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# Søren Kierkegaard in Russian Literature

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The increased post-war interest in Kierkegaard has perhaps obscured the fact that because of certain specific circumstances Russia was one of the first countries in the world where his works were translated and, to a certain extent, understood.

I

This relatively early acquaintance with Kierkegaard stems from the entry, in 1871, into the service of the Northern Telegraph Society in Omsk of a Danish *litteratur*, Peter Emmanuel Hansen (1846-1930), who lived in Russia under the name of Pjētr Gotfridovič until 1917. Having learnt Russian, Hansen began at the end of the 1870s to translate the works of Scandinavian writers (at first alone, later together with his wife A. V. Vasil'eva). In the course of time their publications in Russian amounted almost to an entire library. Among Hansen's first translations were works by Kierkegaard, whose pupil he considered himself to be. Hansen was personally acquainted and corresponded with his nephew H. Lund, who in an unpublished letter to Hansen in 1892 mentions the important role played by his father in Kierkegaard's life. Hansen wrote more fully on this subject in his article »Kirkegor« in »Enciklopedičeskij slovar«<sup>1</sup> (ed. Brokgauz-Efron, v. 15, 1895). This article gives a detailed account of the philosopher's life and work, and may well also be of interest to the Danish reader, although Hansen largely relies on the portraits drawn by G. Brandes, P. Heiberg and H. Höffding. However, a long campaign to awaken interest in Kierkegaard had preceded this article. We find the first known mention of the Danish writer's name in Hansen's letter of April 17th, 1878 to I. A. Gončarov, whose »An Ordinary Story« he had translated into Danish: »There is a Danish writer (Søren Kierkegaard), who speaks far more eloquently and convincingly, and if I translated for you various passages from his work, I'm sure I could persuade you! What a dialectician! 'Not even the Devil could get the better of him in an argument', is what people used to say of him, and you would have fallen for him!« (Literaturnyj arkhiv, No. 6, M.-L., 1961, p. 73). In his letter Hansen polemicizes against Gončarov's sceptical attitude to his young readers, who, Gončarov claimed, did not understand him. Thanks to his acquaintanceship with Gončarov, Hansen was admitted to literary circles in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and

having set himself the task of translating Kierkegaard into Russian, he began to introduce the members of these circles to Kierkegaard's writings. One of the first to be approached was the well-known historian and legal scholar K. D. Kavelin. In 1886 Hansen offered his translation of »The Aphorisms of an Aesthete« to the journal »Vestnik Evropy«<sup>2</sup> and wrote to the editor M. Stasjulevič: »No sooner had the late Konstantin Dmitrievič Kavelin become slightly acquainted with him, that is, Kierkegaard, through the translation I had begun of another article on ethics than he recognized in him a writer of genius, a knowledge of whom, as K. D. wrote in a letter, through his biography alone together with copious extracts from his works in a good translation would be of enormous benefit to the Russian public ... Having heard from Kavelin that you are, in general, reluctant to print articles of a more abstract nature, I have had no hesitation in acceding to Mrs. Evreinova's request for the article« (Arkhir Gos. Publičnoj Biblioteki v Leningrade. Fond A. N. Pypina (621)). In a letter to L. Tolstoj of October 16th, 1885 (arkhir L'va Tolstogo V Moskve) Hansen adds that having read the beginning of his translation of the article »The Harmonious Development of the Aesthetic and Ethical Principles in the Human Personality«, Kavelin »had expressed considerable sympathy and interest, but also concern that the subtle exposition of a Danish writer for a Russian public unfamiliar with German, and even more so with Danish, philosophy would in all probability disappear without trace«. But unfortunately the publisher of »Severnyj vestnik«<sup>3</sup> (A. M. Evreinova) »was so captivated by the writer that she did not consider any editing of the article to be necessary, nor even to show it to any competent specialists before printing it«, for which reason Hansen believed that his first attempt at acquainting the Russian reader with Kierkegaard by means of the above-mentioned article, published in »Severnyj vestnik« in September-December 1885, had not proved to be entirely successful. »The Aphorisms of an Aesthete« were published in »Vestnik Evropy« in May 1886. Hansen also introduced Kierkegaard's texts to the philosopher Vl. Solov'ëv as well as to the historian and Overprocurator of the Holy Synod K. P. Pobedonoscev, who both, as Hansen writes in his unpublished notes, »expressed the most lively interest and repeatedly urged me to continue my labours«. Pobedonoscev's positive attitude to Kierkegaard may, at first sight, seem surprising, but he was, despite his reputation as a reactionary, a man of discernment and fairly well acquainted with Western thought. In his book »Moskovskij cbornik«<sup>4</sup> (1896) we find, among excerpts from T. Carlyle, R. Emerson and others, a slightly emended quotation from »The Aphorisms of an Aesthete«: »The dreams of which our lives and doings are full will come true some time after ... Alas! Will they, then, be realised as in Swift's case: in his youth he constructed a madhouse, and in his old age he found refuge in that very house«. In Solov'ëv's work, however, we encounter only the bare mention of Kierkegaard's name.

The history of Lev Tolstoj's confrontation with Kierkegaard is, on the other hand, of special interest. In 1885 Hansen initiated a correspondence

with Tolstoj, but for a long time received no answer. The proofs of »The Harmonious Development«, which Hansen sent to Tolstoj, were received and read in January 1886, and the latter made some notes in them (preserved in Tolstoj's library in Jasnaja Poljana). In his letter of October 16th, 1885 Hansen wrote that under the influence of Tolstoj's writings of the preceding years, he had translated Kierkegaard's article »For Self-Examination«, the first part of which »deals with the question of how the Gospels should be read. It is intended for Protestants but might after rewriting also be useful for the Russian reader«. Hansen went on to give a short general description of Kierkegaard's work. Although he received no reply from Tolstoj, he heard that this first sending, as he writes in his unpublished notes, »awoke, as I was informed by his friends, a particular interest in this writer«. Hansen now began to prepare for a visit to Jasnaja Poljana. With this in view, he translated a number of Kierkegaard's aphorisms and thoughts from his journal for 1847. »In my selection of these extracts, I was guided not so much by my personal views as by the impression of L. N. that I had acquired through the reading of his writings of recent years and from conversations with his friends: N. N. Strakhov, V. G. Čertkov, I. A. Birjukov and I. I. Gorbunov-Posadov. I had particularly in mind the internal conflict between Tolstoj the artist and Tolstoj the thinker and moralist, which at times manifested itself with such force that it compelled Tolstoj to reject his entire creative-artistic production. In Kierkegaard the poet-artist was subordinated to the thinker, or rather, both were harmoniously fused in his work, as opposed to L. N.'s writing, which was at times dominated by the poet-artist and at times by the thinker-moralist, who had repudiated the artist«.

In April 1890 Hansen travelled to Jasnaja Poljana. He describes his stay there in the article »Pjat'dnei v Jasnoj Poljane«<sup>5</sup> (The journal »Istoričeskij vestnik«, 1917, no. 1). Translations of Kierkegaard, »which had a lot in common with the spirit of Tolstoj« are given as the main reason for the visit. Hansen brought with him translations of the articles »In Vino Veritas«, »On Don Juan in Music and Literature« (these translations, believed to have been lost, have in fact been preserved in Tolstoj's library), and also three exercise books of aphorisms. Furthermore, Hansen had just completed the translation into Danish of »The Kreutzer Sonata« and also wished to translate Tolstoj's as yet unfinished Afterword to the tale. It was apparently Tolstoj's determination to unite sexual desire with the demands of Christian morality, which finds its most paradoxical expression in this story, that had given Hansen the idea of the two writers' kinship. For in »The Kreutzer Sonata« Tolstoj advocates the total renunciation of carnal love, while the most important event in Kierkegaard's life was his decision not to marry and his attempts at basing this decision on a Christian viewpoint.

