NEWS AND NOTICES

REVIEWS

Joakim Garff, SAK: Søren Aabye Kierkegaard. En biografi
By Poul Houe

Julia Watkin, Historical Dictionary of Kierkegaard’s Philosophy
Jon Woronoff, Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements, No. 33
By David Cain

M. Jamie Ferreira, Love’s Grateful Striving: A Commentary on Kierkegaard’s Works of Love
By John D. Glenn, Jr.

Steven Shakespeare, Kierkegaard, Language and the Reality of God
By Brian C. Barlow

Jamie Lorentzen, Kierkegaard’s Metaphors
By Rev. Donald H. Fox

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NEWS FROM THE HONG KIERKEGAARD LIBRARY

Submitted by Cynthia Wales Lund, Special Collections Librarian. Email: lundc@stolaf.edu. Tel. 507-646-3846, Fax 507-646-3858.

THE KIERKEGAARD LIBRARY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, 2003

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. Scholarships are also available at other times of the year.

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. 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

The Jonathan Stenseth Memorial Fellow for 2002 is Nicolae Irina from the University of Bucharest in Romania.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Friends of the Kierkegaard Library gathered for their fall meeting on November 6, 2002. Conversation and critical discussion of Kierkegaard's "An Occasional Discourse" (or "Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing") led by Gordon Marino took place following a luncheon and business meeting.

The Ellefson Lutheran Heritage Lecture for 2002 at St. Olaf College took place on October 30. The speaker this year was Bruce Kirmmse whose lecture was called "What Would Luther Do? Reflections on Church and State" with reference to Søren Kierkegaard and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Approximately 100 titles were added to the collection since September of 2002.

We would like to thank the following scholars and friends for their contributions to the library: Todd Nichol, Kinya Masugata, Niels Jørgen Cappeløn, Oscar Parcero Oubinya, Darya Loungina, Narum Family, Hans Aaen, Pieter Vos, Tatiana Schitzova, Poul Houe, Sean Nye, Ettore Rocca, Louis Pojman, Howard Hong and Gordon Marino.

The Hong Kierkegaard Library strongly encourages the donation of books and articles on Kierkegaard and related thinkers to add to its collections and to share with other libraries and scholars. Gift books are so indicated with a special donor bookplate.

PUBLICATIONS

The volume of papers related to the 2001 International Kierkegaard Conference sponsored by the Kierkegaard Library is forthcoming in March 2003 from Reitzels in Copenhagen. (Website address - www.careitzel.dk)

The Library sponsors the undergraduate journal of existentialist thought, The Reed. The journal, which is now entering its fourth year of publication, includes scholarly essays, short stories, and poetry. The student editor this year is Candace Crockett. Those interested in either submitting to this journal or in receiving a copy should contact Gordon Marino.
OBITUARY

Prof. Rafael Larrañeta Olleta (Pamplona, 1945 – Madrid, 2002)

A doctor in both Philosophy and Theology, Prof. Rafael Larrañeta Olleta was at the time of his death teaching in the Department of Philosophy (Ethics and Sociology) at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid (Spain). He was formerly a teacher at the Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, where he still lectured occasionally. It was also in Salamanca where he earned his doctoral degree in Philosophy with his work *La interioridad apasionada. Verdad y amor en S. Kierkegaard* (Univ. Pontif. Salamanca, 1990). As a researcher, Larrañeta studied in Paris, Rome, Münster, and Copenhagen. In recent years he had been working on the subject of the nature and implications of current political and economic systems. However, Larrañeta’s main occupation remained, as shown by his publications, the accurate reading of Kierkegaard’s works, both as a Kierkegaard scholar and as a translator/editor of Kierkegaard into Spanish. He was the enthusiastic coordinator of *Escríitos de Sören Kierkegaard*. He had just finished the introduction for volumes 2 and 3, including *O bien, o bien (Either/Or)*, which hopefully will be published later this year. Larrañeta was a pioneer in Kierkegaard studies not only in Spain but in Spanish, that is to say, in the whole Spanish-speaking universe. He was the first to publish more than twenty years ago a large bibliography about Kierkegaard in Spanish and he remained a witness of the interest and significance of Kierkegaard’s thought in Spain and in Latin America, including Brazil, as an active participant in international conferences and seminars, including the Kierkegaard Translation Seminar organized annually by the Sören Kierkegaard Research Centre in Copenhagen.

I would like to conclude this note on the unfortunate death of a very dear colleague by briefly referring to Larrañeta’s last scholarly words, to his last publication: *La lupa de Kierkegaard*. Here Larrañeta approaches Kierkegaard anew, since he does not write an essay strictly on Kierkegaard’s thought but on Kierkegaard’s life in the light of his thought. *La lupa de Kierkegaard (Kierkegaard’s Magnifying Glass)* entails what I would call an intimate intellectual biography. Why and how intimate? Larrañeta provides the reader with information about Kierkegaard’s life which is familiar, even for the incipient Kierkegaard reader, and the story he builds by means of such information is not new either except for the tone in which it has been written, and, thereby for the atmosphere it evokes. Therein lies the major strength of this little book. Between the lines, the originally unaffected and neutral reader perceives subtle signs of admiration, of devotion, of preoccupation, even of complicity, which textually illustrate Larrañeta’s personal view of Kierkegaard’s life and work as given to and determined by each other.

The author is not interested in telling once again Kierkegaard’s story but in telling this very story to himself, that is, to tell the story in a way that it makes sense to himself or, in Judge Wilhelm’s friend priest’s latest words in *Either/Or*, in a way that the truth of the story being told might become a truth for himself and thus a truth for the reader as well. By means of a list of thirteen items, some referring to clearly biographical facts (such as Jutland, University, or The last friend), some to coined kierkegaardian concepts (such as Seduction or Anxiety), Larrañeta honestly reflects in a partly inquiring and partly poetic mood on the significance of several of the main issues on which any Kierkegaard reader might have dwelt. Yet the point of the book is not to offer new answers to old questions, and much less to offer definitive answers to open questions. Rather, the book stands as an interpretation, a very subjective one, and this is the reason why the story told is radically new. The story is new because it pays attention to details usually neglected whereas some of the “highlights” are only considered *en passant*. Larrañeta explains this selection by referring to his tired eyes. After so many years of reading and searching, they are tired to the point of deforming reality, Kierkegaard’s reality. But I prefer to believe that Larrañeta was in possession of the glasses owned by the Aesthete according to the *Diapsalmata* in *Either/Or* - to which Larrañeta refers in the motto of the book - one lens magnified what was in sight while the other reduced everything to an equal degree and that he knew how to make sensitive use of them for any occasion, including this very last one.

Begonya Saez Tajafuerce
Sant Cugat del Vallés, Spain

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News From The Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre in Copenhagen

Forthcoming Publication

*Søren Kierkegaard Skrifter* volume 20, with commentary volume K20, will be published on March 14, 2003 by Gads Forlag. To order a copy, consult their website at http://www.gads-forlag.dk.

Recent Publications


To order these titles, consult the publisher’s website at http://www.degruyter.com.

Schleiermacher-Kierkegaard Congress, October 9-13, 2003

The theme of the upcoming conference will be "Subjectivity and Truth." It will offer 4 plenary sessions and 18 parallel sessions with the following titles: *Subjecfivitat und Wahrheit; Individuum und Gesellschaft; Stinde unnd Erlösung; and Sprache und Erkenntnis*. The languages of the congress will be English and German.

The congress will be arranged by Theodor Jongensen, Professor, dr. theol., Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen, and Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Director, Dr. h.d., Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre at the University of Copenhagen, together with Internationale Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft and Det danske Kierkegaard Selskab.

Papers are invited to be submitted by June 1, 2003.

Fees for the congress are DKK 950 and DKK 550 for PhD students.

For further information consult the following website:
http://www.sk.ku.dk/Schleiermacher-Kierkegaard

Or contact organizers at the following addresses:

Congress Secretariat
Store Kannikestraede 15
DK-1168 Copenhagen K
Tel. +45 33 76 69 00
Fax. +45 33 76 69 10
Email: sec@sk.ku.dk

News From International Kierkegaard Commentary Editor

International Kierkegaard Commentary

Call for Papers

Papers for *International Kierkegaard Commentary: Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits* are due 1 September 2003. Prospective authors should email the editor, Robert L. Perkins, at rperkins6@cfl.rr.com about their interest. Commit yourself to submit an article for this volume now so that you have the whole year to mull, think and write.

Direct all communication to:

Robert L. Perkins
Editor, International Kierkegaard Commentary
225 South Boundary Avenue
DeLand, FL 32720-5103

Rperkins6@cfl.rr.com 386-734-6457
News From Kierkegaardiana

*Kierkegaardiana*, Volume 22, was published in December, 2002. Volume 23 should be out in December of 2003. The deadline for submissions to Volume 24 is January 15, 2004. For information, contact Pia Seltoft at ps@sk.ku.dk.

