

ANMELDELSER

Søren Kierkegaard:

LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS

Translated by Henrik Rosenmeier. Vol. XXV of KIERKEGAARD's WRITINGS, 1978, 518 pp + xxviii.

Søren Kierkegaard:

THE CONCEPT OF ANXIETY.

Translated by Reidar Thomte in collaboration with Albert B. Anderson. Vol. VIII of KIERKEGAARD's WRITINGS, 1980, 273 pp + xviii.

Søren Kierkegaard:

THE SICKNESS UNTO DEATH.

Translated by Howard V. and Edna H. Hong. Vol. XIX of KIERKEGAARD's WRITINGS, 1980, 201 pp + xxiii. KIERKEGAARD's WRITINGS: General Editor *Howard V. Hong*, assisted by an International Advisory Board. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

For those who imagine a somewhat distorted personality lying behind Kierkegaard's authorship, vol. XXV of *Kierkegaard's Writings* will come as a healthy shock. Letters and documents, translated into English for the first time, give a picture of someone extremely well-balanced

and in active communication with all kinds of people. In these pages, broken engagement and bishop attack lose any exaggerated emphasis as we meet a man very much concerned about the feelings and welfare of others, whether it is the little boy accidentally forced to walk too fast, the Queen who had not received a copy of one of his books, or a severely crippled cousin (Letters 195, 295, 196). While the documents provide an excellent commentary on all the phases of his life, giving us, among other things, valuable information about his school and university career, the letters from and to Kierkegaard supply an exciting and humorous source of material, not only about Kierkegaard and his family, but about his Copenhagen contemporaries, about, for example, the Heibergs, Law Professor Kolderup-Rosenvinge and the philosopher F. C. Sibbern. In addition, there are, besides full notes and index, an historical introduction, an ample Kierkegaard chronology, extra items about his family and

clear maps of 19th century Copenhagen and Denmark, all of which furnish the reader with essential back-up information about the people and places mentioned.

Whereas it can be taken for granted that *Letters and Documents* will be of immense interest and value to scholar and general reader alike, the publication of vols. VIII and XIX may raise some eyebrows. Why retranslate *Begrebet Angest* and *Sygdommen til Døden*? After all, Walter Lowrie, pioneer Kierkegaard translator of *Angest* and *Sygdommen*, hoped that the 1954 revision of *Sickness* was 'an impeccable translation', so why waste money on superfluity? Indeed, since these two psychological works on angst, sin and despair have been on the market for years, surely it can be argued that even a review of them is waste of space. – Every Kierkegaard interested person has read them long ago.

Anyone examining the retranlations will realize at once that they are of course anything but superfluous, and while the contents of the two works need no mention here, much can be said about them as translations. Firstly, it can be said that they are part of an edition in which agreement has been reached on the translation of Kierkegaard terminology. Despite the fact of different translators, the reader can be confident that 'Virkelighed' and

'Realitet', for example, will consistently appear as 'actuality' and 'reality' and that it will be clearly indicated whether 'existence' translates 'Existents' or 'Tilværelse'. Secondly, with the greatest respect to Walter Lowrie, to whom so much is owed, it has to be admitted that the time has more than come for radical retranslation in the uniform edition of *Kierkegaard's Writings*.

Fresh work on these two books has in fact done a great deal to clarify the text through remedying errors and omissions. For example, 'Elverpiggen der er huul bagtil', previously translated 'the fairies, which are empty silhouettes', now becomes 'the elf maid who is hollow seen from the back' (Lowrie, *Dread* 119, line 20, *KW* VIII 134, line 8) and 'Fortvivlelsen', 'despair', accidentally overlooked in the Lowrie revision, is now restored to the text (*KW* XIX 78, line 30, cf. Lowrie, *Sickness* 209, line 31). While explanatory and sometimes incorrect additions are removed, for example, Lowrie's 'nothing to do' and 'to the point of' (Lowrie, *Dread* 145, line 23 and *Sickness* 201, line 11, cf. *KW* VIII 162, line 20, and *KW* XIX 67, line 21), there is modernization of Lowrie language in contexts where Kierkegaard is not himself using an old-fashioned word, e.g. 'nødvendigt' is now translated as 'necessary' instead of 'requisite' (*KW* XIX 37, line 1, Lowrie, *Sickness* 170, line 3).

