

Søren Kierkegaard Newsletter



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Editor: Gordon D. Marino
Spanish Editor: Begonya Saez Tajafuerce

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Hong Kierkegaard Library website has been updated.
All issues of the *Søren Kierkegaard Newsletter* from 1978 to the present
are now available in PDF form through our website:
<http://www.stolaf.edu/collections/kierkegaard>.

We will now be posting each new issue of the *Newsletter* online instead of mailing issues due to rising postal and printing rates. If you wish to have an electronic version of future issues mailed to your email address, please complete the following and send to Cleo Granneman at grannema@stolaf.edu:

Name

Email Address

If you wish to temporarily continue receiving a printed copy mailed through the post office to your home address, please let us know by completing the following form:

Name: _____			
Address: _____			
City: _____	State: _____	Postal Code: _____	
Country: _____	Email: _____		
_____ Please continue to send me future newsletters by mail.			

We are willing to continue to send issues to you by mail for a limited period of time but hope to move the Newsletter to an electronic format on a permanent basis. Issues will continue to be posted on our website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

Gordon Marino's Return

Professor Marino returned to his position on September 1 after his year away from the Library on sabbatical leave and a leave-of-absence. He can be contacted at the Library at marino@stolaf.edu or 507 -786 -3846.

Friends of the Kierkegaard Library – Fall 2007

The Friends held their fall gathering on Founders' Day at St. Olaf College, November 6, 2007. The group met at 3:30 for a business meeting followed by dinner in the Heritage Room at 5 PM. and the 2nd Julia Watkin Memorial Kierkegaard Lecture at 7:15 PM. About 30 Friends gathered for this event.

2nd Julia Watkin Memorial Kierkegaard Lecture

The Hong Kierkegaard Library sponsored a lecture again this fall in memory of the late Julia Watkin. C. Stephen Evans, University Professor of Philosophy and Humanities at Baylor University, presented the lecture this year entitled "Kierkegaard: Father of Existentialism or Critic of Existentialism?" The lecture was held in Trollhaugen, Buntrock Commons on November 6. Howard Hong joined the group. Professor Evans is a former member of the Philosophy Department faculty at St. Olaf College and served as the first Curator of the Hong Kierkegaard Library from 1984-1994.

Kierkegaard Scholar Symposium: "Kierkegaard and Death", December 7-8, 2007

The Kierkegaard Library sponsored this workshop organized by scholars Adam Buben and Patrick Stokes. Scholars presenting included: Jeremy Allen, Eric Berg, Adam Buben, George Connell, Daniel Liechty, Laura Llevadot Pascual, Jack Mulder, Patrick Stokes, and Jonathan Weidenbaum.

Donors to the Kierkegaard Library since April 2007

Books, articles, and financial gifts were given to the Library by the following individuals: Karel Eisses, Sinead Ladegaard Knox, Gabriel Merigala, Poul Houe, Rob Puchniak, Laura Llevadot Pascual, Shin Fujieda, Luis Guerrero Martinez, Roman Kralik, Patrick Stokes, Donald Fox, Brian O'Connor, Gene Skibbe, Joseph Brown, Andrew Burgess, John Varughese, Jong Hwan Hwang, Christopher Nelson, Jon Stewart, Robert Jorgensen, and Hans Aaen.

Summer Fellowship Program, 2007

The following scholars participated in the program between May and September: Jeremy Allen, Antony Aumann, Adam Buben, Mike Cantrell, Paul Carron, Samuel Chandran, David Coe, Timothy Dalrymple, Aaron Fehir, Ian Harris, Nathan Hedman, Eleanor Helms, Andrew Henscheid, Jong Hwan Hwang, Keith Hyde, Varughese John, Tony Kim, Roman Kralik, Steven Leach, Leonardo Lisi, Steven Martz, Luke McPhee, Theophilus Sunday Meabe, Tom Millay, Shannon Nason, Christopher Nelson, Petre Vasile (Father Pimen), Alejandro Vazquez, Mark Wells, and Jonathan Wood.

Summer Fellowship Program, 2008

If you are interested to apply as a Summer Fellow for 2008, please send before March 1 a *Curriculum Vitae*, proposal for research in the Library, and 2 recommendations to Gordon Marino, Hong Kierkegaard Library, St. Olaf College, 1510 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield, MN 55057 or electronic documents to marino@stolaf.edu. If you need early acceptance to make your plans, this may be possible.

Kierkegaard House Foundation Fellows

Scholars here during the past 6 months have been Søren Landkildehus and Patrick Stokes. Simon Podmore and Tamara Marks will arrive in January. Further details are available upon request from Gordon Marino.

Danish Course, Summer 2007

Our course for scholars beginning their study of Danish in order to read Kierkegaard texts in the original language was again taught by Sinead Ladegaard Knox from Copenhagen. Participants included: Adam Buben, Jeremy Allen, Paul Carron, Mike Cantrell, David Coe, Timothy Dalrymple, Adam Fehir, Nathan Hedman, Eleanor Helms, Andrew Henscheid, Luke McPhee, and Tom Millay.

Danish Course, Summer 2008

The course will again take place in July with Sinead Knox teaching. Please contact Cynthia Lund as soon as possible at lundc@stolaf.edu if you wish to enroll in the course for this summer. Cost of the course is \$1200 with a \$300 deposit due by March 1 to hold your place in the course. If we have 10 students with interest, we can hold the course for sure.

Visiting Scholars Program 2007-8, 2008-9

Kierkegaard scholars are invited to visit the Library to do their own research at any time when the Library is open during the year. Possible support and housing vary depending on the circumstances of individual scholars and the dates involved. Scholars with support from their own institutions or grant-funded projects are also encouraged and welcome. For further information, please contact:

Cynthia Lund
Kierkegaard Library
St. Olaf College
1510 St. Olaf Avenue
Northfield, MN 55057

OTHER NEWS

Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks – submitted by Bruce Kirmmse

KJN vol. 2 will be in print and bound by Christmas, so it should be available for purchase in January. KJN vol. 3 is well along, and we expect it to be out a year after vol. 2.

Søren Kierkegaard Society (U.S.A.)

The purpose of the SKS is to encourage study and discussion of the thought of Søren Kierkegaard in all its dimensions and ramifications, including its sources and influences. Affiliated with both the AAR and the APA, the Society alternates its annual business meeting between AAR and APA conventions. The Society encourages scholarship on Kierkegaard at the national and regional meetings of the AAR and APA through an Executive Committee which includes members of both organizations. For more information see http://libnt.4.lib.tcu.edu.staff.bellinger.SK_Society.htm.

Søren Kierkegaard Society (U.S.A.) and the APA

The Society currently plans to hold sessions at 2 out of 3 APA meetings each academic year. During the 07-08 academic year, the Society will run sessions at the Eastern APA in Washington, D.C. and the Pacific APA in San Francisco. During the '07 and '08 academic year, sessions will run concurrently with the Eastern APA and the Central APA. This rotation should continue every other year. For further information on deadlines for paper submissions etc. please use the following website posted by John Davenport. www.fordham.edu/philosophy/department/skconferences.htm.

**Søren Kierkegaard Society Dinner and Presentation – submitted by Andrew Burgess
AAR Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group – San Diego, November 16-21, 2007**

This year the AAR convention had three Kierkegaard sessions, the first two on Saturday—one a panel about Kierkegaard in dialogue with non-Christian religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religions, Japanese religions, Judaism, and Islam), and the other about resources in Kierkegaard's works for approaching the issue of religious pluralism (drawing on such concepts as the universally religious, absolute difference, mysticism, suffering, and revelation). Then on Saturday the Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group co-sponsored together with the AAR Schleiermacher Group a short session on the relationship between Kierkegaard and Schleiermacher, drawing upon the recent work by Richard Crouter (Carleton College). The information in the AAR Program Book about the first Saturday session is incomplete. You can access the complete, updated schedule on our web site with the AAR, if you are a current member of the AAR, at (http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting/Program_Units/PUCS/Website/main.asp?PUNum=AARP U033), or, whether or not you hold a membership in the AAR, you can access a fuller description of the events than that at the KRC's own site (<http://home.uchicago.edu/~ddp/aarkrc.html>).

One part of the program each year especially to be recommended is the Søren Kierkegaard Society Banquet. This year no reservations were required. You were also be able to obtain there a copy of the printed versions of this year's Saturday sessions, called "Kierkegaard and Religious Pluralism." The cost for that book is \$20, or \$15 if you are a member of the Søren Kierkegaard Society. The Society is the umbrella organization that coordinates activities of the AAR and APA Kierkegaard units. Membership in the Society costs \$20 (\$10) per year. The Society's secretary-treasurer, David Kangas, will be happy to enroll you in the Society.

Lastly, even if you were not able to attend the AAR this year, the steering committee for the KRC and the officers of the SK Society would like very much to learn about your interests in Kierkegaard research, and particularly about the sorts of topics you wish to see represented in future Kierkegaard convention sessions. If you have ideas along those lines, please email them to the SK Society president, Lee Barrett (lbarrett@lancasterseminary.edu) or to one of the co-chairs of the KRC, Marilyn Piety (mgpiety@drexell.edu) or myself (aburgess@unm.edu).

Looking forward to seeing you at another future meeting,

Kierkegaard Society Group Meeting at the Central APA

April 18-21, 2008. Palmer House Hilton Hotel, Chicago, IL.

Session Title: "Kierkegaard and German Idealism"

Chair: Dan Johnson (Baylor University)

Presenters:

1. *Keynote Address* : Ulrich Knappe (University of Copenhagen): "To Kant and Kierkegaard's Conceptions of Theoretical Truth."
2. Antony Aumann (Indiana University), "Kierkegaard's Case for the Irrelevance of Philosophy"
3. Shannon Nason (Purdue University), "Contradiction, Opposition, and Mediation in Hegel and Kierkegaard"
4. Michael Matthis (Lamar University), "Autonomy and Heteronomy: Kant and Kierkegaard and Freedom"

Comments: Noel Adams (Marquette University)

CALL FOR PAPERS – APA 2008 Meetings

Søren Kierkegaard Society Meeting at the Eastern APA

Date: December 27-30, 2008, Philadelphia , PA. - Marriott Hotel (the session is usually scheduled on the evening of 28th or 29th)

Session Theme: *C. Stephen Evans and Kierkegaard: Faith, Love, and Divine Commands*

Reading time: 20-25 minutes max.

Respondent: C. Stephen Evans

Deadline for submission: April 30, 2008. Three open slots.

[Note: any paper addressing themes in Kierkegaard and Evans can be considered; submissions are not limited to essays specifically reviewing Evans's work alone or by itself].

Søren Kierkegaard Society Meeting at the Pacific APA

Date: Late March or early April, 2009 (city to be announced, but probably LA).

Session Theme: *Kierkegaard, Free Will, and Autonomy*

Reading time: 20-25 minutes max.

Deadline for submission: June 15, 2008. Three open slots.

Any submission broadly related to these topics will be considered. Scholars, including graduate students, who have not spoken recently at an APA group meeting of the SK Society are especially encouraged to submit. No more than *one* submission per person, please.