News From Kierkegaard Cabinet in Budapest

In March 2001, the Kierkegaard Cabinet opened at Budapest University Eötvös Loránd, hosted by the Institute of Aesthetics. This resource center functions as an independent foundation, with the mandate to support Kierkegaard scholarship in Hungary and the Central European region and to assist in the translation of Kierkegaard's works into Hungarian. The "heart" of the Cabinet is a special library and an electronic database which provides contacts with other resource and research centers in the world. The Cabinet welcomes scholars, students, and researchers from Central and Eastern Europe.

The founder of the Kierkegaard Cabinet Foundation is Péter Nadas. Members of the Board include Chairperson, András Nagy; Béla Bacso, head of the Institute of Aesthetics; and Thomas Berntsen, director of the Danish Cultural Institute in Hungary. Sponsors of the Cabinet include The Royal Danish Embassy, The Danish Cultural Institute, The Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre (Copenhagen) and the Hong Kierkegaard Library.

Address: Kierkegaard Cabinet
c/o ELTE Művészettudományi Intézet
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Budapest 1088, Hungary

Phone: 36.1.266.9100/5855
Email: cabinet@emc.elte.hu
Website: http://kierkegaard.elte.hu/

Hours: Wednesday and Thursday during the academic year, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM.
(Appointments possible for other times with advance notice.)

To request information about the Kierkegaard Cabinet or to offer books, articles, databases, etc. for scholars, students, and translators in the region, please contact András Nagy at andrasnagy@mail.matav.hu.

News From Søren Kierkegaard Society of the United Kingdom

The Society will hold its annual conference on Friday 27th June 2003. The conference will take place at King's College, London. The topic will be "Kierkegaard and the Stages." Speakers are C. Stephen Evans, Hugh Pyper and Peter Vardy. Enquiries should be directed to: murray.rae@kcl.ac.uk or sd.podmore@virgin.net.

In addition to the three keynote addresses, the day will include a panel discussion on the following thesis: "Kierkegaard's Stages is the work of one who seeks to guide a reader to a personal understanding of penitence and faith." (Adapted from "Historical Introduction" to Stages on Life's Way, Princeton, 1988, p. xv.)

Short papers of 10 minutes duration are invited on the defense or refutation of this thesis. Please provide an indication of your interest in presenting a paper along with a brief statement of your proposed argument to: murray.rae@kcl.ac.uk.

News From Sociedade Brasilierea de Estudos de Kierkegaard

Alvaro Valls has informed us that this group has a new website, SOBRESKI, at the following address: www.kierkegaardbrasil.hpg.com.br

The site includes issues of the journal of this group, Severino, as well as announcement of works published by members and translations of Kierkegaard by members. Note Dr. Valls' recent translation of *Works of Love* into Portuguese.
Change in Website Address

Please note that the Kierkegaard Library website has slightly changed:
www.stolaf.edu/collections/kierkegaard/

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SAK: Soren Aabye Kierkegaard. En biografi.
By Joakim Garff

Reviewed by Poul Houe
University of Minnesota

The 1998 translation into "The eyes of Argus" (for Blackwell's Kierkegaard: A Critical Reader) of Joakim Garff's article on Kierkegaard's The Point of View (from Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift [1989]) made for an important introduction of this Danish scholar to an international audience well before his 700 plus page biography of SAK: Soren Aabye Kierkegaard appeared in Danish two years later. Since both beginning and more seasoned students of SAK are likely to appreciate the article as a key to the tenor of the latter, I offer for a starter a brief review of the former's conceptual inventory.

It posits the reader as a hermeneut spying on Kierkegaard's textual spy to allowing SAK to execute the counter-espionage himself and thus almost to render apparent the condition of possibility for all communication. The focal point is here the distance between textual meaning and textual doing, or what Garff calls textual (dys)function. As a prompter who produces pseudonymous authors, SAK is either disconnected from the latter or conversely applying a deliberate tactic of authorial disassembling. The either-or amounts to a "divergence between 'the totality of the authorship' and 'the total production,"' or between the 'authorship' as a unit of studied symmetry and an aesthetics working against itself.

As an aesthetic discourse seeking to present religious concerns, The Point of View in Garff's rendition bears witness to a whole series of paradoxical scenarios. Besides aesthetics posed against aesthetics, they include tensions between the aesthetic and the religious author and between the author and the work, to say nothing of the duplicitous simultaneity of the aesthetic-religious whole. The task of deceiving in the sense of truth is executed as believable deception. Altogether, a narrative in the indicative yields to a subjunctive parlance as the empirical self gets written off by the textual self and as construction of the text entails deconstruction of the self. Thus the author is explained by the work (not the opposite way round) and his only presence lies in a textual production of his self which is determined by a transcendental signified in the same way it is directed by 'Divine Guidance.'

This all amounts to The Point of View offsetting a plurality of viewpoints with SAK as the reader of the authorship, rather than its author. As a writer he is written in the sense that writing the 'I' into the text means writing off the empirical 'I'. Textualization becomes depersonalization because the writer loses sight of himself as he approaches this self. Instead of direct communication and a documentary report to history, the Kierkegaardian point of view is superseded by many viewpoints distinguished by fictive techniques. The eyes of Argus replace the person proper.

In SAK this thematic sketch has been extended to a large and richly composed orchestration conducted with Olympic breadth of view. Proceeding chronologically, one year per chapter, Garff has managed to capitalize on the clarity of a basic developmental drive without sacrificing supplementary or complicating insights. His volume, in five cohering parts, abounds with biographical and philosophical detours, and its plethora of variegated socio-cultural and intertextual excursions - graphic in form, principal in reach - is presented with authority and erudition, and with almost infallible stylistic aplomb and wit. Garff is an elegant, albeit ardent punster, who rarely falls for the temptation to be witty at the expense of the subject at hand, as when he refers cavalierly to Regine Schlegel as a bigamist (693).

Quite in concert with the eyes of Argus, entire essays in their own right germinate from adequate points of origin in SAK's authorial life, and while they often go beyond the scope of these initiating points of departure and thus could be expected to hamper or distract from the volume's compositional tenor and general chronology, it is to Garff's credit that they flow with impeccable ease from the mainstream concerns and rather assures the audience of an exciting and pleasurable read.

In fact, precisely because SAK is about one most particular empirical person who transforms himself into a multitude of textual personas, its focus on the nexus between the protagonist's nearly boundless scriptural outlets and the richly contextualized empirical particularity by which these are said to be informed engenders a tension that is often thought-provoking and occasionally compelling. Six pages about the hygienic predicaments literally flowing from Copenhagen's old sewage system (462-67) may sound excessive in a text about a thinker and writer; but because the account is so informative and hilarious (surpassed in this respect only
by the "Sturm und Drang?" chapter on masturbation (92-100), it does make the case for viewing its lowly subject as one material sounding-board 'underlying' SAK's authorial production. All differences notwithstanding, the chapter actually bears resemblance to some early pages (28-33) about "Copenhagen's Underground." The subterrain referenced here is the irrationalist revivalism to which SAK was rather differently attracted than N.F.S. Grundtvig, whose sermons he once called weekly evacuations, thus alluding quite unequivocally to the city's overall sewage problems.

On the whole, Garff's probing of Kierkegaardian side-themes contains a wealth of key observations and formulations. On the material side there are recordings of SAK's fastidious dietary habits, the many servants in his employ, the modest scale of his charities, etc. (460 ff.), altogether constituents of his milieu at least as close to (his) home as Copenhagen's public health situation. The account emerges on the background of a solid - and generous - review of SAK's monetary extravagance, indebted to a 'political' as well as a 'religious' economy (438-55), as seen in Works of Love's financially expedient notion that compassion prefigures munificence (442).

Strikingly illuminating is here a segment on Martensen's treatise on socialism and Christianity, for it shows how differently Martensen, SAK (and supposedly God!) considered the reverse side of the social human pyramid (439-40). But although Martensen's work is from 1874, it is treated in SAK under 1847, while it's not until 1853 (613), that we find a characterization of the later SAK's so-called Christian socialism, which resembles not only Sibbern's work on state and church from 1849, which SAK most likely didn't care to read, but also Martensen's combined critique of liberalism and prediction of socialism's future, which SAK was obviously unable to read, unlike Frederik Dreier's tract on the same subject (613-17). A cross-reference would have highlighted the actual affinity between the antagonists here involved.

More fully combining material and spiritual evidence, Garff's discussion of SAK and Adler (388-404) - the men and authors - departs from the familiar question of genius versus apostle. But it pivots on SAK's use of Adler for self-identification - not unlike SAK's autobiographical criticism of H.C. Andersen's autobiographical works (129 f.) - and ultimately leads to a fruitful discussion of the difficult matter of epilepsy associated with both men. A subsequent chapter called "Either and Or" (419-24) typifies Garff's felicitous use of quotes in his rubrics; here it is Queen Caroline Mathilde's telling misnomer for SAK's masterpiece that affords the biographer an opportunity to treat his readers to a priceless view of SAKs relation to Danish royalty.

