

# The Increase of Christian Terms in Kierkegaard's Samlede Værker

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Kierkegaard repeatedly insisted that he had been “a religious author from first to last” and, as everyone knows, he spent the last years of his life in an often bitter attack upon the established Church. Despite these facts however most Kierkegaard scholars would probably agree that his writings became more and more explicitly Christian with the passing of time. The present paper attempts to support and refine this accepted and hitherto intuitive view. It shows that there is a more or less steady increase in the use of Christian terms throughout the overall course of Kierkegaard's published writings. Equally important, it describes the nature of this increase as fully and precisely as possible. Briefly, it uses statistics to describe this important and, as we shall see, quite remarkable aspect of his authorship.

The precise yet limited aim of this paper can be further indicated by noting two related and obviously important areas which it deliberately avoids. Though it demonstrates a correlation between the increase of Christian terms and the passage of time, it says nothing about the significance of this increase or about any of its possible causes. Specifically, it makes no attempt to correlate this increase with any other isolable factors, physical or physiological, intellectual or spiritual. It does not trace Kierkegaard's changing personal attitude toward Christianity nor does it say anything about his shifts of sympathy for or opinions about particular positions therein. Rather, it is concerned solely with changes in the extent of his preoccupation with Christianity as such as this is reflected in the frequency of his use of certain key Christian terms. Of course, I have no doubt that these other studies can and should be undertaken; indeed, I would hope that the present piece would serve to encourage and stimulate such investigations. In my view it would be fully justified if its results and, perhaps equally important, its general approach were used to explore these further important and fascinating problems.

This short report falls naturally into four sections. The first describes briefly the method which has been employed. The second reports the frequencies of each word in our sample set by individual title and, combining these by years, plots their average increase over the course of the authorship. The third plots the values for each individual work and locates these at their proper place on the time scale so that the reader may see each in proper perspective. The fourth draws an obvious but perhaps important conclusion from the observed data.

## I

Any account of our method should be prefaced by two preliminary remarks. First, the statistical methods and routines here employed are quite standard and traditional and the only relatively novel feature of this work is their use for the discovery of gross trends within a very large body of literary material. Second, though the data for this study has been produced by computer it should not be either automatically sanctified nor condemned on that account. I am grateful that the computer can assemble data which would take a human being many years but I hasten to add that there is nothing in this investigation which, in principle at least, could not have been done by the unaided human mind. In a word, this paper should not be seen as supporting the uncritical computer enthusiast nor, equally important, as giving justifiable fright to the traditionally minded scholar.

Our method is illustrated throughout the course of this paper but the following brief summary may prove helpful. The first step is to discover and record the average number of occurrences per page of a representative sample set of Christian terms by both title and year. The second is to plot the yearly averages on a graph, establish the appropriate trend line and, finally, describe the nature of the increase thus displayed. The third is to plot the averages for individual titles and to superimpose upon these points the trend line from the original yearly graph. It now remains to note certain steps taken to fit this general method to our particular problem.

Of course, granted the computer, it would have been possible to tabulate the occurrence and even frequency of every Christian term in the whole of Kierkegaard's writings and, by suitable statistical procedures, to uncover and describe the trends indicated by this enormously large and unwieldy data set.

Possible, but not, I think, either necessary or desirable. Such an approach would have greatly increased the amount of work without appreciably improving the accuracy of the results. It would have meant much labour rather than the exercise of a little wit. It would be a retreat from the goal of artificial intelligence or, what is surely the same thing, scientific understanding. In short, both the problem and our approach call for the use of a representative sample set. Indeed, it is only by using such a set that the problem is in practice soluble.

Everyone knows the conditions for a reliable sample and there is little point in discussing these matters here. It is perhaps more relevant to point out that our goal requires the choice of a sample set which collectively indicates preoccupation with Christianity as distinct from advocacy of, or indeed support for, some partisan position within Christianity. I have chosen thirteen words including, in two cases, some variants but shall not discuss or defend these choices here. They are listed in Table 1 and the reader may judge for himself, either now or later, whether the set meets these conditions. I would say only that I have selected these words solely in light of their sense and presumed centrality to Christian thought and without reference to either their frequency or distribution. In fact, these choices were made without asking or indeed knowing what results would follow.