Please submit papers in Word or Wordperfect electronic form (as an email attachment) to John Davenport, Department of Philosophy, Fordham University, Davenport@Fordham.edu. If the Kierkegaard Society has a new APA representative by that time, this will be announced and the details will be available on the APA Conference Session Webpage, but Davenport can also pass submissions along as needed. (As long as Davenport remains the APA representative, submissions from anyone connected with Fordham will be evaluated by a separate referee).

Please also circulate this Call for Papers to any relevant parties.

From Robert L. Perkins, Editor, International Kierkegaard Commentary

CALL FOR PAPERS

International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'The Moment' and Late Writings

Due date: 1 September 2008

Prospective authors should write the editor to discuss their intention to contribute to this volume.

LAST CALL FOR PAPERS

(and tentative due date)

International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'The Point of View' (9/09)

VOLUMES IN PROCESS

International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Christian Discourses' and 'The Crisis and A Crisis in the Life of an Actress' Page proofs are being read.

International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'The Book on Adler'

The Advisory Board is reading the submissions.

MOST RECENTLY PUBLISHED VOLUME

International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Without Authority' (2007)

Submissions that do not adhere to the conventions and sigla will be returned unread.

All essays are submitted to the Advisory Board for evaluation; no papers are commissioned.

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED VOLUMES (and year of publication)

I. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Early Polemical Writings' (1999)

II. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'The Concept of Irony' (2001)

III. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Either/Or, Part I' (1995)

IV. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Either/Or, Part II' (1995)

V. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses' 2003

VI. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Fear and Trembling' and 'Repetition' (1993)

VII. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Philosophical Fragments' and 'Johannes Climacus' (1994)

VIII. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'The Concept of Anxiety' (1985)

IX. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Prefaces' and 'Writing Sampler'

2006

X. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions' 2006

XI. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Stages on Life's Way' ((2000)

XII. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Concluding Unscientific Postscript' (1997)

XIII. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'The Corsair Affair' (1990)

XIV. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Two Ages' (1984)

XV. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits' (2005)

XVI. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Works of Love' (1999)

XVIII. International Kierkegaard Commentary: Without Authority (2007)

XIX. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'The Sickness unto Death' (1987)

XX. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'Practice in Christianity' (2004)

XXI. International Kierkegaard Commentary: 'For Self-Examination' and 'Judge for Yourself!' (2002)

These volumes can be ordered directly from Mercer University Press: mupressorders@mercer.edu. Phone: 478-301-2880. European scholars may order from: Fowler Wright Books, Lt., Gracewing House, 2 Southern Avenue, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 OQF, United Kingdom.

Contributors to any volume can receive 30% discount on all volumes on the Kierkegaard page of the Mercer University Press Catalogue.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONVENTIONS

Submissions that do not adhere to the enclosed conventions and sigla will be returned unread.

Series limited to new, unpublished essays

International Kierkegaard Commentary is devoted to the FIRST publication of significant new studies of Kierkegaard's thought, its sources, its influence, and comparative studies of Kierkegaard and other thinkers.

Permission to reprint. If you wish to reprint your article after its publication in International Kierkegaard Commentary, you may do so with permission from the editor and the press, but the reprint must clearly acknowledge the original publication in IKC. We request a two-year lapse between the publication in IKC and reprinting. As a matter of courtesy, any thoughts you have about reprinting an article should be discussed with the editor prior to its submission.

Expectation about secondary literature. International Kierkegaard Commentary is interested in well-researched analytical, critical, historical, comparative articles based primarily on “Kierkegaard's Writings” but, they should also be enriched by the work of one’s colleagues published in such standard series as Kierkegaardiana, Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook, Kierkegaard Studies, Monograph Series, International Kierkegaard Commentary, other journals, and monographs. References to important secondary literature, at least in one’s native tongue, are expected.

Soren Kierkegaard Research Center, Copenhagen - submitted by Niels Jørgen Cappelorn

Volume 24 and volume K24 of *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*, containing the Journals NB21-NB25 (from late 1850 to mid 1852), will come out by the end of November this year. Vol. K24 contains critical accounts of the manuscripts and more than 3,000 explanatory notes.

Volume 12 and volume K12 of *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* containing *Practice in Christianity* (1850) and *One Upbuilding Discourse* (1850) as well as *Two Discourses at Communion on Fridays* (1851), are planned to be published in May 2008.

News of the Danish Academy, 2007

Jon Stewart from the Søren Kierkegaard Research Center at the University of Copenhagen has been inducted into the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters. For further information about the Academy see their website at <http://royalacademy.net.dynamicweb.dk/>

News from Argentina – submitted by Maria José Binetti

Kierkegaardian advances in the Hispanic World

The last three months have brought excellent news for Hispanic Kierkegaardians. Two significant projects, long expected, have become reality through by the initiative and direction of José García Martín. The first one is the creation of the *Hispanic Kierkegaard Society (Sociedad Hispánica de Amigos de Kierkegaard)*, formed by Kierkegaardians from Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Chile. The main purpose of the Society is to promote and spread the work and thought of Kierkegaard, through cultural and academic events like seminars, lectures and conferences. It will include its own Library and support Kierkegaardian research by scholarships and materials. Furthermore, the Society plans to guide the translation of Kierkegaard into Spanish, in order to gather specialized resources. The second project is the creation of a *Kierkegaardian Journal (La mirada kierkegaardiana)*, whose first number is planned for January 2008. The Journal will include articles, reviews and news will be a valuable resource for connecting Kierkegaardian studies and scholars, especially in the Hispanic world.

For more information to contact:

<http://www.hiin-enkelte.info/index2.html> josegm@hiin-enkelte.info

Argentinian Kierkegaard Conference - 2008

The *Third Kierkegaardian Conference* organized by the *Argentinian Kierkegaard Library* was celebrated in Buenos Aires October 19th-20th under the title “Being Woman, Being Man; Being the One and the Other”, the Conference was focused on questions of gender and alterity. Papers tried to approach these subjects from a

Kierkegaardian perspective, including philosophical, psychological and political aspects. Kierkegaardian categories like individual, freedom, possibility, existence and inwardness were connected with the cause of women and the others.

New Bibliography

Søren Kierkegaard, *Johannes Climacus o el dudar de todas las cosas*, trans. Patricia C. Dip, Gorla, Buenos Aires 2007, 78 pp., ISBN: 987-22081-7-2.

SOBRESKI (Brazilian Kierkegaard Society)

The 7th meeting of the Society took place November 12-14, 2007 at Universidade Federal de Sergipe) sponsored by the Departamento de Filosofia and the Grupo de Pesquisa em Ciências Religião . A *Festschrift* in honor of Alvaro Valls was presented to him during this gathering.

Individual Presentations included the following:

Patricia Dip, Marcio Gimenes de Paula , and Franklin Roosevelt Martins de Castro on the subject of “**Kierkegaard, leitor do ceticismo e de Descartes**” ;

Jorge Miranda de Almeida, Maria José Binetti, and Deyve Redison Melo dos Santos on the subject of “**Kierkegaard como educador e seu diálogo com a tradição hegeliana**”;

Jasson da Silva Martins, Jonas Roos, and Alvaro Luiz Monetegro Valls on the subject “ **Kierkegaard e o Conceito Angústia**;

Daniel Arruda Nascimento, Marília Murta, and Celso Cruz on the subject of “**Kierkegaard, subjetividade e literatura**”;

Josilene Simões Carvalho Bezerra, Alex Gonçalves Muniz, and Bento Itamar Borges on the subject of “**Ironia em Kierkegaard e em Lichtenberg**”;

Ana Cecilia Barbosa, Edouardo Gomes de Siqueira, Cícero Cunha Bezerra, and Romero Venâncio on the subject of “**Kierkegaard e seu diálogo com a tradição filosófica e com o cinema**”.

José Garcia Martin presented “**La crítica a la prensa y a la docência em los Diarios de S.A. Kierkegaard**”.

Alvaro Luiz Montenegro Valls presented “**Kierkegaard e Nietzsche: a busca pela cristicidade**”.

Silvia Saviano Sampaio presented “**Kierkegaard e Paul Auster: aproximações**”

Opening welcome and remarks were given by Jorge Miranda de Almeida (presidente de SOBRESKI), Marcos Antonio da Silva (chefe em exercício de departamento de Filosofia de UFS) and Marcio Gimenes de Paula (Grupo de Pesquisa em Ciências da Religião de UFS).

News from Slovakia – submitted by Roman Kralik

The Kierkegaard Collection in Slovakia

Inspired by my studies at the Hong Kierkegaard Library in the United States in 2004, I decided to found a collection of books in Slovakia focusing on the life and work of Søren Kierkegaard. The main reason for doing so was the lack of relevant primary and secondary literature on Kierkegaard in the local libraries, as well as the increasing interest in Kierkegaard's thought in Slovakia.

The Kierkegaard Collection was from its very beginning founded as a part of the Šal'a Public Library. It was primarily designed for university students and all those interested in a deeper study of philosophy or theology. Its aim has been to inform the general public about the work and ideas of the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, as well as about the broader context of Danish history. Another aim was to provide students with sufficient access to scientific literature in order to assist them with their diploma papers and dissertations.

The Kierkegaard Collection includes Kierkegaard's own works, as well as a number of monographs, studies and translations of Kierkegaard in Danish, English, Czech and Slovak. The Collection was established in 2005 thanks to the support of several renowned researchers, such as Marie Mikulová Thulstrup, Julia Watkin, Robert Perkins, Junius Stenseth, C. Stephen Evans, Abraham Khan, Andrew Burgess and the Hong Kierkegaard Library. The Collection has benefited greatly also from the support of the Royal Danish Embassy in Bratislava. We remain grateful to all our supporters.

The Kierkegaard Society in Slovakia

The Kierkegaard Society in Slovakia was officially founded in February 2007. The founding members of the Society comprised Dr. Roman Králik (chairperson), Dr. Peter Šajda (vice-chairperson) and Prof. Dr. Lukáč Ján Veverka, CSc.

The aim of the Society is to promote philosophical interest in Kierkegaard in Slovakia and Central Europe, to organize conferences, seminars and lectures and produce publications on Kierkegaard. Yet another aim is to create a centre for local researchers who would closely co-operate with the researchers abroad and thus help to broaden knowledge of Kierkegaard in Slovakia and in the region of Central Europe.

ŠALA: Kierkegaard in the Heart of Europe

The official seat of the Kierkegaard Society in Slovakia and of the Kierkegaard Collection is Šal'a. The town of Šal'a lies in the northern part of the Danubian Lowlands, on both banks of the river Váh, and is 70 km far from Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic. Šal'a has a rich and interesting history: In the early 11th century, at the beginning of the literary history of the Hungarian Kingdom, the "Váh territory" was mentioned as one of the early centres of Christian culture.

The history of the region was full of changes and events in the time following the Middle Ages. At the turn of 16th and 17th centuries, Šal'a was an important bastion of re-Catholicization. It also played an important role in the defense system against the Turks, in the time of Francis II, in Rákóczi's uprising against the Habsburgs at the beginning of the 18th century, as well as in the second half of the 19th century. The history provides us with evidence that its inhabitants were able to pull through, to face major challenges and difficulties arising throughout the centuries. The town gradually became the centre of the region.