On a more technical note, Garff spends the final pages of 1836 (86-91) on accounting for SAK's journals and diaries. The place is well chosen, for it concerns SAKs significant relation to Poul Martin Moller, the piecemeal writer par excellence to whose 'affectionation' SAK was beholden for his own 'irony' and 'demony' (84); and besides, the interpretational implications are such that they potentially sustain Garff's own biographical tenor that the author must be understood on the basis of his authorship, and that his (in)famous secrecy in light of this position is likely neither his epilepsy nor any other strictly human condition but rather the textual secrecy that, in reality, there is no secrecy at all; the alleging of such is nothing but a literary device, and the real SAK is the artist by this name.

Among his contemporaries Moller was considered a friend by SAK, while most other luminaries of the day were rather his foes, if not simply nuisances like Sibbern and Rasmus Nielsen, the latter torn between SAK and Martensen (609). Unlike such adversaries of the second order as Martensen and Goldschmidt, perhaps P.L. Moller, Grundtvig, and his own brother, SAK's foremost antagonist was, of course, J.P. Mynster. It deserves positive mention that Garff in his elaborate treatment of this towering pillar of Danish society goes beyond SAK's iconoclastic portrayal and permits the reader to follow the development into a complicated episcopal persona of the little Jens Peter who relished in playing with his pals around the ghostly corpses in his physician father's hospital ward (528).

Garff's descriptions of Mynster come full circle and deliver a far more richly composed personality to behold than the personified church and ecclesiastical hypocrite to which we are habitually treated by SAK (538-44). It is typical that Garff in his mention of Mynster's 1798 prize winning dissertation on modern education adds his own praise of the author's critique of modern pedagogical superficially. "In reality it has perhaps not changed all that much since then," he muses (531). In like manner he soberly sides with P.L. Moller, SAK's other major anathema, when need be i.e., when the composition of the Postscript, say, deserves upbraiding (350, 371). In the final analysis Garff even lumps together Goldschmidt, P.L. Moller, and SAK as three combatants sharing the ultimate plight of outlaws (357).

The principal bone of contention between SAK and his various opponents is the matter of subjectivity, and SAK's biographer's principal task is centered on the fullest possible investigation of this concept and the space it defines between life and writing. His article for Blackwell's Kierkegaard: A Critical Reader set the stage for the undertaking, but the full scale performance could not be seen until SAK, where formal distinctions, such as the one between indicative and subjunctive, appear clad in flesh and blood, in this particular instance as Peter Christian and Soren Aabye Kierkegaard, respectively (87). At some point (467) Garff is especially reminded of the distance between life and writing, when during the war preparations in 1848 SAK in his overly expensive apartment notes that here he is penning some of his
best writings. Despair and self-inflicted suffering are his precious commodities in that they enter his discourse to fuel its production (470-71) and to take it on a course from repression of to distraction from to integration of the elements of spleen. No wonder since the authorship is the idea for which SAK will live and die (53).

As mentioned already in the Blackwell volume, The Point of View is deliberately that of a house divided, and the optimal reader, according to SAK, is the one who can detect that SAK is not reproducing his real life actions in writing but producing them as textual acts pretending to be real (480). The field where art and reality, fiction and truth are wrestling is a mine field, if not a killing field, to judge from Garff's intimations (490). Its complexity, and the cracks it leaves in the myths and grand narratives about SAK, is the very object – actually the subject – of the biographer's interrogation (xvi). It is consistent with this approach that it shows us a SAK who criticizes H.C. Andersen for lack of outlook or philosophy of life, while his – SAK’s – own subjectivity is in even more dire straits and hardly qualifies as a philosophy on the level of sentence! Moreover, the concept of Bildung, in which so much of the 19th century's artistic outlook was grounded, and to which Andersen at least contributed several attempts in the novelistic genre, is the target of SAK's most unforgiving affronts, including the implicit assault launched from within his own Bildung's novel – The Seducer's Diary – which is explicitly demonic! (246)

Bildung has the odor of Mynster, if not of Heiberg and Goethe (198), and the unholy alliance of Christianity and Bildung is a contamination that must be dissolved as the whole concept of Bildung gets written off in anti-Bildung novels inclined more toward primitive notions of God and Christianity (318-20). As is well-known, the radical thrust of this critique will eventually move the Kierkegaardian subject from indirect pseudonymity toward merciless directness, and from dialectic toward irreversibility, martyrdom and death (543-44). As a movement distinguished by a martyr's will to powerlessness replacing a hero's will to power (430 f.), it generously allows the reader to act as substitute martyr for SAK. On account of an alleged lack of authority, SAK yields to pseudonymous authors, whereby, in the words of the pseudonym H.H., he enables the subject to be reinstated in its (pseudonymous) rights, although the reality of pseudonymous subjects is purely textual (549-50).

Still, the poet of martyrdom does not yield to the martyrdom of the poet, for SAK admits (552) that as a poet he only writes about the Christian ideal (an admission apparently not to be confused with Mynster's comparably worded confession [543]). Whether his modesty is justified and sanctioned by Governance or it is merely a bad and cowardly excuse, SAK must eventually repeat H.H.'s textual martyrdom on the existential level. Even so, he is a martyr denied his martyrdom except in words on precious paper (554). The implicit urgency of SAK of a unified perspective and the conflicting need to safeguard the ideal of this unity by dissolving it into relative autonomies whose betrayal may ultimately serve the unit they all seem to disown, presents the ultimate challenge to Garff's biographical analysis of SAK. What is the status of this tension, and how is it correlated to the author's vita? A case in point is SAK's rebellion against his father, articulated in candid concealments of the father cast as stepfather in place of God, the true and heavenly Father (491 f.).

But locating such impulses from reality is difficult both in principle and in practice. As SAK's chapters about The Point of View underscore (482-90), the writer is written as he writes, and the writing both divides and multiplies the 'I' so that truth about the subject repeatedly defies description; indeed, the very multiplication of viewpoints has a desubjectivising impact upon the writing. The autobiographical drive is undeniable, but so is the pseudonymous evasions of its terms. All told, The Point of View is a documentary fiction, a fact which Garff must find at once typical and worrisome (487), given his dual allegiance to SAK's fiction and vita. (Perhaps his discomfort accounts for the peculiar Danish word "dokumentafiktion" with no r).

In consequence of this concern, Garff notes how Kierkegaard's Christian self-denial, which resembles a grandiose self-arrangement, is not without self-assurance. In the same vein is his observation of the ease with which SAK 'biographizes' his own religious development by recycling material otherwise classified as aesthetic. Clearly this is evidence of Kierkegaard complex to which Garff devotes his biography of SAK, or of what he labels "these complex self-presentations in which delusion and self-delusion [if not deceit and self-deceit] are in a fatiguably equal struggle with one another" (489).

For the author of The Point of View the intimate link between life and writing warrants a biographical reading of his Christian discourses in which the publisher pretends to be what is written in the published works (435). For the biographer of SAK, however, the same biographical circumstances have the effect of making conjectures inescapable on many occasions. In "The Quiet Despair," father and son are seen as mirrors of one another, yet after inspecting the depiction of the father figure, Garff must add that although there is no assurance of the biographical authenticity of this image, it would take an almost violent interference to change the reader's mind about it (304). In a section about Michael Kierkegaard's fear of carrying syphilis, and about the possible transmission of this fear to his two surviving sons, Garff's reflections abound with open-ended questions leading to a quote from SAK's journal, May 1843, which aims to show how writing, in personal yet distanced artistic form, was the place where the author worked out his traumas, if not dispensed with them. The point being that the sheer supposition of a Kierkegaardian family scourge is not unrelated to the
intensive treatment of original sin in the Concept of Anxiety (308 f., 313, 382).

Still, the ‘theory’ in question, linking life to writing with a particular view to the sexual economy of both, is not written in stone. True enough, allegorical, perhaps even dreamy form is an unquestionable outlet from otherwise unbearable experiences. A subject ruled by reticence may become the textual ruler of this sentiment and assure the conversion of existential depression into artistic power. A merry melancholic, so to speak (383-84). But there is no way of establishing 1-1 connections between particular real life episodes and corresponding artistic expressions. The theory merely establishes an interpretational framework within which caution and conjecture must accompany any specific ‘reading.’ Garff himself demonstrates this in his wary decoding of “Salomo’s Dream.” The story’s allegorical representations afford a plausible link to the two Kierkegaard sons’ traumatic childhood memories of their father’s libido, and their likely disenchantment is disclosed by way of a deenchanting disbandment of the allegorical guise. Even so, an unambiguous reduction is out of the question (310 f.); biographical readings, while obviously called for, will remain indirect.