Earlier I suggested that the data for this particular study had been supplied by the computer. In fact, it has been taken more or less directly from the proofs of my forthcoming concordance,<sup>1</sup> itself constructed by the computer. This has had two consequences neither of which are recommended but both of which should be noted. First, my choices had to be made from the words, indeed, from the particular form or forms of these words, already chosen for this other purpose. Second, and as explained in the introduction to that work, the frequencies reported are those of the running as opposed to the total text. Put another way, occurrences in titles, sub-titles and chapter heads are not counted. No doubt both these facts will slightly alter certain individual scores in our raw data and to that extent one should perhaps exercise caution in drawing conclusions about individual works. I am however reasonably confident that neither of these facts, either singly or together, are likely to produce any uniform, overall distortion or to put our general conclusions into any serious

<sup>1</sup> *Konkordans til Kierkegaards Samlede Værker*, compiled by Alastair McKinnon; Brill, Leiden; 1971.

doubt. As in most such statistical investigations, any resulting "errors" tend to cancel each other out; in the mass statistical sort their effect is simply lost. I believe that this will happen in the present case and report it only in order that the reader may have a complete account of our procedure. Should I be proven wrong I can only say that I judged the material sufficiently important to justify its publication in its present form. For any who may be interested in repeating the experiment with another sample set I can however report that total frequency counts for all Kierkegaard's words should be available shortly.<sup>2</sup>

It is one of the merits of a statistical approach that it tends to compensate almost automatically for any merely casual use of even apparently crucially significant words; indeed, it makes this adjustment perhaps even more easily than many careful readers. Quite simply, in the overall score such uses become statistically insignificant. This has obviously happened with the three terms of our sample set used in *LP*.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps more conclusively, it has also happened with "Gud" in *EEI*; though this word occurs 43 times in this work, the combination of other low scores with the large size of this work reduces its overall score to nearly 0. In short, the method is not fooled by the fact that a particular work uses a certain term in what one would ordinarily regard as a significant number of times. Of course, if a work were to use even half the members of our sample set with moderate frequency we should all agree that such use could not be casual. Statistically significant effects are only rarely accidental. Of course, what is true for particular works is, *mutatis mutandis*, yet more clearly true for yearly productions.

Several of the above effects are clearly at work in the sermon *GU*. For example, whereas our chosen form "Apostlene" is not found in this work, the form "Apostelen" appears 6 times. Further, the form "Gud" appears so frequently (34 times) in this short piece (12 pages) that, though it has no other members of the set, its overall score is still slightly above average.

I do not wish to undertake any defense of our sample set but to allay natural and perhaps plausible misgivings would point out that "Gud" does not in fact "swamp" the set or distort the overall result. For example, while

2 In *Index Verborum til Kierkegaards Samlede Værker*, compiled by Alastair McKinnon; Brill, Leiden; 1973.

3 This and all other title codes used in this paper are explained in Table 1. I apologize for the use of these codes but, as indicated later in the paper, they conserve much space and facilitate the clear graphic representation of our data.

*HCD* has by far the highest individual score, this particular word occurs there only 3 times. Again, it is the only word in our sample set which appears in *GU*. In fact, these examples suggest that the inclusion of this term may be most informative. More to the point, and appearances notwithstanding, they show that it is the set as a whole and not any single member which determines the overall result.

This study is based upon the whole of the *Samlede Værker* except *Bladartikler, der staar i Forhold til Forfatterskabet* which has been excluded for the following reasons. Though this title exists in both the printed and machine-readable texts as a single unit, it is in fact a collection of short pieces spread over half of Kierkegaard's literary career and cannot therefore be assigned any single, satisfactory date. Further, these pieces are too short to merit individual treatment, especially as there are other titles which might be broken down into smaller units with much greater profit. Finally, preliminary examination suggested that at least most of the items in this collection are miniatures of the years from which they come. If this is so, indeed if our general conclusions are even approximately correct, the omission of this particular title should make almost no difference to the overall result.

