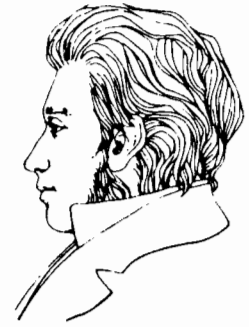


Søren Kierkegaard Newsletter



A Publication of the Howard and Edna Hong Kierkegaard Library

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A Note from the Editor

Dear Reader,

I am honored to take over the helm of the SØREN KIERKEGAARD NEWSLETTER. I will do my best to keep up the high standards of my immediate predecessor, C. Steven Evans, and of his predecessors Louis Pojman and Robert Perkins. While I plan to continue in much the same vein as Professor Evans, I would like to encourage people from outside the Academy to subscribe and contribute a bit more than they have in the past. While I am not so sure that Kierkegaard

would have been very enthusiastic about a KIERKEGAARD NEWSLETTER, I am sure that he would have been gratified by the fact that he has succeeded in speaking to people from many walks of life. It is my hope that we can bring more folks and fresh perspectives into our ongoing conversation about Kierkegaard. As a gambit in this conversation, I would like to encourage the submission of some short exegetical pieces to the NEWSLETTER. Just take a perplexing passage, set it out there, and explicate it, or, if you would prefer, discuss the way in which the passage speaks to you. It is conceivable that we could run a couple of alternative readings of the same piece. And so you have my immediate suggestions--if you have any of your own, please pass them along.

Best wishes,
Gordon D. Marino

NEWS YOU SHOULD NOTE

NEWS FROM THE HONG KIERKEGAARD LIBRARY

DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

As many of you know, the Howard and Edna Hong Kierkegaard Library began as the private collection of its founders who made use of the collection to support their work in the translation of Kierkegaard's writings. In 1976, the Hong's gave the Library to St. Olaf College with the understanding that it would exist as a study and publication center, a place where scholars of varied experience could come and have access to materials and a conducive environment for their intellectual work. The book collection numbers about 10,000 volumes and the periodical article file about 3,000. The Library also has microfilms of Kierkegaard manuscripts located in the Royal Library in Copenhagen as well as materials in other formats such as cassette tapes, CDs, films, and microfiche. All materials are non-circulating.

The book collection is divided into two parts with about 40% comprising a replication of Kierkegaard's personal library based on the Auktionsprotokol over Søren Kierkegaards Bogsamling. Other materials published before 1856 are included in this section as well. Books published after 1855, when Kierkegaard died, are divided into several sections: primary sources in all languages; secondary critical materials with substantial sections about Kierkegaard; dissertations; materials by and about related thinkers including contemporaries of Kierkegaard, thinkers who influenced his thought, and later thinkers who were affected by Kierkegaard's ideas. The Library also includes reference materials and works documenting Danish culture, literature, and history.

PROGRAMS

Use of the Library by qualified individuals is available throughout the year but arrangement for use of the collection in advance of a visit is strongly encouraged. The Library has regularly offered the Summer Scholars Fellowship Program which provides housing and a modest stipend for up to 6 scholars between June 1 and August 15 to work at the Library. This program will be expanded to October 15 beginning in 1996. Each applicant is asked to submit an outline of his/her research proposal along with a vitae or other description of qualifications by March 1st for the following summer. Our new Kierkegaard professor and Curator, Dr. Gordon Marino, is planning an international conference at the Library for 1997. Scholars at the Library will soon have access to Danish language instruction at the University of Minnesota through a program sponsored by the Danish Education Ministry. For further general information please contact Cynthia Lund. Telephone: 507-646-3846 FAX: 507-646-3858. Email: lund@stolaf.edu

lundc

VISITORS

Summer scholars in 1995 included Mark Dooley (University College, Dublin); Marcia Robinson (Emory University); Father Abel Beinomugisha (Urbanian University, Rome and Uganda); Henrik Schön (Dresden); Curtis Thompson (Thiel College). Other scholars working in the Library in recent months were Begonya Sàez Tajafuerce (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona); William McDonald (University of New England, Australia); Kinya Masugata (Osaka Kyoiku University); Richard Crouter (Carleton College); and John Poling (St. Olaf College).