The new translations are thus excellent, an enormous improvement on the old, but does this mean that they will deserve the label 'impeccable'? When speaking of perfection, the answer is of course in the negative. No human project, let alone translation, is ever absolutely perfect, and the only good Kierkegaard translator is the one who, like Lowrie himself in his time, is but striving towards that goal. Howard Hong never tires of telling the story of his overlooked misprint when contemplating 'cod' in a tank became contemplating 'God' in a tank, and of course scholars are going to continue to discuss translations, assert error, argue about key Kierkegaard words. – The battle will continue as to whether 'Angest' should be translated 'dread' or 'anxiety', whether 'opbyggelige' should be 'edifying' or 'upbuilding'.

To help the battling scholar, the scholar using English and Danish texts, and the ordinary reader, these retranslations, like vol. XIV, *Two Ages*, and *Letters and Documents*, give valuable editorial material. In vols. VIII and XIX there is cross-referencing using all three Danish editions of the *Samlede Værker*, Danish pagination in the margin of the main text, translation in the text of Latin, Greek and other foreign tags, historical introduction, supplementary material from Kierkegaard's *Journals and Papers* and the most

copious and instructive notes possible. Thus, one must not only praise this new series for its translation and notes, one must also applaud the fact that the reader is encouraged to consult original texts. No translation is 'impeccable', as every translator discovers, but there is the top translation category of 'almost impeccable', and in my mind there is no doubt whatsoever that all three translations, together with *Two Ages* and the *Journals and Papers* that preceded them, belong in this category.

Julia Watkin

Paul L. Holmer:

THE GRAMMAR OF FAITH.

San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978,
212 pp.

Professor Holmer's book is an important contribution to the question of the definition and task of theology, metatheology, if you will. Still it is a contribution that is hard to evaluate for several reasons.

First, the very concept of metatheology is different from theological method. We are familiar with Biblical, historical and systematic theology and recognize these as different from each other as much by method as by content. Then too, there are a whole host of other efforts, practical theology, theology of

pastoral care, etc. Mostly these are – well what are they? Case studies? How-to methods? The churchly arm of psychotherapy? Well, theology they are not, and Holmer's effort is none of these. His is rather a study which attempts to distinguish theology as living language in a living community from many other intellectual activities, theological and philosophical. Thus the major thrust of his book is negative, and only in the last chapter does he begin to set forth his own positive views.

Another reason why the book is difficult to characterize is the virtual lack of notation. This omission is very à la mode, Kierkegaardian, Wittgensteinian, analytic and difficult to penetrate. Of course, the author has a right to make demands on a reader, but tit for tat. The reader has expectations of the author and fuller notation and referral would have enabled the reader to see the aim of Holmer's criticism more clearly. As it is there are numerous times when I think he may be referring to X, but I am not entirely sure. A few footnotes would have created a lot of certainty. The other side of this coin is that Holmer is a master of allusions. Positively, this book is the most humorous theology book I have ever read.

Connected to the above is Holmer's irony, understatement, overstatement and general rhetorical way of writing. He is not above sar-

casism. He enjoys his rhetoric, but to characterize a position as »a howler« is neither to clarify nor to refute it. One surmises that Holmer's rarely concealed disdain for a position is sometimes confused with reasons for rejecting the position.

Thus far this review reflects the book: the negations are first and the affirmations are last. However, this part is even more difficult, if not dangerous, for one can imagine Holmer good naturedly giving his critic the above truisms about his style of writing. However to construe an argument of Holmer as »X« when he actually meant »X minus two degrees« (to express missing the precise point geometrically) will, one can well imagine, bring down Holmer's laughter upon his hapless pate. But the risk must be taken. Another problem with a review at this point is that Holmer has promised two more volumes; what is criticized here as a lacunae may be fully discussed later. But all one can do is review the book in front of him.

Holmer's book can be read from beginning to end, but the last chapter shows his theological intention and so shows the point of his negative comments in the early chapters. Thus it must be understood backwards.