The small town of Šal'a shares certain features with another small town: Northfield in Minnesota, USA. They are similar not only with respect to population and size, but they also have something else in common – a passionate interest in the Danish philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard. It is for this reason that Šal'a has been visited by a number of outstanding personalities of scientific life recently. My special thanks belong to His Excellency, the Danish Ambassador in Slovakia, Jørgen Munk Rasmussen, who has been personally engaged in the events organized by the Kierkegaard Society in Slovakia and who has visited Šal'a four times already. I am

also thankful to my colleagues from Slovakia and abroad since they made it possible for my dream of Kierkegaard's town – Šal'a to come true.

Portuguese Translation – submitted by Elisabete M. de Sousa

The Philosophy Center at the University of Lisbon has launched a Translation Project of the works of Søren Kierkegaard published between 1838 and 1845, which will hopefully publish twelve titles through 2013. The translation team includes Professor José Miranda Justo (German Department, FLUL) and Elisabete M. de Sousa and the first works to be translated are *Repetition* and *Either/Or*.

Dutch Kierkegaard Scholarship – news submitted by Karel Eisses

Works of Love, **Wat de liefde doet**, translated by Lineki Buijs and Adries Visser was presented on Monday, November 26 at the Berg-Kerk in Amersfoort. The presenting paper was given by Professor Arjo Klamer, cultural economist at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam.

Thorough Kneading of Reflection

**By Ronald F. Marshall
Pastor of First Lutheran Church of West Seattle
Seattle, WA
deogloria@foxiinternet.com**

Kierkegaard, KW XIV:111
In Memoriam Edna H. Hong (1913-2007)

The board is barely dusted.
Patting and molding follow.
Then the pushing down – back and forth.
Some flour's in the air.
Clumps get folded in for rising.
Beautiful arcs take shape.
My elbows and wrists start aching.
I'm thinking too soon of the oven
and how it will taste.

Friends of the
Howard V. & Edna H.
Hong Kierkegaard
Library



Friends correspondence in care of Jamie Lorentzen, Chairperson, 29065 Wood Ave., Old Frontenac, MN 55026, Phone: 651/345-2908

CALL FOR PAPERS

Provisional Title:
The Final Crossroads:
A Festschrift for Howard and Edna Hong
Editor: Jamie Lorentzen
Due Date: July 1, 2008

Interested Press: Mercer University Press

Subject: Critical essays and/or personal memoirs from Kierkegaard and philosophy scholars, colleagues, translators, friends, and former students intimately acquainted with any or all of the following: the translations, teaching/writing/library activities, and personal lives of the Hong's.

Contents of the volume will be divided into two sections:
"The Hong's as Family, Friends and Colleagues" and
"The Hong's as Teachers, Translators and Scholars."

Submit two hardcopies of final draft of essay/memoir, plus a brief biography of its author, to:

Jamie Lorentzen, 29065 Wood Ave.,
Frontenac, Minnesota, 55026

Also submit essay/memoir in electronic form to:

jalorentzen.redwing.k12.mn.us

The Year of the Books of the Hong Kierkegaard Library

Søren Landkildehus, 2007
Kierkegaard House Foundation Fellow
Hong Kierkegaard Library, St. Olaf College

In the Danish church year, a long period follows Trinity Sunday. During summer until advent, churchgoers sit through one past another of the 27 Sundays after *Trinitatis* as it is known to the Danes. In the Roman Catholic Church that time of year would be called ordinary time – so one of our student library helpers informs me.

All these Sundays after *Trinitatis* denote a time of waiting, a time of taking care of business, a time of preparation and gathering the crops. Usually a harvest thanksgiving in late August or early September is the only feast punctuating the post *Trinitatis* period. But people have all sorts of business in need of a church feast. Many weddings take place in the hot summer days; the celebrations fuse into the warm evenings of July, when the northern sky refuses to turn off the light. Amongst the waves of barley and wheat, near the deep blue of the seas surrounding Denmark reflecting that special light, the western winds breeze through both kinds of sea one of which sorrowfully rocks towards ripening, the other scornfully teases coastlines while roaring “wa-ah-asH-WASH-Sh-shhh-away”. After *Trinitatis* is the time of ordinary life, for the unspectacular, and the simple wonder of human busy being.

In the year of the Hong Kierkegaard Library similar periods exist. But unlike the church year the library has its ordinary busy being in the winter time. Whereas the church year begins with advent, the library year begins with the Friends of the Hong Kierkegaard Library meeting on or near Kierkegaard’s birthday May 5th. That day marks the start of the festive season for the Kierkegaard library, or at least it announces the coming of summer months when each day has its own cares quite enough for a whole year. So not unlike Christmas yet still dissimilar the days grow short and the work grows heavy. Many scholars enter, read, and leave; many new ones arrive, learn Danish, and perhaps for life are smitten with the words – Danish words – of that heavy-minded thinker. The summertime of the library year is the extraordinary busy being of so many different people from so many very different countries. Some of them sit around the big table in the library workroom. The table has supported several theses, dissertations, and book manuscripts. Placed on it piles of books and papers bury the poor scholars working their way through the maze while humming happily away their laptops encipher and decipher the movements (thoughtful or otherwise) of fingers on keyboards. We all hope good things come of it!

In the ordinary time of the Kierkegaard Library, the table is no less occupied with books. Nevertheless, in ordinary time the books are acquisitions. New books, old books, common books, and very rare books lie for a while on that table waiting to be catalogued, repaired, numbered as a second or third copy, or still waiting because there is detective work to be done. Some of the rare books are difficult to catalogue, because of the rarity perhaps or because owners would provide their books with unique binding. Perhaps the book in hand consists of various loose papers beautifully collected into one volume, since there might be no colophon or title page.

Some time ago, Howard Hong bought a heap of books from the Solum estate. Arthur Solum had been a professor of mathematics at St. Olaf College and had inherited a great deal of the books that Howard secured for the library, so Howard tells me. One book is a wonderful mystery. The hardbound book is covered with green marbled paper and nice coffee coloured leather back. The gold lettering and ornamentation is wearing off but otherwise the book is in good state. Stretching to about 7 inches wide, about 2 ½ inches thick, and little more than 9 ½ inches high the book is not for the pocket. The lettering says *Artistiske Bilag*. [artistic exhibits]¹ and 1841-44. Opening the book odour only good old books can have meets the nostrils of curious readers. On what would have been the title page, we see written in pencil “ca 200 tavler” [approximately 200 plates]. Moving on, the first plate is a large sized lithography of Caroline Charlotte Mariane “Kronprindsesse til Danmark” [crown princess of Denmark].² She would have been married to and was later divorced from Frederick, who became the seventh king of that name. This first plate is on the verso printed on thick paper. The recto is in this case of a different type of paper, what we would call ‘glossy’, with a print that at places has traces of former splendour. The print is of a poem in honour of the Crown Princess. The greaseproof paper that separates the two pages

bears evidence of where most of the splendour of the ‘golden’ print has gone. The press that to this day prints the broadsheet *Berlingske Tidende*, Berlingske Bogtrykkeri, is the printing press of this poem, and it has been carefully glued to the other pages. Each plate of the book is on the same kind of paper as the lithography of the Crown Princess. But the rest of the plates are on the recto without any prints on the verso, and with each plate a piece of greaseproof paper translucently veils the lithography.

The lithographs depict the celebrities of the age. Hegel, Beethoven, Balzac, Brorson, Benjamin Franklin, Donizetti, Dickens, and de Vigny are some of the many recognizable figures among just as many which may have enjoyed only fame or infamy too briefly and too superficially to merit our attention. At the end of the book we find lithographs of various character – some humorous and some as tableaux – some with text attached spelling out a morale, citing a dialogue, or naming the tableau. We find on the plates only the year and the name of the publication in which they appeared; I shall come to that in a moment. The only other clue that binds them all together is that each plate displays the name of the institute producing them: “Em. Bærentzen & Co. Lith. Inst.”

According to *Salmonsens Store Illustrerede Konversationslexicon for Norden* [The Salmonsens’s Great Illustrated Encyclopaedia for the North] Emil Ditlev Bærentzen (1799-1868) was a Danish painter, a middling artist, whose massive output spoke of the superficiality of his skills. His institute produced lithography for many Danish journals and weeklies. Out of the about 2000 portraits he is alleged to have painted his most famous sitter was Johanne Luise Heiberg, the actress who moved Kierkegaard to write *The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress*. Salmonsens’s writer, Sigurd Müller,³ describes Bærentzen as an artist who had ‘the ability to satisfy the demands of the large audiences for mere outward likeness and smooth production; this fact combined with his cheap prices have to explain the great popularity he enjoyed in his time.’ So much for Bærentzen as a fine artist!

In addition to the mention of the production institute there is underneath each plate two names, either “Figaro” or “Ny Portefeuille”. Georg Carstensen (1812-1857) published *Portefeuillen, Figaro and Ny Portefeuille* which were Copenhagen weeklies.⁴ Carstensen achieved fame primarily by founding Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen. In Peter Tudvad’s *Kierkegaards København*, Carstensen is presented as the entrepreneur who provided the escapism Kierkegaard later attacked the church of imitating.⁵

In the library near the large table that sees so many different comings and goings we have two editions of *Dansk Biografisk Lexicon* [Danish Biographical Encyclopaedia]. The editions characterize Carstensen with some variation. Reading C. F. Bricka’s first edition from 1889,⁶ the staff writer Edgar Collin⁷ characterizes Carstensen as a typical entrepreneur with a flair for raising money for many projects without the necessary substance to keep the projects financially safe – from English literature figures such as Trollope’s Melmotte and Dickens’s Mr. Merdle spring to my mind.⁸

The 1934 edition is much more poetic. Carstensen had been born in Algiers. In light of this, what Carstensen initiated and achieved makes Robert Neiiendam⁹ writing under the new editor Povl Engelstoff¹⁰ note that Carstensen ‘had the temper and rashness of a Southerner.’ The rashness is fairly exhibited in his many travels around Europe and USA. Neiiendam remarks that Carstensen returned to Copenhagen as ‘a rootless cosmopolitan who combined French elegance with American smartness.’¹¹ His weeklies attracted with its ‘easy, motley, and largely translated material many readers especially amongst the ladies, but was criticised by the broadsheets.’

Part of the benefits of subscribing to his weeklies was grand firework displays which dazzled even Heiberg, with whom Carstensen had a tense rapport. Carstensen’s tendency to overextend himself is divined from the many professions he tried. Turning from law studies to soldiering, from extensive travels to become the “maître de plaisir” of Copenhagen as the founder of Tivoli and the weeklies he lost all due to financial incompetence. He was alienated from the Gardens. The war with Prussia came opportune and he went back to soldiering. After the war, he moved to New York designing the New York Crystal Palace; but because of a financial disaster, he gained no profit from it. He returned to Denmark and tried to set up a competing entertainment facility to Tivoli, Alhambra, only to die from pneumonia within two years after Kierkegaard’s death. The leading person of society and fashion in the North had his end before seeing that his latest project failed. As an aside, Neiiendam’s characterisation is less like Dickens’s Mr. Merdle in *Little Dorrit* and more like Richard Carstone in *Bleak House*. Thus Neiiendam concludes that Carstensen’s ‘exuberant imagination and

easily ignited enthusiasm gave him a semblance of geniality, but the looseness of character weakened all he did.' Without further comparison, Neiiendam's characterisation of Carstensen would fit the fictional character Carstone.

