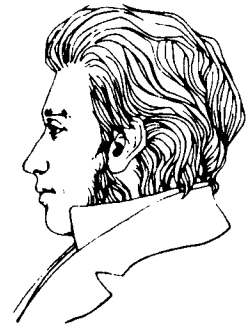


Søren Kierkegaard Newsletter



A Publication of the Howard and Edna Hong Kierkegaard Library

St. Olaf College

Northfield, Minnesota

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NEWS FROM THE HONG KIERKEGAARD LIBRARY

THE KIERKEGAARD LIBRARY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, 1999

Summer fellowships for research in residence are offered to scholars for use of the collection between June 1 and November 15. The awards include campus housing and a \$250.00 per month stipend.

To apply for a fellowship, send a letter outlining your proposed research project and reasons for wanting to use the collection, along with a vitae or other description of qualifications. Two academic letters of recommendation are also requested. The application deadline is April 1. To apply, send materials and letter to:

Gordon Marino, Curator
Howard and Edna Hong Kierkegaard Library
St. Olaf College
1510 St. Olaf Avenue
Northfield, MN 55057-1097

SPECIAL EVENTS

This summer the Library is sponsoring a mini-conference of Spanish-speaking scholars who will meet over several days to discuss matters related to the forthcoming new Spanish translation of the works of Søren Kierkegaard published by Trotta of Madrid.

Alastair McKinnon will lead a Workshop on his Kierkegaard texts and software at the Hong Kierkegaard Library in June. The Workshop will be held during the three days most suitable to most applicants and those interested are invited to apply indicating their preferred dates as soon as possible. Participants are encouraged to bring their own laptops. For more information about Professor McKinnon, computer resources, visit his website at www.skcw.com. For more information about the seminar call or e-mail Gordon Marino at 507-646-3846 or contact via e-mail marino@stolaf.edu.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Gifts to the Library were received since July from Alvaro Valls, Andràs Nagy, Anthony Rudd, Ron Marshall, Darya Loungina, Dimitri Constant, Cleide Scarletelli Rohden, Luiz Rohden, Pia Soltoft, Zaczpal Zdenek, Ettore Rocca, Rafael Larreñeta, Louis Pojman, Begonya Sàez Tajafuerce, Maria Zubrytska, and Gordon Marino.

Most of the works of Ernani Reichmann, noted Brazilian Kierkegaard scholar, were generously donated to the Library by Alvaro Valls.

The Library purchased materials from the library of Danish scholar Skat Arildsen including papers belonging to Martensen.

The Hong Kierkegaard Library welcomes the donation of books on Kierkegaard and related thinkers to add to its collection and to share with other libraries and scholars.

PROGRESS IN THE ARCHIVES, THE CATALOG, AND COLLECTION PRESERVATION

The newly created archival program received donations from Pam and Jack Schwandt and from John Davenport. (The Library welcomes manuscripts, papers, letters, photographs, and other archival materials related to Kierkegaard studies.) We are now entering basic records into the catalog for both periodical and newspaper articles. Book-plating of the collection should be completed by June 1999.

Cynthia Wales Lund - Assistant Curator e-mail: lundc@stolaf.edu Telephone: 507-646-3846 Fax: 507-646-3858

INTERNATIONAL KIERKEGAARD COMMENTARY

The Commentary on *Stages on Life's Way* is in process. People interested in contributing to this volume should send Professor Perkins a proposal. His address is as follows: 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)

IKC volumes on Early Polemical Writings, and Works of Love are complete and in the pipeline to the press.

The editors already have three articles in hand for INTERNATIONAL KIERKEGAARD COMMENTARY: STAGES ON LIFE'S WAY.

New sigla have been sent out to all contributors to previous volumes of IKC. This new set of sigla is the first since the completion of "Kierkegaard's Writings" and contains many revisions.

By popular request, Professor Perkins has extended the due date for submissions to IKC: SLW to 1 July 1999. He requests that everyone e-mail him about their plans.

Persons who have not previously published in IKC but who desire to send an article for consideration should e-mail Professor Perkins to let him know their plans and to receive the new sigla.

Founders Day Convocation Address (1998) by Roy O. Elveton

Howard and Edna Hong were recipients on November 6, 1998 of the St. Olaf College Regents' Award on the occasion of Founders Day. The Award was established in 1959 "to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the college and shown special interest and concern in its welfare". The occasion was attended by many former students and colleagues of the Hong's and included a reception and luncheon following the celebration service and address by Roy Elveton.