In this chapter, Holmer proceeds to reject the idea that »God is objective and can therefore be talked about in the same senses that we

write about stars, the crust of the earth, people, or animals.« (p. 180) He wants to praise the motive of such an effort reserving the right to criticism. Holmer takes his own point of departure from Luther, Barth, Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein. There is no longer a single, universal and comprehensive view of logic and rationally applicable without qualifications to all domains. At first brush Holmer appears to opt for a fideism based on a »form of life«. One can even sympathize with that judgement, but it is false. Rather, Holmer claims that there is a logic, or a grammar, if you will, of faith, and theology is one part of that grammar along with prayer, worship, love and other things people do, in, about and with faith.

There are objective things that can be known *about* theology, like Hebrew verbs and the issues of the Christological controversies. But this is not the language *of* faith itself, the actually used language of devotion, prayer and sacred teachings. The first responsibility of the theologian is to guard the language of faith so that it is properly used. His activity is possible and necessary because there are certain rules about the language of faith which in turn are supported by a certain mode of life. However, note that the grammar is first.

The language of faith is, for Hol-

mer, found paradigmatically in the Bible and liturgy. What one does to become a Christian is to make oneself at home in the language of faith and adopt the form of life it calls for. Theology's task is to grasp the grammar.

Holmer is quite critical of intellectualist attempts to put the meaning of theological concepts into some other language game. The problem is that these other concepts, for instance emergent evolution, Omega point, Ground of Being, etc., have to be explained first. In the name of economy (not one of Holmer's words) why not go straight to the language and life-form of faith? That makes good sense.

A bit further on Holmer widens his canon and also qualifies it: »The Bible, the prayer books, the public liturgy, the confessions – these and more are, if they have not been endlessly tampered with and made agreeable to passing whims of the age, the formats within which the knowledge of God is brought to definition.« (p. 202) A number of things puzzle me with this assertion.

Fundamentally, my problem is that Holmer takes a very nearly nonhistorical attitude to historical deposits. He seems to be saying: It is out of this set of historical deposits that we can determine the grammar of faith, but by and large, interpreting them is no problem. Hol-

mer seems to forbid us to respond in our history to the way others who wrote the Bible, the liturgy and the confessions responded to their history when they wrote these items. It is as if he were saying, »Don't think about these historical deposits historically; think of them theologically.« But thinking theologically is to think in part, at least, historically. There just isn't the great distinction between historical and theological thinking that Holmer insists upon.

Further, Holmer when he talks about thinking theologically seems to be moving in the direction of N. F. S. Grundtvig. He writes »... the language of faith is kept alive and in the edifying use of the Scriptures usually in the worship services of the churches.« (p. 198, The sentence seems awkward.) Holmer's view that »the language of faith is not an artificial and contrived tongue« is certainly sound. These quotations again show Holmer's attempt to balance the living word of the form of life with the steadiness of a canon of historically objective deposits. This balance of tradition and ongoing life is emphasized by Holmer, but it is not addressed. The problem is that even the language of faith has a history, is molded and changes to some degree historically as new peoples, like the Romans or Nigerians accept the faith.

It is in view, however, of these

positions that Holmer expresses his criticism of the hoary views of theism, atheism and metaphysics. The distinction of the language of faith and language *about* faith is fundamental to Holmer. This distinction is closely related to what I take to be his major thesis that the language of faith is not observational but rather relational language. More power to him!

This distinction also leads Holmer to be quite critical of all major fads in theology. Though in general agreement I cannot be quite so categorical as he. To be sure, process theology is a professor's game and it is more dignified and better paying than welfare. But liberation theology is another matter. Holmer writes, »The political focus of Christian concepts is something altogether new and, on the face of it, quite questionable. But more of that subsequently.« (p. 146) Unfortunately, Holmer never delivers on that »subsequently« in this book; perhaps he will do so in the promised two subsequent volumes.

