series. That was almost certainly a reference to the famous *Nachwort* of 1917/1918 to his translation of Kierkegaard's *Der Begriff des Auserwählten*, a powerful attack on the chauvinistic liaison between the churches and the national states of Europe in 1914. Burns also accepted Haecker's new book on Virgil, *Vergil. Vater des Abendlands* for the 'Order' series. It finally appeared in 1934, translated by A.W. Wheen. However, Sheed & Ward seemed less interested in 'the' Kierkegaard project.

In August 1931 Haecker expected a visit from Alexander Dru and Father d'Arcy to discuss an English translation of some of Kierkegaard's works. He promised Dru to consult a friend and Kierkegaard expert on the best selection for this project which might perhaps also include Dru's own translation of Haecker's latest work *Der Begriff der*

Wahrheit bei Sören Kierkegaard. That work existed only in manuscript form at that time, but Haecker promised a copy for the following week[12]. It was now becoming obvious that Dru himself would translate Kierkegaard into English, and Haecker emphatically welcomed Dru's intention to learn Danish as the best possible solution. Haecker had taught himself Danish more than twenty years previously in order to discover the true Kierkegaard, and thought that Dru would overcome the difficulties 'very easily and quickly'. Haecker, a great perfectionist about language and expression, must have been concerned about the possible distortion of Kierkegaard's meaning mediated by Dru's imperfect understanding of his German.

Dru was already working on a translation of one of the two of Haecker's essays on Kierkegaard contained in *Christentum und Kultur*, entitled 'Søren Kierkegaard'[13]. He sent it to Haecker 'with „fear and trembling"' in July 1931, but Haecker was delighted with the work and asked whether Dru had started work on the second essay, clearly the 'Nachwort' to his translation of Kierkegaard's 'Altarreden' *Am Fuße des Altars*. The two pieces were the third and fourth essays in the collection *Christentum und Kultur* (pp.66-114, 115-134). They ultimately became part of the joint volume of Haecker and Dru for Oxford University Press in 1937. In 1931 Haecker and Dru still saw them as part of a bigger collection of Haecker's essays translated by Dru, 'specially revised for this purpose' (letter of 22 July 1931).

When Haecker sent Dru the new book-length version of his *Vergil* in September 1931 for Sheed & Ward[14], he wished Dru luck with the translation of the Nachwort to *Am Fuße des Altars*. If Dru were to get the commission to translate Kierkegaard into English, he would be prepared to write an introduction for it. The letter started with the sentence, half German, half Danish: 'It is a good thing that you are learning Danish. You won't regret it, naar de engang kan laese og oversaette S. Kierkegaards Vaerker. Hvad skal de Danske og Tyske sage over engelsk Ortografi' [once you can read and translate S. Kierkegaard's works. What will the Danes and Germans say about English spelling?].

In the autumn of 1931 Dru was planning 'to work hard at Kgd.' and hoped to have his translation of Haecker's Kierkegaard essays 'finished in a couple of months'. He intended to include Haecker's *Nachwort* to Kierkegaard's *Der Begriff des Auserwählten* (1917) which had run to more than ninety pages and been one of his most influential early publications when it appeared under separate cover in 1918, with a re-

print in 1920. However, at the end of the year Dru reported in a mood of despair: 'I have been unable to get through the „Begriff der Wahrheit" [...] it would need someone with your genius for translating to be able to render your own prose.' Should he publish the two essays he had translated separately? Almost a year later the continued silence from Sheed & Ward about the original project of a selection of his essays on Kierkegaard gave Haecker cause for concern. He wanted the translation of *Der Begriff der Wahrheit bei Sören Kierkegaard* combined with earlier essays, particularly the 1924 lecture 'Sören Kierkegaard', from *Christentum und Kultur.*

While the project of Haecker's essays continued to stall Dru was busy improving his Danish. In November 1933 – after Haecker's attack on Hitler and the swastika as the symbol of deceit – he thanked Haecker for his 'Essay on Man' *Was ist der Mensch?* (1933). That volume, still widely reviewed in the German press and noted with sympathy by Thomas Mann in exile in Switzerland, was a defence of the Christian definition of man as created in the image of God and Haecker's answer to the brutish crudeness of Nazi ideology.