The collection of lithographs we have sets the time span as 1841-1844. This may be explained by way of looking at the running years of these two weeklies. *Figaro* ran 1841-1842 and *Ny Portefeuille* 1843-1844. On Danish press history, Salmonsens's writer, Emil Gigas, notes that 'the Europeanised Georg Carstensen's Copenhagen weeklies' were somewhat 'more "just for fun"'.¹² The weeklies carried a lot of lithographical material, though mostly in the form of portraits. However, *Portefeuillen* would carry fashion prints as well.

Kierkegaard knew these publications as he was asked by Carstensen to write against Heiberg in either *Figaro* or *Portefeuillen* for an enormous sum of money.¹³ Less directly involved, Kierkegaard complains in 1843 that his secretary has been publishing some of his ideas in the weeklies. 'It is by him, I think, that little article in *Portefeuillen* published just a few days before *Either-Or*.'¹⁴ Kierkegaard did not have particularly flattering words to use when describing Carstensen. In an article published in *Fædrelandet* in 1842, Kierkegaard says about Carstensen that he 'has become important, not in virtue of his hairdo; since we all admit that he has a head for that sort of thing, but through *his* head Professor Heiberg has become insignificant.'¹⁵ The translation of this passage is notoriously hard, but I think despite some of the confusions of the Danish original are aptly negotiated in George Pattison's *Kierkegaard, Religion and the Ninethenth-Century Crisis of Culture*. There Pattison writes that Kierkegaard shows his allegiance to Heiberg by noting that what distinguishes one over the other is the claim to fame: one for his hairdo, the other for intellectual capacity.¹⁶ The Hongs translate the passage differently and to the effect that Carstensen is known not for his hairdo but for his head, leading us to suspect that the real charge of Kierkegaard's critique is not the obvious distinction of outwardness, but one of pointing to the fact that what people in his contemporary day called ingenious or clever was exemplified by Carstensen. Now if only Heiberg would have put on some fireworks and some dancing then he might have been called clever too. Thirteen years later in 1855, Kierkegaard writes in *Øieblikket* no. 7:

This is the highly respected activity of the priest [arranging marriages, christenings and confirmations], a living which prevents human beings from entering the heavenly realm. As recompense the priest tries his best in terms of performances, not unlike the ones of the magnitude for which agent Carstensen has such great a talent, that is to say beauteous, wonderful celebrations with – just as a little wine tastes better in lemonade – a little bit of religiosity in it, something which Carstensen cannot deliver...yet perchance he could be ordained.¹⁷

It would be unfair to say that Kierkegaard was hostile to Carstensen. At least the entrepreneur does not pretend to be something he is not. Nevertheless, Carstensen epitomizes the comedown of significance and value in the Danish society. This levelling down of religious values may just be the sort of thing that gains momentum from the idea that some things are "just for fun". Once there is a connection between purely sacral ceremonies and strictly secular celebrations, little wonder if the spiritual values are forgotten.

Our book of lithographs from Carstensen's weeklies is then testament to this levelling down. A mediocre artist, who serviced the demand for superficiality, produced the material. The lithographs were published in magazines that were deemed unsophisticated, "just for fun", and glib. The largely foreign material would pique the sensibilities of anyone for whom there is no harm in "just for fun".

What a gem of a book! Because it offers insight to how the age of Kierkegaard was visually affected. Just as the illustrations to Dickens's novels by Phiz enable our visualisation of Victorian and Dickensian England, the lithographs of this book might deepen our visual understanding of Kierkegaard's age and thus his writings.

But the time is nearing, the extraordinary time of the Kierkegaard Library, when Minnesota heats up and welcomes the summer scholars. The book from the Solum collection will need to go to the cataloguer, and some designation has to be found for it. Is it likely that the various plates of *Artistiske Bilag*. were collected and bound privately? Or did the plates come as a set? In the first issue of *Figaro*, the frequency is spelled out: 'Every Sunday before noon an issue is published consisting of 1) 24 columns [...]; 2) one or two lithographs detached

printed on fine and thick vellum, and 3) a cover with 6 closely printed columns. Title page etc. is delivered at the end of every quarter.¹⁸

So perhaps the mystery is not so great after all. The book of lithographs from *Figaro* and *Ny Portefeuille* matches in binding to two sets of books already in the rare book room. One set of two volume has all the issues of *Ny Portefeuille*, whereas the other set comprises of one volume of *Figaro* issues, and one volume with all the covers from *Ny Portefeuille*, *Figaro*, and the supplementary issues of *Figaro*. Our book is just part of this series by which the owner has bound the various items according to how the various items arrived. If we look at the Kierkegaard Library's copy of *Portefeullen*, we find that this is whole. That is to say, the various numbers of *Portefeullen* have been collected and bound into one volume for each year without distilling the covers and the lithographs to other volumes. In the volumes of *Portefeullen*, we might get a grasp of what *Ny Portefeuille* and *Figaro* would have looked like.

In any case, along with its retreat into the rare books room, the other wonderful books used for this little adventure at the end of ordinary time will have to go back on the shelves. At least *Salmonsens Store Illustrerede Konversationslexicon for Norden*, *Dansk Biografisk Lexicon* – both editions, *Kierkegaard's København*, Kierkegaard's writings with papers and journals, and all the other flowers of this garden which is not “just for fun” will be there ready to bloom for the next researcher. Be careful when you open these books. In between pages, the Hongs have stuck little cuttings of old Danish broadsheet articles and obituaries. Perhaps you will find that recipe for Milky Herb Soup, or the little news story from 1946 about how French women find nylon stockings inelegant! Remember, though, that there are two sides to most things...

¹ “Bilag” can also be translated “additions” or “enclosed material”. All translations from Danish in this article are my own.

² Princes and princesses who are eligible to ascend the throne are named “til Danmark” whereas those who are not are referred to as “af Danmark”. The distinction does not matter in English where both cases are rendered “of Denmark”. Also note the quaint little addition of the “d” in “-prindsesse”, it is of course not enunciated, which is why it has eroded away by now.

³ Sigurd Müller (1844-1918) was a historian of literature and art. His textbooks and articles on these subjects were heavily used in schools and did much to form public opinion.

⁴ Incidentally, the press that printed Carstensen's weeklies was Berlingske Bogtrykkeri.

⁵ Cf. Peter Tudvad, *Kierkegaards København*, Copenhagen: Politikens Forlag, 2004, p. 299.

⁶ Bricka (1845-1903) was Keeper of the archives of the Realm, and the founding editor for *Dansk Biografisk Lexicon*. The first volume of this work came out in 1887.

⁷ Edgar Collin (1836-1906) was a journalist about whom Robert Neiiendam (cf. n.7 below) writes in the second edition of the *Lexicon*: ‘Collin was a good-natured, well-meaning man with a culture of lineage and a sense of justice, but without any personal style.’ Collin had travelled with H.C. Andersen, who gave Collin the original manuscript to *The Fairy Tale of My life*. This gesture of the infatuated Andersen towards Collin remained unrequited.

⁸ Respectively, *The Way We Live Now* and *Little Dorrit*.

⁹ Robert Neiiendam (1880-1966) was a leading literary critic. Readers of Kirmmse's *Encounters with Kierkegaard* will recall that at the end of the third chapter of that work Neiiendam recounts his interview with Mrs. Regine Schegel.

¹⁰ Povl Engelstoft (1876-1961) was an editor and historian.

¹¹ Neiiendam's article makes use of “smartness” – the introduction of an English loanword in 1930ies Denmark.

¹² Emil Gigas (1849-1931) was a prolific writer and librarian at the Royal Library. He was educated in Spanish studies, but was broadly proficient in music, art, and literary history. The notes are to be found in Salmonsens's vol. 4, p. 1042.

¹³ Cf. *Pap.* X 3 A 99 / *JP* 6:6624

¹⁴ Cf. *Pap.* IV A 141 / *JP* 5:5688 – curiously, this article was included in the first and second editions of *Samlede Værker*. It was removed from the third edition.

¹⁵ *SV* 3 vol.18, p.13

¹⁶ Pattison, *Kierkegaard, Religion and the Ninethenth-Century Crisis of Culture*, Cambridge University Press 2002, p.35.

¹⁷ *SV* 3 vol. 19, p. 238

¹⁸ Kierkegaard Library call number F471 .F5 1841-42.

LA CRÍTICA A LA CATEQUESIS Y A LA IGLESIA ESTABLECIDA O CRISTIANDAD EN EL *DIARIO* DE S. A. KIERKEGAARD

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Introducción

Pretendo en las siguientes líneas, y de manera breve, presentar un aspecto de la crítica a la sociedad en los *Diarios (Dagbøger)* de Søren A. Kierkegaard que se puede considerar la más importante: la crítica a los pastores y, en general, a la cristiandad o iglesia establecida en su país. Para ello desarrollaré los siguientes puntos:

1. Crítica al catequismo. Es decir, la crítica kierkegaardiana a la instrucción y enseñanza del cristianismo en su época.
2. Crítica a la iglesia establecida en su patria o cristiandad, en la que una vez puesto de manifiesto la insuficiencia del cristianismo de su época, se enumeran las condiciones que según Kierkegaard debe poseer el verdadero cristianismo. Dichas condiciones son las siguientes: a) la condición del espíritu; b) la condición del martirio; c) la condición de la imitación; d) la condición de la relación con Dios; y e) la condición de la singularidad.

Por último, expresaré algunas reflexiones a manera de conclusión.

1. Crítica al catequismo

Acerca de la clase social de los prelados, Kierkegaard realiza un furibundo ataque¹. Y el más importante en su *Diario*, por cuanto se refiere a los representantes y defensores del cristianismo. Los pastores, más que cualesquiera otros, son los responsables de la marcha del cristianismo. Sobre todo de su propagación y predicación. Son, también, los que deben cuidar de sus rebaños. Por otro lado, ellos deben expresar con su vida la exigencia contenida en el Evangelio sobre amor, pobreza y sacrificio; es decir, el ideal del cristianismo.

Cabe distinguir, pues, un doble plano en la crítica de Kierkegaard: práctico y teórico. El primero se refiere a la praxis y al comportamiento de los sacerdotes; el segundo, a la doctrina y predicación cristiana. Ambos se encuentran estrechamente relacionados. Hasta tal punto que, siendo justos, se identifican: se predica con la conducta y el buen ejemplo o la imitación. Sin embargo, lo que dicen no se corresponde con lo que hacen. Precisamente este último aspecto es el central. Junto a él podemos destacar otros, como el interés material y mundanización de los pastores, la confusión en los conceptos y en la fe cristianos, o la relación del clero protestante con la política y la sociedad.

Kierkegaard no ahorra calificativos despectivos hacia los pastores; tales como que son unos parásitos (Kierkegaard: XI 2 A 227), unos impostores (ídem: X 1 A 30), unos taberneros (ídem: X 3 A 267), unos pillos (ídem: XI 1 A 458), unos animales comparados con los demás (ídem: XI 2 A 434), unos estafadores (ídem: X 1 A 11), o los más estúpidos de todos (ídem: VI A 39). Así pues, su valoración fue muy negativa. ¿Qué motivos tuvo el filósofo danés para semejante opinión? Trataré de aclararlo a continuación.