In simple terms, with which our author may feel comfortable in spite of his own sophistication as a reader and writer, Garff has a gift for biographical analysis of a large variety of texts, familiar and otherwise, and for detecting hidden connotations, that is matched only by his dual sense of textuality and transtextual biological references. In fact, textuality itself has biological materiality, ranging from the lyrical flavor of its prosaic forms and down to the existential punctuation of its sentences (296-98) and the “currente calamo” of the author’s physical penmanship (278); especially moving is the drastic making up of conflicting intentions, additions, and deletions that criss-cross the manuscript pages of Repetition for the purpose of withdrawing the initial ‘message’ to Ragine (217). Perhaps the examples explain this biographer’s pronounced skepticism regarding recent abstract – postmodern? – theories about SAK’s reasons for issuing a particular pseudonymous publication, say; for don’t we know that such down-to-earth factors as a bad dream, someone’s sudden death, and the unexpected opening in a typesetter’s calendar were the true causes behind the book’s appearance! (518 f.)

At the same time Garff is mindful of SAKs postmodern diagnosis of his own epoch – as finding novelty in hollowed out tradition – long before postmodernism became modern (428). His subtle play on the words modern and postmodern notwithstanding, the observation appears with the observer’s stamp of approval and is thus in contradistinction to his unmistakable critique of postmodern practices after postmodern became modern, indeed postmodern. All in all, there is a discernible solidarity here between the biographer and the ‘biographed,’ witness that the former notes about the latter how the bulk of his oeuvre is marked by a movement from the objective and abstract to the subjectively concrete (though not at the expense of neglecting a certain connection between the human condition and the surrounding society and its developmental trends [407]). Although crafted as a biographical clue to SAK, this is no less fitting as an autobiographical clue to his biographer.

Subsequently, it comes at a price (unaccounted for by Garff) much the same way SAK’s own investment in subjectivity does (well accounted for by Garff). Of the latter Garff notes how the extreme intensification of the tenet that subjectivity is the truth means loss of the dialectic dynamic issuing from the opposite claim that subjectivity is the untruth. By losing this dimension, however, SAK finally comes to understand his extraordinary task (624). Now, in rejecting the objective abstractions of postmodern theory, Garff may well have found the perfect take on SAK’s intellectual development towards this ultimate singularity, but he – Garff – too loses sight of an important dialectic dimension and dynamic, namely, the fact that postmodern theory represents a dialectic within whose abstract objectivity the subject is not only being deconstructed but whence the process of deconstruction ricochets – with further deconstructive effects – back on the same dialectic that enabled this process in the first place.

The important lesson is here that no matter how forcefully subjectivity is alleged to be truth, the subject still does not necessarily designate an actual person, but rather an intertextual instance. To ‘biographize’ such an instance is to engage the intertextual domain that constitutes its being, and precisely on this score Garff is a bit of a fundamentalist who rarely gives conspicuous mention to authors or others with whom the person name SAK has not been in touch (personally, by reading, etc.). The rare exception is Freud, and his claim to attention is precisely that “if you didn’t know any better, you might think that SAK had read Freud, for he too diagnosed the literary work of art as a symptom of an unresolved conflict in the poet, a sublimate of a crisis in his relation to his self” (377). While Freud and SAK were obviously not in touch, they somehow could have been.

But intertextual instances inform one another without necessarily being in any form of biographical contact. Their “lives” interact like artistic/textual pseudonyms, and their biographies should be designed accordingly. As subjects, moreover, their depersonalized and destabilized mode of agency conforms distinctly to that of their biographical author’s wandering persona. Unlike the pampered civil servant, SAK is the free agent and a nobody living in the streets, all of which in his own mind designates subjectivity, according to his own perception in a polemic with archdeacon Tryde, cited by Garff (577). Several passages in SAK bear on SAK as a wandering street philosopher. Martensen considers these...
peregrinations a blow to the philosopher's authorial authority (281), and when SAK concedes to this relinquishment of power (consistent with the indirect communication of his works) by even expounding it as a deliberate attempt on his part to impress upon the public the image of a peripatetic dandy suited to diminish the impression of me, Garff aptly comments, "which me? one wonders" (281). For why deflate the image of something already in question? To arrive at depersonalization of the second order? Garff does not follow up on his own lead - is there a SAK? - but pursues instead his other agenda: who is SAK? And he answers: an aristocratic radical thanks in no small measure to his peripatetic life in Copenhagen streets.

Meanwhile, SAK's wanderlust was not limited by the city limits (as it was in Berlin, where a shortage of public conveniences restricted his moves significantly! [180 f.]). During his visit to Jutland in 1839, he wanders in solitude across the heath expecting to encounter a nature of mythological gravity consistent with the home of his father. But lo and behold, he gets so confused by the actual views that a dizzying emptiness and nothingness foils his expectations and leaves him in a state of utter anxiety (141 f.). Within a few pages the anxiety has spread to a prefiguration of the chasm between his ideal and burning desires on the one side and naked reality on the other (144). Wanderlust may not be confined by city limits, but confined it is by nature. Small wonder, then, not merely that to travel meant to write in SAK's case, but that to write meant to travel, whereas plans for real life travel were rather meticulously circumvented and eventually abandoned, if at all possible (417-18). Garff's chapter about SAK changes of address (564-67) confirms in a humorous way how these settlements concern a basically unsettled person.

The American critic Rebecca Solnit, whose book
Wanderlust: A History of Walking appeared the same year as SAK and therefore was unavailable to the author of the later, has a brief chapter on Kierkegaard in which she condescendingly writes about him and his likes: "They were in the world but not of it. A solitary walker, however short his or her route, is unsettled, between places, drawn forth into action by desire and lack, having the detachment of the traveler rather than the ties of the worker, the dweller, the member of the group." What is striking in this and similar passages of hers is not so much the eloquence and verbal precision, although they surpass even Garff's. Rather, it is the compelling manner in which it interfaces - or intertextualizes - wandering spirits, notably Kierkegaard and Rousseau, who otherwise seem strange bedfellows separated by time and geography, ideology and personal/philosophical lineaments. Biographically speaking (of wholehearted persons), these are not birds of a feather flocking together in putative real life, yet biographically speaking (as agents of textual subjectivity and subjective agents of textuality) they are clearly instances walking together

- intertextually and to the thought-provoking benefit of interpretationally inclined readers.

One more instance of something missing in this biography of SAK is Joakim Garff himself. Like his Danish colleague Jørgen Bonde Jensen in a book called Jeg er kun en Digter: Om Søren Kierkegaard som skribent (which is listed in SAK's bibliography), his subject is the Kierkegaard who is not "for fastholdere," as a well-known younger Danish poet has described himself. A bar of wet soap is not "for fastholdere," for you can literally not hold on to it. But metaphorically speaking a person like Kierkegaard is not "for fastholdere" either, for he is, in Bonde Jensen's words, one who "falls outside all designations. Not only those of the literary tradition and the national identity, but also those of the clique, the common sense, and the notion of the natural." To come to terms with this slippery figure, Bonde Jensen acknowledges that Kierkegaard's way of writing, his authorship, as it were, cannot be separated from his intentions, no more than Bonde Jense's writing can be separated from his. Hence, he "seeks in this context to take bearings of my own point of departure, the disparity between the intellectual left and Seren Kierkegaard."

This is one way of coming to terms with slipperiness around you: Find your own position and be as steadfast as possible as you seek to engage your slippery surroundings (before you perhaps allow yourself to slide in one or more of its many directions). But it is not Joakim Garff's way. For one thing, there is little evidence in his production of any tangible afflication with leftist causes. But more importantly, he possesses the breadth of view, erudition, and intellectual and stylistic authority to follow - without losing his critical bearings - his slippery subject in whatever direction its biographical complex may take him; at some point he even openly admits to the psychological inevitability of "biographically reading along" (248).

