

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

NEWSLETTER NO. 17

EDITOR: Louis Pojman

OCTOBER 1987
Philosophy and Religions
Philosophy Department
University of Mississippi
University, MS 38677



NEWS

Papers for this year's discussion in the Kierkegaard Seminar at the American Academy of Religion (Boston, Mass, December 5-8) are on the Philosophical Fragments. Five papers will be discussed. Their authors are: Steven Emmanuel, David Goicoechea, Abraham Khan, Brayton Polka, and Fredrick Sontag. The respondents are Dalton Baldwin, Wanda Warren Berry, John Donnelly, George Stengren, and Ron William Walden. To request copies of papers, kindly submit \$8.00 to Dr. Abraham H. Khan, Trinity College, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1H8, Canada.

Next year's seminar is on Either/Or.

During the Eastern Division Meeting of the APA (December 27-30, 1987) in New York the theme will be Kierkegaard and Deconstruction. Papers will be given by John Caputo of Villanova University, Louis Mackey of the University of Texas, and Mark Taylor of Williams College.

At the Eastern Division Meeting of the APA (December 29, 1986) the Soren Kierkegaard Society elected the following people as members of the Council: Merold Westphal, President; John Donnelly, Vice President; Louis Pojman, Secretary-Treasurer; Robert Perkins and Sylvia Walsh members at large.

Call for Papers for 1988: The Kierkegaard Society plans to have meetings at all three of the APA conventions in 1988. Paper submissions for the Eastern Division meeting are invited. They may be on any topic in Kierkegaard scholarship. The deadline is March 15, 1988. Send three copies of the paper, along with an

abstract, to John Donnelly, Department of Philosophy, University of San Diego, Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110.

The programs for the Pacific Division and the Central Division are as follows:

Pacific Division APA (Portland, Oregon) March 23-26, 1988

Chair: John Donnelly, University of San Diego

Papers:

1 Edward R. Mooney, Sonoma State University of California: Getting Isaac Back: Kierkegaard's Double Movement of Faith.

2 Jane Rubin, University of California, Berkeley: Kierkegaard on Philosophy and Modern Nihilism.

3 Lyle Anderson, University of San Diego: Equality and Hierarchy in Kierkegaard's Concept of Community.

Central Division APA (Cincinnati, Ohio) April 28-30

Chair: John Donnelly, University of San Diego

1 C. Stephen Evans, St. Olaf College: Where There's a Will There's a Way: Kierkegaard's Theory of Action.

Commentator: Louis Pojman, University of Mississippi

2 Robert Kruschwitz, Georgetown College: Kierkegaard and the Christian Virtue of Hope: A Reading of Sickness unto Death.

Commentator: tba

Call For Papers

The Howard and Edna Hong Kierkegaard Library of St. Olaf College invites interested philosophers, theologians, and lovers of Kierkegaard in general to send papers to be considered for a conference on "Kierkegaard as a Religious Thinker." The conference will be held June 6-8, 1988, on the campus of St. Olaf, in Northfield, Minnesota, about 45 minutes from the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport.

Papers on any aspect of Kierkegaard as a religious thinker are welcome, but a special invitation is extended to papers dealing with the social or political dimensions or implications of Kierkegaard's religious thought, and/or papers dealing with what Robert Perkins has called "Kierkegaard's Second Authorship."

Two of the featured speakers for the conference will be Professor Stephen Crites of Wesleyan University and Professor Merold Westphal of Fordham University. The majority of the program will be filled through the open call for papers.

Papers should have a reading time of 20 to 30 minutes, and should be sent to Professor C. Stephen Evans, Kierkegaard Library, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057 no later than February 1, 1988. Completed papers are preferred but detailed abstracts will be considered. If a paper is selected for presentation, the author agrees to give the Kierkegaard Library the right to publish the essay in a book should a publisher be willing to publish the conference proceedings.