Dru was working on the Kierkegaard project with Herbert Read, through whom Haecker's 'Essay on Man' also reached T. S. Eliot. Herbert Read had not at this time written anything on Kierkegaard, but this early interest explains his reviewing of Kierkegaard's *Philosophical Fragments* for *The Spectator* in 1937 and of Lowrie's *Kierkegaard* in the same journal in 1938. His 1945 volume *A Coat of Many Colours* devotes several pages (pp.248-58) to Kierkegaard[15].

Dru, who had let Herbert Read study Haecker's Kierkegaard essays, was thinking of launching them in tandem with the projected Kierkegaard translation he was now planning jointly with Herbert Read. Dru was convinced of the need for a translation based on the Danish original and not on Christoph Schrempf's unsatisfactory German version (a similar comment would later be made in the Preface to Dru's edition of *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*, p.x): 'I have been going through *Enten-Eller* [*Either-Or*] with this German as (what at school is called) a 'crib'[...] The Danish is a great deal clearer of course but this German is nothing like the original, often alters or leaves out sentences and even twists the meaning. Schrempf is an old scoundrel. *Our* translation will be very different – I hope.' Haecker's view of Schrempf as a translator of Kierkegaard was very similar.

The nucleus of the joint English volume, which Dru and Haecker

eventually brought out in 1937 with Oxford University Press, emerges in a letter of 28 November 1933: Dru would 'write a biographical introduction' and wanted Haecker 'to expand your present essay [*Der Begriff der Wahrheit bei Sören Kierkegaard*, one presumes] and then they might be published together, or separately, just a[s] you thought fit.' Haecker immediately agreed and suggested as a good basis for such a biographical essay Frithiof Brandt's book *Den unge Kierkegaard* and the books by Geismar[16].

However Dru was now concerned that the Kierkegaard essays he had translated were 'not the right length' for a commercially viable volume. 'But if I added the „Begriff" and some of the „Nachwort", both of which we marked carefully for translation, it would make a good collection of essays. Could you add something to it? I would suggest something on the psychology which if I remember, comes in only a little into the Begriff. Then it would make a fine book – Essays on S.K. – '.

Dru intended to start translating Kierkegaard's Journals, 'almost at once – for guided by *your* translation I could easily do it now.' He actually started in May 1934, finishing volume one exactly two years later and completing the whole translation in April 1937, as he noted in his copy of Haecker's German version.

Dru's attempt to get Faber & Faber also interested in the volume of Kierkegaard essays failed. Haecker was philosophical about the disappointment. He suggested that Dru get in touch with the American Quaker, Professor Douglas Steere, whom he had met in Munich and who seemed interested in an Anglo-American edition of Kierkegaard.

Douglas Steere's article 'Discovering Kierkegaard' (*Christendom* 1938, pp. 145-51) links with Haecker's *Der Begriff der Wahrheit*. In a letter of 7 May 1934 Dru refers to 'Steer', thanking Haecker for writing to the latter and adding that a letter from Steere had reached him a few days previously. Clearly the correspondence had concerned Steere's translation plan, for Dru remarks that Steere 'had apparently made no arrangement and simply wants to translate some of the Christelige Taler'. At that stage Dru was planning some extensive English translation of Kierkegaard, and so he would write to Steere and say that if he were successful in arranging such an edition he would hope that Steere would do the translation of the *Christian Discourses*. In the end, Lowrie translated the book, and it appeared in 1939[17].

Dru was 'still working laboriously at Danish' but did not find it as easy as at first he had thought (letter of March 1934). Dru's repeated

failure to get publishers interested in Haecker and Kierkegaard depressed him. Some days after writing to Haecker in May 1934 that he had still not started work on his translation of Kierkegaard's diaries, Dru actually began the work. In April 1934 he had written that he was unable to share the common view that Kierkegaard developed 'from the aesthetic outlook towards the religious attitude'. 'Reading the complete Journals for the first time it seems to me that Kgd knew better. What is so striking to me is the fact that *from the beginning* he was a religious writer with all his ideas in seed.' Haecker's view was the same and on 7 May 1934 Dru happily noted their agreement.