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Howard Hong's recent stay in Denmark allowed him to attend auctions resulting in the Library's acquiring important new titles for the replicated library. Of particular note are works by Baggesen, Oehlenschläger, Holst, Hertz, Heiberg, and Molbech. Translations of Kierkegaard titles in Hungarian have been given by Andràs Nagy; in Czech by Jonathan Stenseth; in Catalan by Begonya Sàez Tajafuerce; and in Russian by Yevgeniy Vorontsov. Materials published in Denmark related to the recent Golden Age Festival in Copenhagen have been added. Between June 1, 1994 and June 1, 1995, 512 new volumes were added to the collection including recently published monographs and dissertations. Our regular subscriptions to the International Kierkegaard Newsletter, Kierkegaardiana, The International Kierkegaard Commentary Series, Kierkegaard's Writings and other publications continue.

THE CATALOG

Access to the collection is through our own online catalog which is connected to but independent of the St. Olaf College library catalog. All cataloged titles can be found in the OCLC international database. Specialized subject headings have been added when appropriate. We expect to issue a microfiche edition of the catalog for distribution at a very low cost during the next 6 months and are making plans for a version available on computer disk in the future. Cataloging continues on a regular basis by Suzanne Nevin.

A REQUEST: As already mentioned, we keep an extensive file of articles on Kierkegaard. In the interests of keeping this well used collection up to date, it would be very helpful if writers would send us a reference, or better yet, a copy of any of their articles which bear either directly or remotely on Kierkegaard's thought.

INTERNET INFORMATION

The Library sponsors a Kierkegaard listserv on the Internet. To subscribe, type "subscribe" to kierkegaard-request@stolaf.edu. We currently have about 320 subscribers world wide. We also have capability for storing and exchanging articles through an associated service. We will soon have a Web site through St. Olaf College.

Cynthia Lund

Kierkegaard Discussion on the Internet

Some History

In October of 1993, the Hong Kierkegaard Library at St. Olaf College created an Internet discussion list to be devoted to Kierkegaard. Since its inception, the list has gone through stages typical of narrow-focus Internet groups. In the initial period, excited subscribers introduced themselves and their interests in Kierkegaard. Several people suggested grand organizing projects. The most common suggestion was for "slow reading" of Kierkegaard texts. Accordingly a "slow reading" of the Fragments was begun, though it petered out after relatively few pages had been covered. Most participants did not have enough background information to sustain a conversation of this kind. Another event typical of the Net was an attempt to control the discussion by a person with tangential interests.

Subsequent activity on the list has been sporadic, with only a few questions generating considerable comment. Through the fall of 1995, the list has been quiescent, although as I write there has been a sudden flurry of posts bemoaning the inactivity.

Notes on the Subscribers

Most of the active members of the Kierkegaard list are not Kierkegaard specialists. Many subscribers have a hobby interest at best. They may well be able to follow a complex discussion, but they do not have the depth of information--or the time--to enter into such a discussion. A few active subscribers have read Kierkegaard extensively, and one or two are in the scholarly field.

This profile has been typical of humanities groups on the Net. Most people who are comfortable in the electronic world are techies. Nonetheless, some well-known scholars have been connected to the Kierkegaard list since early on. They have

even made occasional contributions, mostly in response to intelligent questions. Others have been "lurkers" (listening but not contributing). Still others have been put off by the generally weak level of discussion.

The last year or so has seen enormous growth in use of the Internet by people who do not have a specific interest in computing as such. The vast majority of academics in the developed world have some form of Net access. Many fairly narrow scholarly discussions in the humanities have reached critical mass. Thus it is a good time to consider ways of giving the Kierkegaard list new life.

A Modest Proposal

The list has a broad charter to serve as a locus for discussion of Kierkegaard. As one aspect of this mission it should serve as a place for scholarly exchange. Clearly the list has not fulfilled its potential as a tool for Kierkegaard scholars. One reason for the weakness of the group is that it is hard to engage in considered discussion within the "off-the-cuff" framework of email communication. Most people can't produce quality comments at a terminal; they need to sit back and think. But by the time they have thought, the discussion has gone stale.

Another problem is lack of participation. An Internet group is what its vocal subscribers make it. If Kierkegaard researchers use the list as a way of communicating and learning from each other, the group will take on a scholarly character. If not, the "discussion" will continue to bump along at a very basic level. This kind of use ought not to be forbidden, yet at the same time it should not drive out other forms of discussion. But researchers will only use the list if they see some benefit in doing so.