Alastair McKinnon has just re-issued, with minor corrections, Gregor Malantschuk's classic study Kierkegaard's Way to Truth. Students and orders of 10 or more: \$3 per copy plus postage. Others: \$5 per copy plus postage. Copies may be obtained from Inter Editions, 3005 Barat Road, Montreal H3Y 2H4, Canada.

A number of people have contacted me to say that they didn't receive the last edition of the Kierkegaard Newsletter, #16 (April 1987). I assume that the post office lost the copies. If you did not receive a copy and would like one, please write to the editor at the University of Mississippi and we will send you one.

Bob Perkins reports that the International Kierkegaard Commentary on Sickness unto Death is due out from Mercer University Press any day now.

REVIEWS

Faith, Knowledge, Action: Essays Presented to Niels Thulstrup on His Sixtieth Birthday. Ed. George L. Stengren. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels, 1984. 263 pp.

by Andrew Burgess, University of New Mexico

Diversity of contents is the hallmark of a Festschrift, and this work is no exception. The volume consists of a one page biography of Niels Thulstrup and a list of his publications, and then seventeen articles in three languages (English, Danish, and German), on figures ranging from Tertullian to Lukacs. As is appropriate to the scholar being honored, however, the majority of the essays focus on Kierkegaard, and it is that which will be treated here. They will be placed in three groups: those that address the issue of irrationalism in Kierkegaard, those that look at the overall structure of his thought or the thought of his contemporaries, and specialized studies.

Not surprisingly, the largest group is the first, consisting of essays on proof and rationality, by Harry Nielsen, Ralph McInerny, John Heywood Thomas, Paulus Swenson, and Alastair Hannay. Nielsen's essay is a good place to begin, in that he provides an example of proof that has a genuine Kierkegaardian air. Nielsen fastens on remarks in Either/Or II (pp. 274f, English trans.) in which Judge William offers "the true proof of the immortality of the soul," to the effect that "I cannot become ethically conscious without energy. I can therefore never become ethically conscious without becoming conscious of my eternal nature." He rightly points out that the "proof," if that is what it is, is something very different from what is provided by Kant in the Critique of Pure Reason. The Judge's proof, for example, could only be a proof for himself, never for anyone else. Appropriately, then, Nielsen declines to take up the proof from an outsider's standpoint, but concludes instead with a soliloquy, in typical Nielsen fashion, on the interconnections between being ethically conscious and becoming aware of one's eternal nature.

The essays by Ralph McInerny and John Heywood Thomas take up challenges to Kierkegaard from Thomism and Marxism respectively. McInerny asks the question whether the Climacus of Philosophical Fragments is a fideist. Starting from the definition of 'fideist' as "one for whom nothing that can be known counts for or against what is believed," McInerny has an easy time showing that Climacus is a fideist (although ambiguities remain, he admits), while Thomas Aquinas is not. McInerny goes on, however, to point out that Climacus and Aquinas also share the same position on certain key points, and further that there is no need to iden-

tify Kierkegaard with Climacus. John Heywood Thomas' essay is on the critique of Kierkegaard by the Marxist philosopher and literary critic Georg Lukacs. While the main criticisms Lukacs presents are by no means new--irrationalism, individualistic ethics, and aristocratic withdrawal from social engagement, for example--his analysis is important, and Thomas' reply is a model of sympathetic and insightful exegesis from which both Marxists and Kierkegaardians can learn.

The two essays by Paulus Svendsen and Alastair Hannay look at the concept of religion in relationship to Christianity. Svendsen makes the Barthian point that Christianity can only be classified as a "religion" if it is identified with what Kierkegaard calls "Christendom." Svendsen's article is much longer than it needs to be in order to make his argument and includes five pages of quotations from the Postscript that might better have been omitted. Hannay's essay, on the other hand, is both ingenious and to the point. After noting that SK's Johannes Climacus is writing to those who profess to be Christians, he asks how Kierkegaard might write today as "Johannes Mundanus" to an audience that is avowedly worldly--that is, agnostic or atheist. This question takes him into reflections about frameworks and paradigm shifts that will be of special interest to readers of contemporary analytic philosophy.