Having struggled before with the translation of *Der Begriff der Wahrheit bei Sören Kierkegaard* for the collection of Haecker's essays in English Dru was now proposing to translate it from the French version by Jean Chuzeville (Paris 1934), 'using the German, and add it to what I already have translated', i.e. Haecker's essay 'Sören Kierkegaard' from *Christentum und Kultur*. Dru still hoped to use T. S. Eliot's influence to further his projects: 'But I am afraid he is too full of modern poets and in particular to [!] full of himself – perhaps that is why his writing is so full of „I". A great pity that such a man should be lost in the morass of Anglo-Catholicism – a bastard church if ever there was one'.

The letter Dru sent on 1 June 1934 was full of unexpected good news. Dru had been asked by two papers, *The Criterion* and *The European Quarterly*, to write something about Kierkegaard: 'I still cannot get over the fact that it is I who have to introduce Kierkegaard to England [...] it is as if fate pursued Kgd relentlessly into his grave. Here am I who have never written a word in my life, who have not read a word of philosophy, and with a positive 'antitalent' for translation, landed with the most astonishing phenomenon in European litterature[!].' Most of the letter dealt with the problem of selecting appropriately representative passages for translation and then writing about them. 'Obviously it is not at all easy to explain Christianity in ten lines and that seems to be the difficulty with Kierkegaard. It would be easy enough, in a short selection from the diaries, to put forward the witty aphoristic side'.

Dru admitted to Haecker that his plans for both articles included much about Kierkegaard's mission which was 'stolen from your writings': 'You will forgive my being such a nuisance but as there is not a soul I can talk to in England it is a very great comfort to write to you.' In an letter of June 1934, Haecker largely approved Dru's plans for the two papers and suggested a 'nice little autobiography' put together from

the most important passages of the Journals. In his view, despite its length, Kierkegaard's *Stadien* was the most coherent work of art and should really be forced upon a publisher. By October 1934 Dru had done 'a lot of work at Kgd' but felt that he was not getting any further in understanding him. His translation of the *Kritik der Gegenwart* (Dru published it later as *The Present Age*, 1962) was complete in a rough version and he was constantly adding to the amount of the Journals translated. He now had a definite plan for their joint book: 'My intention is to write his life as simply as possible, add a few pages on some of his main ideas taking as leitmotiv „Hiin Enkelte" [that individual]. I shall, with your permission include your „Essay" (1922) [the preface to the *Religiöse Reden* of 1922] & some passages from „Der Begriff der W.". I may conclude with the sermon from Entweder-Oder. Do you think that this will make a good *Introduction?*'.

Haecker encouraged Dru to proceed, but suggested that Kierkegaard's *last* sermon 'Guds Uforanderlighed' [God's Unchangeability] might be a better choice: 'it is greater, simpler, without too much dialectics, and also a great comfort in our time'. It was one of the texts Haecker had translated himself and published in *Der Brenner* (vol. 7, pt. 1, 1922, pp. 26-40).

In January 1935 Dru wrote of his contact with Dr Lowrie of Princeton who was trying to launch a complete Kierkegaard edition with 'the support of the American-Scandinavian Foundation and of the Rask-Orsted Fund'. Lowrie had offered to leave Dru 'in control of the English Edition of which half would be translated here and the rest in America, all of it to be submitted to the Editors.' Dru was not over-impressed by Lowrie and thought that not only was 'his heart [...] bigger than his brain' but 'his ideas are positively childish'. However, the joint volume now 'nearing completion' had turned out to be not only 'very much longer' but also 'alas, very much below the standard which I had hoped to reach'. Would Haecker 'have the goodness to read' the existing rough version of 'about 75,000 words (including your Essay and the Kritik der Gegenwart)'?. As yet Dru was undecided whether he should accept Haecker's advice about the one sermon he intended to include; he was more inclined to think 'that one of the more dialectical ones would appeal more to the reader because of its wit'.