Roy O. Elveton graduated in 1961 from St. Olaf College and was a former student of Howard Hong. Professor Elveton is the Maxine H. and Winston R. Wallin Professor of Philosophy and Cognitive Studies at Carleton College. He is currently working on Logic and Minds: A Philosophical Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, a text for non-math and non-computer science students exploring the philosophical, technical and cognitive science aspects of artificial intelligence.

President Edwards, Howard and Edna, members of the Board of Regents, faculty, students, alums - it's a great honor and delight for me to take part in this Founders Day Convocation.

Howard and Edna - two individuals I have known and respected for over 40 years! We are here to celebrate their achievement.

The Princeton project of the translation into English of Kierkegaard's published works is now complete and has been brought to completion by the sustained creativity of Howard and Edna.

In a review of *The Downward Ascent*, one of Edna's most remarkable books, the reviewer poses this question: "Why a wisp of a girl reared on a Wisconsin Farm, who has spent her life as a homemaker, mother of a large family, wife of a professor in a midwestern college, should be singled out by the muses for the gifts that could produce such a gem as *The Downward Ascent* is a mystery." The gifts in question are those of "poet" and "dialectician." Remarkable gifts that both overlap and complement Howard's talents of "dialectician" and scholar and a philosopher with a passion for the question at the center of Kierkegaard's thought: What does it mean to be human?

What can be said about the translation project that this gifted pair has conducted with such incredible patience, skill and mastery?

Quality of translation is one measure of what they have accomplished. There is little doubt that the Hong

translations are the most accurate translations of Kierkegaard into English that we possess. Their meticulous standards regarding both the accuracy of *English* prose style as a vehicle for Kierkegaard's nuanced writings and the conceptual integrity of these translations in light of the complex terminology of Kierkegaard's rich philosophical vocabulary was present from the very first stages of the project and has persisted for over thirty years without the least bit of slackening. Kierkegaard's Journal contains the following entry: "What a difference there is between the powerful puff of an animated breeze at the beginning - and a steady wind which uniformly fills the sails so that you advance steadily under full sail." (IV, 290). Howard and Edna have shown a tremendous capacity to proceed, not by fits and starts, but by sustained inspiration, determination and great internal energy.

I recall very clearly the early stages. In 1972, during the period of my first sabbatical leave at Carleton, Howard and Edna graciously offered me the use of an office in the Kierkegaard Library (located at that time in the far upper reaches of Holland Hall). I enjoyed a daily picture of the Journals translation and the first stages of the Collected Works project. There were conversations with Edna at her desk and over coffee as she wrestled with a Danish idiom or a Kierkegaardian turn of phrase. I was amazed by her subtle understanding of the polyphonic character of much of Kierkegaard's writing and even more astounded at the flowing and crisp English that emerged from her handwritten manuscripts. Howard has called Edna the best "syntax-smasher" he's ever known, referring to her ability to provide fertile English-language soil for Kierkegaard's vigorous sentence-structure.

And of course there were conversations with Howard about the Hegelian roots of certain Kierkegaardian categories. Howard's command of the History of Philosophy, his delight in dialectical refinements of philosophical questions and the premium he has always placed on precision of expression reveals a translator who is uncannily attuned to the rich imagination and philosophical inventiveness of the Kierkegaard he is

concerned to understand.

The result: unhurried translations that are matchless in their respect for the integrity of the highly original voice they are attempting to capture. An early tribute to their edition of the *Journals* reads: "Howard and Edna Hong have brought to the task solid scholarship, linguistic competence...and a scrupulous self-effacement before the work." This self-effacement betrays a singular devotion to Kierkegaard's tone of voice, an absolute prerequisite to understanding the subtleties of Kierkegaard's writings.

Another measure of what they have accomplished can be found in the astonishing scope of their project. Not only the size of the project by volume count, but, more importantly, the range of the project measured in terms of the variety of voices, perspectives and vocabularies embedded in Kierkegaard's writings. At the present time, a well-known magazine publisher (Kaplan) has set about the task of conducting Mahler's Second Symphony with major orchestras around the world. Training himself to conduct just this one symphony, he has conducted Mahler's Second over seventy times and has conducted nothing else. Most translations resemble such one-shot "virtuoso" amateur performances. In terms of its scope, Howard and Edna's accomplishment is more realistically comparable to von Karajan's cycle of the Beethoven Symphonies or Solti's cycle of Wagner's Ring. In these examples a vast wealth of material must be mastered, involving a creative effort that must be sustained over years. The goal is to present both the inner diversity and the underlying unity of vision that represents an author's or composer's complex life-work. Just as Beethoven's nine symphonies are not just one symphony after another, so Kierkegaard's authorship is not simply one book after another. A uniform translation of Kierkegaard's writings that is still sensitive to the different keys in which Kierkegaard composed is an awesome challenge, one that is met fully in Howard and Edna's monumental translation project.