One way to address the staleness problem, and to provide some value-added, would be to link the list with a "pre-print" service. Such a service allows scholars to place copies of works-in-progress in an archive, from which they may be retrieved by interested others. The others then submit comments, and eventually may join open discussion of the works.

This model has been tried with some success in Philosophy. The technical apparatus used in that effort is quite complex, as befits the ambitious scope of the project. The capability to provide a small-scale service is available at St. Olaf.

A pre-print service* is a unique way of discussing and collaborating on scholarly work. It provides quick response from a variety of viewpoints, which is normally only to be had at conferences--but without the delay and expense. It also has the potential for considered comments inherent in peer review for publication--but without the risk, or the need for polish. It helps everyone to see the direction work is taking in the field. Ideally it can raise the level of discussion and the quality of published work.

I would like to see submissions (and potential submissions) to IKC, and papers for the various Kierkegaard Society meetings, posted regularly for discussion. Other papers, reviews, and shorter reflections would also be welcome. Of course this model implies that people are willing to risk their unfinished work in an open environment. It also requires us to work through each other's work, and that takes time. But from where I stand (at a small, fairly isolated college) the benefits far outweigh the costs.

I hope at least to have stimulated some others to think about what we can do with this grand technology. Let me know what you think.

Charles Creegan
ccreegan@unccs.edu

***PRE-PRINT SERVICE**

The Kierkegaard Library at St. Olaf announces that in addition to sponsoring the Kierkegaard list (bulletin board) on the Internet, it can now receive scholarly articles for request by members of the list. Please notify Cynthia Lund at lundc@stolaf.edu if you wish to forward an article. The article should be sent to her email address. It will then be put into a special file for access through Gopher by list members at their request. The accepted rules of copyright apply to all

materials distributed in this way. This procedure also prevents list members from receiving lengthy unwanted postings of articles. Special thanks to Charles Creegan for submitting the first article, "Kierkegaard's Ecclesiology," and assisting us with developing this method of sharing scholarly work."

Research Unit Australia.

The Søren Research Unit Australia (started 1994 at the University of Tasmania), offers facilities in connection with Honours/postgraduate courses at the University and to guest visitors. The Unit is actively committed to working with other Kierkegaard centers and Societies, and in Australia works with the new Søren Kierkegaard Society of Australia (1994). The Head of the Research Unit, Dr. Julia Watkin, is happy to provide details about the Research Unit and the Society: fax: 61 03 26 75 35 or email: Julia.Watkin@human.utas.edu.au

DECEMBER APA SESSIONS

Dec. 28 - Session I - 11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

Symposium: 150th Anniversary of Kierkegaard's *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*

Chair: Robert Perkins Speakers: C. Stephen Evans, Sylvia Walsh, and Merold Westphal

Dec. 28 - Group Session III - 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Søren Kierkegaard Society

Chair: Gordon Marino

Speaker: Mark Dooley, "Risking Responsibility: A Kierkegaardian Ethics Exchange"

Speaker: Gene Fendt, "Frater Taciturnus on the Impossibility of Religious Drama with Constant Reference to Shakespeare"

Speaker: Marilyn Piety, "The Place of the World in Kierkegaard's Ethics"

Dec. 30 - Session V - 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Colloquium: Philosophy of Religion

Chair: Wanda Warren Berry

Speaker: John Davenport, "The Absolute as *Eschaton* in Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*"

Commentator: Vanessa Rumble

NOVEMBER AAR SESSIONS

Kierkegaard, Religion and Culture

Nov. 20 - 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Theme: Purity of Heart *in Context*

Presiding: M. Jamie Ferreira

Charles K. Bellinger - "*Doublemindedness*" in Kierkegaard's Purity of Heart and René Girard's *Psychology of Mimetic Desire*

Robert L. Perkins, Purity of Heart *in Context: The Dialectic of Individuality and Sociality in Kierkegaard's Purity of Heart and Two Ages*

Respondent: Gordon D. Marino

Nov. 21 - 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Theme: *Communication: Indirection and Misdirection*

Presiding: Sylvia Walsh

Helene Tallon Russell - *Kierkegaard the Film Maker*

Laura Lyn Inglis - *A Dialectical Trick by which Kierkegaard Might Become a Feminist*