The essays of the second group take up two systems of thought--Louis Pojman, the "stages" framework of Kierkegaard's writings, and Curtis Thompson, the anthropology of SK's teacher, H. L. Martensen. Pojman builds on the work of Richard Schacht (in Hegel and After), but modifies Schacht's identification of nine states and shows their interconnectedness. Compared to the many references in secondary literature to SK's stages, there has been little written explicitly on the topic itself, so that Pojman's essay is a welcome addition. While I am not persuaded that Kierkegaard had such an intricate structure in mind as he wrote, Pojman's reconstruction is useful in its own right for bringing out relationships among the pseudonymous works.

Thompson's article on Martensen fills an equally important gap in the literature. It presents a distinction in Martensen between three kinds of religiousness--religiousness 1, the essential God-relatedness intrinsic to human nature, shown in art and philosophy; religiousness 2, the existential religious (but not-Christian) relationship of the human with God; and religiousness 3, the existential religious (Christian) relationship of a person with God. Martensen distinguishes between the first and the latter two kinds of religiousness in the following way: "Art and philosophy present the Idea of God in its objectivity, but religion is its real subjective existence in the human. In the former I related myself objectively to the Idea of God (that is, I contemplate the Idea as it is in-and-for-itself without any relations); in the latter I related myself subjectively (that is, I ask about its relation to me)." If this quotation from Kierkegaard's notes on Martensen's 1838-39 lectures sounds similar to some ideas in SK's Postscript, that would be a good reason to pay close attention to Martensen, both in his similarities to and differences with SK. For that task Thompson has provided a helpful start. Indeed, on reading Thompson about Mynster and Martensen, one is struck by the fact that certain aspects of SK's thought, which have often been seen as unique to him (such as the stages of life's development), are really ideas which were in the air at the time and discussed by his contemporaries. Perhaps the main effect of packaging Kierkegaard for modern scholarship will be to transform him into a mildly unconventional mid-nineteenth century Danish systematic philosopher. How SK would have howled to learn that result!

The third group contains three essays on specialized Kierkegaard topics. In

the last essay of the book Robert Widenmann discusses briefly but penetratingly SK's teaching about "the moment," over against the background of Plato's teaching in the Parmenides. An even more specialized study is provided by Wolfietrich von Kloeden, on the concept of "double-mindedness" as found in the first part of Edifying Discourses in a Different Vein. Interestingly, "double-mindedness" also turns out to be related to the concept of "the moment." From "the moment" Marie Mikulova Thulstrup brings the reader to The Moment and other pieces of Kierkegaard's final "attack on Christendom." After dismissing harshly most major SK interpreters on this subject, from Brandes to Malantschuk, she interprets the attack as a "corrective" rather than as a new norm.

With its three languages and its technical articles, this book is only for Kierkegaard specialists, but for them it is essential. Even the articles not dealing with SK will be of interest, since they are by such authors as Per Lonning, Thor Hall, Frederick Sontag, and George Stengren, who have written about SK in other places. Although there are few, except perhaps Thulstrup himself, who would want to read the book through, there will be equally few serious Kierkegaard scholars who will not find several essays in this volume that they will prize. For my own part, since I dislike reading long books, to find a volume with several insightful essays is to find a treasure.

Robert C. Roberts. Faith, Reason and History: Rethinking Kierkegaard's Philosophical Fragments. Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986; 145 pp.

by John Donnelly, The University of San Diego

Much as Kierkegaard offered a rational critique of rationalistic, idealistic systems of thought, so too, *mutatis mutandis*, Roberts offers us a scholarly interpretation of Philosophical Fragments while attempting to avoid any pedantic pitfalls endemic to Kierkegaard scholarship. Roberts describes his study of the Fragments as a "primitive reading," i.e., a particular individual's reflection on the text and how it relates to his own existence. Roberts invites us to reduplicate the thought-experiment begun in the Fragments.

Roberts is extremely adept at untangling the multiple webs of SK's irony, indirect communication, jest, upbuildingness, and assorted dialectical techniques. His book is a paradigm of detailed and insightful reflection. He has learned well the Kierkegaardian caveat that "success is to the accurate rather than the swift."