An undogmatic reader and elegant interpreter of seemingly contradictory pieces of evidence, Garff's astuteness and pleasant self-assuredness know of no other limits than his biographical activity and the episteme under which his project is conducted. For these reasons his achievement deserves to be delimited as well by its boundaries. Its balancing acts are not entirely commendable, for they border on a sense of moderation that is not entirely justified, not on its own premises, and certainly not on the premises of a theoretical awareness that is larger than his. The many virtues and few vices thus enumerated make for a biography that is truly Danish in the best sense. A book which honors the Kierkegaard Research Center in Copenhagen, from where it emanated, as a center of resources where the best of a scholarly tradition is traded and where imaginative expansion of the critical canon can occur. All the same, a place that is also a center for lesser or larger circles, whose points may well
be peripheral when viewed from center perspective, but vantage points when seen from above and abroad. That said, there are countless central formulations and insights (in every sense of the word central) to be had in this book no matter where one's vantage point might be; students of SAK will ignore them at their peril. To mention but a few: a sterling extract (from a letter addressed to P.W. Lund) showing SAK's conception of natural science vis-à-vis the existential point of gravity within the single individual (47), matched much later by Garff's harshly critical denouncement of the increasing backwardness of his subject's view of science (412); SAK's modern exilic individual as prefiguration of, say, Edward Said's intellectual exile (68); the biographical background for the caricatured ethicist and uncaricatured aestheticist in Either-Or (196); the notion of repeating repetition's impossibility (207) and the observation that repetition and coincidence are mirror images of one another, though the former is religious and the latter aesthetic (208); the compelling illustrations of the dramatically decisive ups and downs of SAK's production (321, 360); the forceful point that modern persecution is always symbolic (362) and that martyrdom is reclamation of eternity in time (438); the sense that as life comes closer to SAK, other forms of life, the social, and other beings, move away (494); the aesthetic figuration of Christ considered as the activity of an aesthetic figuration within a religious prefiguration (570); the topicality of SAK's internalization of Christianity within a secularized culture as opposed to efforts at modernizing the exterior forms of the faith or internalizing it as is but on the terms of the present age (579-82); the convergence between SAK's late interest in Schopenhauer and his own misanthrope (617-24); and SAK's anti-Hegelian view of history as a dynamic of nothingness (659).

Some of the examples owe their merit as much to poignant wording and deft quoting as to penetrating analysis and bold combination. On occasion the terms of Garff's discourse even border on trivia as when the extremes of Western intellectual history are said to be: “spontaneity and reflection, desire and control, presence and absence” (164). And to finish this critical inspection of smallware, Garff makes a slightly mannered and hackneyed use of split sentences (with pronominal representation of an appended subject noun) and leaves us uncertain about SAK's profit from the first printing of Either-Or (1200 rixdollars (446) or 1000 rixdollars one page later?); the pictures of the elder Schopenhauer are not moping, the man is (621). An opaque passage (548) needs clarification, and a few index errors have been detected (705, 708, 710, 711). The index of personal names is obviously helpful, but a similar index of titles and subjects is sorely missing.

But to leave no one in doubt that these prosaic defects and mishaps are mere exceptions to the rule that the text at hand is anything but prosaic – or flawed and sloppy, for that matter – let me end on a poetic note, and one that is not even mine but belongs to SAK. And which pertains less to the poetic output of its protagonist than to the poetic sense in which the volume's dual proximity and distance to its subject comes to the fore in its last pages' soberly empathic account of SAK's final days. The austerity of tone is gradually enhanced as the composition comes down to a day by day reporting of medical facts and eyewitness testimonies about the bedridden little giant in Frederik's Hospital ward (677 ff). Yet the solemn inevitability is put into brutal perspective on SAK's very last pages (702-03) by the fact that only in death was SAK an agreeable enough witness to the truth to comfort his people. On this note Garff's historical account bridges the gap to our present time as only the poetic can do it.

3 Jørgen Bonde Jensen, Jeg er kun en Digter: Om Søren Kierkegaard som skribent (Cop.: Babette, 1996).
4 Klaus Rifbjerg's line "Jeg er ikke for fastholdere" is from the poem "Livet i badewaerelset" (Life in the Bathroom) in his collection Konfrontation: Digte (1963; Cop.: Gyldendal, 1966), 6.
5 Bonde Jensen, op. cit., author's cover text.
Julia Watkin's remarkable work is an encyclopedia of surprises. The author refers to "a handbook" (xi). "Dictionary" surely results from the title of the series in which this volume participates, but is too "direct," and "Philosophy" is too comfortable, for Kierkegaard's indirect pseudonymous dazzle. Jon Woronoff makes essentially this point in his "Editor's Foreword." Julia Watkin concurs: "As soon as one attempts to pin Kierkegaard down as a theologian, a philosopher, or a psychologist, his writings, through his strategies of using pseudonyms and "books and articles under his own name or published posthumously" (xi). Once past the title, this book is a cornucopia-thesaurus-treasure-trove. These comments are celebration-ovation-acclamation—and some indication of riches to be encountered.

Julia Watkin's dedication of the book bespeaks her own dedication and offers two clues to the volume's character: delight in exacting scholarship and lively respect across centuries: "To Christian Molbech and Ludvig Meyer / in gratitude for their wonderful dictionaries / that are as invaluable now as when they were / first written" (v). (All right: "dictionary" does not want to go away.) Watkin refers readily to "the assistance from the many 19th— and 20th—century friends inhabiting my library..." (xiv). She achieves an impressive "contemporaneity with Kierkegaard" and his times, and can observe one of Kierkegaard's favorite actors, Joachim Ludvig Phister, "He was particularly good at portraying stupid people without overdoing it" (196) — as if she had just seen Phister on stage. In this "contemporaneity," the crisscross and interconnectedness of the "little world" of Golden Age Denmark is evidenced on most every page, a reason why an index—celebration-ovation-acclamation—and some indication of riches to be encountered.

The two major sections of the book are "The Dictionary" (well over half) and "Bibliography" (one-fourth). These are framed by "Preface," maps of 19th century Denmark and Copenhagen, "Chronology," "Introduction" ("Kierkegaard's Life," "Kierkegaard's Cultural Background," "Kierkegaard's Authorship" and "Kierkegaard's Thought"), and by three surprise appendices: "Appendix A" is "Kierkegaard's Writings." Following a brief note on the "Journals and Papers" are two detailed sections, "Books and Articles Under His Own Name or Published Posthumously" and "Pseudonymous Books and Articles or Published Posthumously." *Works are listed chronologically in each section. Titles and contents are given in English and Danish. An admirable aspect of the entire work is Watkin's keeping in touch with the Danish. A second, thorough appendix is on "Kierkegaard's Pseudonyms" (twenty-eight entries; but there is a double entry — "Nicolaus Notabene" and "N.N." as well as such "pseudonyms" as "One Still Living" and "Writer of the Letter, The"). Here one finds intriguing suggestions concerning the possible significance of some of the "names," e.g., "H.H. might indicate the Danish word for higher (herein), with the use of initials at the same time expressing his modesty of pretension" (403). A third appendix, "Some Historical Notes," gives us "Monarchs," "Historical Events (Chronological Order)" and "Places Where Kierkegaard Lived in Copenhagen."

The author's "Preface" provides helpful previews of the varied treasures in this chest. The economy and detail of the "Introduction" are impressive. A "theme" recurs (to be found also and not surprisingly in Julia Watkin, KIERKEGAARD [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1997]), that of tension and paradox: "the tension between the world-affirming Christianity of Judge William and the world-denying Christianity of the imitator of Christ" (3), "past poverty and present wealth" (4), "the rural religion of peasant pietism and the urban religiosity of bourgeois city life" (4). These are but examples. Of the latter, Watkin observes, "The Kierkegaard family attended the Moravian meetings and Mynster's services and so in a sense had a foot in both camps" (4). This could serve as a title for the "Introduction": "A Foot in Two Camps." I suppose a foot in two camps means two feet. Are these two feet planted in both camps, or might we think instead of a dialectical dance? The former is static and spatial; the latter is dynamic and temporal as well as spatial. Kierkegaard's thought takes time. The dialectic is in motion, and motion requires time. A static Kierkegaard is not Kierkegaard. Watkin writes, "Finally, one can see dialectic, if not paradox in the intellectual life of the Kierkegaard home. Like his father and elder brother Peter, Søren Kierkegaard had a talent for philosophical and theological discussion. He was exceptionally good at being able to put forth both sides [and often there are more sides than "both"] of an argument" (5): a dialectical tackling of paradoxes in time.