David Kangas - *Indirect Communication, Postmodernism and Apophatic Theology*

Respondent: Charles L. Creegan

AAR PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION SECTION

Nov. 19 - 3:45 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

Theme: *Contemporary Paradigms in Philosophy of Religion*

Charles L. Creegan - *Kierkegaard's "Ditch," Wittgenstein's "Cage," and Philosophy of Religion*

KIERKEGAARD SOCIETY NEWS

We would like to thank Vanessa Rumble for her superb service as the representative of the Søren Kierkegaard Society to the APA. George Connell has been selected as the new representative. Professor Connell requests that people who would like to have their papers considered for possible presentation at an APA Division Meeting send their manuscripts to him at the following address: Department of Philosophy, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN 56562

While no deadline has been set for the Pacific session, individuals who would like their work considered for the Midwest Division Meeting (1996) must have their papers in by 23 November. The deadline for next year's Eastern Division Meeting is 10 April 1996.

Kierkegaard Days in Copenhagen, May 5-8, 1996

This special event will include a conference on "The Meaning of Meaning It" dealing with Kierkegaard-inspired work on two topics related to the human self: (1) as ethical political person after the end of the cold war, and (2) as "subject" in light of recent hermeneutical-literary theory. The Kierkegaard Days will also include tours, theater, exhibits, and other events. For further information, contact David Gouwens.

For further information, contact Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre, Købmagergade 44-46, DK-1150, Copenhagen K, Denmark. Tel: +45 3532 3705, Fax: +45 3532 3710, email: njc@sk.ku.dk

International Kierkegaard commentary: Either/Or. Two volumes

Both volumes are in the press as you read this sentence, perhaps even at the bindery. There is every expectation that both volumes will be at the fall meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Philadelphia in November. Subscribers (persons and libraries) should have their volumes before then.

I want to express special thanks to Dr. George Connell who filled in as Title Consultant while Steve Evans was at Oxford. He along with Sylvia Walsh, a member of the Advisory Board, read all articles for both volumes and offered valuable comments on each. David Gouwens served as Volume Consultant for Part I and Edward F. Mooney served for Part II.

International Kierkegaard Commentary:

Concluding Unscientific Postscript

We hope that this volume, celebrating the sesquicentennial of the Postscript, will be published by 5 May, Kierkegaard's birthday and the opening of Kierkegaard days in Copenhagen.

The submissions for this volume are currently being read by the Advisory Board. Merold Westphal serves as Volume Consultant, and Steve Evans and Sylvia Walsh are the Advisory Board readers.

International Kierkegaard Commentary:

Early Polemical Writings

While the editing of International Kierkegaard Commentary: Concluding Unscientific Postscript continues, articles on Kierkegaard's Early Polemical Writings are still being sought. There will be some new authors in this volume. As with International Kierkegaard Commentary: Two Ages, this volume will be the first collaborative effort to examine this material and will break new ground as well as challenge the "standard interpretation" of various parts of this collection.

Persons interested in submitting an article for this volume should contact the editor ASAP and request a current set of sigla. Since the closing date for articles is fluid, the editor must be able to write all prospective authors when the date is final. Be in touch. Julia Watkin, the translator of the primary texts for Princeton University Press, will serve as Volume Consultant.

International Kierkegaard Commentary:
Stages on Life's Way

Due date for submissions for this volume: 1 September 1996.

International Kierkegaard Commentary:
The Concept of Irony

Due date for submissions for this volume: 15 March 1997

Persons interested in submitting articles for these volumes should write the editor and request a current set of sigla and conventions. (Robert L. Perkins, Editor, International Kierkegaard Commentary, Stetson University, Philosophy Department, campus Box 8250, DeLand, FL 32720-3756; FAX: 904 822-8825; e-mail: Perkins@suvax1.stetson.edu)

KIERKEGAARD'S WRITINGS NEWS

The next two KW volumes, Christian Discourses and Without Authority, are scheduled for 1996.