En primer lugar, según Kierkegaard, habría una característica del prelado, su interés material (y concretamente por el dinero), que le aleja del que debería ser su auténtico apego: la tarea espiritual del cristianismo. En efecto,

el cura es alguien a quien le preocupa más el sustento económico que lo religioso (ídem: VIII 1 A 352). De esta manera, se olvida de lo que es y representa. Lo peor es que hace creer que quiere el cristianismo, cuando en realidad es el diezmo (ídem: X 4 A 622). Por otra parte, esas ganancias pecuniarias —como otras cosas— las consigue el sacerdote alabando los ideales santos (ídem: XI 1 A 41), en vez de llevarlos a la práctica. Y éste ha llegado a ser licenciado en Teología, para de esa forma tener algo de lo que vivir y poder casarse (ídem: XI 1 A 88). En definitiva, cabe afirmar que la actividad del prelado se rige por la ley de primero el dinero y después el Reino de Dios: « ¡Veamos! “Primero el Reino de Dios”. Ahora esto no ha llegado a ser mucho más que la ley para la actividad de todos los pastores: primero dinero, y luego lo demás. Por todas partes donde él participa se llama: primeramente debo pedir mi dinero, y entonces lo demás» (ídem: XI 1 A 389).

Como dice el Evangelio, primero se debe buscar el Reino de Dios y todo lo demás se nos dará por añadidura. Pero el pastor, al estar al servicio del Estado como un funcionario más, se mundaniza (ídem: VIII 1 A 403). En este sentido, la mundanización constituye un peligro que se debe evitar, ya que el sacerdote no debe homogeneizarse con el mundo; al contrario, debe permanecer completamente heterogéneo respecto a él: «Si tiene que haber verdad en el “sacerdote”, su tarea reside en permanecer con su existencia personal y con la predicación de la palabra testificando que aquel discurso es ateísmo de la mundaneidad, que justamente el cristianismo es permanecer fiel a la impresión de la niñez durante toda la vida. Pero entonces el sacerdote *debe* también tener cuidado de no llegar él mismo a homogeneizarse con todo el mundo» (ídem: X 3 A 136). Los contemporáneos del pensador danés consideraban de modo erróneo el refinamiento del pastor como piedad (ídem: XI 2 A 305); en cambio, el católico juzgará como mundaneidad que un prelado católico se haya hecho mundano (ibídem). Para Kierkegaard no existe más que una alternativa: o bien dejar de ser mundanos, o bien admitir que solamente somos poetas (oradores, escritores, admiradores de lo cristiano), pero no sacerdotes (ídem: XI 2 A 320).

Hablar de mundaneidad significa a su vez hablar de la relación del clero con la política y la sociedad en general. Kierkegaard pone de manifiesto una serie de incongruencias y de acusaciones. Por ejemplo, que el sacerdote canoniza el espíritu burgués (ídem: X 3 A 463); es decir, se pone al servicio de la burguesía (convirtiéndose él mismo en una clase burguesa), traicionando el mensaje evangélico. El prelado, pues, está estrechamente unido a la sociedad a la que sirve; por eso, todas las clases de sociedad desean un tipo de prelado que se ajuste a ella (ídem: X 3 A 135); los mismos estamentos sociales favorecidos poseen sus curas, los cuales son como sus cómplices (ibídem).

Otro de los aspectos que critica es la intervención del clero en la política: «Quizá nadie, nadie es tan atractivo como un sacerdote que es político. Porque el mundo sabe muy bien que un prelado debería ser un testigo de lo religioso en medio de la “realidad”; pero ésta triunfa ahora. La mayor parte del tiempo su pensamiento se dirige hacia la votación y cosas similares; y entonces tenemos esta hipocresía de que un tal pastor explica su participación en política como celo y religiosidad» (ídem: X 2 A 418). La idea básica es que política y religión no deben confundirse; sería un error muy grave aplicar categorías políticas o mundanas al cristianismo, el cual se mueve en el ámbito del espíritu. Basta recordar la figura de Jesucristo frente al Sanedrín o Barrabás.

Por tanto, el sacerdote debería ser un testigo del cristianismo, no un político. Y como testigo, expresar con su existencia el mensaje y la exigencia cristiana. Pero aquél se limitaba a cumplir con su trabajo remunerado, a realizar su actuación dominical cual actor en el teatro: una vez que se desvestía se consideraba uno como los demás, miembro votante de todo lo mundano (ibídem).

El cura vive en categorías mundanas; no es extraño que actúe en política. Ésta la podemos entender como la expresión de la competencia social en lo mundano. El prelado forma parte de la sociedad; es un funcionario del estado, y ellos mismos constituyen un estamento social. Desde este punto de vista, es lógico que tengan intereses políticos. La cuestión es si política y religión son compatibles². El debate al respecto es antiguo, y ya en el mismo Evangelio se puede encontrar; pero no por ello deja de ser de tremenda actualidad. Kierkegaard piensa que son ámbitos distintos y que no deben mezclarse. Sería un gran error —como comentaba ya líneas más arriba— politizar la religión, o aplicar criterios políticos a los temas meramente religiosos. La idealidad cristiana está muy lejos de la realidad política y social. El cristiano, y más concretamente el sacerdote, debe poner de manifiesto de forma comprometida dicho contraste con su existencia personal. Pero cuando no es así,

como critica Kierkegaard, el prelado se siente seguro con su profesión, acomodándose dentro de este mundo, que sólo es capaz de soportarlo en la misma medida que no se sale de la pura formalidad en la que consiste su trabajo. En este momento, la causa cristiana está perdida; el mundo ha vencido.

En definitiva, el prelado una vez que se desposee de su sotana los domingos, se considera uno más que vota o que va al parlamento (Kierkegaard: X 2 A 357). Toda su vida es puro engaño e ilusión, una obra de teatro en el que tiene el mismo papel en cada función, pero en el que no cree en realidad: «Qué indecente, qué maleducado soy que quiero recordar fuera de la iglesia, o incluso recordar existencialmente lo cristiano; eso sería como si un actor quisiera en sociedad seguir haciendo comedia» (ídem: X 2 A 418). Un sacerdote debería ser un testigo de la verdad en medio de la realidad, y no querer ser un político, un ser mundano, alguien que busca su propio beneficio.

Otro aspecto en el que se manifiesta la mundanización del clero protestante, es en el del matrimonio. Para Kierkegaard la práctica del casamiento en los sacerdotes se había convertido en una tradición impuesta de hecho, de tal modo que no se consideraba un verdadero prelado aquel que no se casaba (ídem: X 2 A 468). Sin embargo, en ningún sitio del Nuevo Testamento se dice nada de que tengan que casarse, ni tampoco que tengan que tener un sueldo para mantener a mujer e hijos (ídem: X 3 A 502). La ventaja de esta situación es la de servirle al cura de excusa para no atreverse a hacer nada, hablando desde el punto de vista cristiano; al contrario, su actuación la justifica precisamente por tener mujer e hijos. De esta manera se asegura su tranquilidad: «Así que todos nosotros nos hemos asegurado la tranquilidad agradable, porque los pastores no podían hacer nada a causa de la mujer y los niños (y no puede casi llegar a ser sacerdote sin tener mujer y niños)» (ibídem).

La crítica central de Kierkegaard al clero es la que tiene que ver con el cristianismo y su predicación. Detengámonos a continuación en ella. En primer lugar, hay que decir que convertirse en sacerdote significa realizar un juramento. Dicho juramento le hace responsable ante Dios y el Nuevo Testamento. Según dicha promesa, se debe buscar primero el reino de Dios; pero en la práctica no ocurre nada de eso. Desde la perspectiva humana, representa un perjuicio, algo sin significado. Por eso no se considera un perjurio no cumplirlo, porque al fin y al cabo es pura formalidad (ídem: XI 1 A 389). El juramento del prelado carece de valor. Ahora bien, si es así —piensa nuestro danés—, ¿no sería mejor eliminarlo?; y si no es el caso, seamos consecuentes y cumplámoslo (ídem: XI 2 A 292). Según la promesa del sacerdote, que es sagrada, éste está obligado a predicar el cristianismo tal como se encuentra en el Nuevo Testamento (ídem: X 4 A 551).

El problema que subyace en este punto es, en realidad, la nula religiosidad del prelado, ya que no vive en lo religioso (ídem: X 4 A 485), ni tiene fe en el cristianismo (ídem: IX A 2). Es un funcionario del estado que al cobrar un sueldo ha prostituido al cristianismo y a sí mismo (ídem: X 1 A 540). El cristianismo no necesita de esta clase de gente, que le hacen un daño tremendo al no representarlo idealmente (ídem: XI 1 A 234). La alternativa que se les presenta a los sacerdotes es la de que, o bien deben pensar seriamente en el carácter propio del cristianismo del Nuevo Testamento y, por tanto, dejar de ser pastores; o bien, procurar hacerle un sitio al verdadero cristianismo (ibídem). Lo que no puede ser es que los curas se aprovechen del cristianismo buscando su propio beneficio (ídem: X 3 A 136), en vez de servir al cristianismo, o que el cristianismo sea el verdadero y único objeto de sus preocupaciones.

Según Kierkegaard, la existencia misma del pastor oficial es la expresión del robo del cristianismo a Dios (ídem: XI 1 A 101). Desde el punto de vista cristiano, su existencia es una irregularidad; no solamente en el sentido de que su vida no imita a la de Cristo, sino también por ser un funcionario real. Esto último convierte en un absurdo predicar un reino que no es de este mundo (ídem: XI 2 A 400). El hecho de que sea una autoridad regia, le da respeto ante el pueblo. Mientras el rango sea más alto, tanto más respeto. Pero predicar de esta forma el cristianismo es un sinsentido. El sacerdote está, vive y disfruta del respeto en virtud de ello, lo cual es precisamente lo contrario del cristianismo. El verdadero cristianismo exige ser un testigo de la verdad, esto es, un individuo extraordinario o superior. Pero los pastores introducen un concepto falso de lo extraordinario cuando afirman que es por humildad por lo que no reclaman ser algo tal alto (ídem: X 4 A 518).

La consecuencia de que el prelado predique algo en lo que no cree es la desmoralización de la sociedad: «Y ahora, bajo el nombre de cristianismo hacen el mayor daño posible, mientras que aquí las personas desarrollan más y más una sospecha sobre que lo del cura carece de sentido, que lo que dice no es su convicción, es algo oficial; lo que significa entonces que el sacerdote de nuevo presta más y más atención a lo que dice el estado. Y de este modo, con ayuda de la predicación del cristianismo, la sociedad se desmoraliza desde su más profundo fundamento» (ídem: XI 2 A 401). Esta habladuría del sacerdote, que no es su propia convicción, es algo que declama por ser un funcionario y su sustento o empleo (ídem: X 3 A 334).

En definitiva, al modo de ver de Kierkegaard, un cura protestante en Dinamarca es un particular que se deja pagar para recitar los domingos lo que él mismo puede inventar (ídem: XI 2 A 130). De forma irónica, el pastor es alguien que recibe dinero del estado para predicar la doctrina de la pobreza; es alguien que respetado, disfruta honor y consideración predicando la doctrina de que no deberíamos buscar honores (ídem: X 5 A 164). En verdad, los sacerdotes son unos retóricos cuyos sermones son como los ejercicios en las escuelas de retórica (ídem: X 4 A 525). Sin embargo, no deben ser oradores sino practicar lo que predicán, deben ser existentes en lo que predicán; al no ser así, de nuevo se produce una desmoralización en la comunidad, y el mismo concepto de pastor, en el sentido de un orador, representa por lo mismo la supresión del cristianismo (ídem: IX A 240).