Upon reflection, there are remarkably few precedents for Howard and Edna's accomplishment. Perhaps Jowett's translation of Plato's dialogues, or Schlegel's translation of Shakespeare into German (although he managed to translate only thirteen plays) might be cited as examples. The scope of this project is almost without comparison. We can put it negatively as well: there are no uniform translations of the works of Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche or Heidegger. But we *do* have a uniform translation into

English of the enormous output of Kierkegaard.

There is a third measure of the quality of this project: its relevance for the age in which it appears. Howard once wrote that "Kierkegaard was one of the three or four seminal thinkers of the Nineteenth Century with even greater significance for the Twentieth Century." I agree with Howard's judgment and would like to show that this is particularly true today with respect to the core of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works: his battle with the philosophy of Hegel.

Hegel represents the epitome of a philosopher who is concerned with system-building. Since system-building is out of philosophical fashion, one might well expect to confront the following argument:

Hegel builds philosophical systems

Philosophical systems are of a strictly historical interest (no one builds philosophical systems today),

Therefore, Hegel is of no interest to philosophy today.

And here's the relevant corollary:

Kierkegaard attacked Hegel's system-building.

Since system-building is no longer relevant, Kierkegaard's attack upon Hegel is only of historical interest.

Both of these syllogisms are false.

Let me begin with the year 1961, my senior year at St. Olaf. It so happened that 1961 brought the well-known English philosopher John Findlay to Carleton College as a visiting professor. I knew several Carleton philosophy majors at the time and thus had an opportunity to hear Findlay speak on his then current philosophical project: a re-examination of Hegel.

This enterprise was a most significant event. English analytical philosophy had shunned Hegel since the turn of the century. That a philosopher *within* this tradition would publicly argue that Hegel was indeed worth a careful study was comparable to Groucho Marx playing Hamlet: the incongruity was palpable.

According to Findlay, Hegel as a "systematic"

philosopher is unconvincing. But Hegel's insights into language, epistemology, ethics and social existence are fully worth being unearthed and examined, if not necessarily redeemed.

Thus, the figure of Hegel quietly stepped into the arena of mid-Twentieth Century philosophy, and there he not only remains, but, as we shall see, flourishes. And along with Hegel's re-entry, and almost chronologically parallel, came the Hong translations of Kierkegaard's Journals and Collected Works.

Findlay's book, *Hegel: A Re-examination*, was published in 1958. The first volume of Howard and Edna's edition of Kierkegaard's Journals appeared ten years later and won the National Book Award for translation.

The first volumes of the Collected Works appeared in 1978. In 1975, Charles Taylor's book, *Hegel*, appeared. This incarnation of Hegel was different from his somewhat ghostly Findlay appearance ten years earlier. Taylor, also writing from within the analytical tradition, revived a more substantial Hegel than Findlay's. Taylor took Hegel's claims for the systematic nature of his philosophy seriously, and tried to show that, whether or not they were correct, they were for the most part meaningful and called for a serious reading. For example, according to Taylor, Hegel's *Phenomenology* should be read as a series of Kantian-style transcendental arguments. Hegel began to take on truly contemporary shape and form. Yet, a metaphysical aspect of Hegel's thought was not retained in Taylor's analysis of the Hegelian perspective, an aspect that gave gravity to Taylor's analysis, but which, as we shall see, was destined to be set aside in later, "neo-Hegelian" positions.

Findlay's version of Hegelian philosophy was non-threatening. Even a St. Olaf philosophy major, such as myself, could assimilate a "simply insightful" Hegel as compatible with a broadly Kierkegaardian stance. After all, Kierkegaard himself found much to admire, emulate and adopt from his arch-enemy. Kierkegaard writes: "I feel what for me at times is an enigmatical respect for Hegel...I have learned much from him...His philosophical knowledge, his amazing learning, the insight of his genius, and everything else good that can be said of a philosopher I am as willing to acknowledge as any disciple." (Journals 2/221).