Haecker was more than willing to look at the text and must have read the typescript of this very ambitious and substantial project in the autumn of 1935. He explained that parts of his first essay on Kierkegaard

would have to be cut or changed and expressedly authorised Dru to publish his essay 'wie und wo Sie ihn wollen' and to cut any passages, particularly polemical ones, which 'are no longer appropriate today'. He urged Dru not to leave the matter for too long now. On the sermon he had not changed his mind: 'Gottes Unveränderlichkeit' struck him as a fine example, with plenty of dialectics in it. He conceded that the first sermon, 'daß man vor Gott immer Unrecht hat', might also be appropriate. That was a reference to the sermon of the Judge's friend at the end of *Either-Or II* on the edification implied in the thought that as against God we are always in the wrong.

In February 1936 Haecker wrote to Dru from Zurich in Switzerland from a lecture tour for which permission had been inadvertently been granted by the German state: 'I must not say a single word in public in my own country [...] I have been named as enemy of the state', adding 'I hope that your labours over Kierkegaard will soon be rewarded by success. In a few hours I shall travel back to Germany and I do not know what might happen. In any case I shall no longer be able to write the truth.'

Their joint volume did indeed go to print that summer. On 14 July 1936 Haecker asked to see a copy of the translation of his essay in which Dru's additions or alterations were marked. Dru quickly obliged. Oxford University Press wanted to publish the little volume on the same day as Professor Swenson's translation of *Filosofiske Smuler* in 1937.

After years of effort the slim volume was a disappointing outcome. As the Preface would explain, the 67pp volume consisted of 'Theodor Haecker's essay ... given in the form of a lecture at Zürich in 1924', 'the epilogue to his translation [of 1922] of Kierkegaard's *Discourses at Communion Service on Friday* (1851)' with a 'biographical note ... added by the translator'. It did not contain *Der Begriff der Wahrheit* and Dru was 'trying to pursuade [!] the O.U.P to publish the *Begriff* when the Efterskrift comes out – though that will not be for some time.'

Returning the manuscript of the volume on 21 July 1936, Haecker had attached a few notes to Dru's biographical introduction, one of them to the statement on page 2 that as a child Kierkegaard was melancholy: 'that is not correct in this form and creates a false impression. To the world around him he appeared as very open-minded, lively, witty, ironic, cheerful even, as you yourself comment later'. Today we read that as Dru's view, on p. 1 of the volume. Haecker returned the result of many years of toil to Dru with the dismissal: 'May this libellus

now have its own fatum, over which we have no further controll'. The proofs were completed by Dru and Haecker in October. The work was done.

Dru's invitation in November 1934 to visit England did result in Haecker's visit to London in March 1938 with a paper on 'Der Christ und die Geschichte'. Haecker's letter of thanks at the end of March spoke in carefully encoded language of the benefit he had derived from the visit: it even slightly brightened his habitual melancholy.

In 1939 Haecker began work on an entirely new preface for a second edition of his translation of Kierkegaard's diaries. The Kierkegaard it portrayed was also a self-characterisation: a writer whose own life bears witness to the things he writes about, a man of prayer, a writer in the spiritual no-man's land of his time having to make decisions, a diarist. The first draft of this new text was written as a series of entries in Haecker's own secret diary against National Socialism which, if discovered, would have cost him his life. After the war his friend Alexander Dru would translate the *Tag- und Nachtbücher 1939-1945* as *Journal in the Night*; part of his excellent Introduction also appeared in the summer of 1949 in the *Downside Review* as 'Haecker's Point of View' [18].