In general we have treated individual titles as natural and independent units. The few departures from this practice will be obvious from Table 1 and can be explained quite simply. Because we are concerned with the correlation between the use of certain words and the passage of time we have treated *Opbyggelige Taler* from 1843 as one title (*T43*) and those from 1844 as another (*T44*). For the same reason we have, with some very slight license,<sup>4</sup> treated *Bladartikler* from 1854 as one unit (*B54*) and those from 1855 as another (*B55*). Further, because there was some evidence of a decline in the frequency of our sample set toward the very end of Kierkegaard's life, we have followed the editor's practice of dividing *Øieblikket* into three main sections (*Ø1*, *Ø2* and *Ø3*); hopefully, this replays the action in slow motion and allows the reader to observe this change more closely. Finally, though these results do not appear in our published table, we have assembled and

<sup>4</sup> I have assigned to the year 1854 all the articles up to and including "Hvad der skal gøres" (*Anden Pintsedag* 1854) (*Dan. 3. udg. 19, p. 38*); this despite the fact that some of the short pieces which appear in this early part of the collection bear a date from 1855. In fact, the pieces from these two years are so intermingled that it seemed impossible to avoid some such arbitrary solution.

compared the relevant data for the various parts of *SV*, *AE*, and *OTA*. But more about this later.

With four exceptions, all works have been treated as of their date of publication. More precisely, in Fig. 1 they have been treated according to their year and in Fig. 2 according to their month and year of publication; the former of course, to augment the averaging out process so integral to the statistical approach. The four exceptions are *SFV*, *DS* and  $\emptyset 3$ , none of which were published in Kierkegaard's lifetime, and *GU* which was not published until three years after its writing. This dating scheme is not perfect but I believe it to be adequate especially in view of the fact that for most of the remaining works the interval between composition and publication is both relatively short and uniform. Indeed, I think that the only serious objection can be in respect of *EE1* which on this scheme is assigned the same date as *EE2*. This is plainly not ideal but any other solution leads to conjecture and controversy and I have therefore thought it best to give due warning and, here as elsewhere, use the date of original publication except in the four cases where this is obviously inappropriate.

All averages, whether for individual titles or years, have been obtained by dividing the total of all occurrences of all members of the sample set by the total number of "full pages". I say "full pages" because the disparity between different parts of the text made a simple page count quite unsatisfactory. To correct this I have visually scanned all works and have produced a corrected full page count for each. I meant, of course, the number of pages which would have been required to print all the material in each work successively on full pages. I have done this on an intuitive basis and have no formula according to which I can claim to have proceeded but I think that my figures cannot be far wrong. Anyone in doubt may check these estimates by consulting Table 1 where they are given in brackets along with individual volume titles.

Before leaving these matters I should like to make one final point. There is nothing magic about numbers and one does not necessarily increase one's understanding of a phenomenon by assigning to it some quantitative value. Nevertheless the fact remains that the features with which we are here concerned are genuinely additive ones and that we are here engaged in fundamental measurement as opposed to mere measurement by scale. Put another way, it is an objective and indisputable fact that *EE1* contains an average of .114 occurrences per page, that *HCD* contains an average of 9.5

per page and, extravagant as this may seem, that the latter has therefore approximately 83 times as many occurrences per page as the former. In short, the relationship between these two works in this particular respect is of precisely the same kind and order as, for example, that between the populations of Køge and Copenhagen. In fact, the increase is a staggering one and I make the point partly because, for merely fortuitous reasons, our graphs do not adequately emphasise this point. We turn now to follow out the course of this quite remarkable increase.

II

The raw data of this study are the frequencies of the individual members of our sample set within each of Kierkegaard's writings. These are given, together with overall averages by title and year, in Table 1. Individual titles are followed by their assigned dates and, in brackets, their title codes and full page counts. As these codes save much space and, especially, permit clear graphic display of this material I shall continue to use them wherever practicable throughout the remainder of this paper.