Such a student of philosophy as I was at the time could

also assume that Kierkegaard's fundamental project, that of refuting the claim that systematic thought constituted the ultimate measure of human existence, had been demonstrably effective, if for no other reason than for the fact that a philosopher as distinguished as Findlay clearly held no brief with the purportedly systematic dimension of Hegel's work. Again, here is Kierkegaard on Hegel: "[The system]...' goes forward by necessity,' so it is said. And look, it never for a moment is able to advance as much as half an inch ahead of existence, which goes forward in freedom." (Journals 2/225). That Hegel's systematic and conceptual "necessity" at no point touches the arena of human existence is the central message of the pseudonymous works.

However, Taylor's Kantian-style Hegel directly engaged metaphysical and systematic aspects of Hegel's philosophy and brought Hegel even closer to the philosophical interests of the times.

Just as Hegel materialized more firmly 150 years after his death, so did Kierkegaard. As a result of Howard and Edna's continuing accomplishments, the multi-dimensionality of Kierkegaard's work become increasingly apparent. Not that we hadn't known about the logic of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous authorship before and the strategies concealed under the category of indirect communication (a category invented in opposition to Hegel). But the availability of an increased sample of the pseudonymous works and the historical and philosophical scholarship embodied in each of the Hong translations, permitted us to grasp more firmly the philosophical battlefield that had occasioned much of the authorship.

1985 saw the publication of the Princeton edition of *Philosophical Fragments*. The Fragments may well be Kierkegaard's most acute anti-philosophical work. In my judgment, its theme, organization and pseudonymous style are perfectly matched. This work reviews a position which claims that the human spirit has the inherent capacity to come to the full truth about itself and its world, a claim that is the hallmark of Hegel's position. The Fragments develops a stark antithesis to this claim of philosophical immanence: human existence is in untruth and requires a transcendent or divine illumination. Truth must come from the outside by means of a God-relationship.

This is what the Fragments is ostensibly about. However, we are driven to another dimension of the text

when the careful reader asks the following question: how is a strictly philosophical perspective, such as the counter-hypothesis represented by the pseudonymous author of the Fragments, capable of framing such a radically anti-philosophical hypothesis? Of course, it's possible that the author of the book may not be the author of the hypothesis. And, if this is possible, then it is also possible that the author of the book does not properly understand the hypothesis, in particular, the author may in the first place *incorrectly* take it to even "be" an hypothesis or a thought experiment that human reason can responsibly entertain. The issue raised by the *Fragments* is the question whether truth is encompassed by human structures or whether it significantly transcends such structures.

To put the issue directly, the question is whether or not truth, as Kierkegaard understands this term, can be taken to be a well-formed formula within a human-centered language. For something to be well-formed in this context is for something to be analogous to a sentence of English, which at least follows the rules of the language, quite apart from what it could possibly mean. The point of the Fragments is to show that the very notion of a transcendent truth cannot fit the elementary structural rules of human reflection, much less be even *understood* by a strictly human reflection.

There is a current reading of Hegel that runs like this: Hegel's thought in fact rejects metaphysically transcendent realities (realities, that is, that are fundamentally above and beyond finite human reason). Just as Kierkegaard perceived, Hegel is the philosopher of immanence, of the self-sustaining and self-justifying character of human thought. Here is one of the clearest contemporary statements of this reading: "Hegel...held...what might be called an enduring communal consensus theory of truth - a theory according to which the very nature of truth is such that it is necessary and sufficient for a claim's truth that it be agreed upon and continue to be agreed upon by a community or communal tradition." (Forster, **Hegel's Idea of Phenomenology of Spirit**, p. 226).

Here's a second philosophical voice:

"Has Hegel really come back on to the intellectual agenda of contemporary thought?" - Yes (Pinker says) - Hegel offers an ..." explanation of how we came to be the people for whom 'absolute knowing' - that is, the human community's coming to a reflective non-metaphysical

understanding of what it must take as authoritative grounds for belief and action...(is) a community in which people have come to understand themselves as cultural artifacts, as constituted by their practices, as finding their forms of legitimization, of reassurance and affirmation coming only from the historical nature of norm-guided reflective activity trying to make those norms intelligible to itself." (Pinkard, **Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason**, pp. 3, 267, 268.)