During his stay with Tolstoj Hansen spoke at length with him about Kierkegaard: »In general Lev Nikolaevič has a very high opinion of Kierkegaard, although he finds the Danish philosopher »young«, as a result of which there is much youthful rashness in him. This opinion is, of course,

due to Lev Nikolaevič's insufficient acquaintanceship with Kierkegaard; of his many works he knows only the few, mainly of an aesthetic character, that I have managed to translate. But, as I have already mentioned, Lev Nikolaevič is very interested in Kierkegaard, and in the course of our conversations, hearing me refer to certain of the latter's ideas and sentences, he urged me many times to devote myself to the task of acquainting the Russian reader with this remarkable thinker. When I told him that I had already translated a few things but had met with considerable difficulties with regard to having them printed, Lev Nikolaevič remarked that I ought first to write a separate book containing a biography of Kierkegaard and a full examination of his writings. »Then you can be sure that a publisher will be found«, added Lev Nikolaevič«. This account is supplemented in Hansen's unpublished notes, in which he writes: »In a short note »Why is the poet so dangerous for people, and why do people so love the poet?« I found, it seemed to me, the key to the conflict which tormented L. N., and the fact that, having read the note aloud, he sat silent for some minutes in thought – only confirmed my supposition. Although L. N. was much occupied during the course of my stay at Jasnaja Poljana with the Afterword to »The Kreutzer Sonata«, he nevertheless managed to read Kierkegaard's aphorisms and thoughts and give »marks« to those that pleased him most. (The system used was the Russian five-point scale, in which 5 is the highest mark. – L. T.) Judging from the fact that out of 62 separate aphorisms and thoughts, 24 got »5« and 2 got »4«, I was satisfied with the extent to which my selection had corresponded to L. N.'s state of mind at that time. Unfortunately I did not have the opportunity to converse with L. N. on this subject, so I did not find out why he had apparently ignored certain aphorisms, which I had counted on being of particular interest to him (among others, nos. 19 & 20)«. (See APPENDIX I. The list of aphorisms translated by Hansen with the marks given by Tolstoj). After his visit Hansen again wrote to Tolstoj in August-September 1891 and sent him a portrait of Kierkegaard. In a letter of September 14th, 1891 Tolstoj thanked him for the portrait and, among other things, sharply criticized H. Ibsen on the grounds that his plays and the characters placed in them were contrived. (Although Hansen cites the opinion of his friend, the philosopher and publicist N. N. Strakhov to the effect that this was the normal manifestation of »antipathy between great literary figures«, one ought to bear in mind Tolstoj's unfamiliarity with the special features of Scandinavian life, which differs in many ways from life in the rest of Europe and in Russia). Tolstoj, however, contrasts him with Kierkegaard and M. Bjørnsterne Bjørnson, who, »although they are different kinds of writer, both possess the most important quality of an author – sincerity, passion, seriousness. They think seriously and say what they think« (L. Tolstoj, *Polnoe sobranie sočinenij*, v. 65, M., 1953, p. 45). As Hansen writes in his unpublished notes, Tolstoj repeated this opinion of the three leading Scandinavian writers when he and Tolstoj met some years later in Moscow. Hansen had expected a more sympathetic attitude to Ibsen, a number of

whose plays had been written under the influence of Kierkegaard's ideas, for example »Brand« (see P. & A. Hansen's notes on the complete works of Ibsen in Russian – SPB, 1907, v.1). In a conversation with Hansen in March 1900, however, (see »Scando-slavica«, v. 24, Copenhagen, 1978, p. 61) Tolstoj was more critical of Kierkegaard: »Great thoughts, often of wonderful genius, but poorly worked out and unclearly expressed. Hard to understand«. This is close to what N. Strakhov wrote to Tolstoj in a letter of April 24th, 1890: »I've been reading him, reading and reading – terribly hard going. Then I got hold of a German translation, a whole book – I thought it would be easier. But no, it was the same! And the translator, his great admirer, writes in the foreword that he can't guarantee that he has understood him everywhere. But how has it come about that so incomprehensible a writer has gained such fame and acquired disciples?« (Perepiska L. N. Tolstogo c N. N. Strakhovym. P. 1914, p. 401). This is particularly noteworthy, since in August 1889 he had written to Tolstoj concerning Kierkegaard: »For some reason I expect much from this writer« (ibid, p. 390). It should be noted that apparently this particular interest was, in part, due to Strakhov's ascetic mode of life and certain aspects of his biography (the renunciation of the girl he loved) that related him to Kierkegaard. Despite his critical attitude to the Danish philosopher, Strakhov nevertheless defended him against the Neo-Kantian A. I. Vvedenskij, who did not wish to afford Kierkegaard any recognition whatsoever. In 1894 under the title of »Naslaždenie i dolg« (Pleasure and duty), Hansen published part of Kierkegaard's »Either-Or«, which also contained two of his earlier translations in revised form and »A Seducer's Diary«. (It will be noted that in this selection of texts he followed Brandes, who considered these works, together with »In Vino Veritas«, to be Kierkegaard's best). Furthermore, Hansen was negotiating with I. Gorbunov-Posadov concerning the publication of »Aphorisms« by the Tolstoyan publishing house »Posrednik«<sup>6</sup> (Centr. Gos. Arkhiv Lit-ry i Isk. v Moskve, fond 122, opis'I, no. 414).

In the autumn of 1891 Hansen made the acquaintance of N. Strakhov and even wished to write a supplement to the latter's article »Tolstoj i o Tolstom«<sup>7</sup> in the form of a short account of Kierkegaard. During this period Hansen translated together with his wife Kierkegaard's speech »The Lilies of the Field and the Birds of the Air«. He also sent Tolstoj as a gift the books »Either-Or« and »Stages on Life's Way« in Danish, which are still in Tolstoj's library. It may be noted that in his »Zapiski«<sup>8</sup> D. Makovickij (Tolstoj's physician) records that on September 24th, 1905 in a conversation with a visitor from Germany, a Mr. Lepsius, Tolstoj drew attention to Kierkegaard as a religious thinker.

So great was Hansen's enthusiasm for Kierkegaard that he was guided in his own life by the ideas of the Danish philosopher. For example, Hansen once wrote to Tolstoj that, like Kierkegaard, he considered 30 to be the decisive age in a human being's life, the point at which he is able to resolve questions of life and death for himself. At times the seriousness of Hansen's attitude to Kierkegaard and to his literary labours in general evoked the

friendly ridicule of his literary colleagues. Thus, the poet V. L. Veličko composed the following expromptu verse on being invited to stand godfather for the Hansens' son Emmanuel in 1896:

You'll never say, Emmanuel,  
That I a poem did conceal,  
But gave you both these wishes kind:  
The radiance of Hans Christian's mind,  
And that you'll learn to think as hard  
And write as well as Kierkegaard.

However, the main undertaking in the Hansens' popularization of Kierkegaard was their preparation of his collected works under the title of »Etapy žizni«,<sup>9</sup> which was to have appeared in 1917, but was prevented from doing so by wars and revolutions. The major part of the translations were completed, but there were considerable cuts in the translations, and some texts were represented by summaries. Hansen wrote a long article on Kierkegaard, in which, however, being only an amateur philosopher, he devoted excessive attention to Kierkegaard's biography – childhood, youth, relations with the journals »Korsaren« and »Fædrelandet« – and relatively little to the philosophy itself. Hansen also began on »A Short History« of his attempts at acquainting the Russian public with Kierkegaard, excerpts from which have been cited above. In addition to the works already mentioned the following texts were translated, either in full or with cuts: »The Rotation of Crops«, »Repetition«, »Fear and Trembling«, »On Marriage«, »Guilty? Not Guilty?«, »Training in Christianity« »The Instant«, newspaper articles, a selection of texts entitled »In Search of Christ« and others. In the 1970s some of these translations were acquired by the so-called »Samizdat«<sup>10</sup> press, and »Fear and Trembling« was published in abbreviated form in the emigrant journal »22« (Israel) and in 1982 it appeared separately in the USA.