	Apostlene	Christen	Christendom	Christenhed	Christne	Christus, -o	Evangelium	Gud	Gud-Mennesket	Guds-Forholdet	Gudsdyrkelse	Jesus, -u, -um	nye Testamente	Total/Title	Aver. occ. per page/Title	Year	Total/Year	Aver. occ. per page/Year
Af en endnu Levendes Papirer ..... Sept., 1838 (LP) (40)						2		2				1		5	.125	1838	5	.125
Om Begrebet Ironi ..... July, 1841 (B1) (264)		4			7	12	2	49			2			76	.287	1841	76	.287
Enten-Eller. Første halvbind ..... Feb., 1843 (EE1) (402)						1	1	43			1			46	.114			
Enten-Eller. Andet halvbind ..... Feb., 1843 (EE2) (314)		2	1		7	8	1	194			2	1	1	217	.694			
(Atten) opbyggelige Taler ..... June, 1843* (T43) (145)		1				2	1	256				7		267	1.841			
Frygt og Bæven ..... Oct., 1843 (FB) (103)						2		85					4	91	.883			
Gjentagelsen ..... Oct., 1843 (G) (80)								40						40	.500	1843	661	.633
(Atten) opbyggelige Taler ..... June, 1844* (T44) (188)			1		1	2	4	380						388	2.063			
Forord ..... June, 1844 (F) (56)		1						9						11	.196			
Philosophiske Smuler ..... June, 1844 (PS) (87)			1				1	9					1	12	.137			
Begrebet Angest ..... June, 1844 (BA) (134)		2				11		37						50	.373	1844	461	.991
Tre Taler ... Leiligheder ..... Apr., 1845 (TTL) (77)								122		2	6			130	1.688			
Stadier paa Livets Vei ..... Apr., 1845 (SV) (422)	1	1	2			1		199				1		205	.485	1845	335	.671

	Apostlene	Christen	Ckristendom	Christenhed	Christne	Christus, -o	Evangelium	Gud	Gud-Mennesket	Guds-Forholdet	Gudsdyrkelse	Jesus, -u, -um	nye Testamente	Total/Title	Aver. occ. per page/Title	Year	Total/Year	Aver. occ. per page/Year
Afsluttende ... Efterskrift .....	12	225	94	2	62	32	3	435		37	2	5	10	919	1.752			
Feb., 1846 (AE) (525)																		
En literair Anmeldelse .....								12						12	.130	1846	931	1.508
Mar., 1846 (LA) (92)																		
Opbyggelige Taler ... Aand .....	23	16	2	2	38	30	12	493	2	1		7		626	2.265			
Mar., 1847 (OTA) (286)																		
Kjerlighedens Gjerninger .....	4	42	15	9	17	62	5	588	2	29		4	4	781	2.175	1847	1407	2.181
Sept., 1847 (KG) (359)																		
Christelige Taler .....	4	165	18	3	120	52	4	706				16		1088	4.059			
Apr., 1848 (CT) (268)																		
Krisen ... Skuespillerindes Liv .....								2						2	.100			
July, 1848 (KK) (20)																		
Synspunktet ... Forfatter-Virksomhed		69	13	6	43	7	1	80		2	1	2		224	2.545	1848	1314	3.691
Nov., 1848* (SFV) (88)																		
Lilien ... Fuglen ... Himlen .....		1						135						136	3.777			
May, 1849 (LF) (36)																		
Tvende ... Smaa-Afhandlinger .....	1	10	2	1	3	35		50	1			3		106	2.163			
May, 1849 (TSA) (49)																		
Sygdommen til Døden .....		6	7	1	13	48		228	9	3	2			317	2.780			
July, 1849 (SD) (114)																		
"Ypperstepræsten" ... "Synderinden"						18		64				10		92	4.181	1849	651	2.946
Nov., 1849 (YTS) (22)																		
Indøvelse i Christendom .....	12	177	27	52	99	308	2	248	71	5	2	55		1058	4.750			
Sept., 1850 (IC) (224)																		
En opbyggelig Tale .....	1		1			13		12						27	2.700	1850	1058	4.636
Dec., 1850 (EOT) (10)																		
Guds Uforanderlighed .....								34						34	2.833			
May, 1851* (GU) (12)																		
To Taler ... Fredagen .....					1	10	1	21				7		40	2.353			
Aug., 1851 (TAF) (17)																		
Om min Forfatter-Virksomhed .....	1	13	12	3	4			9						42	2.800			
Aug., 1851 (FV) (15)																		
Til Selvprøvelse, Samtiden anbefalet	16	10	8		6	25	1	54	1		2	3		126	1.826	1851	242	2.141
Sept., 1851 (TS) (69)																		
Dømmer Selv .....	9	46	103	6	15	19	2	145	1			5	8	359	3.479	1852	359	3.479
May, 1852* (DS) (103)																		
Bladartikler 1854—55 .....	1	31	34	5	28	17	2	20			6	10	20	174	6.960	1854	174	6.960
Dec., 1854* (B54) (25)																		
Bladartikler 1854—55 .....			105					32						18	155	3.780		
May, 1855 (B55) (41)																		
Øieblikket nr. 1—2 .....	1	23	50	10	52	3		17	3		6	2	33	200	6.666			
June, 1855 (Ø1) (30)																		
Hvad Christus ... Christendom .....			28	8	1	13		3			7	2	14	76	9.500			
June, 1855 (HCD) (8)																		
Øieblikket nr. 3—7 .....	3	97	196	27	70	26	2	105		1	18	2	60	607	7.313			
Aug. 1855 (Ø2) (83)																		
Øieblikket nr. 8—10 .....		31	39	11	9	13		60	1		9	8	11	192	4.085	1855	1230	5.885
Sept., 1855* (Ø3) (47)																		