Obituary. Professor Cornelio Fabro 1911-1995

It is with profound regret that we report the death of the preeminent Kierkegaard scholar, Professor Cornelio Fabro. Cornelio Fabro was a thinker of enormous breadth. While he took his doctorate in theology (Pontifical University "Angelicum" 1937) he made extensive contributions in the fields of philosophy, theology, and the natural sciences. Professor Fabro taught at the University of Naples, the University of Rome, Notre Dame, and a number of other universities. He founded the Urbanian Pontifical Institute and the Italian Center of Kierkegaard Studies and he was a founding member of St. Thomas University in Houston, Texas. Over his long and brilliant academic career, Professor Fabro garnered many awards, such as the President's gold Medal of Merit for Teaching, Culture, and the Arts (1964). He was a prolific author and the editor and translator of Søren Kierkegaard: Opere. Professor Fabro will be sorely missed.

ARTICLES

Madness in *Postscript*

In *Postscript Climacus* evinces an ontological rather than an epistemological understanding of madness.¹ That is, he takes psychopathology to consist in a derangement of the structural features of the world of *Dasein* rather than in an epistemological misrelation between subject and object. He takes obsessional neurosis to be paradigmatic of madness.² That is, madness consists in wanting to embrace a finite object with infinite passion.

...madness (*Afsindighed*) never has the inwardness of infinity. Its fixed idea is a kind of objective something, and the contradiction of madness lies in wanting to embrace it with passion. The decisive factor in madness is thus not the subjective, but the little finitude that becomes fixed, something the infinite can never become.³

The mad fixate on a "little finitude" immanent to their

world, so that it takes on the transcendental feature of structuring their whole world. In Heideggerian terms, the world of *Dasein* is a multidimensional relational space constituted by the arrangement of objects and subjects within it - a social and psychological space analogous to Einsteinian physical space, which is curved into shape by the gravitational forces of the material objects in it. *Dasein's* relational space provides a context in which subjects and objects appear and make sense. Heidegger calls this context a clearing (*Lichtung*). It is neither subject nor object, but the context of emergence for both. When a person generalizes the way they relate to one person or object to all people or objects, we might say that an object *in* the clearing becomes a dimension *of* the clearing. This then structures all the relations and perceptions in that world. This is precisely how Climacus

understands madness (*Afsindighed, Galskab*).

Clamacus reinforces this ontological understanding of madness with an explicit rejection of an epistemological understanding (which takes madness to consist in a false relation between the believing subject and its intentional object). Clamacus says, "The objective truth as such does not at all decide that the one stating it is sensible; on the contrary, it can even betray that the man is a lunatic, although what he says is entirely true and especially objectively true."⁴ Climacus proceeds to illustrate with an example from a madhouse (*Daarekiste*), in which an escapee tries to convince the world of his sanity by stating an objective truth. To remind him of what objective truth he ought to tell people he ties a "skittle ball" (*Keglekugle*) to his coat tail, so that at every step it bumps him and he says, "Boom! The earth is round."⁵ The obsessive repetition of this platitude is the very thing which betrays him as mad and results in his readmission to the madhouse.

Climacus also considers another mode of "madness", which consists not in elevating an immanent object in the world of *Dasein* to a transcendental dimension of that world, but in elevating a dimension of the world to a dominating metadimension. This is the madness of speculative philosophy in its attempt to subordinate everything to the rule of objective reason. The attempt to do so results in a dehumanizing loss of subjectivity, which Climacus thinks even more disturbing than the other form of madness:

But when the insanity (*Afsindighed*) is the absence of inwardness, the comic is that the something known by the blissful person is the truth, truth that pertains to the whole human race but does not in the least pertain to the highly honored parrot. This kind of insanity is more inhuman than the other. One shrinks from looking the first one in the eye, lest one discover the depth of his frantic state, but one does not dare to look at the other at all for fear of discovering that he does not have proper eyes but glass eyes and hair made from a floor mat, in short, that he is an artificial product [like a mechanical walking stick] ...To drink *Dus* with the executioner can indeed be unpleasant for a self-respecting man, but to get into a rational and speculative conversation with a walking stick - now that is enough to drive one crazy (*gal*).⁶

That is, the clearing for the emergence of objective truth is no longer articulated onto the subjective world of the speculative parrot. It has become an obsessive focus that excludes all other possible forms of emergence (such as those which may be embraced with inward passion; and those conditioned by the existing individual).