## II

There were, however, others besides Hansen, who from the 1880s onwards attempted to introduce Kierkegaard to the Russian reading public. In the press there appeared a number of short articles about him, based on materials from Western publications. For example, the well-known publicist Dioneo (I. v. Sklovskij) wrote an article entitled »Datskij moralist«<sup>11</sup> in the newspaper »Odesskie novosti«<sup>12</sup> (29. XI.1894). This article relied on French sources – the articles of Janen in »Nouvelle revue« and of Bernardini in »La literature Scandinavienne«. The same sources were used for a short anonymous article in »Knižki nedeli«,<sup>13</sup> no. 4, 1894. In the article »Datskij filosof Kirkegor«<sup>14</sup> in the journal »Mir božij«,<sup>15</sup> no. 7, 1894, E(frusi B. O.) devoted particular attention to »Guilty? Not Guilty?«. In the Narodnik »Russkoe bogatstvo«<sup>16</sup> (1894, no. 6) we find a review of »Naslaždenie i dolg«,<sup>17</sup> in which it is claimed that Kierkegaard is

»one of the most original thinkers, a brilliant stylist, but not a writer for a large public«. Both his old-fashioned negative view on the emancipation of women and the absence of a social element in his ethics are noted. In the journal »Russkij vestnik«,<sup>18</sup> no. 8, 1901 there is an analysis of an article by the French publicist M. Muré »A Forerunner of Ibsen«; the title itself indicates agreement with Brandes and points to the way in which interest in Kierkegaard was dependent on Ibsen's popularity. In the journal »Živopisnoe obozrenie«,<sup>19</sup> March 1902, there is a report of a lecture given by Brandes on Kierkegaard and, in particular, on his influence on Ibsen's »The Enemy of the People«. Short compilatory notices on Kierkegaard appeared in »Novyj žurnal inostranoj literatury«.<sup>20</sup> no. 3, 1903 and in »Al'manakh mirovoj literatury« (1914).<sup>21</sup> An exposition of some of Kierkegaard's ideas is to be found in N. I. Kareev's essay »Mysli ob osnovakh nravstvennosti«<sup>22</sup> (1894). Church circles also devoted attention to Kierkegaard, giving him a cool but relatively objective evaluation from Orthodox positions (T. Butkevič, »Datskij filosof Serën Kirkegor« in the journal »Vera i razum«, 1886, and L. Egorov »Kirkegard« in »Bogoslovskaja enciklopedija, Minsk, 1914). New translations also appeared. »Severnyj sbornik«<sup>23</sup> (SPB, 1908, no. 4) published Kierkegaard's speech »The Most Unhappy Man« in a translation by the Lithuanian-Russian poet Jurgis Baltrušaitis together with the translation of an extract from H. Höffding on Kierkegaard. The two translations were reviewed in the newspaper »Russkie vedomosti«,<sup>24</sup> no. 356, 1908. A small selection of Kierkegaard's aphorisms was printed in the journal »Novoe slovo«,<sup>25</sup> no. 2, 1912.

More importantly, however, independent studies on Kierkegaard by Russian authors began to appear. As early as on April 16th, 1903 H. Lund wrote to Hansen about a certain Russian girl called Rajnen, who was collecting material on Kierkegaard in Copenhagen and wished to prepare a Russian edition of his works, but this project was never realised. In 1905 another Russian researcher came to Denmark – Mikhail Vasil'ievič Odincov (1879-1965), a native of the province of Irkutsk. In 1903-04, even before he had learnt Danish, he had already written his first study on Kierkegaard, but it remained unpublished (Irkutskij oblastnoj arkhiv). The most significant result in his painstaking research (after Odincov's death a large selection of Kierkegaard's works and of literature about him was handed over to Biblioteka inostranoj literatury in Moscow) was a lecture given to the St. Petersburg Religious-Philosophical Society on October 18th, 1912. It was published under the title »Filosofija religioznogo dejstvija. Sëren Kerkegor«<sup>26</sup> in the journal »Russkaja mysl'«,<sup>27</sup> no. 10, 1912. Drawing for the main part on Höffding, who saw Kierkegaard as a representative of the reaction against Romanticism. Odincov gives (as opposed to Hansen) a completely professional analysis of Kierkegaard's work, based on the contrast between philosophy and religion as respectively contemplative and active points of departure. Odincov points to the links between Kierkegaard and Kant, Hegel, Jacoby and Emerson and compares him with the pragmatist William James (who was, as it happens, being translated into

Russian by, among others, pupils of the future Kierkegaard admirer – L. Šestov) with his critique of the Absolute. However, Odincov notes the fragmentariness of Kierkegaard's thought, its fundamental rejection of system (a feature that it shares with Russian thought – see V. F. Ern, »Bor'ba za Logos«, 1911). As the central point in Kierkegaard's philosophy, Odincov singles out his teaching concerning the personality, which is seen as a synthesis of the temporal and the eternal, of the finite and the infinite, of the possible and the necessary. The spirit as the basis of individuality, sincerity as the highest manifestation of the personality, this is the basic idea underlying Ibsen's »Brand« and »Per Gynt«. For this reason Christianity should not be embodied in forms that have become rigid. Odincov sums up his findings as follows: »In Kierkegaard's philosophy ... it is necessary to distinguish the empirical kernel from its metaphysical husk, a forced tribute to the philosophical influences of his time. But there is in it the genuine pulsation of life, one senses the living nerve of all real philosophy – a living personal interest; his philosophy is the core of his life, not just the product of speculation. If the consciousness of our time begins to listen more sensitively to the imperious voice of living inner experience and becomes more receptive to its religious revelation, if we strive to find the immediate link between philosophical contemplation and religious experience, then the echoes of life stored in Kierkegaard's philosophy may become for us a beneficial germ that will give life to true philosophical pathos and preserve us from wandering off into the sterile desert of the pure logic of intellectualism or of dead mechanical naturalism«. Unfortunately the lecture was written in a dry, academic language, which prevented the audience from receiving any impression of Kierkegaard's special characteristics as a prose stylist. The poet Aleksandr Blok wrote in his diary: »Yesterday – at the Religious-Philosophical Society ... (P. B.) Struve read Odincov's paper on Søren Kirkegor, written without talent. Kirkegor does have interesting, though too psychological and muddled passages on »aesthetes« (of the male gender). Then (D. S.) Merežkovskij and (A. V.) Kartašev replied«. Blok goes on to list those present. Among them were the literary figures Z. N. Gippius, M. M. Prišvin, V. N. Knjažnin, E. P. Ivanov, Aleksandra Čebotarevskaja, D. V. Filosofov, K. A. Sjunnerberg (Erberg), S. A. Kublickaja-Piottukh, A. V. Rumanov, the priest K. M. Aggeev. In conclusion Blok writes: »Today among the wise people sitting at the table the most »positive« (Struve) spoke of »enormous suffering« as a necessity, so naturally, so simply. The others didn't even say anything – it was written on their faces«. (A. Blok, *Sobranie sočinej*, v. 7, M.-L., 1962). Here Blok is ironising over the tendency of this circle to discuss the »ultimate« (Z. Gippius's expression) questions of human existence, closely related, in fact, to the problems treated by Kierkegaard. However, the rightist publicist F. E. Spersk, who had opposed Vl. Solov'ev on the very question of the relationship between ethics and aesthetics in life, and who was close to this circle, wrote in 1894 to the well-known V. V. Rozanov: »I've been reading Kirkegor in Hansen's translation – I'm horrified!« (Arkhiv CGALI,