\* These divisions and datings are explained in the main text.

Table 1. Frequencies of Sample Set by Title and Year

The average frequencies by year have been indicated in the final column of Table 1 above. These are given, together with their plot line, in the graph in Fig. 1, the axes of which represent average occurrences per page and the successive years in Kierkegaard's authorship, respectively. In this case these averages have



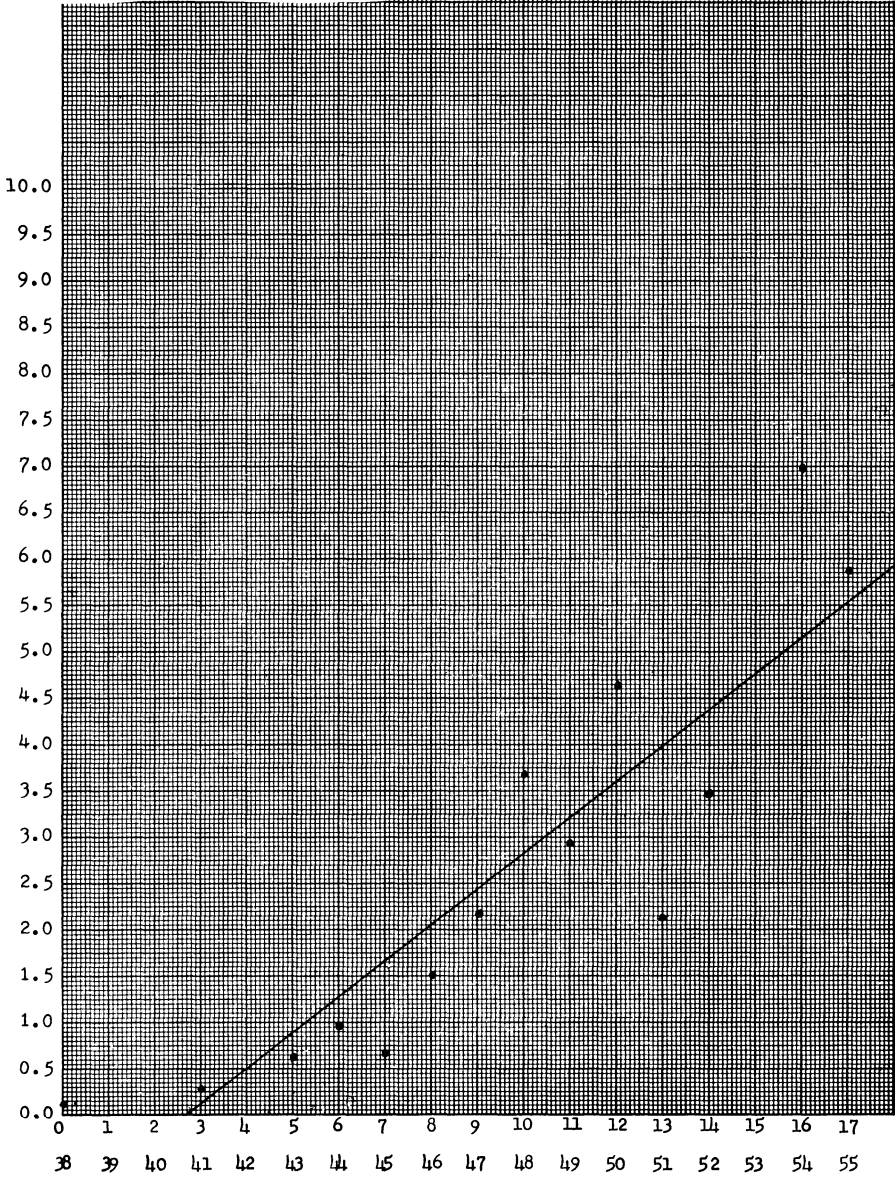


Fig. 1. Use of Sample Set by Year

been plotted on a line representing the mid-point of the year in question. To compensate for the fact that it was necessary to represent the year 1838 by "0", the plot line has been shifted one square left.