Both of these modes of madness are commensurate with

the social definition of *Dasein's* world. Climacus explicitly invokes an understanding that madness is socially defined when he says, "I am well aware that if anyone nowadays were to live as a Greek philosopher, that is, would existentially express what he would have to call his life-view, be existentially express what he would have to call his life-view, be existentially absorbed in it, he would be regarded as a lunatic."⁷

There is another form of "madness" too, discussed at length in *Fear and Trembling*. This is the religious "instant of decision", exemplified by Abraham's "mad" decision to sacrifice Isaac. Here it is neither the case that a finite object in the world is elevated to a dimension of the world, nor that a dimension of the world is elevated to a hegemonic metadimension, but that the world is totally restructured in terms of a personal relationship to the transcendent deity. This may bear some similarity to the case of obsessive neurosis, since in the case of religious conversion by means of revelation an object in the world (the event of revelation) transforms the dimensions of the world. But Climacus would differentiate this from madness or superstition by claiming that the "object" or event is paradoxically both finite and infinite. Though it appears as finite (e.g. in the person of Christ), if it is genuine revelation then it will also be an aspect of the infinite. If the dimensions of the world are transformed by means of an infinite relation to the infinite, we have religious faith rather than madness:

...the speaker may privately have a tryst with the god, who is present just as soon as the uncertainty of everything is thought infinitely. Therefore, the one who actually has an eye for the god can see him everywhere; whereas he who sees him only on extraordinary occasions actually does not see him at all but is superstitiously deluded by a phantom.⁸

This seems to return us to something closer to the epistemological view of madness, since the one who is infinitely fixated on the wrong thing, viz., something finite, is mad; the one who is finitely fixated on the infinite is superstitious; and the one infinitely fixated on the infinite is a believer. But since the infinite transcends the grasp of reason immanent to mere human beings, this adequation of subject to object cannot be an epistemological relation. Rather it is, according to Climacus, an infinitely subjective relation of faith. Moreover, since it is a transfiguring relationship for the whole world of *Dasein*, it is a subjective leap which transforms *Dasein's* entire being-in-the-world. Nevertheless, there is still a problem about identifying that for which one has an infinite passion as the infinite. We can never be sure, but must tremble in uncertainty and make a "mad" decision that will take us out of the "restricted economy" of our socially defined clearings into

the "general economy" of sacrifice, death and religious faith.⁹

Nevertheless, there are some features of an "infinite relation to the infinite" which distinguish it from madness and superstition. Both of the latter are characterized by some form of fixity. It is precisely because the world of the mad *Dasein* is rigid that it is perceived to be a pathological state. Similarly, superstition is recognizable by its unshakeable, unfounded dogma. An infinite relation to the infinite can never be fixed because fixity implies finitude. A relation of faith, as defined by Climacus, is necessarily open. Its Christian expression is love. God, the infinite, is love. The relation of faith to God is love. The individual whose world is structured by an unlimited love of unlimited can never be mad or superstitious. Love is alert openness in dynamic exchange with alterity. It is an extreme concern with the way things are, which nevertheless constantly transfigures (*forklarer*) the world. Love is the ultimate solvent of all obsessive rigidity, and its clear-sighted concern undoes the distortions of neurosis.

William McDonald
University of New England
Australia

1. On this distinction see Hubert Dreyfus, "Foucault's Critique of Psychiatric Medicine." *The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, vol. 12, no. 4 (Nov. 1987) 311-333.
2. Danish has many words which can be translated as "madness": *Galskab*, *Afsindighed*, *Aandssvaghed*, *Daarskab*, *Vanvid* and more. Those I will concentrate on are *Galskab* and *Afsindighed* because of the frequency of their occurrence in *Postscript*. Other terms for "mad" which do not appear at all in *Postscript* include *tosset* and *forryket*, the latter being cognate to the German *verrückt*, which is the generic rubric under which Hegel classifies all specific forms of madness. Cf. Daniel Berthold-Bond, *Hegel's Theory of Madness* (New York: SUNY Press, 1995) 21. In this paper I will not consider specific forms of psychopathology such as *Tungsind* or *Melancholie* (both of which might be translated as "melancholy" or "depression").
3. Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Volume 1, trans. Howard V. Hong & Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 194.
4. *Ibid.*, 194.
5. *Ibid.*, 195.
6. *Ibid.*, 196.
7. *Ibid.*, 352.
8. *Ibid.*, 87.
9. On restricted versus general economics of faith, see Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago & London: Chicago University Press, 1995); and *Postscript* 386-387.