Throughout the book Roberts offers many interesting insights on Jesus' non-Socratic role as teacher, the Paradox of the incarnation, the claims of historicity and the lordship of Jesus, the concept of offense, the role of discipleship, etc. He adeptly elucidates Climacus' theological grammar, correcting the conceptual confusion inherent in various attempts (e.g., Schleiermacher, Bultmann, Cobb, et. al.) to conflate the sphere of the Socratic teacher with that of Christ the redeemer. Roberts also nicely captures the dialectical, often poetic nuances of Climacus: "the thinker who addresses grammatical distortions must combine the powers of an informed logician, a spiritually qualified depth-psychologist, a religious 'poet'. Climacus qua therapist is conceptually inoculating any putative Neo-Hegelian reader against Socratic forms of Christology and assorted demythologising ailments. In this vein, Roberts warns his reader about the guiles of existential reinterpretation or historical reconstruction, and casts a skeptical

eye too on the vaunted claims of biblical scholarship.

Of course, Philosophical Fragments is also a love story between the God-in-time and those persons with whom he enters into a freely reciprocal love relationship in time. I believe that Roberts is quite correct in maintaining that the logic of reciprocity need not require any equality of understanding between the lovers. Albeit, to be sure, that love story is miraculous, as the God appears as a humble servant to satisfy the need for atonement. And Roberts also nicely handles the conundrum of whether God needs to love, analyzing divine love as activated by "created desire." However, I am puzzled by his seemingly favorable remark about Chapter II of the Fragments as a model of preaching. That is, contra Roberts, I wonder how preaching can be "good theology," if its rhetoric is devoid of any epistemic force, as Roberts grants.

In discussing the God-in-time as the absolute paradox, Roberts offers a detailed analysis of the remark "the highest potentiation of every passion is always to will its downfall." This Kierkegaardian principle seems blatantly false, for the highest pitch of every person would seem instead to will its own fulfillment. Arguably, Roberts may correctly critique SK's example of erotic love where "the lover is changed by this paradox of love so that he almost does not recognize himself anymore." Nonetheless, SK's example seems to deal with a situation involving unrequited love and the eventual self-sacrifice by the lover of his loving selfishly in favor of the interests of his beloved. However, Roberts, perhaps inadvertently, seems to change the Kierkegaardian principle in his critique. He speaks of the passion's desiring its own frustration, and claims the lover "does not desire to give up the pleasure of his beloved's company, even if he is willing, for her sake, to do so." But the Kierkegaardian principle, pace Roberts, uses the term "will" not "desire"!

Moreover, the principle is not as absurd as Roberts alleges. Turning to a case of satisfied erotic love, the person's sexual passion herein is surely to will (or desire) its downfall via copulation. But the sense of 'downfall' here is not that of 'frustration', so much as it is of calm satisfaction. The upshot is that the original principle is not as outrageous as counterexamples like "the highest potentiation of the desire for wealth is desire for poverty" would suggest (Compare the cynical retort that there are two tragedies in life: one not to get your heart's desire; the other, to get it!).

I would agree with Roberts in his critique of SK's views on natural theology, especially that it is false to say that a person can never reason in conclusion to existence, but only reason in conclusion from existence. However, in his discussion of Alvin Plantinga's possible world argument (as a more fitting model for an ontological argument than SK chose to critique) in which unsurpassable greatness is exemplified, I am puzzled by Roberts' claim to have shown that the Plantingian argument "in no way supports the belief in God."

In attempting to reconstruct Climacus' argument for the absolute paradox, Roberts says: " 'sin' is just the dogmatic name for the absolute unlikeness," further claiming that "nothing in the structure of this argument will be lost by removing the reference to sin..." However, pace Roberts, such a claim seems to have the unhappy effect of identifying God with sin! How's that for an hilarious deduction?! For example, the proposition "the unknown (i.e., God) is the absolutely different" becomes "the unknown is sin." I suspect similar reductio moves could also be made with Roberts' arguments on p. 79.