The results of this investigation are now obvious and the reader can see these himself in considerable detail and with great accuracy. Nevertheless some brief comment may be helpful.

It is, of course, clear that there is a generally steady increase in sample use with the passage of time. This is clear from the array of the individual plot points and, especially, from the plot line which indicates the overall trend or average for the entire authorship. In fact, this line shows that there is a very high correlation (+ 0.889) between use and time. Indeed, this is so high that it can hardly be judged accidental. Of course this is not to say that the passage of time is itself the cause nor is it in any sense to offer an explanation. Rather, it is simply to observe that there is a clear and distinct trend within the authorship and, a quite separate matter, that the evidence is such as to invite investigation of its cause.

It is perhaps worth noting that this general trend can also be discerned even within individual works. There is, for example, the case of *T43* and *T44* which the observant reader may already have noted. Similarly, although the results have not been included, the later parts of *EE1* and *EE2*, *AE*, *OTA* and, to a lesser extent, *SV*, consistently show a higher score than the earlier ones. It is of course possible that this simply reflects an internal development within each of these works; this is probably at least part of the story in the case of the first of these works. On this view, however, the two halves of *SV* ought to show a corresponding discrepancy whereas in fact they do not. Further, this would hardly account for the fact that the three discourses in *OTA* show such markedly increasing scores (1.015, 2.041 and 3.571). In fact, all these works are of substantial size and as each shows the same pattern I conclude that we may see them as a further instance of the overall increase we have been describing.

The early years and writings aside, there appear to be but two exceptions to this general trend. The first is a clear and substantial drop in the year 1851; in fact the use rate for this year falls back to approximately that of 1847. Now it is clear from the individual scores in Table 1 that this drop is due mainly to the relatively large *TS*, but further inspection shows that both the sermon *GU* and the discourses *TAF* have a surprisingly low rate. (The score for *FV* is,

interestingly, about equal to that of its earlier counterpart *SFV*.) It is therefore clear that we should think of this year as showing a clear and marked decline in sample use.

The second decrease is less obvious but nevertheless apparent to closer observation. This occurs in the final year of his writing or, comparing years, in the last as against the preceding one (5.885 down from 6.960). In fact, the details of this decrease can be clearly documented. The articles *B54* show a score of 6.960 compared with 3.780 for *B55*. The three sections of  $\emptyset$  show a roughly similar pattern. The first two sections have approximately equal scores (6.666 and 7.313) but the last shows a clear drop to 4.085. It is clear then that his very last writings have lower scores than the immediately preceding ones or, put another way, that there is a second drop in use rate at the very end of the authorship.

It is perhaps worth emphasizing that the figures cited are the average occurrences of our sample set per full page of published writings for the year in question. Hence, while the year 1843 shows 661 occurrences and 1854 only 174, the average score for the former is only .633 while that for the latter, which has only a few pages, is 6.960. It should also be noted that the general increase in use here documented is apparently not a function of the amount of Kierkegaard's literary production. Indeed, these two rates tend to show, if anything, a generally negative correlation. Specifically, the general increase we have documented is accompanied by an almost equally clear fall in production. Further, the decrease of 1851 is followed by a sharp drop and indeed total lapse in production while that of 1855 coincides with a sharp rise. These connections, if any, are obviously much too complex to be uncovered here; those interested in such matters are invited to compare Fig. 1 with the graph of production rates in the Appendix, or, alternatively, to examine Fig. 2 where production lapses are more obvious.

Our conclusions to date can be summarized briefly as follows. While there are two minor decreases, the overall trend is a general and steady increase in the use of our sample set throughout the course of the authorship.

### III

Thus far we have sought to chart Kierkegaard's increasing use of Christian terms by the simple and obvious means of combining the works according

to their assigned years. I propose now to do a roughly similar plot for the individual works. This should reveal the pattern of this increase more fully and precisely and, further, should enable the reader to see it in relation to the actual works with which he is already familiar. The averages for these works appear in the fourth last column of Table 1 and are plotted in Fig. 2 as of the assigned month and year. Because the distinction may interest some readers, pseudonymous works are indicated by a “+” and acknowledged ones by a “•”.