REVIEWS

Anthony Rudd, *Kierkegaard and the Limits of the Ethical* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) xiv and 184 pages. \$39.95. Reviewed by Julia Watkin, University of Tasmania, Launceston, Tasmania.

Rudd's book consists of an application of Kierkegaard's ideas to a discussion of the status of ethics and religion in our century. Affirming the inadequacy of the attempt to arrive at a disengaged or totally detached "objective" perspective on life, Rudd shows Kierkegaard as endorsing the need to start thinking about ethics and religion from a standpoint of personal passionate concern that is not "subjective" in an arbitrary sense. In his examination of the case for ethics Rudd finds that while one can develop values relevant to personal commitments or "projects," this activity cannot provide the basis for a universal morality. The "purely ethical sphere" (Rudd, 174, cf. 117) fails to offer the individual a goal or telos above all other goals. Such an absolute goal or telos belongs to the religious sphere and not to a pluralistic secular morality, although the pursuit of meaning-giving goals within temporality is what is seen as common to both secular and religious morality.

Rudd provides us with a valuable discussion of the phenomenon of disengagement and the ideal of autonomous rational objectivity, particularly as found in one vision of modern science (Rudd, 1-18). As Rudd points out, those holding such a notion of radical autonomy want to suggest that one can remain oneself after a total distancing of the self from such contingent relationships and roles. Such an outlook fails to see, however, that one cannot derive absolute standards of correct behavior from the purely contingent (Rudd, 9-10). Rudd also argues that if morality cannot be derived from such sources as one's social identity, religious/metaphysical assumptions, or a utilitarian concept of the good, then it will not help to invoke the concept of rationality. Despite the efforts of Kant and his successors, it is not possible to construct morality solely on the somewhat thin picture of humans as pure rational agents; one is inevitably driven into ethical subjectivism.

In his discussion of ethical disengagement, Rudd discusses Kierkegaard's ideas not only in connection with figures such as Pascal, Hegel and Schopenhauer, but also with detailed reference to a number of positions in the moral philosophy of our time, e.g. Philippa Foot and Alastair MacIntyre. It is here that Rudd makes first-class application of Kierkegaard's critique of the disengaged perspective. With great clarity, Rudd puts forward Kierkegaard's objections to the idea of personal

disengagement to show that, contrary to some Kierkegaard interpreters, Kierkegaard is not the father of subjectivism and irrationalism (Rudd, 17-39). In Rudd's presentation, Kierkegaard is seen as attacking the notion that emotions are opposed to reason through their interference with our detached rational observational relation to the world. As Rudd notes, we also relate validly to the world through our emotional life; indeed, in some cases the emotions may prove to be a more reliable guide than reason. Truth is gained not through disengagement from personal existence but through such engagement. Intellectual acceptance of moral obligation or doctrinal propositions calls for the appropriate practice in relation to them.

Rudd must be highly commended for the first half of his book, especially for his fine grasp of Kierkegaard on the themes of objectivity, subjectivity and skepticism. Here, Rudd supplies us not only with an analysis of Kierkegaard's view of skepticism as a position one chooses, but also with an examination of skepticism and language involving the work of Davidson, Quine, Derrida and Wittgenstein.

Given the excellence of this book, it is sad to have to report any demerits. Rudd modestly says he makes no claim to present the "true" Kierkegaard, and that he supports his interpretation of Kierkegaard's thought through extensive quotation. Yet despite his disclaimers, Rudd's work is weakened by his failure to engage the relevant secondary literature. For example, Rudd appears never to have consulted the work of Evans, Malantschuk, Walsh, Westphal, or Kirmmse. He is also unfortunately not in a position to know of material on Judge William's ethics (in the Søren Kierkegaard's Society's *Populære Skrifter*, volume 20, 1991) important to his assessment of the Judge. In Rudd's work, Judge William's view is made to do service to Rudd's interesting discussion of personal "projects" and their relevant virtues (Rudd, Ch. 3, esp. 73-111), but there is an over-emphasis of commitment to projects at the expense of the religious perspective in Judge William. Among other things, Rudd says he does not think "the religious element is essential to Judge William's thought" and that for the Judge "being a Christian is like being a husband or a Judge - it is one of the roles that one adopts as a good member of Society...He has no conception of

religion as a possible threat to the established order...His outlook is essentially secular, and his religion is an adjunct to his ethics" (Rudd, 116, 141-2, cf. 148). Rudd has, I believe, missed the religious dimension of Judge William's thought.