And although I have quoted only two sources, I ask you to take my word for it that at present many strong voices in contemporary philosophy interpret Hegel in this way (Pippin, Brandom, Pinkard, McDowell). In fact, the force of this interpretation is evidenced by the fact that there is a "movement," known as "Pittsburgh neo-hegelianism," centered at one of the most prestigious graduate philosophy programs in this country. (For commentary, see Rorty.)

To a large extent, this reading of Hegel corresponds to a widespread mood in contemporary thought to seek ways of justifying cultural norms in terms of a self-legislating autonomy. As an example of this we can cite the work of Hirsch, a mathematician and philosopher of mathematics, who maintains that mathematical truth is a product of intersubjectively constituted practices. We can also point to recent theories of art which maintain that aesthetic objects are constituted by institutional, or social arrangements, and are not dependent upon intrinsically "aesthetic" features that certain objects might come to possess. Even the celebrated "communicative Ethics" of Habermas shares elements of this approach. (Habermas' critique of Kantian ethics from a Hegelian perspective is a telling feature of Habermas' work!) It is perhaps more than just a delightful coincidence that the completion of the Collected Works comes at a time corresponding to the strong emergence of this new "Hegel." Kierkegaard and Hegel remain locked together.

Kierkegaard's voice, so effectively made available to us by Howard and Edna Hong, is antithetical to such claims. Kierkegaard could well agree with St. Augustine that "In interiore hominem veritas habitat." Truth, in Kierkegaard's and Augustine's sense, is a criterion which the human mind receives from above and which is not contained immanently within the soul. Augustine argues that truth is found by turning within and discovering that human reason judges in accordance with a standard that is "higher" than itself. Kierkegaard's sympathy to such a stance should be manifest.

Neither Hegel nor Kierkegaard are "easy" authors to read. Yet Howard and Edna have placed in our hands a remarkable set of texts and a set of scholarly instruments that enables us to read Kierkegaard more widely and more deeply than ever before.

Kierkegaard notes in his Journals the story of a clerk whose handwriting was so terrible that his fellow workers sharply complained about its unintelligibility. The clerk responded: "It's my job to write! It's your job to read!" Unlike the clerk, Howard and Edna's job was to "write," but in such a way as to make our job of reading Kierkegaard incomparably richer. Indeed, they have accomplished this in a truly masterful way. Given the relevance of Kierkegaard in the present age, no one could ask for more.

REVIEWS

Hans L. Martensen, Between Hegel and Kierkegaard: Hans L. Martensen's Philosophy of Religion, trans. Curtis L. Thompson and David J. Kangas, introduction by Curtis L. Thompson, American Academy of Religion Texts and Translations Series, Number 17 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), Cloth 0-7885-0348-0, Paper 0-7885-0349-9. Reviewed by Richard E. Crouter

Richard E. Crouter is the John M. and Elizabeth W. Musser Professor of Religious Studies at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota and Co-editor, *Journal for the History of Modern Theology* (de Gruyter).

Some years ago when I attended Union Theological Seminary Robert L. Horn taught a seminar, which he called, "Kierkegaard and his Contemporaries." Horn's passion was to crack open Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel. He insisted that Kierkegaard had to be read contextually, alongside the contemporaries that shaped his theological and philosophical world. We didn't read Hans L. Martensen (1808-1884), however, probably because the requisite editions of his work were not available. Only later did I realize that Horn's dissertation was the only English-language treatment of Martensen, Kierkegaard's teacher of dogmatics. Even today most readers of Kierkegaard remain relatively innocent of Martensen. To speak autobiographically, I once dipped into Martensen's lectures on speculative dogmatics just long enough to convince myself that he was recognizably a Hegelian theologian and that Kierkegaard's scorn for his teacher thus appeared warranted. Such practices will no longer suffice! The present volume, a significant joint translation effort by Curtis L. Thompson and David J. Kangas with an Introduction (1-71) by Thompson, makes a formidable bid to locate Martensen on the intellectual map, somewhere "between Hegel and Kierkegaard."