Moscow, fond Rozanova). This is the only interesting reaction of its kind to the relativist double morality of »Either-Or«! Rozanov himself mentioned Kierkegaard only in one of the notes to his book »Literaturnye izgnaniki«<sup>28</sup> (1915). But it is interesting that the style and character of Rozanov's fragmentary records in his books »Uedinënnoe«<sup>29</sup> and »Opavšie list' ja«<sup>30</sup> are very reminiscent of the form of Kierkegaard's paradoxical aphorisms – for example, »My soul is woven from dirt, tenderness and sadness«. In the correspondence between the poet and thinker Andrej Belyj and the critic E. K. Metner the following passage appears in a letter of September 22nd, 1913 from Oslo (Christiania): »We attended a talk by a Norwegian on Kierkegaard's philosophy in the Norwegian language, and out of the whole lecture we understood only a couple of words »Grüss Gott« or »Mahlzeit«, and then Belyj went on to develop his usual fantastic constructions quite without any relationship to Kierkegaard« (Arkhiv Biblioteki im. Lenina. Fond Metnerov).

Somewhat later than Odincov a Lecturer at St. Petersburg University began to study Kierkegaard. This was Karl F. Tiander, a scholar of Swedo-Finish extraction, who had also taught at Helsingfors University. In a letter of June 13th (26th), 1910 he wrote from a study trip to Stockholm to his university professor F. D. Batjuškov: »For relaxation I am reading Kierkegaard and am enjoying this original mind« (Arkhiv Puškinskogo Doma v Leningrade. 15229 XC 163). Probably at the invitation of Batjuškov, who was editing »Istorija zapadnoj literatury«,<sup>31</sup> Tiander wrote an article on Kierkegaard for the section in the third volume entitled »Echoes of Romanticism in Denmark and Sweden« (Moscow, 1914). He also contributed the article on Kierkegaard in volume 21 of Novyj Enciklopedičeskij Slovar' ed Brokgauz-Efron,<sup>32</sup> which appeared in the same year. Tiander displays a modernist approach to Kierkegaard. He writes that, having rejected marriage, Kierkegaard »only inflamed his imagination. Henceforth his entire life is a struggle with his sinful fantasy in the name of the ascetic demands of the Christian religion. This struggle is so tormenting that it does not permit Kierkegaard to concentrate on his writing and create, at the very least, one completed work. All 14 volumes of his writings are characterized by their fragmentary nature and resemble the diary of a brilliant dialectician, who is constantly being interrupted by the rambling of an erotomaniac. Organically incapable of tolerating the golden mean, he rushed from one extreme to the other, pursuing his thought to its very end, either in the direction of Christ, or in the direction of the devil«. (article in NES). Tiander detects pathological traits in Kierkegaard's fear of publishing his work under his own name and proves unable to appreciate the special qualities of Kierkegaard's style, in which he sees only a mixture of incongruous elements. As a writer and literary critic Tiander considers Kierkegaard to be undeveloped, although he correctly defines »A Seducer's Diary« and »Guilty? Not Guilty?« as psychological short stories. More clearly, however, than his Russian predecessors Tiander understood the fundamental antinomy of Kierkegaard's position. This is especially

manifest in »Either-Or«, in which, in contrast to the systematists, Kierkegaard prefers not to seek a divine synthesis between the aesthetic (Hell) and the ethical (Purgatory) sides of his nature but to exist with a painful schism, an antithesis in his soul, leaving it to the reader to seek for this synthesis. And continually returning to his attempts at resolving this antithesis through religion, Tiander correctly demonstrates that Kierkegaard's search for God was different from Tolstoj's and Dostoevskij's, for the latter drew their inspiration from social currents, while Kierkegaard, being an egocentric like Štirner and Nietzsche, found his inspiration in personal sources. This is why Kierkegaard arrives at a belief in subjectivity and in the objective paradoxicality of truth, at a conviction that God exists apart from man rather than being the supreme manifestation of man. Tiander notes that Kierkegaard's view is close to Lessing's opinion that truth is higher than the possession of truth and to Feuerbach's view of religion as psychology. Like Schopenhauer Kierkegaard sees in sexual love the primacy of the species over the individual. One of Kierkegaard's most important achievements is, according to Tiander, the fact that he took religion out of the church and into life, considering this to be necessary for its salvation (cf. Tiander's article in »Istorija zapadnoj literatury«). It should be noted that by this time Russian editions had appeared of Brandes' essay on Kierkegaard in his collected works (1896) and of two books by Höffding – »Istorija novejšej filosofii«<sup>33</sup> and »Učebnik istorii novoj filosofii«,<sup>34</sup> in which considerable attention was devoted to Kierkegaard.

Although the Hansens abandoned their project of a collected edition, perhaps in the belief that the time was not suitable, the Revolution did not extinguish interest in what might have seemed to be the rather remote problems of the Danish thinker. On March 9th, 1919 in Perm, Professor L. A. Zander read a survey paper entitled »The Life and Philosophy of Kierkegaard« (cited in »Sbornik obščestva istoriii, filosofii i social'nykh nauk«, 2, Perm', 1927), published in the journal »Russkoe obozrenie« (Vladivostok, 1922).

However, Professor Zander emigrated from Russia, as did almost all the main representatives of Russian non-Marxist philosophy, and for a long time Russian interest in Kierkegaard was to be found outside the borders of the Soviet Union.

### III

The most notable chapter in the history of Russian Kierkegaard studies is linked with the name of the philosopher Lev Šestov (Švarcman) (1886-1938). Šestov first heard of Kierkegaard in 1928 from M. Buber and E. Husserl, which is surprising since previous to this he had been deeply occupied with Ibsen and Tolstoj. Whatever the explanation, Kierkegaard made a profound impression on Šestov, who found in him an experience in some ways close to his own.

For Šestov, Kierkegaard was a fully worthy replacement for Ibsen in the Nietzsche-Ibsen-Dostoevskij triad that had been created by publicist

philosophy even before the end of the 19th century. Šestov himself was a representative of existentialist philosophy, which can also be designated as the philosophy of religious despair. The major part of his work consists of speculations on man's isolation from God in this world. On the other hand, he was disillusioned regarding the potentialities of human reason, as is particularly evident in his article »Pokhvala gluposti«<sup>35</sup> (1907). It can be said that even at this early period he had sensed Kierkegaard's central concern through Ibsen, had got to know him in Ibsen's »Brand«. But it was not until 1930 that he began to work on Kierkegaard, beginning with the study »V Falarijsckom byke«<sup>36</sup> in his book »Afini i Jerusalim«,<sup>37</sup> the material for which he had drawn from »The Aphorisms of an Aesthetek«. By 1934 he had completed his book »Kirkegard i ěkzistencial'naja filosofija«,<sup>38</sup> which was, however, rejected by the editorial board of »Nouvelle revue francaise«. Only in 1936 did a French edition of the book appear under the title of »Kierkegaard et la philosophie existentielle«, published by the specialist press J. Vrin with support from a »Committee of Lev Šestov's Friends«. Not until 1939, after the author's death, did a Russian edition appear. Šestov's lecture »Kirkegard and Dostoevskij«, given on May 5th, 1935 in Paris, was printed as a preface to the book. Five other lectures on Kierkegaard, given by Šestov on Radio Paris in 1937, should also be mentioned. The essence of these lectures is contained in his article »Kirkegor – religioznyj filosof«,<sup>39</sup> published in the journal »Russkie zapiski«,<sup>40</sup> no. 3, 1938. The article is included in Šestov's book »Umozrenie i otkrovenie«<sup>41</sup> (1964), which has been translated into German (1949), Spanish (1947), English (1969) and Danish (1947). In the Danish edition the Preface has been omitted. Peculiar to Šestov as a thinker was the way in which, after having examined in great depth various figures from the history of philosophy (e.g., Socrates, Tertullian, Pascal, etc.), he more or less stylized them in his own image; at times this approach resulted in a certain distortion – as in Kierkegaard's case.