Así pues, la predicación del cristianismo no es una cuestión puramente doctrinal, teórica, sino más bien práctica o existencial. Tal predicación, por otro lado, debe dirigirse al individuo mediante la imitación y la reduplicación: el sacerdote tiene la tarea de predicar, en el sentido más profundo, con su vida (ídem: X 2 A 149). No obstante, el lunes, es el primero en gritar que crucifiquen a aquel que se atreve a imitar lo que fue dicho el domingo (ídem: X 3 A 434, X 4 A 584)³. Cuando hay alguien que quiere imitar lo que él dice, no se le permite (ídem: X 2 A 545). Por tanto, cuidado con hacer lo que el domingo llama lo más alto, porque el lunes él mismo forma parte del complot contra el verdadero cristianismo (ídem: VIII 1 A 489). Lo desdichado es que de ningún modo existe en eso sobre lo que habla (ídem: IX A 198). Es decir, de forma hipócrita el pastor afirma una cosa y hace otra. Su propia vida no expresa nada de aquello sobre lo que predica (ídem: X 2 A 176). Se atiene a predicar de manera objetiva —no subjetiva— *qua* funcionario que es (ídem: X 5 A 10). Pero si le ordenamos callar los domingos, entonces permanece lo esencial: su existencia diaria con la cual en realidad predica (ídem: X 3 A 237). «Y como está tan ocupado predicando, ¿cómo, por Dios, puede sacar tiempo para hacer algo de lo que dice?» (ídem: XI 1 A 110). Lo peor de todo, lo más sorprendente, es que el sacerdote afirma que lo que dice es doctrina del Nuevo Testamento (ídem: X 5 A 112); ¿cabe mayor engaño y fraude? Kierkegaard se lamenta de esos curas mentirosos que tienen la responsabilidad de que el pueblo no sepa nada de lo que es el cristianismo de verdad (ídem: XI 1 A 166, IX A 347) Por su parte, el estado se queda bastante tranquilo mientras les sigue pagando la charlatanería que vierten (ídem: XI 1 A 63).

Una de las consecuencias de la predicación de los sacerdotes es la de crear confusión en los feligreses respecto a las verdaderas ideas cristianas. Con su prédica introducen un conjunto de ideas más bajas sin que tengan ninguna intención de corregirlas (ídem: X 4 A 597). De manera fundamental, la idea de que Dios está para la masa, en vez de para el individuo singular. De esta forma sacan beneficios mundanos para ellos: «[...] porque el provecho que queréis tener sólo se consigue con ayuda de la muchedumbre, predicando que donde está la multitud ahí está Dios presente, que los muchos agradan a Dios» (ídem: XI 1 A 227). Los pastores viven para atraer a la multitud, y para convertir lo verdadero en algo falso (ídem: XI 2 A 149); por ejemplo, predicar que todos no podemos ser mártires (ídem: IX A 5), o peor aún, predicar el martirio y no llevarlo a la práctica (ídem: IX A 344). La cuestión es que el individuo en cuanto tal no cuenta desde tales planteamientos. En todo caso, éste se entiende desde lo estético-extraordinario en vez desde lo ético-extraordinario (ídem: X 3 A 464). Esta perspectiva supone una falta de singularidad, que el prelado lo pone como un *plus* por falsa humildad y modestia. De este modo, de forma perspicaz, trata de escabullirse de su responsabilidad personal para con el cristianismo auténtico.

2. Crítica a la Iglesia establecida o Cristiandad

La anterior consideración sobre la predicación de los pastores protestantes en la época de Kierkegaard, nos lleva irremediamente a la conclusión de: a) no se daban las auténticas condiciones del cristianismo; b) y, por tanto, no existían verdaderos cristianos que formaran lo que podemos llamar la cristiandad (ya formaran parte de la jerarquía de la iglesia, o como ciudadanos corrientes).

Las que he llamado condiciones del cristianismo, del verdadero cristianismo del Evangelio, son las del espíritu, el martirio, la imitación y la relación con Dios. Sin ellas, el individuo no puede decirse que es cristiano. Por eso, también se resumen todas ellas en la condición de la *singularidad*. La ausencia de tales requisitos vició a la cristiandad protestante, a la vez que ésta entró en contradicción directa con el cristianismo. Con toda seguridad, la lucha contra la iglesia en su país, extenuó física y psíquicamente a Kierkegaard, debilitando su salud a la vez que se le agotaban sus recursos económicos.

2.1. Las condiciones del verdadero cristianismo

a) La condición del espíritu.

Podríamos definir la cristiandad —en la época de Kierkegaard— como una sociedad de millones de seres humanos formada por terceras personas, sin que se dé ningún yo (ídem: XI 1 A 487). Por tanto, sin ningún espíritu. El yo o *espíritu* es característico de todo hombre como individuo, el cual vive desde sí cualitativamente diferente de cualquier otro. En realidad somos primeras personas, que es la única forma de serlo; porque las demás personas siempre lo serán con relación a ésta, siendo más bien una cuestión de perspectiva, pero nunca de entidad. Sin embargo, el espíritu (recordando ideas aparecidas con anterioridad) ha desaparecido por entero del género humano (ídem: XI 1 A 511). La consecuencia ha sido, según Kierkegaard, que el cristianismo ha degenerado en mediocridad. Es decir, se ha desnaturalizado, perdiendo vigor y excelencia. Dicho con otras palabras, se ha producido una homogeneización. Esta homogeneización se debe al propio estado cristiano que la busca. Algo radicalmente perverso, puesto que para el cristianismo el hombre como espíritu es la diferencia en sí, y Dios mismo quiere la heterogeneidad (ídem: XI 2 A 112). Esta diversidad significa que todo cristiano llega a serlo de forma y manera distinta.

Por otro lado, la cristiandad ha eliminado también la determinación espiritual para evitar el sufrimiento de existir como criatura animal, y para hacer la vida fácil (ídem: XI 2 A 242). Esto es, el espíritu choca con la existencia de animal, lo cual produce sufrimiento. Por eso, la cristiandad protestante ha suprimido el espíritu del cristianismo: «Pero más fácil, si se admite, más fácil ciertamente ha llegado a ser la vida de la cristiandad; especialmente el escenario del protestantismo es: idilio, el hecho de tener hijos, buenos empleos, actividad intensa en este mundo, política» (ídem: XI 2 A 246). En definitiva, bajo la excusa de que es perfectible, el cristianismo ha llegado a ser una tontería (ídem: XI 2 A 426).

No obstante, el cristianismo es como es: su exigencia siempre es la misma. Pero el mensaje cristiano se ha rebajado. Este aspecto se puede comprobar, en primer lugar, en que se ha hecho melifluo perdiendo severidad; en segundo lugar, porque se predica como un consuelo o lenitivo para nuestros dolores (Suances, 1998: 259-261). La idea de progreso, de perfección, de historia, es un ardid para eludir todo aquello que nos resulta incómodo e inquietante. En cambio, el hecho de ser cristiano implica el desasosiego más alto del espíritu. Lo que hace la cristiandad es reducir la intranquilidad del cristianismo y, por tanto, causar una desespiritualización (Kierkegaard: XI 1 A 193).

Existe una confusión fundamental para Kierkegaard, que es la de entender el cristianismo desde el punto de vista histórico y tradicional, cuando en realidad se trata de que en cada nueva generación se debe empezar desde cero, con el Nuevo Testamento: «Y justamente esta es la confusión que ha producido la “cristiandad” y hecho retrotraer el cristianismo al judaísmo, que en el transcurso de los tiempos, en vez de comenzar con el Nuevo Testamento, cada generación particular ha empezado con “la fe de los padres”, continuando con la fe de los

padres. Siempre esta picaresca histórica y la categoría del género, en vez de —lo cristiano— la idealidad y el singular» (ídem: XI 1 A 392).

b) La condición del martirio

Otro aspecto en la crítica a la cristiandad es la pérdida o ausencia del valor del *martirio*. La historia misma de la cristiandad se podría entender como el sucesivo cambio sobre la idea del cristianismo con relación al martirio. Y como es natural, éste también se intenta evitar. La consecuencia o efecto es, asimismo, la homogeneización; de este modo, la exigencia es menor y los martirios caen terminando por desaparecer (ídem: XI 1 A 462).

Por otro lado, la emancipación de la iglesia implica, religiosamente, la existencia de martirios (cruentos e incruentos). Incluso, en opinión de Kierkegaard, aquel que no sea un seguidor sufriente de Cristo, no puede pretender reformar la iglesia (como fue el caso de Lutero). Es un insulto contra el cristianismo querer emancipar a la iglesia por medio de votaciones, de la política, librándose así de los martirios (ídem: X 4 A 22). Tal idea, como se refleja en los hechos, convierte al cristianismo en judaísmo y paganismo.

La figura de Lutero es central para entender toda la crítica de Kierkegaard al respecto. A pesar de expresar su respeto por él en los *Diarios*, Kierkegaard no dejó de reprobar su actuación. En primer lugar, por su responsabilidad al sustituir el Papa por el *público*, y cambiar el concepto de martirio (ídem: XI 1 A 108). Lutero alteró el cristianismo modificando el martirio (ídem: XI 2 A 161), causando un gran daño justamente por no haber llegado a ser mártir (ídem: XI 1 A 61). En términos generales, para Kierkegaard su error estuvo en confundir el hecho de ser paciente con ser médico; a Lutero le faltaba la claridad del médico (ídem: XI 1 A 193). Además, fue una desgracia la generalización de algo que venía a responder a una situación dada y concreta.

Por otra parte, Lutero también causó un gran daño al tener admiradores que le adoraban. Lo peor de todo fue la confusión que dio lugar, respecto a lo que significa ser reformador, al haberse ayudado de la política (Suances, 1998: 249). «El resultado ha llegado a ser la desorientación más profunda en los conceptos más elevados, y la desmoralización más peligrosa de todas, como es natural cuando algo tan fino, noble y vulnerable, como el concepto de “reformador”, se pudre» (Kierkegaard: XI 1 A 61). En realidad, la mundaneidad se había aprovechado de él para cambiar el significado de ser reformador; porque ahora ser reformador es salir bien librado. Según Kierkegaard, Lutero fue un reformador a medias (su vida también fue mediocre), haciendo imposible tal figura en el futuro. La consecuencia de todo esto fue que ser mártir no es lo más elevado (ibídem).

Lutero fue un individuo singular, extraordinario. Su tarea fue la interiorización. Pero en vez de haber sido un mártir de forma solitaria, fundó partido (ídem: X 5 A 121) e hizo política. Junto con ello, su predicación no fue siempre clara ni estuvo en concordancia con su vida (ídem: X 2 A 263).

c) La condición de la imitación.