The present book lifts all these musings to a new plateau. Its translators from the Danish have done us all a wonderful service by presenting readable and usable texts of three significant essays from Martensen, as he launched his career at the University of Copenhagen. Whether the world would know or be interested in Martensen apart from his connection to Kierkegaard remains a moot question. Yet the present work reveals his substantial work and contributions to early 19th-century theological inquiry in ways that make him far more than the caricature of a Danish Hegelian. The three substantive essays "The Autonomy of Human Self-

Consciousness in Modern Dogmatic Theology," (1841) "Meister Eckhart: A Study in Speculative Theology," (1840) and "Outline to a System of Moral Philosophy" (1841) form a cluster that conveys a sense of the complexity, range of interests, and intellectual seriousness of Martensen, as philosopher, theologian, and historian of theology. It was still an era when classical theology was intact; his theological discourse takes its bearings through delightful well-considered Latin dicta (Augustine's *nemo credit nisi volens*, 110) or hermeneutical wisdom (*haec tibi dicta esse puta*, 117). Throughout the essays one peers over Martensen's shoulder as he positions himself theologically and struggles to present the rich context of German philosophy and theology to his Danish audience, all within a decade of Hegel's death. Make no mistake, however. The essays are not light reading. At times they are downright tedious; it takes effort to orient oneself to Martensen's categories and definitions. In a short review one can, however, indicate something of the content and direction of each Martensen essay, while offering some comments on the editorial apparatus and interpretive principles that inform the volume, which mainly draws from Curtis Thompson's Introduction.

The first major surprise is that a reading of the three essays gives a picture of Martensen, then in his early thirties, whose philosophical orientation is not exclusively occupied with expositions of Hegelian teaching. Of the three, "Autonomy of Self-Consciousness" provides the most vivid positioning of Martensen as professional scholar in his theological setting. The work seeks to critique the modern Cartesian turn to subjectivity and the embrace of this turn by modern dogmatics, which results in a set of teachings that are nominalistic, i.e., invoke the language of Christian symbols without defending their objective reality. The core of this first treatise is concerned to

critique Kant's *Religion* (100-120) and Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith* (120-144), which mirror each other. Both thinkers are too caught up in finitude and have removed all theoretical determinations from religion. "The difference between Kant and Schleiermacher is only this, that Schleiermacher has posited pious feeling in place of Kant's practical reason...." (132). Martensen's own principles are in play in this work, even though muted. The treatise ends with only a cursory conclusion recommending the transition to a more rational, objective philosophy of revelation (his preferred characterization of Hegel), "Transition to the Autonomy of Human Self-Consciousness in the Form of Absolute Spirit" (144-147).

The essay "Meister Eckhart: A Study in Speculative Theology," expresses a deep and profound interest in Western, largely Germanic mysticism. Here Martensen sees the significance of the claims of mysticism as lying behind many post-Enlightenment debates about religion, especially the ongoing status of claims about pantheism, acosmism, and forms of atheism. The essay combines actual texts from Eckhart sermons with searching commentary on the development of the German school of mystics (Tauler, Suso). Schelling and Hegel, he writes, "demanded that philosophical thought rejuvenate itself in the immediate knowledge of God and divine things found in mysticism" (154). In Eckhart, he writes, "one is often spontaneously reminded of Hegel" (183). Although he greatly admires the boldness of the mystical traditions, especially their willingness to take a radical stand on the side of the infinite, Martensen appears to signal that this tradition - when not guided by objective reason - ends up in post-Reformation times with Jacob Boehme's theosophy, which he characterizes as a form of gnosticism and associates with Schelling (238-243). Speculative philosophy is needed to mediate these concepts and restore finitude to its rightful place. Martensen's mysticism essay shows a singular ability to probe mystical consciousness in Western thought under the themes of mystery, revelation, the highest good and virtue. The essay repays careful study in view of today's considerable interest in mysticism, quite apart from Johannes Climacus' various asseverations regarding these monastic traditions in *Postscript*.

The third of these essays goes even further in showing the independence of Martensen's mind and his orientation in philosophic thought. "Outline to a System of Moral Philosophy" takes on the task of developing an

appropriately practical moral philosophy that will address individual personal morals. "However much this generation prides itself on its knowledge of God and knowledge of the world, still in one primary area it stands far behind that time, namely, in moral self-knowledge" (247). To Martensen, this task has not been sufficiently addressed or covered by Hegelian teaching, which subordinates ethical interests to the state. In lectures prepared for student use Martensen draws from Schleiermacher, Daub, Michelet, and Rosenkranz to develop an original philosophical defense of freewill as it relates to the Good as Law (269-280), the Good as Ideal (280-298) and the Good as Kingdom of Personality (298-313). Especially in its critique of fatalism and its depiction of sin ("Knowledge of sin is the first act in the inner crisis of consciousness...." 278), the text invites comparison with Kierkegaard's stringent Socratic demand for self-knowledge and personal self-awareness.