"The Dictionary" from A to Ø, from "ABSORB" to "ORSTED, HANS CHRISTIAN (1777-1851)," contains two-hundred eighty-two entries, though with many cross-references, e.g., "MEN AND WOMEN. See WOMEN AND MEN" (166). (There are cross references and...cross references.) These entries
are widely varied. The predictable: concepts, persons, subjects, places, societies, books of the authorship, events, schools, publishers, and publications. The not-so-predictable:

20th-century thinkers influenced by Kierkegaard (Barth, Bultmann, Heidegger, Jaspers, Sartre) are accorded extensive entries. Precursors give way to successors—no Plato, no Kant, no Hamann. Hegel is here, but the entry is "HEGEL, HEGELIANISM." In the same way, "SOCRATES" is a topic: "See INDIRECT COMMUNICATION; PAGANISM; RECOLLECTION; SIN" (240). Of the eighty-three biographical entries (not counting three cross-listings and the "20th-century five"), only four are not Kierkegaard's contemporaries or are without dates overlapping his: Hans Adolf Brorson, Ludvig Holberg, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, and Kirste Nielsen Statdler Rayen (Kierkegaard's father's first wife). Also less predictable—but illuminating and engaging—are explanations of now obscure references in the authorship, e.g., "BIRD KING," "HORSE, DRIVING ROUND THE," "NEXT HOUSE, TRY THE," "SNOWDROP AND WINTER FOOL." Reading through rather than going directly to what one is looking for (and most often one can find it) is an adventure and fun. One never knows what is coming next. Examples: one goes from "ANIMALS" to "ANXIETY" to "ART," from "GREAT DAY OF PRAYER" to "GREEKS, THE" to "GRIB FOREST, THE," from "MOVING DAY" to "MUSIC," to "MYSTER, JAKOB PETER (1775-1854)." These entries come with striking specificity from dates onward: "Kierkegaard was vaccinated when he was three and a half months old, on September 23, 1813" (44). "Mrs. Päges, the mother of Johanne Luise Heiberg [the bold means a separate entry], ran a refreshment tent at Bakken" (63). "Kierkegaard entered the Pastoral Seminary (as number 252) on November 17, 1840. On January 12, 1841, at noon, Kierkegaard took his turn in Holmen's Church at a trial sermon, choosing as his text Philippians 1, verses 19-25" (190). Libraries would be challenged to locate the information Library Watkin has collected and catalogued. The injunction, "You don't study Talmud; you swim in it," is apposite. Though this is not quite Talmud, dive in: start swimming.

If all of this is a bit staggering, one may be led to ask: Why did Professor Watkin not edit such a volume, inviting contributions from a motley legion of Kierkegaard students or, as she nicely puts it, from "the living world of ongoing, interacting Kierkegaard scholars and Kierkegaard lovers" (xiii)? She also raises the question indirectly, rivaling Kierkegaard for (ironic) understatement: "I have been very conscious that to write such a dictionary without collaborators is a considerable project for one person" (xiii). The obvious minus is loss of diverse voices and specialized expertise. The plus is continuity and control. Patterns are evident. The person entries begin with a brief biographical sketch (again, with often amazing detail) and then address the connection with Kierkegaard. The concept entries attend to the organic relation between one concept and a cluster of others. Of course there are interpretations which one could question: perhaps the recurring use of "as"—as in "Kierkegaard as Anti-Climacus" (61) and "Kierkegaard as Johannes Climacus" (72)—falls short of respecting the pseudonyms (see also 60, 64, 127-128, 178, 208, 212-213, 215, 252, 259, 263). But overall the presentations are judicious, balanced, and insightful.

This is not all. There is the one-hundred-plus-page "Bibliography" with an orienting "Introduction." Watkin declares that the "two main aims" of the bibliography "are to create satisfactory categories and to include only good material" (278). Both aims are problematic. The "categories" spill over into one another. The placement of a work "here and not there" often seems (almost) arbitrary. Many works could appear appropriately in several categories. Then there is "only good material." Watkin knows she is in trouble: "the difficulty...is to decide what counts as 'good'...this [to stick to what one finds relevant and interesting about Kierkegaard in relation to one's own field of research] can result in the 'bad' books becoming good through the quality of anonymer scholarly reaction provoked, an annoyance that can provoke the writing of insightful articles and books. So in this bibliography there are at least two books and some articles that I find appalling, but I included them in the hope that they will succeed in stimulating the reader in the way they stimulated me" (279). (She writes herself here into a near "mini-theodicy.")

Ten categories: "Texts of Kierkegaard in Danish" (this is divided into "Single Editions" and "Collected Works and Papers"); "Kierkegaard Texts in Translation" (again, "Single Editions" and "Collected Works and Papers"); "Introductory Works"; "Background Material" (these last two categories leak into one another); "Kierkegaard and Aesthetics"; "Kierkegaard and Ethics"; "Kierkegaard and Religious Perspectives" (these three categories follow, roughly, the "three spheres" or "stages"). The eighth category is "Kierkegaard and Other Thinkers." If a certain arbitrariness haunts the earlier bibliographical categories, "Other Thinkers" is likewise haunted. These "Other Thinkers" are Adler, Andersen, Anselm, Aristotle, Augustine, Balle, Barth, Brandes, Buber, Bultmann, Bunyan, Confucius, Danie, Derrida, Dinesen, Dostoevsky, Faulkner, Feuerbach, Fichte, Foucault, Freud, Goethe, Goldschmidt, Greene, Grundtvig, Hamann, Hawking, Hegel, Heidegger, Heine, Holberg, Husserl, Ibsen, Jaspers, Kant, Lessing, Levinas, Lewis, Jaspers, Lessing, Levinas, Lewis (C.S.), Lukács, Luther, Legen, Marcel, Martin, Marx, Mozart, Moller (P.L.), Moller (P.M.), Nietzsche, Pascal, Planting, Plato, Plotinus, Rahner, Santayana, Sartre, Schelling, Schlegel, Schleiermacher, Schopenhauer, Shakespeare, Socrates, Tillich, Trendelenburg, Unamuno, Weil, Wittgenstein. Missing precursors now make their appearance, together with Plato, Kant, Hamann. In several cases, one reference establishes an entry. References to Watkin's own writings secure the inclusion of Bunyan, Hawking, and Lewis. Category nine is extensive: "Other Studies." To be noted especially are the detailed contents regularly included. For instance, here we find Kierkegaard Studies: Yearbook of the Saren Kierkegaard Research Centre, Liber Academicae Kierkegaarensis: Yearbook of the Kierkegaard Academy, International Kierkegaard Commentary, and Kierkegaardiana: the articles included in each volume are given. Finally, "Bibliographical and Lexical Aids" is divided into "Printed Materials" and "Electronic Materials."

The book is attractive and clean, a voluminous volume of extraordinary range and depth, of invaluable historical specificities—a service and gift to us all. "No Kierkegaard library should be without one." Kierkegaard is surrounded; we are besieged. Tusind tak, Julia Watkin.
This is an excellent study of one of Kierkegaard's most important writings—*Works of Love*, his extended deliberations on the commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Ferreira is clearly well informed with respect to both Kierkegaard scholarship and relevant philosophical and theological discussions of love. She is meticulous in her attention to the details and nuances of Kierkegaard's text, and insightful in her consideration of various alternatives to and criticisms of Kierkegaard's treatment of love.

As one might expect, Ferreira's commentary is, in general, organized parallel to the divisions of Kierkegaard's text, and focuses on its major themes. But she also brings to the text a number of questions—many derived from criticisms that others have brought against *Works of Love*. And she reads Kierkegaard in relation to a richly diverse group of other thinkers—including critics such as Theodore Adorno and K.E. Lagstrup (to whom she responds strongly and convincingly), other philosophers such as Levinas and Derrida, and Luther. (Her comparisons of Kierkegaard and Levinas are especially interesting, and provide provocative insights into the positions of each.)

Among the questions that Ferreira addresses are: Does Kierkegaard's understanding of the command to love our neighbor preclude "preferential love"—erotic love and friendship? Does Kierkegaard's claim that God is the "middle term"—or even the "sole object"—in love mean that one is not called to love another human being directly? Does Kierkegaard regard love of neighbor as somehow requiring a lack of reciprocity, or as necessarily being met with hatred by the world? Does his account of the work of love in recollecting one who is dead as an instance of the most unselfish and faithful love justify Adorno's judgment that, according to this conception, to love is to "behave toward all men as if they were dead"? More generally, is neighbor love as Kierkegaard conceives it abstract, and blind to the concrete character of the neighbor who is to be loved? Does it involve lack of concern for the material needs of the poor? Does his claim that in loving we have an "infinite debt" to the other imply that the command to love our neighbor cannot really be fulfilled? And is Kierkegaard's ethical position a form of divine command ethics?

In addressing these questions, Ferreira is dealing with the fact that, as she notes, "many of Kierkegaard's claims, when presented in isolation from their context, provide grist for the mill of someone who wants to find fault with this ethic" (p. 55).

In response, a major aim of her work is to provide a charitable interpretation of Kierkegaard, and to defend him from such critics. But I suspect that it is not only those who want to fault Kierkegaard who find some of his claims problematic—that other sympathetic readers have shared my experience of struggling for acceptable interpretations of some statements made in *Works of Love*. Hence Ferreira's reading of the text is welcome help.

Her approach to these matters involves various strategies. She often relies on identifying the rhetorical context in which Kierkegaard makes apparently problematical statements; sometimes she shows that he presupposes things that, because he does not explicitly state them, critics have taken him to deny. For example, in choosing to devote one chapter of his work to mercifulness, rather than generosity, Kierkegaard is not—as Adorno charges—demonstrating indifference to temporal circumstances, including the material needs of the unfortunate; rather, Kierkegaard holds that generosity will follow true mercifulness. Other passages indicate that he is not opposed per se to works of "charity" in the usual sense, but that he is concerned that they not be performed unlovingly. Similarly, when Kierkegaard says that Christianity calls on us to be indifferent to worldly distinctions, he does not mean that one should be uncaring about the situation of the disadvantaged; in context, he is rather stressing how the command to love is "indifferent" in the sense of being addressed to all, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

In an especially thoughtful and interesting chapter entitled "Love's Vision," Ferreira explains that when Kierkegaard says that one who is to love may need to approach the neighbor "with closed eyes," he is not counseling indifference to the concrete other. Rather, his point is that we must not be kept from loving because of the apparently unlovable qualities of the other. As she notes, the "closed eyes" passage is balanced by his discussion of our duty "to love the one we see," which requires attention to the concrete and distinctive qualities of the other.