Thus, in his book with the characteristic subtitle »A Voice Crying in the Wilderness«, he writes: »Kierkegaard has passed by Russia. Neither in philosophical, nor in literary circles have I once heard his name mentioned« (p. 23). Since Šestov belonged to the same circle as the audience at M. V. Odincov's lecture, this clearly indicates that neither that particular lecture, nor the other facts we have adduced above, can have made any deep impression on Russian thought. Šestov goes on to point out that, as opposed to the majority of philosophers, only Kierkegaard and Dostoevskij dared to rebel against the hypertrophied rights of reason. Kierkegaard, who had been brought up on Hegel, suddenly felt that, concealed in Hegel's philosophy, there is the temptation« to exchange belief in the Creator for submission to universally dominant, unchangeable, but entirely inessential truths« (p. 14). And this experience leads him to a belief in the Miraculous (shared by Dostoevskij) and to the opposition of truth, acquired through knowing, to truth acquired through Revelation. Although Šestov also mentions »Either-Or«, »Fear and Trembling«, »Repetition« and other

works, his analysis is, in general, based on a limited number of theses, which he repeats and varies time and time again. He relates Kierkegaard's Christianity to Tertullian's famous sentence (which Kierkegaard knew): »Credo, quia absurdum«. Šestov wrote that Kierkegaard contrasts the biblical Abraham and Job with their unshakeable belief in God with Hegel (and, even, Plato). Kierkegaard is deeply hostile to Hegel's philosophical »well-being«, but he himself is unable to conquer his own fear before the eternal truths and Nothingness, before the force of necessity and even before human judgement – and, therefore, he is unable »to cast himself into the pit of the absurd«. According to Šestov, Kierkegaard understands that by faith it is possible to achieve everything, including the physically impossible. But since he has no faith, he hopes for a »repetition« that will return that which was before. Kierkegaard is certain that the obverse of sin is not good works, but faith (p. 63). Kierkegaard's God is closer to the God of »Ignorant people, shepherds, carpenters and fishermen« (p. 78). Disappointed by the way of cognition, Šestov writes pithily: »the Tree of Knowledge sucks all the juices out of the Tree of Life« (p. 95) and comments that Christ – like Kierkegaard – stretches out his hand to the Tree of Life but plucks the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.

Šestov also notes Kierkegaard's method of »indirect statement« – the pseudonyms, the fables of fictional stories, the praise of the cruel Christianity (which, in fact, contains a protest against it) – for example, »Edifying Discourses«: »Under his hand the Gospel of tenderness is converted into the Gospel of anger«. Šestov also draws his reader's attention to the fact that when at the end of his life Kierkegaard encountered the writings of Schopenhauer, the similarity of their ideas made a deep impression on him, but he could not forgive Schopenhauer for having arranged himself so comfortably with his pessimism, while Kierkegaard's pathos was made up of suffering. Šestov points out that Kierkegaard was essentially close to the mediaeval scholasts: »In his conviction that it is possible to make what-has-been into what-has-never-been, he outdoes even so radical a thinker as Duns Scotus«. He also returns to Plotinus, who said that man, by going beyond reason and knowledge, could escape the slavery he had created for himself in the expectation of finding freedom. Šestov writes that while Kierkegaard's first period was dedicated to the rejection of the ethical, his second period was doctrinal and dedicated to the recognition of the supremacy of the ethical. In Šestov's opinion this second period was inspired by the theologian P. Damiani. Historical Christianity, writes Šestov, was offensive to Kierkegaard because it lives in cordial agreement with the petrified laws of reason and morality. »But is it given to existentialist philosophy to triumph over philosophical authority?« he concludes his book. »Is it given to Kierkegaard to become the teacher of mankind? Never mind. Perhaps it is not necessary for him to become »the teacher« – most probably it is not necessary.«

Šestov's article »Kirkegor – religioznoj filosof« is mainly concerned with Kierkegaard's biography (which receives no attention at all in his book).

Considerable space is devoted to a comparison with Pascal in accordance with Höffding's designation of Kierkegaard as »the Danish Pascal«, and also to his teaching on The Fall. Šestov's work on Kierkegaard is interestingly illustrated by the following extract from his letter to the translator and music critic B. F. Šlëper of October 10th, 1933: »I have begun to write a lecture on Kierkegaard. It's devilishly difficult and terribly exciting. No other writer has been so close to me as Kierkegaard – no one has, as far as I know, so passionately and selflessly searched in Holy Writ for the answer to his questions. From Hegel and »the Greek Symposium« he has moved on to Job and Abraham, from Reason to the Absurd and the Paradox. But he cannot renounce Socrates, and, in the final resort, in his revolt ... against the authority of philosophy, he has corrected the Gospels inasmuch as they are unable to stand up to Socrates' criticism and has attempted dialectically to deduce the incarnation of God in man. And, of course, through this he has returned to the Greek Symposium, just as Philo did« (N. Baranova-Šestova, Zizn' L'va Šestova, v. 2, Paris, 1983, p. 121).

The well-known philosopher Nikolaj Berdjaev, who belonged to the same circle, reviewed the French edition of Šestov's book (the journal »Sovremennye zapiski«, Paris, no. 62, 1936). He claimed that »in Šestov's book it is impossible to recognize Kierkegaard himself – one recognizes only the author of the book ... There is much that he does not notice«. Berdjaev thinks that neither Kierkegaard nor Šestov possess faith and finds in the latter »a powerful element of Manichaeism«, since for him the world is entirely governed by necessity. Neither, however, is there any faith in Berdjaev himself, as he maintains that »God in no way reveals himself in this world«. Šestov's revolt (like that of the, in some respects, similar German philosopher L. Klages) against reason, the spirit and knowledge evokes Berdjaev's objection that »knowledge is also a part of life«. The Thirties with their events in Europe (Western and Eastern) which seemed to have uncovered the hidden ulcers of our civilization and led many people to doubt the rationality of the Divine Plan made Kierkegaard no less topical, just as had been the case in the period up to the Russian Revolution. Berdjaev himself, in his book »O naznačenii človeka«,<sup>42</sup> mentions Kierkegaard, though negatively, finding in him »an element of non-christian maximalism, the maximalism of a sterile, contradictory love«. This evoked an answer from Šestov in his article »Nikolaj Berdjaev« (Sovremennye zapiski, no. 67, 1938). In refutation, he cites Kierkegaard's famous speech against Mynster and Martensen, the central idea of which is that for God »the impossible is also possible« in the words of the already mentioned poet A. Blok. Šestov considers that the attempt made by Berdjaev at reconciling existential (including Kierkegaardian) philosophy with speculative philosophy (the tradition of Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, Schelling) is untenable in modern times. But is it in fact at all possible to reconcile faith and knowledge?