First, Christianity in its less stringent form underlies and is interwoven with Judge William's ethics throughout, and in the end it is what rescues him from both the "good Nazi" scenario and the problem of ethical relativism that Rudd mistakenly thinks Judge William ignores (Rudd, 110, cf. EO II, 265, 263). Second, although Judge William emphasizes temporality as "a gift of grace" (EO II, 250), he is aware of the possibility of ethical conflict. For example, the Judge acknowledges the possibility that while marriage may be the highest expression of humanity within the world order, there may be valid religious reasons for refusing to marry (SLW, 169, cf. 176-181). The Judge also emphasizes the God-relationship both in the initial ethical choice (the encounter with "the Eternal Power") and as the first commandment to love God (EO II, 167, 177, 206, 232, 255). What Judge William does not do is analyze cases of acute ethical conflict, such as that of Fear and Trembling where Abraham has to decide how to deal with conflicting divine commands; nor does he emphasize Christian ideality in its aspect of renunciation of temporality. In Rudd's discussion of Judge William on the religious life, the question of what kind of life Christianity actually calls for is left unclear, but in fairness to the Judge and the Kierkegaard of the 1850s adequate reference needs to be made to this subject (John Ziesler's book, Christian Asceticism, London: S.P.C.K., 1973, might be helpful here). The references in Rudd are far too meager and a number of issues need careful clarification and discussion, for example, does Christian ideality call for renunciation and asceticism (this need not entail hate of the world or body) or is it simply altruism?

Rudd suggests, despite references to the contrary, that the Judge is not really religious, let alone Christian (Rudd, 142-143), but this assertion seems to rest on the assumption that "real" religion (and Christianity) has to call for conflict with the social order. The path beyond a fulfilled ethical-religious life in society need not necessarily be by way of Abraham (Rudd, 143-151) and a clear distinction needs to be made between renunciation of all worldly goods and apparent divine commands to do something seen as radically unethical, such as kill someone (Rudd, 150). The difficulty lies in what kind of "giving up" might be called for, and the solution of developing an attitude of detachment to the things of the world (Rudd, 155) is scarcely adequate as an answer to the problem.

Questions surrounding the two styles of Christianity and their relationship to each other surely need more careful discussion. These questions also need to be distinguished from other problems dealt with in Kierkegaard's authorship, not the least of which is the question of the salvific significance of works. On this score, it is critical to remember that from beginning to end, Kierkegaard insisted that we must rely on grace for our salvation (Pap. XI, 1 A 296, XI, 2 A 244, XI, 3 B 57). Discussions of these questions tend to run into each other in Rudd's book, so that the reader is not sufficiently prepared to understand Kierkegaard's attack on Christendom. Here, Rudd loses contact with Kierkegaard, seeing him as breaking with orthodox Christianity (Rudd, 167-168). Yet his picture of Kierkegaard as a world and body-hating misogynist indicates a failure to grasp how Kierkegaard understands the relationship between the temporal and the eternal. Once more Rudd also fails to consider Kierkegaard's own social background. Also missing is a careful evaluation of unpublished Journal material.

Penultimately Rudd's inconsistent choice of Kierkegaard translations is regrettable. While Rudd uses the Hong translation of Stages on Life's Way he uses the Swenson/Lowrie translation of Either/Or. Finally, the index is pitifully thin for a work of such substance, making it hard to find some of the important concepts discussed in the book.

To sum up, this book has a lot to offer Kierkegaard scholars in its application of Kierkegaard's thought to the question of ethics in the modern world. Its weakness lies in the need for further research, especially concerning material relevant to Judge William and Kierkegaard's attack on Christendom.

References to Kierkegaard's works are to the Hong Kierkegaard's Writings edition: EO = Either/Or, SLW = Stages on Life's Way, CUP = Concluding Unscientific Postscript. Journal references (Pap.) are to the 2nd edition of the Danish Papirer referred to in English translations: Søren Kierkegaards Papirer, P.A. Heiberg, V. Kuhr, E. Torsting, N. Thulstrup, I-XIII, Copenhagen 1968-70; Index, N.J. Cappelørn, XIV-XVI, Copenhagen 1975-78.

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