To say that the »political focus of Christian concepts is quite new«, may be to say something quite specific, but one is not sure what is meant. Christian concepts have moved in and out of political focus and have influenced political philosophy and practise since Constantine. Surely John 19 and Revelation 17 and 18 are as clear a denunciation of an

oppressive political system as the story of Exodus in the Hebrew Scriptures. And it is precisely this Scriptural dimension that requires we all pay both appreciative attention to liberation theology on the one hand and critical attention so that it does not become a mere theological legitimation of some specific political and economic programs that could be justified in their own terms, or perhaps could not be justified at all. Furthermore, it is precisely this suffering determination of liberation theology »not to be conformed to this world«, not to acquiesce in the face of exploitation and tyranny: it is this suffering in faith, in hope and in love that signifies the theological importance of liberation theology and renders Holmer's judgment itself questionable. For me, the political focus is as necessary as »... suffered under Pontius Pilate ...«

What my criticisms all turn on is the objection that Holmer does not appreciate as fully as he should the historical and cultural context of his own imprecise canon and urges that we attempt to appropriate the language of faith and its consequent form of life as if they were more ahistorical and acultural than I take them to be. While I have a fundamental sympathy with much Holmer says of many time-honored but empty philosophical constructs, his own canon requires we do theology

politically, historically and culturally.

Holmer is provocative, maddening, frustrating and rewarding. Very rewarding.

Robert L. Perkins

Grete Børsand Heyerdahl:
IDÉHISTORISKE SMULER.

Oslo: Gyldendal norsk Forlag, En Fakkelt-bok, 1979, 198 pp.

Denne lille bog med den på en gang beskedne og prætentive titel er ganske underholdende læsning. Grete Børsand Heyerdahl skriver levende og (lovlig) meget pædagogisk om Hegel, H. C. Andersen, kvindepblemer, Hesse og Søren Kierkegaard, og hun ræsonnerer overbevisende. Synsvinklen er idealistisk dialektisk, inspireret af Hegel og Gadamer, og det er jo fuldt legitimt, men det medfører ganske naturligt, at K. kommer noget til kort, at han medieres ind i den humanistiske tradition. Paradokset forsvinder lige så stille, og tilbage bliver en metafysisk K. med kedelige griller.

To af bogens otte afhandlinger beskæftiger sig udtrykkelig med K., »Kierkegaard, Adorno og »Kjerlighedens Gjerninger«« og »Den filosofiske omvendelse«. Den første påtager sig den taknemmelige opgave at kritisere Adornos K.-billede. Da Adorno ikke har læst K. på original-

sproget, er hans »Kierkegaards Lehre von der Liebe« let at afvise eller relativere som en forkyndelse af et livssyn over for et andet, men spørgsmålet er, om Grete Børsand Heyerdahls afvisning af Adorno er andet og mere. Mod Adornos fremhævelse af det konkrete i næstekærligheden opstiller hun idealet af en almen velvilje – og tager K. til indtægt for denne drøm uden at se, at K.'s og evangeliets kærlighedsbud er langt radikalere. For K. skal kærligheden ikke forandre verden, men budet »Du skal elske din næste« er en dom over mennesket, også over dets »højere stræben«.

Heyerdahl ser ikke K. som »das ganz Andere«, og derfor må hun – trods sin omfortolkning af ham – kritisere ham, når han angriber Hegel. Hvorfor skulle K. latterliggøre Heiberg, fordi han kom til hegelianismen ved en omvendelse (Heiberg: *Prosaiske Skrifter* XI, p. 498ff)? K. har flere steder hånet Heiberg for ved et spring at komme til den filosofi, der benægter springet, og det er Heyerdahl forarget over. For hende er enhver tilegnelse af en overbevisning lige så god som den anden, den kristne omvendelse, hvor Gud umiddelbart griber ind og forandrer et menneske, og den enkle aha-oplevelse, hvor et menneske får indsigt i et andet menneskes tankegang, sidestilles, og så er K. naturligvis stemplet som fanatiker og hysteriker, når han latterliggør Heiberg. Da alle »om-

vendelser« angår forholdet til »det absolutte«, så kan de allesammen – for »idéhistorikeren« – være et fedt, men da K. ikke forholder sig til det abstrakt evige, men til det absurde, så er hans holdning til Heiberg helt logisk og rimelig.

Helge Hultberg

Søren Kierkegaard:
TAGEBÜCHER.

Eine Auswahl, herausgegeben von Hayo Gerdes. Düsseldorf/Köln: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1980, 357 pp.