Theodor Haecker had continued to write even when his work could no longer be published. One of these manuscripts was *Der Buckel Kierkegaards* which he completed in October 1943; Alexander Dru would later translate that text and bring it out with an important introduction as *Kierkegaard the Cripple.*

The account given thus far has shown Dru's dependence on Haecker – as a stimulus first to reading Kierkegaard and then to translating both Kierkegaard himself and Haecker's work on him. What has also emerged is how through this Dru himself developed into a Kierkegaard scholar. Therefore two matters need to be discussed by way of conclusion – first, Dru's achievement as a translator and secondly, the contribution Haecker enabled him to make to Kierkegaard scholarship. Though Dru was so modest and self-effacing that he actually described himself as having 'an anti-talent for translation', he proved a remarkably sensitive translator. In an undated letter of 1958, he said that it had occurred to him that he might do another paperback volume of Kierkegaard as well as the abridged Journals, 'perhaps one of the short works, taking the opportunity to brighten up the rather sub-fusc translations which dull the vitality of the original so unnecessarily'. He added: 'The good Lowrie

has many virtues but a nervous prose style is not one of them'. It is possible that Douglas V Steere's 1938 article in *Christendom* would in any case have led to the translation of some of Haecker's Kierkegaard essays and perhaps of the Journals; but Dru's interest antedated this by some eight years and his translation of Haecker appeared in 1937 and that of the Journals in 1938. Moreover, it is unlikely that another translator would have been so attuned to the author's way of thinking as to catch the rhythm and the feeling of the language, something which Haecker noted with pleasure early in their correspondence (13 July 1931). As for his translation of Kierkegaard, it is so remarkable an achievement that one can hardly credit that it is the work of a man who had begun to learn Danish only seven years previously. The first thing that needs to be said is that the translation is completely accurate. Reading Kierkegaard in English is enough to make one aware of his self-consciousness as a stylist; but one might not grasp that in his Journal he cultivated a simplicity and directness that are at times almost journalistic and at others quite lyrical. Dru's achievement was to have combined accuracy with a sensitivity and verbal skill that made these pages of the Papers a proper representation of Kierkegaard's private musings. One of the few people to attempt a translation of the Papers was T H Croxall, who for years lived in Copenhagen as priest in charge of the English church. One can measure the excellence of Dru's translation by comparing their renderings of a prayer in the Journal (II A 320).

> Father in heaven, when the thought of Thee wakens in our soul, let it not waken as an agitated bird which flutters confusedly about, but as a child waking from sleep with a celestial smile (Croxall, *Meditations from Kierkegaard*, p.51).[19]

> Father in heaven! When the thought of Thee wakes in our hearts let it not awaken like a frightened bird that flies about in dismay but like a child waking from its sleep with a heavenly smile (Dru, *Journals*, p. 248).

A simple matter like the usage of the more common 'wakes' rather than 'waken' is a clear instance of Dru's sensitivity to Kierkegaard's almost colloquial style; and nothing could be a better example of that than his use of 'heavenly' rather than 'celestial'. The point is that Kierkegaard was an accomplished Latinist, so that the colloquial character of the

Danish here is all the more telling. Again, the phrase 'flies about in dismay' is so much more graphic than 'flutters about confusedly'. So, despite the fact that the volume represents only a small portion of the *Papirer*, this 570 page translation, which is consistently of this high standard of accuracy and elegance, is a monumental work.

Turning to Dru's work as a Kierkegaard scholar is to move into not only an uncharted area but almost an impenetrable one. One difficulty is that some of his work was published anonymously as reviews in the *Times Literary Supplement*. The other is that his major work was never published, and we have only an indication of its content. Some clue to his general view of Kierkegaard can be gained from noting the first relevant publications of 1933-35. The very first work was a translation of George Catteau's article 'Bergson, Kierkegaard and Mysticism' published in the *Dublin Review* (1933, pp.70-78). This was followed by a translation of writings by Kierkegaard himself – first in *The European Quarterly* of 1934 (vol.1, no.2, pp.115-20): 'A Personal Confession' and in the same journal a year later (vol.1, no.4, pp.215-21) 'The Public and the Press'. The choice of these pieces is indicative of Dru's own rapport with Kierkegaard; for the first of the two is a statement of Kierkegaard's conviction that his destiny was that of a prophet, and the latter is the expression of his disgust with bourgeois mediocrity and the lying connivance of the press. Throughout this time Dru, as he remarks in a letter to Haecker of June 1934, had 'not a soul' to whom he could talk in England. Kierkegaard's uncompromising stress on truth in doctrine and Christian practice clearly found an echo in Dru as he spoke disdainfully of accommodations in ecclesiastical development – as can be seen from his contemptuous reference to T. S. Eliot's Anglo-Catholicism.