Moreover, Kierkegaard's claim that the work of love in recollecting one who is dead provides a proper criterion of love does not call us to treat the living as if they were dead. Rather, his point is that because loving one who is dead cannot be based on any sort of reciprocity, it is a "test case" of neighbor love, which is owing to the other even if the other fails to reciprocate.
Many more issues are addressed, and addressed well, in this book. I will refer to only a few other points, and will offer minor suggestions as to how Ferreira's treatments might be extended. I find her discussion of whether Kierkegaard's ethic is a divine command ethic to be particularly interesting. Such a position has been attributed to him, on the basis of the account of Abraham in Fear and Trembling—although, as Ferreira says, one should not automatically read into the later work what was said in the earlier, pseudonymous one. (I believe it is possible to read the account of Abraham as a figure for the sacrificial relativization of preferential love for the sake of love of neighbor, and to think that this was how Kierkegaard regarded his own sacrifice of Regine, which he associated with Abraham's sacrifice. But Ferreira does not in general attempt to show how Works of Love might provide resources for interpretation of Kierkegaard's earlier works—nor could she, without undermining the proper focus of her commentary.)

Her basic response to the question whether Kierkegaard's ethic is a simple divine command ethic is in part based on the very sound point that, according to Kierkegaard, human beings have a deep need for love—not only to be loved, but to love, so that the command to love one's neighbor, although indicating how our love is to be directed, is not related arbitrarily to those to whom it is addressed. Here I would suggest that Kierkegaard's account of how "commanded love" is characterized by "blessed independence," freedom from despair, and "enduring continuance" could be appealed to as additional indications of how obedience to such a command fulfills certain basic needs of the self, which would further qualify the sense in which his ethic is a divine command ethic. But Ferreira rightly recognizes that the fundamental basis of Kierkegaard's ethic of love of neighbor is the belief that we have, first of all, been loved by God.

As Ferreira says, it is "not easy to know how best to describe Kierkegaard's position" regarding the basic issue of the proper relation between nonpreferential love—love of neighbor—and preferential love—erotic love and friendship. Some passages can be read as suggesting that the former calls for abandoning the latter. Yet Kierkegaard says, "in erotic love and friendship, preserve love for the neighbor" (WL, p. 62; quoted by Ferreira on p. 45).

Ferreira has many insightful things to say on this topic. I would merely suggest that much of what Kierkegaard has in mind here can be summed up by saying that, according to his understanding of the love commandment, preferential love is to be relativized for the sake of nonpreferential love. That is, the former is to be made conditional on the latter, and in a double respect. First, although I should love my beloved or friend, I must not allow these relationships to prevent me from loving my neighbor; second, I should love my beloved or friend with the kind of love that is appropriate to these special relationships, but only on the condition that I first of all love them as neighbors—that is, that I not allow the claims that our special relationships entail to keep me from treating them as selves having their own worth, and a relation to God more basic than their relation to me.

One difficult topic for Ferreira—and it would, I think, be difficult for almost any sympathetic critic—is that in certain passages Kierkegaard suggests that hatred (from one who is loved, but has the wrong conception of love, and demands the fulfillment of his or her arbitrary wants) and persecution are necessarily to be expected by those who take up the task of loving their neighbor. Here the only recourse is to say, as she says, that "most of the time" Kierkegaard insists only that one must be willing to be hated (p. 75). His more extreme statements in this context can, I think, be seen as anticipating his later, highly polemical attitude toward "Christendom," and in particular his insistence that Bishop Mynster could not properly be considered a "Witness to the Truth" because he had not undergone martyrdom.

My comments can only hint at the richness of Ferreira's study. I find her interpretations of Kierkegaard's text to be very convincing. Perhaps others will not—but they do need to read and consider carefully what she has to say. Despite the unique and striking characteristics of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous writings, Works of Love may well be—if not for the specialist, at least for general readers who are concerned for the light that can be thrown on human life—his most enduringly valuable work. Ferreira has made a very valuable contribution to understanding it.
Steven Shakespeare’s book is a wonderful contribution to the ongoing debate between realist and anti-realist interpretations of SK. Part of a new series published by Ashgate devoted to transcending boundaries between philosophy and theology, it is a revision of the author’s dissertation written at Cambridge University. While the book’s dedication to Don Cupitt may leave some readers wary of another attempt at demythologizing SK, the book itself is a rigorous and vigorous analysis of the language that both shapes and is shaped by SK that ultimately leads to an “ethically realistic” vision of God in their own creative communications.

Shakespeare attempts to inhabit a space between what could be called a binary opposition between two opposing sides in SK interpretation. This is a courageous move on his part as it is likely to please no one and only call down the wrath or at least displeasure of some who feel passionate about SK and his writings. Nevertheless, the book does evidence some polemic against the “blunt theological” readings of SK and in so doing perhaps ends up aligning itself more with one side of the opposition, i.e. certain deconstructive readings of SK (although Shakespeare does criticize them as well.)

[The] book aims to explore Kierkegaard’s theological language throughout his authorship, published and unpublished, in light of his more general views on the nature and function of language. The investigation will be guided by the terms of a current debate within the philosophy of religion which has had a significant impact on Kierkegaard studies. (p. 1)

While perfectly legitimate as a point of departure in studying SK, this surely aligns the author with those who have or will be looking for mediating interpretations of him and his writings. However, to his great credit, Shakespeare hews to a fine line the distinctions both within this camp as well as the opposing side. He ploughs deeply in his investigations of SK and the secondary literature, and there are moments of brilliance illuminating the path left for his readers.

In more pedestrian fashion, the book is composed of eight chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the contemporary debate between realists and anti-realists as a context for reading SK today. SK is seen as one who troubles the waters of this debate, subverting both sides (which are really mirror images of each other in oppositional reflection).

He wants to wound philosophy from behind, to use its categories against its fundamental presuppositions, to make it tremble with the resonance of the otherness and inwardsness which it cannot comprehend even as it tries to incorporate them. (p. 24)

Chapter 2 is concerned with the modern context of the discussion of the nature of language. Here Shakespeare shows how other philosophers have interpreted the nature of language before SK. He draws on empiricist, romantic, and idealist traditions to elucidate the problems associated with this kind of analysis and exposes the crisis that still affects us today in this area.

Chapter 3 begins a close reading of SK’s texts in order to depict the problems and creative possibilities inherent in language itself. Language is itself afflicted and afflicts us with its own internal contradictions, opaqueness, and mediated condition that is and will remain epistemologically and ontologically a site of absence and presence.

Following chapters are devoted to exploring such topics as the seduction of language and its significant silences. Here Shakespeare nicely describes how language works in the aesthetic, ethical, and religious spheres of SK’s pseudonymous texts. There is an ongoing “crisis of representation” in each of these spheres that remains irresolvable from outside or within.

The thesis chapter of the book is chapter 6. The “ethical realism” of SK’s texts is seen from the beginning of the authorship in his critique of Romantic irony and it continues throughout. The upbuilding discourses (both early and late) indirectly critique and subvert any attempts to master the irony of the self and world, whether through subjective anti-realist expressions of the individual or systematic and rational (realistic) comprehension.

However, Kierkegaard’s texts still argue for a real relationship with God…. The reality of God is known indirectly through the transformation of
our own existence, a process in which we are wholly receptive and yet also wholly responsible and free. (pp. 26-27)

Part of that ethical realism can be seen and embodied in what Shakespeare calls "the analogy of communication." In an interesting transition he links SK with Thomas Aquinas' radical theology of analogy. Analogy is both a means of revelation and imitation. God's creative communication with humanity occurs by way of analogy as both gift and task. The response of faith will also be by way of analogy. Humans are called to imitate God's creative way (and are enabled to do so by God) in the manner that they (each one individually/singularly) choose to respond in faith. The task is that of witnessing to the otherness of God (at times "Wholly Other") in the passionate struggles of faith.

The self is intrinsically open to otherness which has established it. It cannot establish or account for itself, and it cannot control this alterity. (p. 27)

Shakespeare thus envisions discipleship as the way of kenosis. Although there is no direct correspondence between our language and God's "reality" there is an indirect analogy referring to God's communicative praxis by our self-emptying and passionate imitation of the God/Man, the sign of contradiction who reveals/conceals the possibilities of faith and offence.