In answer to this article Berdjaev sent Šestov a letter on August 30th, 1938 to the effect that he does not »designate Nietzsche or Kierkegaard as joyless

thinkers in any pejorative sense. I also consider myself to have little joy«. Furthermore, he expressed his adherence to Šestov's belief in the Miraculous for the wretched (including Kierkegaard) and explained that Šestov had quite misunderstood him. At the end of the letter he self-critically admits that both he and Šestov tended to force their interpretations on others (the journal »Mosty«, no. 8, Munich, 1961). Berdjaev also touched on Kierkegaard in other of his works, and although he does not go into any depth, he is less one-sided than Šestov. Thus, in »Dukh i real host'«<sup>43</sup> (1937) he mentions Kierkegaard (p. 103), whom he read late and »whose sickly exaltation of sin is deeply uncongenial to me«. In »Ekzistencial'naja dialektika Božestvennogo i čelovečeskogo«,<sup>44</sup> published in Paris in 1952, but written in 1944-5, he quotes with sympathy Kierkegaard's words: »History is identical with subjectivity«. In »Opyt eškhatologičeskoj metafiziki«<sup>45</sup> (1947) he accompanies Kierkegaard's words »Fear is the dizziness of freedom« with the comment that in Kierkegaard Nothingness, Non-Being, acquires a positive meaning.

Thanks to Šestov certain members of his nearest circle began to be interested in and to study Kierkegaard. Thus, articles appeared in the French press written by Šestov's sister F. Švarcman, her husband the music scholar G. Lovckij, P. Bespalova (two articles in »Revue philosophique« in 1934-5), B. Fondan (»Cahiers du Sud« in 1933, »Nouvelle revue française« in 1933-5).

On October 16th, 1933 Šestov gave a lecture entitled »The Religious and Philosophical Ideas of Kierkegaard« in Russkaja religiozno-filosofskaja akademija<sup>46</sup> in Paris. The philosophers N. Berdjaev, B. Vyšeslavcev, G. Florovskij, A. Lazarev, the music scholar B. Šlecer and the writer A. Remizov took part in the discussion. Adolf Lazarev was also working on Kierkegaard and also gave a lecture on him apparently in the same Academy. In a letter to Lazarev of December 1st, 1933 Šestov wrote: »I have heard from many people – Bendjaev, Šlecer, Remizov, Močul'ckij and others – very interesting opinions on your talk. They all found it, as do I, very significant and very relevant« (N. Baranova-Šestova, Žizn' L'va Šestova, v. 2, Paris, 1983, p. 122). In 1934-5 Šestov gave a course of lectures entitled »Dostoevskij and Kierkegaard« at the Russian faculty of Paris University. Among his listeners were the young philosophy-interested emigrant writers – Vasilij Janovskij, Viktor Mamčenko, Jurij Mandel'stam.

Furthermore, Kierkegaard was the theme of discussions between Šestov and the philosophers Martin Buber and Edmund Husserl in 1928-30. Šestov also discussed Kierkegaard with Jose Ortega-y-Gasset (in 1929), whose book »The Rising of the Masses« and philosophical method had much in common with Russian philosophical thought and, in particular, with Berdjaev.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the theme of »Kierkegaard and Šestov« is extremely comprehensive, since Šestov continually referred to Kierkegaard right through the Thirties. But since work on Šestov's archives is still in progress, this is a theme of the future. In the meantime an

American dissertation should be mentioned: David Allan Patterson, »The Literary and Philosophical Expression of Existentialist Faith. A Study of Kierkegaard, Tolstoy and Shestov« (Univ. of Oregon, 1978).

Apparently the clear relationship between Kierkegaard's philosophy and Christianity and his reliance on the Miraculous have given a new topical relevance to his name among other thinkers of the post-revolutionary Russian emigration with their Messianic orientation.

In his article »Spor o nemeckom idealizme«<sup>47</sup> the above-mentioned historian of Russian theology, Father G. V. Florovskij wrote concerning Schelling: »Schelling only spoke of the historicity of Christianity. He did not feel it. He was too active in his perception of the world to feel the genuine Christian pulse of history. And it is necessary to read Kierkegaard, his »Philosophical Fragments«, in order to understand at once what Schelling did not feel. God enters the world, Kierkegaard tells us, in the coming of Christ. Something new happens. And this something new is the beginning of eternity« (the journal »Put'«, no. 25, 1930). S. A. Levickij also studied Kierkegaard and writes in his memoirs concerning the prominent intuitivist thinker N. O. Losskij (»Novyj žurnal«, no. 126, New York, 1977): »My recent deep enthusiasm for Kierkegaard received little support from N. O. He valued Kierkegaard for his passionate propagation of religious faith and his sharply intelligent defence of it. But Kierkegaard's anti-rationalism, his renovation of the Tertullian »Credo quia absurdum« found no favour with him. For Losskij there was no contradiction between reason and faith. For him reason was the only natural ally of faith, and in his opinion only the misuse of reason led to lack of faith. Under the pretext of opposing Hegelian Pan-Rationalism, he said, Kierkegaard declared war on reason itself. It goes without saying that I listened carefully. However, I thought, Kierkegaard's analyses of the essence of fear (»The Concept of Anxiety«), of despair (»The Sickness Unto Death«), and of other determinant emotions penetrate so deeply into the essence of human nature, finding in its very depths the fear of God and trembling before the secret of existence (»Fear and Trembling«), and are executed with such mastery that it is possible to forgive this philosopher his extremity without falling into it oneself. From my work on Kierkegaard came the article »Dostoevskij and Kierkegaard«, published in the Czech journal »Kvart« in 1936. I found much in common between Dostoevskij and Kierkegaard, which soon became a locus communis of existentialist philosophy, but which was not the case at the time«. Further on, writing of his interest in M. Heidegger's development of certain of Kierkegaard's ideas, Levickij concludes: »I have become a disciple of neither Kierkegaard, nor Heidegger and even less so of Sartre. And if I were faced by the dilemma: Kierkegaard and Heidegger or Losskij, I would choose Losskij«.

#### IV

In contrast to emigrant literature, in the Soviet Union the name of Kierkegaard was mentioned only in special contexts, devoted to Scandina-

vian literature or in the notes to philosophical publications. More ground seems to be covered in the short entry by L. G. B(ljumbel'd) in »Literaturnaja Enciklopedija«<sup>48</sup> (v. 5, M.-L., 1931), which gives a short survey of Kierkegaard's criticism of Christianity, but is mainly concerned with his influence on H. Ibsen, M. Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and others. In a pamphlet published in the same year by S. D. Kržižanovskij »Poetika zaglavij«<sup>49</sup> Kierkegaard's chapter headings are adduced as examples of originality.

There was a resurgence of interest in Kierkegaard in the second half of the Fifties in connection with the general information explosion and the special interest in existentialist philosophy. The name of Kierkegaard began to appear in numerous articles and booklets by Soviet propagandists dedicated to »the unmasking of bourgeois philosophy« and was thus given a certain popular currency (see, for example, the articles of A. Mjasnikov, M. Kissel', S. Oduev, E. Solov'ëv). More detail is to be found in the section on Kierkegaard in the Soviet »Istorija filosofii«<sup>50</sup> in the chapter dealing with Danish philosophy (v. 3, M., 1959) by A. G. Myslivčenko. Kierkegaard's conservatism is characterized rather sharply: »he felt hate towards the masses, democratic ideas and especially – towards socialism«; »Kierkegaard's ethic is permeated by a hostile attitude to life and to mankind«; »expressing the interests of the ruling classes, he declared that the problem of equality, as a social problem, is insoluble« and so on. The basic premises of the article can be summarized as follows: Kierkegaard rejected the existing material world and replaced it with the »subjective religious and ethical world of personal, individual experience«; »the distinguishing features of Kierkegaard's subjective idealism are open irrationalism and absolute relativism«. The author takes issue with the well-known Hungarian Marxist D. Lukacs and maintains that the latter's designation of Kierkegaard as a »religious atheist« is devoid of meaning. Finally Kierkegaard's teaching on »stages« and »choice« is criticized. The Soviet author can naturally not accept the concept of stages and opposes to it the concept of development »along an ascending line«.