La crítica a la cristiandad también tiene que ver con otra de las condiciones del verdadero cristianismo: la imitación (“*Efterfølgelse*”). Según Kierkegaard, la cristiandad protestante había eliminado la imitación al sustituirla por la *admiración* (ídem: X 3 A 750). Históricamente, desde el siglo III, el cristianismo se había moderado existencialmente; y a partir del siglo IV se desorientó, al primar la admiración sobre la imitación de Jesucristo. De esa manera, se quería evitar el esfuerzo y la incomodidad de tener frente a sí ese *modelo* o ideal. Tal táctica, pues, llevaba a prescindir de la imitación del modelo de Jesucristo. El resultado fue que el Hijo de Dios se convirtió en un mito (ídem: X 4 A 148). Sin embargo, Cristo es el ideal y paradigma con el que tiene que relacionarse todo individuo singular, todo cristiano. El protestantismo, al alejarse del ideal y aferrarse a la comodidad, ha transformado el cristianismo en mitología, porque la diferencia se encuentra en la imitación. En ese sentido, Lutero y la Reforma lo tuvieron fácil, puesto que la gente vio la posibilidad de escabullirse del esfuerzo del cristianismo (ídem: X 4 A 354).

d) La condición de la relación divina

El error probablemente mayor de la cristiandad ha sido haber desatendido dicha relación. De forma pícaro se rehuye tal compromiso aduciendo que se es demasiado humilde para querer ser algo tan elevado como discípulo o apóstol (ídem: XI 1 A 400). A la par, se toma de forma vana el concepto de lo extraordinario (ídem: X 3 A 766). «Esta es y será la culpa y el pecado de la cristiandad: haber puesto deshonestidad entre Dios y ella misma, de modo que Dios no ha podido ponerse en relación con los seres humanos» (ídem: XI 2 A 135). Hasta tal extremo esto tiene su importancia para Kierkegaard, que la historia misma de la cristiandad la entiende como la historia del alejamiento del hombre de Dios (ídem: XI 2 A 52). Y la razón se encuentra en el hecho de haber convertido el cristianismo en una doctrina, en pura teoría y en una estructura establecida. La razón o reflexión ha eliminado el ideal y lo ha convertido en algo fantástico. Tal ideal, como ya se ha dicho, es ni más ni menos que Jesucristo, que existió como un ser singular (ídem: X 1 A 646). La relación con Dios debe ser personal, como individuos singulares que somos, y no de forma genérica y abstracta; también de ese modo debe entenderse la relación con las Sagradas Escrituras (ídem: X 3 A 497).

e) La condición de la singularidad.

Para terminar con este apartado, recogeremos la que sería la condición principal del verdadero cristianismo: la *singularidad*. La crítica de Kierkegaard a la cristiandad en este tema, como es natural, tiene que ver con todo aquello que va en contra de la mencionada categoría: lo numérico y la ejemplaridad.

La cristiandad ha crecido anormalmente de forma numérica (ídem: X 4 A 148); lo que ha significado que le haya hecho perder intensidad. La verdad es que el grupo, la especie, o un abstracto resulta bastante útil para evitar la presión de la singularidad y del hecho de ser cristiano. Lo que ha ocurrido es que la cristiandad lo ha convertido en una determinación de la especie (ídem: XI 2 A 125). De forma astuta, el ser humano ha puesto lo numérico para esconderse. De este modo, el individuo singular se oculta refugiándose en la multitud de los contemporáneos (ídem: XI 2 A 38). Este comportamiento conlleva la impersonalidad y la cobardía, porque cristianamente no se tiene el coraje de relacionarse en solitario con Dios. Sin embargo, lo numérico es una alucinación que no nos debe impresionar. Porque el cristianismo existe tan pronto como exista un solo cristiano en sentido estricto, no porque haya muchos que se llamen tales. El número no es una cualidad sino algo indiferente para lo cristiano: «Pero el caso es que lo numérico ejerce un poder espiritual sobre nosotros las personas. “El número”, que nunca cambia, produce una nueva cualidad, nos cambia. Cada individuo singular hace la confesión de que él no es cristiano en el sentido más riguroso, y que en cierto modo el cristianismo no existe; no obstante, se quiere que la suma de tales individuos singulares (que ni prueba que el cristianismo existe ni que no exista), tiene que ser la prueba de que el cristianismo existe» (ídem: X 3 A 656). El número transforma a las personas en cierto estado de exaltación y de posesión, como si fueran muchos en vez de ser lo que en realidad son: individuos singulares. En definitiva, para Kierkegaard, la cristiandad es una masa, y la ley para ella es que cada individuo sea como los demás: ejemplares (ídem: XI 1 A 388).

En efecto, en la cristiandad se vive como ejemplares de forma genérica, entretenida y despreocupada (ídem: X 4 A 515). En estas condiciones, aquel que se planteara si es cristiano sería tenido por un pobre loco, como fue el caso de Kierkegaard. Ahora bien, esto prueba que el cristianismo ya no existe en la cristiandad. Por tanto, es una mentira horrible hablar de pueblo cristiano (ídem: XI 1 A 168). En resumidas cuentas, se ha impuesto la categoría de género sobre la de singular, lo cual ha significado que los individuos se han degradado a ejemplares. No obstante, en el Nuevo Testamento se establece que ser cristiano es ser individuo, no ejemplar (ídem: XI 1 A 42); pero la cristiandad únicamente tiene ejemplares.

Ser cristiano significa ser diferente en calidad dentro del hecho de ser persona, pero sin dejar de serlo (ídem: XI 2 A 125). La comunidad cristiana es una sociedad de singulares cualitativos. Con el paso del tiempo, el hecho de ser cristiano se identificó con el hecho de ser persona. En ese momento, la comunidad cristiana se confundió con el género humano, el público (ídem: X 2 A 478). Así pues, ser cristiano depende de uno mismo como

singular con espíritu. « ¡Oh!, pero la decisión de ser cristiano, lo que quiere decir, eso se ha olvidado completamente [...]. No, nos hemos instalado ahora agradablemente con la familia y todas las comodidades terrenales en el cristianismo; y esto es cristianismo» (ídem: X 3 A 506).

3. Conclusión

Kierkegaard no pretendió ser ningún reformador, ni ningún mártir o auténtico cristiano, sino solo un poeta y correctivo del cristianismo (*Bibliotheca Kierkegaardiana* 13, 1984: 260 y ss.). Pero con ello, como puede criticársele, no se apropiaba del cristianismo; todo lo contrario, el cristianismo fue el que se apropió de Kierkegaard, hasta el punto de sacrificar toda su vida al ideal del mensaje evangélico.

Por otro lado, su honestidad y coherencia personal, hizo brillar con renovada fuerza y singularidad la llama de la fe cristiana vivida con pasión, en una sociedad intelectualmente secularizada que de manera irreversible olvidaba sus auténticas raíces cristianas. Todo ello con una gran habilidad psicológica y espiritual. Finalmente, me gustaría reivindicar ecuménicamente, junto a la tristemente desaparecida J. Watkin, la figura de Kierkegaard, desde la espiritualidad puramente cristiana, en interés tanto de los protestantes como de los católicos: «I am convinced that the continuing interest in Kierkegaard in the late twentieth century arises from his profound spirituality, coupled with an ability to address undogmatically a multiplicity of interests and interest groups. He is thus able to be a truly ecumenical figure in a pluralistic age, attracting the interest of vastly different disciplines, from religious studies to computer studies and physics» (Watkin, 1997: 107).

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¹ Como sugiere A. Hannay, parece que la categoría mejor para comprender el devenir dramático y el significado de su vida es la de “colisión”; cfr. Hannay, 2003: 387.

² «Come è già emerso chiaramente dal caso Grundtvig, politica e religione non possono stare insieme perché la prima soggioga la seconda con un totale “sovertimento di valori”. L’incompatibilità tra cristianesimo e politica consiste nel fatto che la politica è egoismo, magiare camuffato da amore» (Spera, 1977: 184).

³En IX A 93, Kierkegaard nos advierte que aquello sobre lo que divagan mil curas todos los domingos, debería ser lo que uno tendría que hacer.

Repetition and Contemporaneity: Kierkegaardian Crumbs in Hans-Georg Gadamer

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The hermeneutic problem attained its philosophical radicalization when the ideas of Dilthey (and Kierkegaard) began to provide the foundation for existential philosophy. (Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen* 103)

Abstract. Although his presence may not be as explicit as that of other philosophers, Søren Kierkegaard holds a place of great importance in the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer. In large part, Kierkegaardian thinking nourishes and sustains Gadamer's elaboration of philosophical hermeneutics. To understand Kierkegaard's influence on Gadamer, it helps, first of all, to examine the philosophical horizon of Kierkegaard's reception in Germany. Second, Gadamer's own discussions of Kierkegaard point to his reliance on the Kierkegaardian concepts of contemporaneity and repetition, two essential elements in the structure of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. Finally, the ties between these two philosophers emerge most clearly when examined according to the "Kierkegaardian logic" of the three stages of knowledge: aesthetic-religious, ethical, and epistemic-ontological.

Keywords: Kierkegaard, Gadamer, contemporaneity, repetition, hermeneutics, aesthetics, ethics, epistemology, existentialism.

1. Status quaestionis: objectives and methodology

The numerous stars that give heat and light to the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer describe an arc that stretches from Plato and Aristotle through Hegel and Husserl, arriving finally at Jaspers and Heidegger. Although not as frequently or explicitly cited, Kierkegaard remains no less central as a star of the first magnitude in Gadamer's work. Throughout his *Gesammelte Werke*, Gadamer cites Heidegger 241 times and Kierkegaard 89, indicating the force and importance that he ascribed to the Danish philosopher. Gadamer, contrary to many other philosophers, never viewed Kierkegaard's "personal issues" and Christian concerns as factors weighing against the value of his philosophy and thought.

In the following pages, I will examine key commonalities between these two thinkers from a Gadamerian perspective, highlighting especially two "philosophical crumbs," namely, Kierkegaard's concepts of contemporaneity and repetition, which are integral to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. My aim is to show not only the presence but also the importance of Kierkegaardian philosophy in Gadamerian hermeneutics. By explicitly examining the sources of Gadamerian philosophy, I intend to emphasize Kierkegaard's value, significance, and ongoing relevance as a thinker. In contrast to the majority of contemporary philosophers, including Heidegger, Gadamer fully recognized Kierkegaard's significance and neither reduced him to the level of a merely religious thinker nor categorized him tout court as an existentialist.

My reflection moves through two specific stages. First, I examine the philosophical horizon of Kierkegaard's reception in Germany, tracing the paths that Kierkegaardian philosophy had followed before it reached Gadamer. Second, taking up Gadamer's references to Kierkegaard, especially in the two volumes of *Wahrheit und Methode* (*Truth and Method*), I turn to the concepts of contemporaneity and repetition. Following the "Kierkegaardian logic" of the three stages of knowledge—aesthetic-religious, ethical, and epistemic-

ontological—I argue for the close imbrication of Kierkegaardian and Gadamerian philosophy based on these two concepts.