Roberts does provide an illuminating discussion of whether an eternal happiness can be founded on historical knowledge, i.e., "the eternalizing of the historical and the historicizing of the eternal." He skillfully treats the difficult matters of discipleship as contemporaneity with Christ, the role of interpretation (i.e., faith as "seeing-as"), faith as a passion and not as a mere act of will or a grasping of historical inferences, etc. Climacus claimed that historical judgments cannot be known with any objective certainty, since one has to believe by an act of will that the basic datum of sense experience at issue has come into existence. So historical knowledge is not based on immediate sensation or cognition, inasmuch as the non-immediate element of the coming-into-existence remains objectively uncertain. Both the eye witnesses and the disciples at second hand are here in the same epistemic boat.

Roberts finds Climacus' account of historical perception ambiguous, especially the treatment of immediate sensation. He neatly shows how coming-into-existence can be an object of immediate cognition, for as actualized possibilities, such states of affairs are definitionally things or events that have come into existence. And, in both the case of the non-contemporary believer and the eye witness "the judgment gets its certification by its relation to other beliefs that, for the moment, play the role of foundations." Indeed, Roberts avers, the disciple at second hand may be at an advantage. "It is because historical judgments are thus systematic or relational, certified by other beliefs, that some judgments that have no basis at all in our immediate cognition are more firmly grounded and certain for us than some that are based on what we have seen with our own eyes." So every historical judgment, whether contemporary or not, is shaped by a belief-structure of the individual that provides the interpretive mold, the noetic context, from which the historical claim is certified. Immediate cognition, as a result, is not especially epistemologically privileged, although the jolt of contemporaneity does have decided aesthetic advantages. And ultimately, there is not epistemic difference between Christian and secular historical claims.

All believers, in every age, must address in faith the jolt of the incarnation. Strictly speaking, there is no discipleship at second hand. And Roberts is careful not to downplay the importance of a non-propositional account of faith: "faith is not the belief that Jesus was raised from the dead, or that he did certain miracles, or said certain things. It is the belief that he is God incarnate reconciling the sinner to himself; and consequently, it is a reconstrual of oneself and the entire world with such profound attitudinal and behavioral corollaries that the believer can be called a new creation."

Roberts' erudite study does much epistemologically to restore the "happy passion" of faith. Faith is more, for him, than the mental assent described by the rationalistic and volitionalist accounts; faith qua faithfulness is to be lived and personally appropriated. Roberts is ever mindful of the delicate balance between the cognitive and committal aspects of faith.

Stephen N. Dunning. Kierkegaard's Dialectic of Inwardness: A Structural Analysis of the Theory of Stages. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985. 323 pages.

by Vincent McCarthy, Central Connecticut State University

Stephen Dunning's Kierkegaard's Dialectic of Inwardness is an able and articulate work that ranges through the Kierkegaardian corpus and the secondary litera-

ture with an informed, gentlemanly ease. In a work that is largely expository, Dunning examines the primary and secondary literature relevant to the stages, maps and charts the Kierkegaardian texts, considers the major current interpretations and periodically takes issue, but in a manner that is usually admirable both for its critique and tone.

The sub-title is more nearly the appropriate title: "A Structural Analysis of the Theory of Stages." For the major substance of the work consists of a careful analysis of the dialectical structure of SK's aesthetic writings (plus Sickness unto Death and Training in Christianity) in seven carefully worked out chapters. The result is not always "exciting" reading, but perhaps what is more important: a solid reference work on the chosen subject. Having granted the subtitle its role, I would like to hold the author accountable for the title itself and register at the very outset my disappointment that, in a book on the "dialectic of inwardness," inwardness itself so infrequently comes into focus. The Introduction would lead us to think that we will hear more about inwardness, and not just its dialectic presentation, when Dunning cites its centrality" "Only in the 1840s, however, in the pseudonymous works of Soren Kierkegaard does the concept of inwardness as such become the central theme in the thought of a Christian philosopher" (p. 3).