Thompson's useful Introduction has the task of moving a reader from virtually ground zero into a serious appreciative reading of Martensen's work, while orienting the reader to the significance of these texts for the study of Kierkegaard. Following a mere five-page overview of the three translated treatises (17-22), it conveys a sketch of Martensen's philosophy of religion (22-40) and his relation to Kierkegaard (40-70). After finishing my own reading of the essays, I sensed a certain incongruity between the Introduction and texts. I wished that the Introduction, and the book's title, had not felt so obliged to place Martensen so overtly between Hegel and Kierkegaard, and wanted more analysis of the complicated positions and leading ideas of the treatises for their own sake. The reasoning for this is obvious; it arises from a need for greater contextualization of Martensen within the history of nineteenth-century theology. Even if we see Martensen's importance in his influence on Kierkegaard, these essays did not construe his own intellectual world or task that way. So the framing of these particular essays, though understandable from a bookseller's perspective, remains somewhat problematic. If one bases a view of Martensen on these texts alone, one sees him more between Kant/Schleiermacher and the German Romantics/Mystics, while trying to work out a sensible appropriation/response to Hegel. Direct engagement with Hegel is not present and Kierkegaard is certainly not part of his youthful mental landscape. Hence, to honor Hans Lassen Martensen most would be to allow him to speak mainly within his own orientation, leaving the

possible links to Kierkegaard to be argued out on another time and place. Thompson's effort to explore the Martensen-Kierkegaard relationship (40-70) thus rests on subsequent contacts and different texts from the one included here. As a result, the fascinating issue of whether and how the present set of treatises contributed to Martensen's development, and by extension bear on his relationship to Kierkegaard, remain unexamined.

A few words on the technical features of this edition of Martensen. Although I did not compare them to the original texts, the translations from Danish read well and appear to lack idiosyncracies. Although they collaborated on the tasks, Kangas is chiefly responsible

for the mysticism treatise, and Thompson for the two others. At times the translators' deliberate choice of inclusive language (e.g., "Godself" to avoid male pronouns) seems anachronistic. The inclusion of original pagination to the Danish editions will serve other scholars well. Original German and Latin quotations remain in the texts, along with published English versions. One slip was noted, apparently where a translation of Rosenkranz was not at hand, and a footnote makes gibberish of the German (100, n.12). Ideally, one would have liked a full bibliography of Martensen's works, as well as an index that is more based on concepts and ideas, with fewer references to individual words ("unity," "end," "beginning," "history," "time," etc.), which can serve little purpose.

George Pattison. Kierkegaard and the Crisis of Faith: An Introduction to his Thought. London: SPCK, 1997. 145 pages with index. Reviewed by Vincent McCarthy.

Vincent McCarthy is Professor of Philosophy at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

George Pattison's slender new volume is a kind of pen-and-ink sketch of Kierkegaard against the background of his intellectual and cultural context, worthy of a theological Dürer.

Chapter One (*Kierkegaard and the Crisis of Faith*) attempts to bridge the cultural gap between late 20th century Britain and early 19th century Denmark. Formally, Pattison addresses a British reading audience that has frequently had less Continental contact than its American intellectual cousins. In the process, he indirectly reminds American readers that, in both philosophy and theology, it has sometimes been easier to reach Calais (and points east of the Rhine) from New York than from Dover.

In situating his Kierkegaard introduction against a contemporary, post-modernist backdrop of Nietzschean nihilism, Pattison introduces into the discussion a far more radical figure than Kierkegaard and one who has had far more influence on post-modernity and its spokespersons. Indeed, against a backdrop of Nietzsche with his twin declaration of the end of Western metaphysics and the death of God, Kierkegaard's agenda can seem to be a mere tinkering reformation of a

foundationless modernity, even-with the announced drama of a crisis of faith, with the recall to tradition or, more radically, a summons to an authentic new departure from Christian origins. But, understandably, Pattison does not develop this tempting Nietzsche comparison, which would have led his book in a very different direction. Kierkegaard's insights into the shadow side of modernity are in any case at least as rich, and frequently far more detailed, than Nietzsche's more radical and strident analysis.

Chapter Two (*Critique of Age*) is an excellent analysis of SK's take on the present age. Pattison's outline is masterful in its brevity. In a few strokes of the pen he sketches the Romantic intellectual heritage, from Schiller to Danish Hegelians, and their connection to bourgeois religiosity: the piety of the easychair and the hubris of the philosophical armchair, the smug sight of which provoked Kierkegaard to take up his polemical pen.