While it would be a relatively simple matter to construct the trend line for this new set of points I have instead chosen to transfer the line already established in Fig. 1 as more appropriate to our immediate interest. It shows the relation of the individual works to the overall trend already observed and, of particular importance, it preserves the averaging out effect already achieved by bunching the works according to years.

Perhaps the first point to be noted is that this earlier plot line represents an intuitively good fit for this new set of points and, it should be noted, for the groups into which they are now clustered. In other words, and as we might expect, these works show the same general trend when treated separately as when bunched according to years; in both cases there is a steady overall increase with some minor but significant deviations. That settled, we must now see if this display by title provides further insight into the precise nature and pattern of this increase.

One of the most interesting features of this new graph is the way in which it underscores the two lapses in Kierkegaard's literary production, the short but perhaps important one from March, 1846 until March, 1847 and the longer and more obvious one running through much of 1852 and all of 1853. Of course, these are features of the authorship as such but they necessarily involve pauses in the increase we have been charting and should therefore be duly noted.

This same point can be put in another way. It is evident from this graph that the increase takes place in three clearly defined stages, stages which are plainly evident from the groupings into which these points are now clustered and which we have merely made more obvious by enclosing them in what might perhaps be called their “least boxes”. The first group consists of works dated between Feb., 1843 and Feb., 1846 and having use rates between .114 (*EE1*) and 2.063 (*T44*); the second of works between Mar., 1847 and, say,