But I would like to quibble here a bit and, even allowing Dunning's sentence to read "the central theme," recall inwardness in the Christian philosophy of Augustine who, even if he didn't have the term and Hegelian dialectic, did chart in his Confession a dialectic of inwardness. SK no more gave the Western Christian world inwardness than Hegel gave it 'dialectic'. Plato, of course, has his own definition (o men synoptikos dialektikos), the sense in which it could be applied to the neo-Platonist Augustine. Dunning, to be sure, is invoking the Hegelian sense. My point is that just as the philosophical world knew of inwardness (in SK's sense) before SK, it also knew of dialectic before Hegel (points which both SK and Hegel, I believe, would readily concede). Dunning's treatment of both dialectic and inwardness lacks a philosophical-historical backdrop that is not strictly required but that would enrich the discussion.

Before turning to the substance of Dunning's work, I would like to engage in a digression and muse - in a Kierkegaardian spirit of scholarship - about footnotes. In brief, is it possible for a scholarly work to have too many footnotes? Answering this delicate scholarly question may involve us in culture views of scholarship, for we all know, for example, that there is a Germanic quotient for respectable ("wissenschaftlich") publishing (For any who may not know: at least three footnotes per printed page). Dunning clearly qualifies, without ever falling into the ponderous style of German footnote-scholarship. In fact, Dunning's footnotes are impressively rich and thorough, without ever becoming pedantic. In them he ranges through the major literature, and they comprise a valuable running commentary on German, English, and French language Kierkegaard scholarship about the various themes discussed. But despite their value, I would like to indulge the heretical speculation that there may simply be too many of them (pp. 253-295 they make up approximately 15% of the text). And, even if one dogmatically clings to the German quotient, there still may be a surplus. For example, despite the flattery I felt in finding myself cited, I might well have been cited less. At one point, Dunning muses in seven footnote lines about my identification of the pseudonym Johannes and the anonym "A" in Either/Or. Without getting into the issue, I would like to cite it as an innocent example of what might be called squid-theory of footnoting: when in doubt, squirt ink! Dunning's is a 20th century study, and he (and we) need not adopt such 19th century German practices

when there are 20th century alternatives. If Dunning wonders about something I wrote, or if I wonder about something that he wrote, it is not as if one of us already belongs to the Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft of Symparanekromenoi or that we are not on speaking terms or that we never met. In the late 20th century, there are conventions galore, telephones--and even Bitnet. Or do we really prefer to take refuge in Kierkegaardian indirectness? I am sympathetic to the dilemma (which Dunning has actually managed fairly well): how to show the "scholars" that you have mined the existing literature for all that it is worth without overwhelming the "student" reader?

Dunning's claim that SK continued throughout his authorship to think unconsciously in Hegelian terms (p. 5) will surely generate lively debate. That Hegelian elements pervade the authorship would seem beyond dispute. At times, the conscious use--and mockery--of them is clear, as in The Concept of Irony, as Dunning notes. But what of the many others? However, I would like to go beyond this, to a question that Dunning does not consider: if Dunning's own thesis is true, namely that SK continued to write in terms that "permit" and "demand" a Hegelian structural analysis, what is the effect on the presentation of the concept and of selection of "data" by Kierkegaardian pseudonyms? For any careful reader of Hegel will marvel at the way the systematic ein-zwei-drei finds a place for everything but also at the way "inconvenient" details get left out since they don't fit well (Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, and in particular his ordering of and section of data for the non-Christian religions, come most readily to mind). Has SK--Hegelianly/unconsciously--ever done the same? If so, it is an important element in the analysis of inwardness and in the structural-dialectical presentation of it. But to answer that question, Dunning would have had to take a position of his own vis-a-vis inwardness, something that he seems to avoid.