Bekanntlich ist es nicht schwierig, eine Auswahl aus dem Werk Kierkegaards zusammenzustellen, die einen überwältigenden Eindruck von seinem Reichtum gibt. Dass Aehnliches auch von den Tagebüchern gilt, zeigt die vorliegende Auswahl, wenn auch das im Werk Geleistete das Entscheidende ist und bleiben wird. Die Texte dieser Auswahl sind der fünf-bändigen, 1962-74 im Eugen Diederichs Verlag erschienenen Ausgabe der Tagebücher entnommen. Sie sind in zuverlässiger Weise in gutes Deutsch übersetzt, z.B. ohne seltsame Entwelschungen. Die Aufzeichnungen sind nicht nach der Reihenfolge ihrer Entstehung, sondern nach Themen ausgewählt und zusammengestellt. Diese Ordnung nach Sachgruppen hat sowohl Nachteile wie Vorteile. Obwohl mit Gedanken des

jungen Kierkegaards begonnen wird, worauf die späteren Aufzeichnungen immer mehr vorherrschen, treten die Stadien in Kierkegaards innerer Geschichte nicht genügend klar und deutlich hervor. Die sorgfältig ausgewählten Texte beleuchten aber zentrale Themen Kierkegaards von verschiedenen Seiten. Auch die kurzen Einleitungen zu den verschiedenen Themenkreisen zeigen, dass der Herausgeber ein Kenner der Gedankenwelt Kierkegaards ist, der auch im Stande war, das gegenwärtig Bedeutsame besonders zu berücksichtigen.

Ein Anhang des Buches enthält eine Auswahl von Texten, die einen Eindruck von der Aktualität Kierkegaards geben, indem Auszüge aus Äusserungen einiger Philosophen und Dichter über Kierkegaard zitiert sind. Zu begrüßen ist es, dass auch die Dichter berücksichtigt werden. Die wichtige Einwirkung Kierkegaards auf zahlreiche deutschsprachige Dichter des 20. Jahrhunderts ist ein von der Forschung bisher ziemlich vernachlässigtes Thema.

Steffen Steffensen

KIERKEGAARD AND
HUMAN-VALUES
BIBLIOTHECA KIERKEGAARDIANA
Vol. 7. Edited by *Niels Thulstrup and M. Mikulová Thulstrup*. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels Boghandel, 1980, 164 pp.

Der Inhalt des Bandes besteht wie in den übrigen der Serie grossenteils aus Artikeln, die ursprünglich für die gescheiterte Kierkegaard-Encyclopaedie bestimmt waren, was die konzentrierte Kürze mancher dieser Beiträge erklärt. Je umfassender das behandelte Thema ist, desto unbefriedigender ist in vielen Fällen eine solche Kürze. So war es z.B. wohl nicht zu vermeiden, dass manches Wichtige in Sören Holms Artikel über das 19. Jahrhundert unberücksichtigt bleiben musste. Søren Holm ist übrigens der irrigen Ansicht, die Aesthetiker in *Entweder-Oder* seien als Vertreter der Romantik aufzufassen. Dies ist ein Irrtum, den man auch bei anderen dänischen Kierkegaardforschern findet. Man muss sehen, dass diese Aesthetiker Vertreter der damaligen europäischen pessimistisch-nihilistischen Zeitströmung sind. Ihre nächsten Verwandten in Deutschland findet man bei Dichtern wie Büchner, Heine und Lenau. Der spleen dieser Aesthetiker hat weder enge Beziehungen zum Taugenichts Eichendorffs, auf den Holm verweist, noch zur Lucinde Fr. Schlegels.

Mehrere der Beiträge geben, dieses

muss auch gesagt werden, trotz der Kürze wertvolle Informationen oder zeichnen Perspektiven, die ein adäquates Verständnis der Kierkegaardtexte erleichtern können. Dies gilt z.B. von den beiden Artikeln über den Angstbegriff. P. Lønning schreibt über den Angstbegriff bei Kierkegaard, W. v. Kloeden über Kierkegaards Vorläufer und die Verwendung des Angstbegriffs bei späteren Philosophen und Psychologen. Zu den Vorläufern Kierkegaards darf man wohl auch Hamann rechnen. Im *Begriff Angst*, dessen Motto Hamann erwähnt, zitiert jedenfalls Vigilius Haufniensis eine Stelle bei Hamann über die Angst (SV IV, 472). Wertvoll sind auch die kleinen Artikel von K. Nordentoft, besonders der etwas längere über »Erotic Love«. Nordentoft hat es vermocht, in seinem Buch *Kierkegaards Psykologi* (København 1972) der Kierkegaardforschung neue Anregungen zu geben, offenbar weil er sich ausserhalb der gewöhnlichen Geleise dieser Forschung bewegt. U. A. sieht man bei Nordentoft, wie sehr Kierkegaard Einsichten der späteren Tiefenpsychologie vorweggenommen hat, was auch der dänische Schriftsteller Villy Sørensen weiss, der in seiner *Literaturauffassung von Kierkegaard* beeinflusst ist.