In the Sixties Soviet attitudes to Kierkegaard changed radically for the better, although his religious faith remains an insurmountable impediment to an objective evaluation by even the least dogmatic representatives of Soviet philosophy, who consequently seek to interpret it in a manner most favourable to their own position. Not surprisingly, Soviet authors have devoted most attention to the early Kierkegaard, his dissertation and his polemic with Hegel. The article by S. Averincev and Ju. Davydov in »Filosofskaja Enciklopedija«<sup>51</sup> (v. 3, M., 1964) is a good example. The authors state that »Kierkegaard's philosophical style is polemically opposed to traditional rationalist speculation. This is expressed even in the form of his presentation, which excludes the possibility of systematization«. The authors give a good account of Kierkegaard's struggle with the Hegelian concepts of »the super-personal« and »the anonymous« and examine in detail his attempt at opposing the objective and »quantitative« Hegelian



dialectic with a dialectic that was subjective and »qualitative«. But especial emphasis is given to the fact that Kierkegaard sensed the incompatibility of Christianity with bourgeois civilization, that he »criticized the Reformation for having displaced the asceticism of the Middle Ages and having made life easier«. It is also stressed that although Kierkegaard himself lived and wrote within the Lutheran tradition, he saw Lutheranism as a degradation of religion.

A more developed interpretation of Kierkegaard's ideas is to be found in the works of Piama Gajdenko, beginning with her article »Sören Kirkegor i kritika Gegelja s pozicij ekzistencializma«,<sup>52</sup> written together with Ju. Borodaj (Vestnik MGU. Serija ekonomiki i filosofii, no. 2, 1961), and ending with his monography »Tragedija estetizma. Opyt kharakteristiki mirosozer-canija Kirkegora«<sup>53</sup> (M. 1970). Gajdenko's book is extremely circumstantial, draws on an extensive literature and aims at the development of an independent conception of Kierkegaard. Thus, surveying the totality of Kierkegaard's writings, published under 12 different pseudonyms, Gajdenko sees in them not so much a philosophical dialogue (like many scholars) but, rather, »an existential drama«, »in which the individual works appear as members of the cast. Relations among the actors are very peculiar, at least they behave strangely: they all live a double life, first of all appearing in their own right, and then as an opponent of some other person; in the latter instance their second role is far more independent than the first – in other words, they are far more real as shadows than as themselves. Every one of them, or almost every one of them, has a Doppelgänger – either as an opponent or as a commentator; in the first case they act as heroes, whose existence is in the final analysis their own negation, in the second – as marionette heroes, whose life is merely a spectral mode of life for completely different personages. Furthermore, all the heroes seem not so much to depend on the author who created them but to be fully dependent on one another«. The author sees Kierkegaard's system of pseudonyms as a labyrinth of mirrors, in which the writer, unable to escape, is also unable to distinguish his own face from its innumerable reflections.

As apposed to other Russian authors Gajdenko firmly links Kierkegaard with German Romanticism, correctly seeing his dissertation »The Concept of Irony« (to which Kierkegaard later attached little importance) as a development of the aesthetic idea of Friedrich Schlegel and, at the same time, as the beginning of a polemic against him. Gajdenko is consistent with her own conception of Kierkegaard in distinguishing his dissertation from the rest of his works as being the only one signed with his own name. She is also correct in attributing great importance to the literary form of the works, »for the latter constitutes the very soul of these ideas«. She carefully examines the difference between Hegel's view of Socrates as a moralist and Kierkegaard's view of him as a thinker, who has moved away from Hellenism, but who does not yet see Christianity. Kierkegaard distinguished Socrates' tragic irony from the self-satisfied irony of the Romantics and prefers to associate himself with the former's negative

position in regard to the reality of his time.

Gajdenko considers the central feature of Kierkegaard's achievement to be the fundamental subjectivity and »personalness« of his position (which was especially important in an epoch that celebrated the triumph of the Hegelian scientific spirit, the foundation for which had already been laid by Cartesian Rationalism). Kierkegaard was disturbed by the fact that objective, scientific thinking was fundamentally an abstraction divorced from the thinking subject and asked how man, a temporal being, could adopt the viewpoint of eternity. Hence followed the inevitable splitting of the philosopher's personality into life »in the pure sphere of speculative thought« and the ordinary everyday pattern of life. Hegel, of course, had found it possible to reconcile these two aspects of his personality inasmuch as he regarded the true form of human existence to be his being as a philosopher. But Kierkegaard logically asked: »What shall I do if I am not a philosopher?« (here his position can be interestingly compared with that of the »retrograde personality« in Dostoevskij's »Notes from Underground«). According to Gajdenko, Kierkegaard's position as a »private thinker« enabled him to discover, earlier than others, the emergence in European society of the phenomenon of »mass culture«, the dominance of standardized »general truths«. And his struggle is not against reason at all, but against this »mass madness«. Despite the incontrovertible correctness of this conclusion, it was chiefly necessary for Gajdenko in order to facilitate a cleverly contrived link-up with Marx (albeit the young Marx), thus revealing the tendentiousness of this interesting work. For although Marx built his criticism of contemporary society on an analysis of its fundamental alienation, he overthrew Hegel's idealist »universality« in the name of a materialist »universality«. And when Gajdenko writes that Marx demonstrated a way out of this »situation of alienation«, we know where that »way out« led to – to a dominance of standardized thinking unparalleled in history. Kierkegaard thus remains in the position of a »private thinker«.

Gajdenko draws attention to the difference between the position of Šestov, »one of Kierkegaard's most consistent adherents« with that of K. Jaspers (basically close to the position of Berdjaev discussed above), who considered that in Kierkegaard (and Nietzsche) the struggle is not against reason but, rather, to draw it out »of the depths of existence«.

B. E. Bykhovskij's booklet on Kierkegaard, published in Moscow in 1972, is written along roughly the same lines as Gajdenko's work, but exhibits a somewhat greater deviation in the direction of Marxist orthodoxy. Both works suffer from the usual vice of Soviet philosophy – the tendency to view the philosophers of the 19th century divorced from the social and literary atmosphere of their environments and to establish an artificial connection with Marx (and also with Hegel – his teacher). It is, therefore, interesting to note the short account of Kierkegaard in V. P. Neustroev's book »Literatura skandinavskikh stran. 1870-1970«<sup>54</sup> (M., 1980), Neustroev attempts to determine the genre of Kierkegaard's writings

in the 1830s and 1840s: they »represent an original fusion of essay, diary, confession (later »hybrid« genres were to become characteristic of Danish – and, in general, Scandinavian – prose)«. We also wish to note V. G. Admoni's entry on Kierkegaard in »Kratkaja literaturnaja enciklopedija«<sup>55</sup> (v. 3, M., 1966).

During the course of almost 100 years Kierkegaard's philosophy was an object of constant interest in Russian philosophical and literary circles, partly because, like the philosophy of A. Schopenhauer, T. Carlyle, M. Stirner, F. Nietzsche and O. Spengler, it had been shaped into non-systematic forms, traditionally close to the modes of Russian thought (cf. V. F. Ern, »Bor'ba za Logos«, M. 1911). That the interest, though constant, was nonetheless limited, was due to the fact that Kierkegaard did not write in one of the major European languages. We have seen just what aspects at different historical moments evoked a response from Russian thinkers. Characteristic of this response is the frequent reference to the ideas of Tolstoj and Dostoevskij, which, in our view, is primarily connected with the existence of reformatory tendencies in both Russian and Scandinavian Christianity. Later greater interest is evoked by Kierkegaard's treatment of existential »marginal situations« and by his polemic with the Hegelian-Marxist aspiration to »gain the whole world« (the identical wording of a phrase from »Either-Or« and the penultimate phrase of »The Communist Manifesto«, 1848). In contrast to the widespread interest in the post-war existentialists, relatively little attention has been devoted to Kierkegaard's play with ethical and aesthetic values, but it can nevertheless be affirmed that Kierkegaard has had a very definite effect on Russian thought, especially on its so-called »religio-philosophical« tradition.