The structural analysis of SK's texts appears very sound. In carrying it out, Dunning has brought into relief an element in the texts/thought of Kierkegaard that many have overlooked and that few have given its due. Only in a few places does he depart from his careful structural analysis, as when he (consciously) separates Stages into essays and diary. Parts of Stages are linked to Either/Or in his dialectical analysis and parts to Repetition. Thematically, I have no quarrel with this. It is manifestly so, as Dunning notes, that Stages simply repeats Either/Or. But, for a structuralist, Dunning would seem to go too far in separating out the parts of Stages, at least without considering them also as parts of one published unit. On the other hand, when he compares the "Diary of the Seducer" and "Quidam's Diary," he does not seem to take his otherwise brilliant "Diary" analysis far enough. Not only is it about Johannes's deception of Cordelia and Johannes's bringing Cordelia to see the deception, the "Diary" is itself a deception--a formal, literary deception. For it is only a literary diary (in a sense, no more a "real" diary than an epistolary novel is a "real" letter). The same is true of Quidam's diary, and of other literary forms employed by Kierkegaardian pseudonyms, including the medieval theological treatise in Concept of Anxiety. The form surely deserves some place in a structural analysis.

There are intriguing parallels, especially between Repetition and Stages, that Dunning seems to overlook. For example, the religiously psychological love affair of Repetition vs "Quidam's Diary" (Stages), the fact that "In Vino Veritas" is a "recollection," a fact that Dunning does see while he passes over the possible link with the discussion of recollection in Repetition. Stages, with its language of recollection, reduplication, and double-movement to say nothing of the repeated theme of melancholy--dialectically elevated in the love story of

"Quidam's Diary," I might add--is too much like Repetition not to merit a more thorough structural consideration.

Dunning's discussion of Afham's writings is laced with insights and suggestions that are worthy of much fuller exploration. As a result, the "subjective reader" sometimes feels--here and elsewhere in the book--that one is spectator at a high-quality dialectical autopsy rather than (as one might like to be) a participant-observer in the exploration of inwardness.

Overall, Dunning's book is a careful application of structural analysis and a detailed illustration of the dialectical structure underlying the texts and the arguments. But what is the point? Beyond the illustration of the dialectic (and the charts at the end of every chapter are quite convincing), what have we learned about inwardness? Too little, I must confess and do so subjectively, precisely because I had earnestly hoped to learn more.

Dunning's work, even on its own terms, lacks a large concluding chapter assessing and critiquing inwardness as conceived and presented by SK (and detected by Dunning). Is Sk's structural dialectic itself adequate to presenting inwardness? Is it perhaps reductionist? In other words, having now seen SK's concept of inwardness dialectically presented through Dunning's structural analysis, what can we make of inwardness itself? Is Dunning's structural method, as executed, adequate to exploring (a) SK's presentation and (b) inwardness itself? The answer to (a) would seem to be yes, and to (b) no (Of course, in fairness to Dunning, (b) is not his intention or program, and he may well take the project further, as I hope he will do). But what of SK's own concept and his presentation of it? That is where one feels the analysis stops short. Where has the structural analysis really gotten us, beyond the dialectical presentation of an unfolding concept, in our understanding of inwardness?

I don't want to suggest that we have gotten nowhere, for Dunning's analysis is full of insights about the meaning of inwardness, even when his concern is with the dialectical development of the concept. I would also not want to be misunderstood in indulging the "usual" reviewer's questions about the book that the author never wrote! I am willing to accept structural analysis as a valid tool of philosophical and literary exploration of an author. But I would also like to see it assess itself and give a sense of how it fits in with the literary "tool-box" of our culture (Does it complement, replace, etc., other methods of reading Kierkegaard's texts?).

Further, if Dunning sees value in the school of Levi-Strauss as applied to SK (with the caveat that Dunning writes "structural" and not "structuralist"), what of the other French structuralist schools about which we hear so much (most of them SK-influenced)? What of Derrida and the Derridean Kierkegaard readings? And what of Jacques Lacan (who makes intriguing references to SK)? And, finally, what of the other, post-Lacanian structuralist pioneer working in that other French city, namely Alastair McKinnon of Montreal? For the logic of structural analysis would seem to me to lead ultimately to a McKinnon-type analysis of the words themselves and of the "unconscious of the text" underlying even such deep-lying and observation-eluding structures as the dialectic of inwardness.