Hervorgehoben seien auch Beiträge wie Per Lønnings über »Experience«, P. R. Sponheims über »Res-

possibility«, Fr.-Eb Wilde über »Decision« und N. H. Søs über »Anthropology«. Diese geben zuverlässige Orientierung über zentrale Themen Kierkegaards, die oft eingehend von der Kierkegaardforschung behandelt wurden. Fr.-Eb. Wilde hat einen beachtlichen Beitrag geschrieben über Kierkegaard und »Established Order« (Det Bestaaende), ein in der Kierkegaardforschung keineswegs genügend erhelltes Thema. Ich vermisse aber in diesem und anderen Beiträgen die Einsicht in die Bedeutung der Tatsache, dass Kierkegaard von Anfang an sein Zeitalter als eine Zeit der Auflösung erlebt hat. So ist es verständlich, dass ihm zunächst die Aufgabe der Kirche wichtig ist. Die Wende tritt bei der immer stärker werdenden Erkenntnis ein, dass auch die Kirche von den Auflösungstendenzen der Zeit geprägt ist, so dass dem späteren Kierkegaard der Kampf gegen die Fälschung des wahren Christentums die Forderung des Tages wird und das »Bestehende« in der Christenheit eine negative Bedeutung erhält.

Für sich stehen die beiden letzten innerlich verwandten Beiträge, C. Fabros über »Desperation« und Frau M. Mikulová Thulstrups über »Suffering«. C. Fabro betont die nach seiner Ansicht engen Beziehungen zu katholischer Frömmigkeit und Mystik. Was sein Thema betrifft, war die Verzweiflung wohl immer bei

Kierkegaard die eigentliche Sünde, die Empörung im Unglauben gegen Gott. Solche fundamentalen Einsichten sind bei Kierkegaard nicht von irgendeiner Lektüre entscheidend bestimmt, sie haben tiefpersönliche Voraussetzungen.

Besteht eine enge Verwandtschaft zwischen der Auffassung des Christentums bei Kierkegaard und der Mystik, wie Frau Thulstrup in ihrem Artikel behauptet? Man muss in solchen Fragen genau sein. Es sei deshalb zunächst festgestellt, dass für jede eigentliche Mystik das Erlebnis der *unio mystica* wesentlich ist. Admit ist auch der fundamentale Unterschied zwischen der Mystik und der ausgesprochen dualistischen Christentumauffassung Kierkegaards bezeichnet. Immer wieder hat Kierkegaard die unbedingte Ungleichheit zwischen Gott und Mensch hervorgehoben, was auch vom Gottmenschen in Vergleich mit jedem anderen Menschen gilt. »Der Geist verbietet jede direkte Unmittelbarkeit«, sagt deshalb nAti-Climacus in der Einübung. So kann es nicht wundern, dass wir in *Entweder-Oder* eine ausführliche beissende Kritik der Mystik finden, die ohne Zweifel weitgehend mit Kierkegaards eigenen Gesichtspunkten übereinstimmt (SV II, 263).

Eine der wichtigsten Fragen der Kierkegaardforschung ist das Verhältnis des späteren Kierkegaard zum früheren. Hier gehen die Mei-

nungen weit auseinander. Man löst aber dieses Problem nicht, indem man Kierkegaard als einen Mystiker auffasst, der nicht die letzten Sprossen auf die Leiter zur verklärten Vollendung hinaufstieg.

Steffen Steffensen

Peter Thielst:

SØREN KIERKEGAARD OG REGINE.
KIERKEGAARD, KÆRLIGHED
OG KØNSPOLITIK

København: Gyldendal, 1980, 138 pp.