In Chapters Three through Five (*Critique of Society, Critique of Philosophy and Science, Critique of Art*), Pattison very ably sketches Kierkegaard's critique of 19th century culture, although mostly high culture. Throughout, Pattison is judicious and circumspect, always well-informed. There is virtually nothing to take issue with in these fluid essays. At the same time, it must

be added that they introduce no new perspective. But neither should they be accountable to such an expectation in an introductory work of this type, least of all a pressure to be novel for the sake of novelty, in place of being scholarly for the sake of scholarship.

Formally, Immanuel Kant had only three Critiques. Pattison assigns four to Kierkegaard. What his discursive spirit of critique misses, however, is a Critique of Kierkegaard. One may argue that this is gently inserted throughout the text, but the irenic, positive tone of the work obscures critique of Kierkegaard, or even the necessity of it. (One can argue that that is not the purpose of an introductory work. But if other authors are displayed with their shortcomings, when compared to SK, surely SK deserves the same at some point.)

What is also perhaps missing among Pattison's sketch of Kierkegaardian critiques is a supplementary critique of Kierkegaard's critique of religion. For Kierkegaard is narrowly (if self-consciously) in the line of Paul-Augustine-Luther and is tied to very traditional Christian categories in an age that was not only becoming secular in substance but, where religiously informed, much broader than Kierkegaard. In an appreciation of non-Christian religion, Kierkegaard is mostly silent but also mostly reactionary. Hegel and Schopenhauer knew and appreciated far more about Hinduism and Buddhism and other sources of spiritual riches. In addition, if one attributes the appropriation of the Abraham-Isaac story to Kierkegaard himself and not just to the pseudonym Johannes de Silentio in *Fear and Trembling* (who as an esthetic author might be viewed as experimenting intellectually with literary types), one might think that Kierkegaard was simply mistaken in binding himself to a paradigm that is inadequate to explain his own psychology and experience. (Nonetheless, the effort is manifestly a great success as provocation to reflection about faith.)

Chapter Six (*Becoming an Individual*) surveys Kierkegaardian religious therapy, as outlined in *Concept of Anxiety* and *Sickness unto Death*. As with virtually all topics, Pattison is systematic and thorough. But here, at least, the irenic tone may misrepresent Kierkegaard (as Pattison would probably readily admit). For Kierkegaard, becoming an individual is a matter of the greatest urgency and passion. And so an irenic survey of the Kierkegaard corpus cannot do it justice. In addition, while Pattison mentions the role of will and of grace, they

do not seem, at least in my judgment, to get their due here. For *Either/Or* is about a character who will not will, and subsequent works outline the religious problem of the character who does will: that willing is not enough, that restoration requires humbling of the will as well as of the intellect before divine grace. Surely as difficult a teaching in the 19th century as it was in the 5th (Augustine vs. Pelagius).

Chapter Seven (*Doctor or Patient?*) wisely places toward the end of the work the inevitable confrontation with Kierkegaard's person and biography. As Pattison notes, Kierkegaard's scholarship is full of biographical speculation and sometimes preoccupation, paradoxically both enabled and predetermined by an author who would be the first to protest that his thought rises above his person and his biography. On the whole, Pattison steers a careful course but at times the currents pull hard. Pattison seems personally taken by what he sees as an eros-thanatos conflict in Kierkegaard, perhaps influenced by the same 20th century psychoanalytic sources he cites in his speculative interpretations of Kierkegaard's journals. His boldest suggestion, repeated in the concluding chapter, is that Kierkegaard understood faith as adoring surrender to God the cosmic tormentor, a very hard saying indeed.

Chapter Eight (*Inconclusive Unscientific Postscript*) is Pattison's brief conclusion to this slender volume. It is a postscript only in so far as Pattison at last departs from the discursive script to speak, and argue, in his own voice for his underplayed but undisguised conclusion: Kierkegaard is a classic and hence of value to contemporaries. The emphasis is very properly on subjectivity, but Kierkegaard is less of a relativist than Pattison might lead his introductory audience to think. For Kierkegaard's emphasis on subjectivity is also a call to subjective appropriation to "old truths" contained in Christianity, waiting to be sensed in their contemporary power by contemporaries who make them real and felt in their own existence. If emphasis on Kierkegaard's classic theological stance is not sufficient, to the ear of this reviewer, in Pattison, there is no cause to be overly worried. The reader directed by this fine introduction to the works of Kierkegaard will soon hear this powerful call for him/herself.

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