His own thinking about Kierkegaard's work found its focus in the person of Kierkegaard as thinker and prophet. That was how he approached the task of providing the introduction to Haecker's *Sören Kierkegaard*[20]. Very much like Newman he wanted to approach doctrine from life, and as Newman (in his diary note about *The Development of Doctrine*) had urged himself 'Write it historically', so Dru was determined to approach Kierkegaard biographically. As early as May 1934 he had told Haecker that he would like to write something like Brandt's *The Young Søren Kierkegaard* (*Den unge Søren Kierkegaard*) – but 'on his whole life'. Some months later he describes for Haecker the plan for the introduction: 'My intention is to write his life as simply as possible, add a few pages on one of his main ideas, taking as leit-motiv hiin enkelte

[that individual]'. That brief Biographical Note Dru wrote as a preamble to Haecker's book did in fact prefigure not only his main published study of Kierkegaard, the introduction to *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*, but also the major work which he wrote but which never saw publication. Referring to *The Journals of Soren Kierkegaard* Lowrie described it as 'invaluable to anyone who would understand the life of S. K. or the development of his thought'; and, though he insisted that there was 'more light yet to shine from the twenty big volumes of the Journals', he believed that Dru had adequately provided for the biographical interest (Søren Kierkegaard, *Attack on Christendom*, London, O.U.P, 1946 Preface p. v). Essentially, then, Dru's impact as a scholar was that he provided a clear, accurate and compact biography of Kierkegaard – and this by the admission of the man who in the same year had published the largest and the most sympathetic biographical study that has been published.

To assess Dru's contribution one needs to recall that only three studies of Kierkegaard's life and thought had been published in England before 1935. The very first was a study by Francis Fulford published in 1911. It was a short book of 75 pages, but it seems to have had some popularity since there is evidence of another edition published in 1913. Entitled *Søren Kierkegaard, a study*, it is indeed more of a study than a biographical picture. Most of the book is taken up with an exposition of the various themes of Kierkegaard's thought. It would be interesting to discover exactly what material Fulford had at his disposal; for he seems to refer to the Barfod-Gottsched edition of the *Papirer* published in Copenhagen in 1869-81. However, as a study it is not grounded in a complete biographical base and – for all its interest as the very first English work on Kierkegaard – it is a rather one-sided sketch of Kierkegaard as a paradoxical thinker or rather, a thinker with an 'infatuation with paradox'. Here is a Kierkegaard who 'would press back the boundaries and enclose common-sense within a too small domain'. Coming much later, with over twenty years of occasional English reference but fairly consistent German and French publication over the years (including the important work of Emmanuel Hirsch, the significant study by Emil Brunner, and the great work of Jean Wahl), we have a more complete picture of Soren Kierkegaard as philosopher and theologian presented in the books by E.L. Allen and J.A. Bain, both published in 1935[21]. Yet even here there is no sense of 'the secret' or the 'essence' of Kierkegaard, and this is what strikes one at once about Dru's 'Introduction'. His approach is epitomised by the quotation that precedes it – Kierke-