Bogen sætter den velkendte og meget omdiskuterede forlovelse i et nyt, kønspolitisk perspektiv. 1. kapitel er en genfortælling af dramaet, skrevet i bevæget tone, dog strengt, med gentagne advarsler mod enhver, som ville vove at følge Kierkegaards skrækkelige eksempel. Forlovelseshistorien bliver først placeret i dens umiddelbare historiske sammenhæng, 1800-tallets København, for straks derefter at blive belyst ud fra hele vor så konsekvent og så ubarmhertigt kvindehadske og kvindeundertrykkende verdenshistorie. Særligt dvæler han ved kristendommens katastrofale bidrag til forbrydelsen.

Ud fra Engels og Freuds teorier om patriarkatets oprindelse (s. 86ff.) fordyber Thielst sig nu i denne historiens grupvækkende sammen sværgelse, dette uhyre komplot, som

kun har bevæget sig i én retning, har haft ét eneste formål for øje: at ud-slette kvinden.

Til sidst vender han tilbage til udgangspunktet, til patienten Kierkegaard. Denne person, hvis synder (»for reflekteret og intellektualiseret«, »for tidsbundet«, »for meget overjeg« m.v.) bliver opregnet i kapitel 2, havde dog efterladt sig et værk. Thielst kan lige nå at foretage en hurtig »1. rundvisning i forfatterskabet«. Næste stadium, foreslår han, må blive en egentlig, kønspolitisk nærlæsning.

Bogen vrimler med dagens kodeglosser og -fraser sammenknyttet med et større antal videnskabelige fremmedord. Disse sidste bliver dog, til trøst for den ubefarne læser, forklaret, ligesom teksten er forsynet med en mængde encyklopædiske oplysninger. Terminologien kulminerer med den nyeste rubrik, trylleordet »knudemand« som nøgle til forståelse af Kierkegaards psyke, der efter forfatteren ikke afviger væsentlig fra den gængse mandschauvinists syndige sjæl.

Sproget er ellers intimt, fortroligt med læseren, blomstrende med de patetiske udtryk, som bedst egner sig til at bevæge søsterskabet, det så uretfærdigt behandlede.

Nogle spredte vredens udråb krydrer stilen. Ingen bliver skånet, hverken samtidens profeter eller Apostelen. En af Freuds kønspolitisk uheldige udtalelser bliver afsløret

(s. 96) som det »fantastiske reaktionære vås«, den var, og Korinterbrevene erklæres (s. 103) forfattet af en »træls seksualneurotisk mandschauvinist« – hvad man dog også har hørt før.

For det meste benytter forfatteren sig ellers af den akademisk beherskede stil, med al den abstraktion og uigennemtrængelighed, den også kan medføre (som f.eks. i formationen: »de kompensatoriske sublimerings-evners kreative muligheder ...« s. 126). Til andre tider moraliserer han med en dyb bekymring, som er grundlagt på solid menneskekundskab og profetisk forudseenhed med tilbagevirkende kraft. Dette udtrykker sig ved hyppige brug af adverbiet »desværre« og en suveræn konditionalis: »Havde han (K.) evnet at se tingene gennem et udviklingspsykologisk og -historisk filter, ville han have undgået den kønspolitiske dogmatisering« (s. 131).

Når vreden og bekymringen har lagt sig, kan der godt gives plads for finere nuancer og distinktioner, som f.eks. når han skal til at definere Kierkegaards eksakte type inden for mandschauvinismens sfære: den var, siges det s. 81, ikke traditionel, heller ikke klassisk, men *civiliseret*.

Hovedformålet med bogen er pædagogisk: vogt jer for undertrykkeren. Forordets afsværgelse af al »pedanteri og hypervidenskabelighed« fritager Kierkegaard-kenderen for at læse bogen efter indholdet og forby-

der anmelderen enhver kritisk trang.

Man kan konstatere, at det eneste hos Kierkegaard, som vækker forfatterens absolutte respekt, er ortografien, et ikke ubetydeligt hensyn i vore dage.

Hvad kvindekampens bastioner angår: ingen alarm. Man kan fortsat roligt græde over den spildte mælk,

begræde Regine samt alle kongelige spøgelser, som ikke kan anvise plads i den travle og tætbefolkede, bedrevidende og absolut emanciperede nutid.

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