If there is a place where Shakespeare slides into a binary opposition himself it occurs in the last chapter where he discusses recent narrative and deconstructive readings of SK. While critical of certain deconstructive interpretations of SK it is clear where his sympathies lie. His strong misreading of "Christian narrativism" is perhaps a necessary tactic to make space for his own highly nuanced linguistic and deconstructive hermeneutic. But, his construal of narrative theology as a "foundationalist fundamentalism" is a misstep that betrays his own (perhaps unconscious) need for a type of reading that appears to avoid all foundations. However, isn't this a slide toward the side of anti-realism, a metaphysical gesture of its own? Perhaps there is a foundation but not one we can see and know. Perhaps the possibility exists as that gift (albeit radically paradoxical) through which one can believe in a "self-emptying" way. And perhaps that gift is communicated in and through a kind of deconstructive and narrative grammar that enables the passionate struggle of faith which then witnesses in imitation of that grammar. Would not this witness be faithful to God and self in the contradictions of absence and presence in and of language itself?

Nevertheless, Shakespeare is to be commended for his own passionate quest to inhabit the space of difference between realists and anti-realists. His search to be faithful to SK and God is in evidence throughout although he is no worshipper of SK per se. May his book get the wide readership it so justly deserves.

Kierkegaard’s Metaphors
By Jamie Lorentzen
Macon, Georgia, Mercer University Press, 2001, pp. xxi + 201, $39.96

Reviewed by
Rev. Donald H. Fox

All of us who claim Kierkegaard as our master and read him religiously place immense value on his writings. We call them classics and we approach them with a uniquely modern combination of reverence and curiosity. We are decidedly not like the famous Rabbi of Ostrowtzer, Poland who, "Because he enjoyed music, he chose not to listen to it."¹

Jamie Lorentzen clearly and significantly enjoys Kierkegaard. And he listens (and reads) well. In Kierkegaard's Metaphors, he has given himself the imposing assignment of explaining how and why Kierkegaard was such a powerful writer.

As the title of the book openly declares, it is in the metaphors, the "more than 10,000 in [Kierkegaard’s] published and unpublished writings and his journals and papers" (p. 5) that Jamie Lorentzen finds the answer to his assignment.

Toward the end of his careful and impressive study of this central element in Kierkegaard’s creative style as a writer, Jamie Lorentzen reaches a kind of epiphany, a
moment of revelation in which Kierkegaard's
multiplicious world is seen as a single whole; and he
writes, "Metaphor appropriated religiously becomes a
signpost of grace by illuminating the possibility of faith
and redemption..." (p. 166).

The chapters leading up to this clarifying observation
cover well-known areas of Kierkegaardian scholarship
that Jamie Lorentzen's theme of metaphor helps to
elucidate in new ways. Chapter One deals with the
classic subject of Kierkegaard's choice of and penchant
for indirect communication. Chapter Two delves into
metaphor's relation with the "esthetic stage of
existence." Chapter Three takes on Kierkegaard's use of
metaphor in the ethical stage where it helps "to achieve
a balanced relationship between the 'possible' self and
the 'actual' self of an individual."

The book concludes with a chapter on Kierkegaard's
religious stage which both validates metaphor as "a
signpost of grace," and then, movingly and forcefully,
presents a valediction to metaphor. For at the end, the
end of life and of work, metaphor must be revoked,
though it is never fully transcended.

The book provides many intellectually and anecdotally
delightful insights along the way. The introduction begins
with a story/metaphor from the author's undergraduate
years at St. Olaf College in the late 1970s and early
1980s. He describes how - in the fleeting perfect
weather of the Midwestern fall and spring, he would set
up his old Royal manual typewriter on a dormitory desk
outside in a courtyard of the hill-top campus. And there,
under the sheltering shadow of the wings of Holland Hall
(housing the Philosophy Dept.) and of Rolvaag Library
(which housed the English Dept.), he would hammer out
essays that pleased neither! "Too philosophical" for the
English pros and "too literary" for the Philosophy pros.

There was of course one exception: Prof. Howard Hong
of the Philosophy Dept. Jamie Lorentzen dedicates his
book, "with gratitude," to Howard and Edna Hong. The
union of philosophy and poetry represented by the
Hongs provides in itself a controlling metaphor for this
book, "with gratitude," to Howard and Edna Hong. The
introduction begins with a quote from Kierkegaard that
writes, "Metaphor appropriated religiously becomes a
signpost of grace by illuminating the possibility of faith
and redemption..." (p. 166).

In the course of his book, Jamie Lorentzen also handles
such large thought projects as "the secularization of the
Christian language" (p. 57); the "less-than-earnest
stewards of Christendom" who are crystallized in Pastor
Adler (pp. 92-95); and theories of metaphor by Janet
Soskice (p. 88), by T.S. Eliot (p. 97), and others.

One passage from the first chapter provides the gist, or
grounds (the "ici gît" for French majors) of the book.
Jamie Lorentzen is describing the inner experience or
passion which for Kierkegaard makes all the difference,
and he writes (with some Kierkegaardian word-play of
his own).

"The role of the imagination in general and metaphor in
particular not only conspire largely to inspire and
appropriate such passion, but also to possess
credentials appropriate for the task: the metaphoric
offers existential situations of contemporaneity toward
which Kierkegaard points. The metaphoric is composed
of elements of ambiguity, opposition, contradiction, and
tension that seek natural conclusion in personal and
existential choice, and eitheror between the wonder of
belief and the doubt of offense." (p. 65)

Jamie Lorentzen's study of Kierkegaard's Metaphors is,
perhaps not surprisingly, also a work that explores the
philosophy of religious speech and speaking. The final
chapter begins with a quote from Kierkegaard that
should be on or above every pastor's desk: "All human
speech, even the divine speech of Holy Scripture, about
the spiritual is essentially metaphoric speech" (p. 121
and Works of Love, p. 209). This one sentence, and the
long paragraph that follows, helps to clear so much of
the on-going battleground between liberals and
conservatives or fundamentalists. The fundamentalists
continue to take the Bible - and its metaphors - literally,
while the liberals continue to side-step any direct
personal application of the Bible by leaving its meaning
up to discussion.

A section of the last chapter focuses on one of
Kierkegaard's masterful discourses on "The Woman who
was a Sinner." (Luke 7:36-50) This discourse (the first of
three, in Without Authority, pp. 137-144) represents the
culmination of the metaphorical. For in the actual woman
who silently sits at the feet of Jesus and ministers to him while he speaks about reciprocity and forgiveness, using her as a living example - metaphor recedes or disappears. Kierkegaard, like Prospero in The Tempest, "drowns his book" (p. 52) and one's own actual existence provides any and all the metaphors we need. And we have life not literature.

In his analysis of this discourse, which offers a kind of farewell to literature, Jamie Lorentzen comes to a positive relationship with Kierkegaard's immense authorship that one pioneering English Kierkegaardian expressed quite negatively in one moment of candor.

This was Alexander Dru, the translator of the 1938 Oxford University Press selection of the Journals, and of Oxford's 1940 edition of "The Present Age," and "The Difference Between a Genius and an Apostle." In late 1939 he wrote a scathing estimation of Kierkegaard as an author in a personal letter to Walter Lowrie. Dru never suspected that Dr. Lowrie would quote part of his letter in the Preface to his 1944 translation of The Concept of Dread (Anxiety) – a preface that remained in print for over 30 years!

Dru wrote:

"As for Kierkegaard, it is question of whether I dislike you or myself more while reading [proofs of our translations]. And I usually settle it by answering the more than either I loath Kierkegaard. One of these days, I am going to say what I think of his vile, slovenly style, his clumsy, unnecessary terminology."

Jamie Lorentzen concludes with a discussion of spoken, not written metaphor of Kierkegaard that is also an example of gallows's humor. This is the well-known anecdote of his saying, after he had fallen into a heap at a party shortly before his final collapse in October 1855, "Oh, leave it – let the maid – sweep it up – in the morning."

Jamie Lorentzen honors this remark by observing, "This utterance is a metaphor of his ideal literary persona. What is more significant is that it is a metaphor of his ultimate, humbling prayer to and worship of God: to become nothing before God." (p. 172)

I'm grateful for these concluding words to Jamie Lorentzen's book. When I was growing up in Princeton, New Jersey, the garbage was picked up twice a week. Only one pickup, however, including bottles and cans. That pickup was called "Everything Goes Trash." My father, the late Rev. Dr. Frederic Fox, once humorously announced that when he died, he wanted to be put out "on everything goes trash night."

Thanks then to Jamie Lorentzen for making so many connections between Kierkegaard and the life of the mind, the republic of letters, and our own intimate worlds – our own Montaignesque backyards that belong solely to us.


2 The Concept of Dread, Princeton University Press, 1944, p. viii. This same preface has raised the ire of several later scholars who were not amused by Lowrie's infinitely interested subjective thinking.