gaard's description of himself (*Point of View* p.iii) as marked out by genius and suffering. This Dru regarded as the leit-motif of the Journals, but he was not then led to view Kierkegaard in any simplistic way or to produce some one-dimensional picture of him. The biography is organized with superb economy and yet with a fine sense of Kierkegaard's multi-faceted genius. It is divided into two parts – Part I: Father and Son – The Great Earthquake – Regine Olsen; Part II: The Corsair – The Book of the Judge – The Instant. This outline gives as it were the lineaments of a portrait, and what is impressive is the way in which this essentially accurate shape is given the significant detail that makes the features clear and recognizable. Three such details can be mentioned briefly – Dru's nice sense of Kierkegaard's individual philosophical style, the recognition of his interest in politics, and finally the clear grasp of his essentially religious motivation and purpose. Before turning to a final comment on these, it is worth mentioning that the book he projected would have given a fuller and more definitive exposition of this interpretation. In a 1958 letter to John Heywood-Thomas, Dru had spoken of the way in which books on Kierkegaard had not settled down to the core of his mind – 'But as I read your pages.[22] I came to the conclusion that there was in fact one central point which has always been overlooked as relatively unimportant and which is in fact the KEY to his mind'.

The interpretation of Kierkegaard's philosophical stance and of his essentially religious authorship links Dru very obviously with Haecker. In the two works *Sören Kierkegaard* and *Kierkegaard the Cripple* Haecker emphasized that the contribution of Kierkegaard to philosophy was to have recalled it to the basic subjectivity of the thinker, bringing the person of the philosopher into his philosophy. That new departure in philosophy is for him likewise only understood when it is approached from theology. As noted already, Dru had in a letter to Haecker (7 May 1934) voiced his agreement with the latter's interpretation against the views of those who would see Kierkegaard as *progressing* to a religious authorship. Haecker was right – from the beginning Kierkegaard had been a religious author. Later, Dru was able to place Kierkegaard more deliberately in the Western philosophical tradition linking him with Romanticism; but again it is significant that this was done in his rich introduction to Haecker's *Journal in the Night* (pp. xxii-xxiii). It is significant, too, that there he went on to say (pp. xxvff.) that the importance of Kierkegaard's work was that it was an attempt to find the meaning of tradition – and

by that he meant something more theological than literary. Yet the very dependence on Haecker shows Dru's originality. Sensitive and cultured as he was, he linked Kierkegaard with the 'failures among the first generation of Romantics', linking him particularly with Coleridge (as well as with Newman). In this way he was anxious to show the reintegration of thought with feeling in Kierkegaard, which was a positive contribution as against the merely negative one of rejecting rationalism (ibid., pp. xxix-xxx, xl). The final point singled out above was one of Dru's many throw-away lines in the Introduction to *The Journals*:

> To succeeding generations it came as as surprise to find him beginning his career in the political field. – ... The lecture which he gave at the University Club in 1835 was followed by articles in Heiberg's *Flyvende Post*, and their success established a connection which Kierkegaard never ceased to value (*The Journals*, p.xxix).

Nothing further was said by Dru on the subject; but, apart from that short comment only some three or so papers have in fact been written on that subject. What we are able now to appreciate so clearly as Kierkegaard's prophetic understanding of capitalism and of the phenomenon of the crowd was in this way perceived quite unexpectedly by Dru as early as 1938. To have bequeathed so many tasks to succeeding scholars was the measure of his greatness as a scholar as well as of a provider of the data for scholarship.

Notes

1 Cf. Lewis A. Lawson's comment that 'he was more responsible than anyone else for introducing Kierkegaard to England', Lewis A Lawson (ed.), *Kierkegaard's Presence in Contemporary American Life*, Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, N.J. 1971, p. xi.

2 The authors are indebted to Bernhard Dru for his generous assistance in piecing together the evidence and granting permission to use Dru's letters. Thanks are also due to Irene Straub, Haecker's daughter, and to the manuscript department of the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach.

3 Details of Theodor Haecker's life and work may be found in the *Marbacher Magazin* 49/1989: *Theodor Haecker 1879-1945*. Bearbeitet von Hinrich Siefken. Mit einer Haecker-Bibliographie von Eva Dambacher.

4 Haecker earned his living, thanks to the generosity of his friend Ferdinand Schreiber from Esslingen whose family owned the paper, as a member of the editorial staff.