## APPENDIX 1

List of surviving extracts from Kierkegaard's diaries, translated by P. Hansen with »marks« and comments noted by Lev Tolstoj /1847/

1. I am happy only when I create ...
2. They assure me that objections to the teaching of Christ ... 5+.
3. They accuse me of exciting young people ... 5.
4. Even if one leaves for a few years ...
5. What a profound meaning there is in the legend of Venus' grief ... 5+.
6. »The masses« – that is really the aim of my polemic ...
7. There is much that is edifying in the thought ... good.
8. What terrible satire, what an epigram ...
9. The Holy Gospel is the guide; Christ is the way ... 4.
10. Each time the wheel of world history ...
11. Under a picture representing Rousseau ... 4.
12. The fate of King Lear is the punishment of Nemesis ...
13. The arisen Saviour invisibly accompanied ...
14. What a sad mistake Cervantes made ... 5.
15. The whole matter is in what environment ...
16. At first man sins out of weakness ... 5.
17. In Moritz Karrier's book ...
18. »The good pastor stakes his soul for his sheep« ...
19. Among people it is customary to approve of friendly sincerity ... what?
20. Our liberals are the greatest cowards and can only chatter ... (crossed out, apparently by A. V. Hansen because of Tolstoj's displeasure at this extract)
21. Sometimes people complain that they can find no friends ...
22. Seeing around me a massive confusion of concepts ... Not always, sometimes just the opposite, especially with us.

(Not always sometimes just the opposite, especially with us.)

23. Love we must learn from God ...
24. Everything in the world goes by itself ...
25. The duty of the Christian: to beware of people ...
26. Our life on earth is in general suffering ...
27. How I have managed to live 34 years since my birth ... (In reply to Tolstoj's question mark Hansen explained in the manuscript he prepared for printing that »Kierkegaard had so lived himself into the figure of Christ that he could not imagine for himself the possibility of living longer on earth than the Saviour.«)
28. If I think of eternity ...
29. The difference between people ...
30. When a man has toothache ... 5.
31. The Christian »measure for measure«.
32. The chief difficulty of my life ...
33. Thanks to the inestimable Divine gift ...
34. People seek earnestly ...
35. Everything indicates that soon they will write ...
36. The fiery, enthusiastic youth ...
37. In the old days when people ...
38. The teaching of Socrates' on the love of ugliness ... 5. But if he is handsome?
39. They say: »the voice of the people is the voice of God« ... 5.
40. I lack the physical strength ...
41. Basically one cannot severely judge ...
42. In my early youth ...
43. The child plays with the doll ...
44. Abraham à St. Clara relates ...
45. The expression »ill-gotten wealth« ... 5.
46. The authority of the Apostles ... 5.
47. Light – that is the medium ... 5.
48. There is no denying that pleasure ... (The last paragraph is marked).
49. The police, as is well known ...
50. All this rubbishy chatter about »national feeling« ... 5+.
51. It is necessary to suffer much ...5.
52. To inspire a man ... 5.
53. Every, even prominent ... 5.
54. The people cursed Him ... 5.
55. It is necessary to disunite the masses ... 5. Yes, Leonid ...? (In answer to Tolstoj's question mark Hansen added here an extract from Kierkegaard's journal of the same year, »Unity«, in which the same thought is presented in greater detail.) 5.
56. For the artist, the poet, the scientist ... 5+.
57. To judge from the lives of present-day Christians ... 5.
58. The wish of the Jews to see Christ as an emperor ...
59. And what if man ... 5.
60. To be surprised at the fact that a public figure ... 5.
61. I am far from ...
62. It is said that one ought not to ...

(The rest of the manuscript is missing, but Hansen's figure of 24 »5« would seem to indicate that, as all but one are present on the above list, it had been similarly marked by Tolstoj. However, the extract »Why is the poet so dangerous ...«, which Tolstoj had read aloud, is not present here.)

## APPENDIX II

Marginal markings (vertical lines in red pencil (by Tolstoj in the proofs sent by Hansen of Kierkegaard's article »The Harmonious Development ...«

In the proofs from »Severnyj vestnik«, September, 1885:

p. 125 – from the top of the page to the words »v kačestve absoljuta«

In the proofs from November 1885:

p. 61 – 9 lines from »po odnoj ...« to »xotja i ja...«  
 p. 62 – 5 lines from »Molodomu čeloveku ...« to »kto ikh ...«

p. 63 – 2 lines from »Somnenie est'...« to »po vozmožnosti ...«

p. 64 – 3 lines from »Všě že ...« to »liša bsoljut ...«  
 p. 71 – 10 lines from »Kogda ja myslju ...« to »ob absoljute ...«

p. 74 – 24 lines from »Ne obizhajsja ...« to »vinovnosti«.

## Author's Note

Since Russian authors writing on Kierkegaard usually did not know (or pretended not to know) their predecessors, they often gave their own transcription of the name – Kirkegard, Kirkegord or K'erkegor. I have throughout retained the most widely accepted version Kirkegor. At times authors seem to wish to stress the independence of their translation by using completely inappropriate titles. For example, instead of Hansen's »Strax i trepet« Tiander used »Bojazn'i sotrjasenie«.

## Translator's Note

Regarding Kierkegaard's name I have »translated« Kirkegor throughout as Kierkegaard except in titles, where I have transcribed the original Russian version of the name.

In order to avoid an accumulation of brackets in the text I have not translated the references to Russian literature as they occur. I hope that the following list will be of service to readers unacquainted with Russian, who wish to know the literal meaning of the titles referred to in the *text* of the article. *References in brackets* have not been translated, as the transcribed form is necessary for locating the works mentioned.

## List of Russian Titles Translated into English

1. Encyclopaedic lexicon
2. Messenger of Europe
3. Northern messenger
4. Moscow collection
5. Five days in Jasnaja Poljana
6. The intermediary
7. Tolstoj on Tolstoj
8. Notes
9. Stages of life
10. Self-published (the underground press)
11. A Danish moralist
12. Odessa news
13. Book of the week
14. The Danish philosopher Kierkegaard
15. The world of God
16. Russian wealth
17. Pleasure and duty
18. Russian messenger
19. Painting review
20. New journal of foreign literature
21. Almanac of world literature
22. Thoughts on the fundamentals of morality
23. Northern collection
24. Russian news
25. New word
26. The philosophy of religious action
27. Russian thought
28. Literary exiles
29. The Isolated
30. Fallen leaves
31. The history of Western literature
32. New encyclopaedic lexicon
33. The history of the most recent philosophy
34. Textbook of the history of the new philosophy
35. The praise for stupidity
36. In the Phalarian bull
37. Athens and Jerusalem
38. Kierkegaard and existentialist philosophy
39. Kierkegaard – a religious philosopher
40. Russian notes
41. Authority and revelation
42. On the destiny of man
43. Spirit and reality
44. The existential dialectic of the Divine and the human
45. The experience of eschatological metaphysics.
46. The Russian religio-philosophical academy
47. The dispute concerning German idealism
48. Literary encyclopaedia
49. The poetics of titles
50. The history of philosophy
51. Philosophical encyclopaedia
52. Søren Kierkegaard and the criticism of Hegel from the position of existentialism
53. The tragedy of aestheticism. The experience of a characteristic of Kierkegaard's world view
54. The literature of the Scandinavian countries. 1870-1970
55. Short literary encyclopaedia