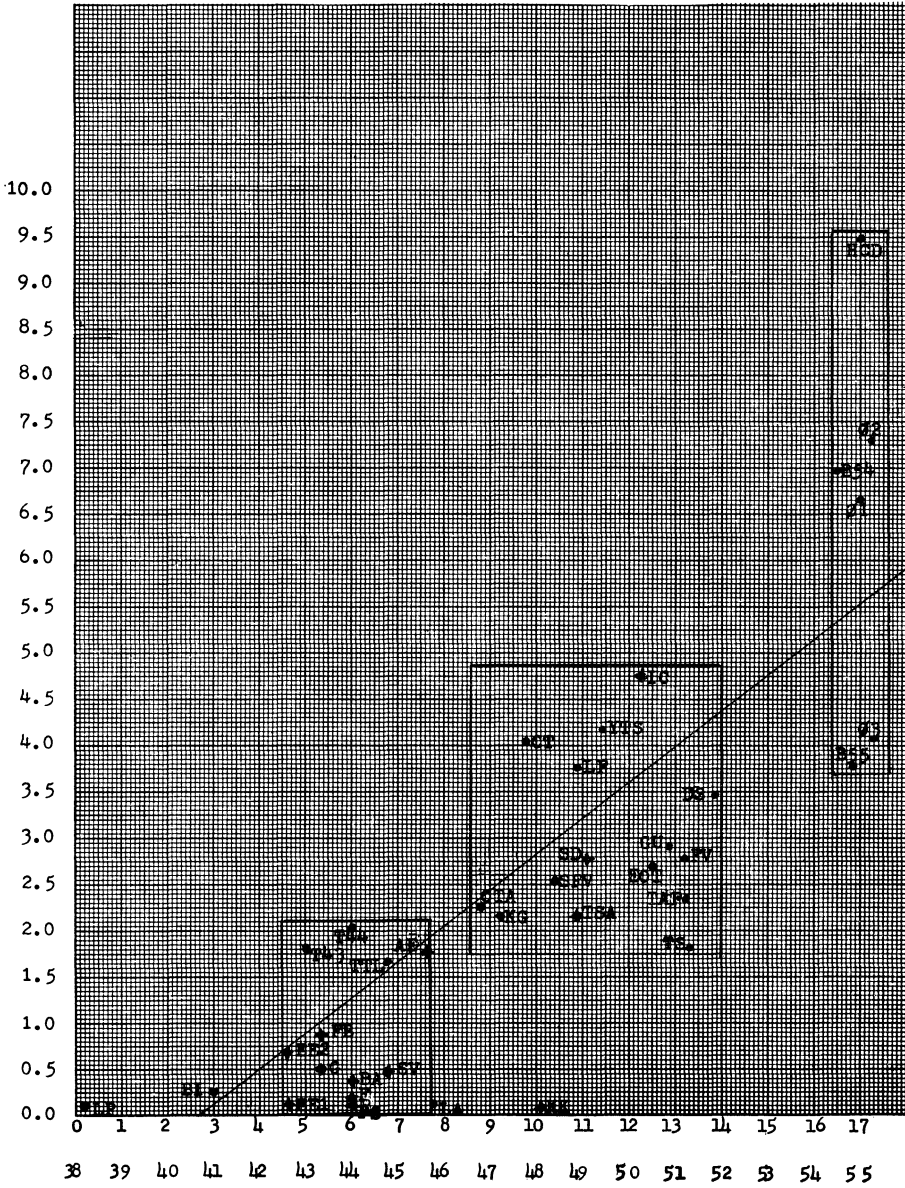


Fig. 2. Use of Sample Set by Title

May, 1852 with use rates between 1.826 (*TS*) and 4.750 (*IC*); and the third of works between Dec., 1854 and Sept., 1855 with rates between 3.780 (*B 55*) and 9.500 (*HCD*). In short, while the increase can be seen as a general trend with two minor variations it can also be seen as occurring in these three definite stages each of which contains interesting and significant variations.

In the last section we reported that all of the larger works which we had been able to test showed an internal development or increase similar to that which we have found in the authorship as a whole. It should perhaps also be noted that the pseudonymous works as a group show a strikingly similar increase in Christian terms throughout their duration. This is interesting support for Kierkegaard's view of the pseudonymous production as an authorship within an authorship and, more immediately relevant, a further instance of the pattern we have claimed to discover.

Our account of this increase is hardly complete but the reader can no doubt supply the remainder with the data which has been provided. Before leaving this matter however I should like to make one further suggestion which, though based upon the material of the present paper, goes beyond its own aims and intentions. Briefly, I wish to suggest that these three groups represent a simple yet fundamental division of Kierkegaard's works, a division which cuts at the joints of his authorship not only with reference to Christianity as such but, equally, with respect to the underlying aim, strategy and character of his various works. Of course, this division excludes *LP* and *BI* on the one hand and *LA* and *KK* on the other. But this is hardly a serious objection. The first two antedate the main authorship and the last two are only casually related to its underlying aim. In terms of the orientation of the authorship each of these four works is, I suggest, peripheral.

In order to make good this suggestion it would be necessary to provide a detailed description of these three groups and this is clearly beyond our present power or intention. I shall therefore leave it to the reader to decide whether this division is fundamental or perhaps merely serviceable. I would however point out that we should not be surprised if it proves to be the former. Kierkegaard repeatedly insisted that he had been a religious author from first to last and that the authorship was devoted above all else to showing what it means to become a Christian. If these accounts are correct, and I have no doubt that they are, it would be entirely natural that these groupings should at the same time prove to be the basic and fundamental divisions of the authorship. Indeed,

one might even go further and say that, granted these accounts, some procedure like the one we have followed would be the obvious way to discover such divisions.

#### IV

Our original aim was to chart the increase of Christian terms throughout Kierkegaard's authorship and, in one way or another, this has now been done. Since however our approach is not exactly conventional it is tempting to conclude by citing some evidence in its defence: by showing that our sample set is a reliable one; that the method does in fact measure the extent to which the various works are concerned with Christianity; even, and this is perhaps particularly tempting, by insisting that our findings are not to be summarized by saying simply that Kierkegaard apparently used the word "Gud" more frequently as he grew older. Similarly, it is tempting to show how data of this type might be used to trace the development of Kierkegaard's interest in particular topics or, by suitable expansion, to plot quite accurately the distinctive concern and focus of particular works. But all this the reader can readily see for himself simply by studying the data which has been provided. I conclude therefore with this comment in a very different vein.

This paper has been about the increase in the frequency with which Kierkegaard uses certain Christian terms and thus far no mention has been made of his thoughts or intentions. We have described a phenomenon within the literature and have said nothing about any mind behind it. But in fact it is easier to believe that Kierkegaard became increasingly preoccupied with Christianity than that he contrived this remarkable increase or, yet more improbably, that it occurred merely by accident. In fact the hypothesis of increasing preoccupation is itself the most economical and convincing one with which to explain the observed data.