In summation, Dunning's is a well-executed analysis of the dialectical presentation of the unfolding concept of inwardness. It may be the "last word" on the structural dialectic in the theory of Stages (although future graduate students--and their footnotes--will undoubtedly have more to say); it is, however, far from

the last word on inwardness. On its own terms, it is nonetheless a significant accomplishment. Stephen Dunning will forgive me, I hope, if I haven't left his work entirely on his own terms, for the subject is too important for that. As for the rest (and to follow my own suggestion), perhaps we can take up that on Binet.

Vincent McCarthy. The Phenomenology of Moods in Kierkegaard Martinus Nijhoff, 1978; 179 pp.

by David Gouwens, Texas Christian University

Kierkegaard's reflections on moods have been neglected by scholars. This is odd, for SK never concealed his concern with moods, writing treatises on irony, anxiety, and despair. But Professor McCarthy argues further that SK's analyses of moods, although written under different pseudonyms, possess an implicit 'systematic unity'. Steering between the two errors of an intellectualist dismissal of moods and an irrationalist celebration of the alleged capriciousness of them, SK takes moods seriously, but also shows that they have a logic which permits rational analysis.

The heart of that logic, McCarthy argues, is a dialectic. The four cardinal moods (irony, anxiety, melancholy and despair) emerge in stadial crises, signaling negatively the failure of aesthetic existence to provide equilibrium, and positively the need to affirm and master the mood as a step on the way to a possible reintegration of the self beyond the aesthetic stage.

McCarthy's virtue is that in arguing for a systematic unity and a stadial progression of the moods, he is also sensitive to the diversity and suppleness of SK's categories. E.g., he shows that a systematic, though neglected, distinction exists between two kinds of melancholy, the passive, unawakened desire of Melancholi and the heavier religious yearning of Tungsind. McCarthy also discriminates helpfully between two sequences of moods. The structure of moods has its own sequence (primal anxiety, despair as the fact of sin, Melancholi, and irony) and explains in a non-ontological way the givenness of moods. This sequence underlies, but is separate from the crisis-sequence itself (irony, anxiety, Tungsind and despair as experience). Furthermore, in analyzing the moods of the aesthete Johannes in Either/Or I, McCarthy shows concretely how the stages of the moods are best understood as 'spheres' which overlap and accumulate. Johannes is at once ironic, anxious, melancholic, and in despair.

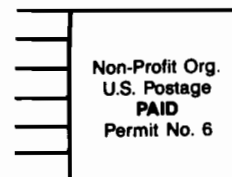
McCarthy investigates the moods primarily as aspects of the aesthetic stage. But although the meaning of moods is discovered on 'the natural plane,' he also discerns the Christian direction of SK's analysis of moods: "the meaning of moods is the religious" (p. 133). Kierkegaard sees Christianity as finally the only adequate life-view; McCarthy's discussion of this rich concept is especially illuminating. In attaining a life-view one becomes master rather than victim of moods, for a life-view grounds the unanchored and damaging moods, transforming them into mastered, directed emotions.

The book is clearly written, impressive in its close attention to the Danish text, and balanced in its judgments. It also relates SK to contemporary philosophical discussions of moods, continental and analytic.

Kierkegaard writes that a critic should be "a serviceable spirit." McCarthy as a philosophical critic fulfills that dictum; his book is serviceable to under-

standing SK, accurately representing the richness and complexity of SK's thought on moods. Professor McCarthy's study should be read by all students of SK, for it illuminates an aspect of his thought--and of human experience--all too often considered, even by the learned, beyond the reach of serious reflection.

The University of Mississippi
College of Liberal Arts
Department of Philosophy and Religions
University, MS 38677



The University complies with all applicable laws regarding affirmative action and equal opportunity in all its activities and programs and does not discriminate against anyone protected by law because of age, creed, color, national origin, race, religion, sex, handicap, veteran or other status.