5 In 1934 Sheed & Ward published A.W. Wheen's translation of *Virgil, Father of the West.* Almost certainly thanks to Dru's influence the same publisher also brought out a translation of Karl Pfleger's *Wrestlers with Christ* (London 1936), a collection of essays on Bloy, Peguy, Gide, Chesterton, Dostoyevsky, Soloviev and Berdyaev, written against the creeds of 'class, blood and race' gaining influence in Europe, which quoted Haecker twice in support (pp. 160 and 281). – When T.S. Eliot re-read Haecker's essay in Dru's translation he thought that 'Theodicy and Tragedy' (*The Criterion* 13, April 1934, pp. 371-381) would, because of the difficult issues involved, be pretty tough going for all but 1% of its usual readers.

6 Cf. the recent annotated edition H. Siefken (ed.), *Theodor Haecker. Tag- und Nachtbücher 1939-1945*, Haymon, Innsbruck 1989 and H. Siefken 'Vom Bild des Menschen. Die Weiße Rose und Theodor Haecker' in *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 37 (1993). For an introduction to Haecker see now *Theodor Haecker: Leben und Werk. Texte, Briefe, Erinnerungen, Würdigungen.* Ed. B. Hanssler and H. Siefken. Esslinger Studien, vol. 15, 1995 (Stadtarchiv Esslingen).

7 *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer* Udg. af P. A. Heiberg og V. Kuhr, København, Gyldendal, 1909-48.

8 It is worth noting that the distinguished Jesuit theologian Erich Przywara published a paper on Kierkegaard and Newman in *Newman Studien* Nürnberg 1948.

9 Theodor Haecker, 'Notizen', in *Der Brenner* 8 (1923), pp. 9-14.

10 Theodor Haecker, 'Christentum und Kultur. Aus Anlaß eines Buches' in *Hochland* 21 (1923/24), vol. I, pt. 1, October 1923, pp. 1-24.

11 The three pieces were published in *Hochland* 26, vol. 1, pt. 1, October 1928, pp. 27-40; 26, vol. 2, pt. 11, August 1929, pp. 476-493; and 27, vol. 2, pt. 7, April 1930, pp. 1-26 respectively.

12 Haecker had published a lecture on the subject, using the same title, in *Hochland* 26, vol. 2, pt. 11, August 1929, pp. 476-493, but was working on a substantially enlarged version which appeared as a small book in 1932 (Brenner-Verlag, Innsbruck).

13 The essay had previously been published in *Hochland* 22, vol. 2, pt. 8, May 1925, pp. 188-212 and was there identified as reworked lecture given to students in Zurich in January 1924.

14 The *Hochland* version (*Hochland* 28, vol. 2, pt. 7, April 1931, pp. 1-27) was a lecture which Haecker turned into a book of almost 150 pp.

15 Herbert Read, *A Coat of Many Colours, Occasional Essays*, London, Routledge, 1945.

16 Frithiof Brandt, *Den unge Kierkegaard*, København, Levin + Munksgaard, 1929. E Geismar, *Søren Kierkegaard*, København, Gad, 1927-28.

17 Søren Kierkegaard, *Christian Discourses*, Translated with an Introduction by Walter Lowrie, London, Oxford University Press, 1938.

18 See *Downside Review* 1949, pp. 260-275; cf. *Journal in the Night*, Harvill Press, London 1949, pp. xvi-xxxii.

19 T. H. Croxall (Translated and ed.), *Meditations from Kierkegaard*, London, Nisbet & Co., 1955.

20 *Søren Kierkegaard.* By Theodor Haecker. Translated and with a Biographical Note by Alexander Dru, London, Oxford University Press, 1937, pp. 1-7.

21 E. L. Allen, *Kierkegaard: His Life and Thought*, London, Stanley Nott, 1935. John A. Bain, *Soren Kierkegaard. His Life and Religious Teaching*, London, SCM Press 1935.

22 This is a reference to the review of John Heywood-Thomas' study of 1957, entitled *Subjectivity and Paradox* which Dru was preparing for the *Times Literary Supplement.*