2. The reception of Kierkegaard in Germany prior to Gadamer

In Philosophische Lehrjahre (Philosophical Apprenticeships), in which he reflects on his academic training and the influence of other philosophers on his life, Gadamer recounts that the second part of Kierkegaard's Either/Or had aroused his sympathy for “the judge Wilhelm and, unsuspectingly, for historical continuity” (5). Historical continuity is a topic that would become central to Gadamer's philosophical labors, and he develops it systematically in part 2 of Wahrheit und Methode and in several texts from Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen, Register, volume 2 of his Gesammelte Werke.¹ The Kierkegaardian “effect” can be seen in Gadamer's effort to overcome historicism by showing its limitations and by opposing it to the principle of a “history of effect” (Wirkungsgeschichte). In Germany, in general, the value placed on a historicity that no longer “evoked the phantom of historical relativism” dovetailed quite effectively with the “renewed influence of Kierkegaard's thinking, which, preceded by Unamuno and others, inspired a new critique of idealism, developing the perspective of thou, of the other and I” (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 204). Gadamer's controversial statement that “it is not history that belongs to us, but us to it” underscores the esteem for “historical continuity” that he learned from Kierkegaard along the way past Jaspers and Heidegger.

Kierkegaard had arrived in Germany, and specifically in Heidelberg, by way of Karl Jaspers, who exercised great influence over the academy in his day and mentored Martin Heidegger, for his part a decisive influence on Gadamer's own philosophical itinerary. In this regard Gadamer states that “Jasper's first philosophical book above all reflected one of the great philosophical happenings of the early twentieth century: the discovery of Søren Kierkegaard, the great critic of German Idealism” and that “Kierkegaard is everywhere in Jasper's book.” “An essay on Kierkegaard,” Gadamer writes, “which formed a chapter of [Jaspers's] book [Psychology of World Views] communicated for the first time the new pathos of ‘existence’” (Philosophical Apprenticeships 161).

According to Gadamer himself, Kierkegaard's reception in Heidelberg was due essentially to what was commonly called the “philosophy of existence.” And “the foundation for this preoccupation had above all been prepared by Karl Jaspers, who in his capacity as an academic teacher in Heidelberg was repeating Kierkegaard's Existenz dialectic” (Philosophical Apprenticeships 162). “Jaspers in his analyses,” writes Gadamer, “follows the deep presentiments of Schelling, the teacher of Kierkegaard, which within Idealistic thinking reflected the separation of the mere possibilities of reason from the basic grounds of reality, on which reason lives.” Like Heidegger, Jaspers “also made philosophy ring with a new and unfamiliar tone, one that was doubly unfamiliar in the neo-Kantian Heidelberg of those days” (Philosophical Apprenticeships 165). In other words,

What Romanticism, with the discovery of the undecipherable mystery of individuality, objected against the abstract generality of the concept was taken up at the beginning of the twentieth century by the critique of the academic philosophy of the nineteenth and the liberal faith in progress. It was not by chance that a disciple of German Romanticism, the Danish writer, Søren Kierkegaard, a great master of literature, battled in the 1840s against the academic predominance of Hegelian idealism. In the twentieth century, with the translation of his works into German, Kierkegaard began to have great influence in Europe. It was above all here in Heidelberg (but also in many other places in Germany) that thinking began to contrast the experience of a thou and of the word that unites an I and a thou with Kantian idealism. (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 210-11)

And since Gadamer incorporated the critique of academic philosophy into his hermeneutics, along with elements of Kierkegaard's “existential philosophy,” we can refer to him, too, as a Kierkegaardian.

3. Kierkegaardian philosophical crumbs in Gadamer's work

I was familiar with the crisis of subjective idealism, which erupted in my youth when Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel was taken up again. This gave a completely different direction to the meaning of understanding. (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 9)

Out of Kierkegaard's broad and fruitful work, I will discuss only two philosophical concepts—true “philosophical crumbs”—in order to demonstrate the close link between these two thinkers. I now turn to Kierkegaard's three levels of knowledge, which underlie and animate Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics.

3.1. The aesthetic-religious level: Kierkegaardian contemporaneity in Gadamer

The religious perspective. We should recall, first of all, the significance of Gadamer's Protestant heritage. In Jean Grondin's outstanding biography, Gadamer states that he took up and applied, throughout his life, the Protestant conception of finite existence (21). And it was in Kierkegaard's Either/Or that he found a “critique of the Enlightenment that laid bare the kernel of truth in the question of religion: it is a question about the meaning of one's own existence” (Grondin 59). From Kierkegaard he learned the “irrational nature of the existential choice of life” (Grondin 58), and attending Maetschke's courses on religion he encountered and appropriated the Kierkegaardian concept of the contemporaneity (Gleichzeitigkeit) of the Christian message (Grondin 52).

The aesthetic perspective, or, the concept of contemporaneity. Kierkegaard's critique of the Hegelian system, a critique that denounces the illusions of self-consciousness, left a profound impression on Gadamer, who recounts that “from that point on I had a glimpse of what I wanted—and obviously it had nothing to do with the idea of a new, all-encompassing system” (“Reflections” 7). Gadamer also recounts that it was in following Kierkegaard's lead that Heidegger took up the argument that “phenomenology should be ontologically based on the facticity of Dasein, existence, which cannot be based on or derived from anything else, and not on the pure cogito as the essential constitution of typical universality.” And it had been “no accident that Heidegger and the other critics of neo-Kantian idealism seized on Kierkegaard, who emerged out of the spiritual crisis of Hegelianism” (Gadamer, Truth and Method 245-46).

Following the guidelines of Kierkegaard's “aesthetic stage,” Gadamer took up the critique of the abstraction of aesthetic consciousness. In Truth and Method, as Grondin puts it, Gadamer asserts that the “the aestheticization of art [. . .] is a direct consequence of modern method and its monopoly on the truth question,” whereas art does not claim to produce any “methodologically verifiable truths” (Grondin 167-68). Following the path of Kierkegaardian thinking, he asserted the close imbrication between art and philosophy, taking up the poetical experience of truth in order to interrogate and reconstruct the abstract concept of truth. The Gadamerian recourse to the enunciation of the work of art and to aesthetic experience pointed to a conception of truth that did not submit “to the rules of rigorous scientific exactitude and methodical progress.”

Rather, the claim to truth at that time, under the influence of a new reception of Kierkegaard in Germany, called itself “existential.” Existentialism dealt with a truth which was supposed to be demonstrated not so much in terms of universally held propositions or knowledge as rather in the immediacy of one's own experience and in the absolute unstitutability of one's own existence. (“Reflections” 6)

In Truth and Method, Gadamer, in discussing the temporality of the aesthetic, develops the concept of claim (Anspruch). For Gadamer, this concept helps explain what Kierkegaard had in mind with the theological concept of contemporaneity, which functions as an “application” in the critique of both subjectivism and the “self-annihilation of aesthetic immediacy.” The concept of contemporaneity holds that in the representation of a work of art something individual acquires its presence, even if its origin belongs to the distant past. On this point, Gadamer concurs with Kierkegaard, for whom “contemporaneous” does not mean “existing at the same time” but rather “names the task that confronts the believer: to bring together two moments that are not

concurrent, namely one's own present and the redeeming act of Christ, and yet so totally to mediate them that the latter is experienced and taken seriously as present (and not as something in a distant past)" (Truth and Method 124).

Contemporaneity constitutes a taking up again in a dynamic repetition of the real, and it must be distinguished from a static and fundamentalist understanding, which "repeats the same." Dynamic understanding, by contrast, "is creative as the production of life itself" (Risser 39). From a Gadamerian perspective, the event of understanding is always different; it makes sense based on the dynamic reproduction of something (fact or text) and therefore accords with Aristotle's concept of mimesis. But for Aristotle the event of artistic creation is much more than an imperfect copy of the original. And for Gadamer the paradox was not the rendering explicit of the eternal within time but rather how the same message, because of the value of tradition, could always be understood differently, such that contemporaneity (or application) could never be taken statically.

3.2. The ethical level: toward a practical philosophy in Kierkegaard and Gadamer

Both Kierkegaard and Gadamer advocate the supremacy of the dimension of praxis (of action) over against the dimension of abstraction (of knowledge), the difference being that the former developed this approach in relation to the Christian faith, whereas the latter did so in relation to knowledge and tradition. In this sense, Grondin relates that Gadamer liked to repeat Schleiermacher's assertion, "I hate all theory that does not grow out of practice" (Grondin 324),² since the pathway of philosophy does not run only "from word to concept but likewise back from concept to word" (Gadamer, "Da palavra ao conceito" 14).

The real cannot be submitted to the procedure of instrumental methods, which is why Gadamer argues for philosophical hermeneutics as Tugend, action. He states that he learned this Aristotelian notion of "practical philosophy" by reading Kierkegaard: "What is practical philosophy? How can theory and reflection be directed to the realm of praxis, since the latter cannot tolerate any distancing, but on the contrary requires commitment? This issue touched me from early on through Kierkegaard's existential pathos" (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 22). From a Kierkegaardian perspective, existence cannot be reduced to or circumscribed by knowledge about it; Gadamer, too, shared this view, which constitutes one of the philosophical leitmotifs of his work.

Kierkegaard and Gadamer: toward a Socratic method of philosophizing. As for the dialogical method or, more specifically, the Socratic method, we know that Gadamer adopted the Socratic/Platonic method of philosophizing not only because of its irony and "practical" character but also because of the emphasis it places on the philosophical question. This is one of the nodal points that brings Gadamer closest to Kierkegaard; indeed, the latter was often referred to as the "Danish Socrates" and the former the "contemporary Socrates."

Regarding his relationship with the dialogues of Plato, Gadamer states that what he learned "from Plato, the master of dialogue, or rather from the Socratic dialogues, composed by Plato, is that the monological structure of scientific consciousness will never fully allow philosophical thinking to fulfill its intentions" (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 13). This statement could also be attributed to Kierkegaard insofar as, according to him, in the philosophical process of writing and reading, we elect the answers that guide us to our fullest personal fulfillment. Further, regarding Kierkegaard's influence in relation to the dialogical method, Gadamer states, "I was familiar with the crisis of subjective idealism which irrupted in my youth when Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel was taken up again," and it "gave a completely different direction to the meaning of understanding. Here is the other who breaks with the centrality of my ego, insofar as he gives me to understand something." "The specific phenomenon of the other" was what Kierkegaard had in mind, and he "consequently sought in dialogue the foundation of our orientation in the world through the element of language" (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 9-10).

Kierkegaard did not write his texts in axiomatic form, nor did he base them on his authority as a writer. Through them, he argued that each reader had the ability to choose his or her own path upon coming in contact with his writings. By reinterpreting the Socratic adage of “know thyself” as “choose thyself,” he granted primacy to choice over against predetermined knowledge (about the real, about life, about philosophy). Here we find another point in common with Gadamer, for whom only the first volume—of the ten that constitute his Gesammelte Werke—is a unitary text, the others consisting of articles that discuss various philosophical issues.

Gadamer applied Kierkegaard’s concept of contemporaneity—and for Kierkegaard “the true task of the Christian was the subsumption of the distance from the past by contemporaneity” (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 57)—to his concept of dialogue in terms of both tradition and the past. The notion of contemporaneity undergirds the Gadamerian concepts of hermeneutical experience, play, dialogue, and circularity. Both thinkers hold that language as effected by contemporaneity is always woven by temporality and its attributes.

Dialogue, according to Gadamer, is the way in which contemporaneity is fulfilled as a dialogical dialectic founded on openness, confrontation, respect, and learning with the other, the last of which is mirrored in the concept of friendship developed by Aristotle in The Nicomachean Ethics. In this respect, Kierkegaard and Gadamer differ somewhat, since for the former contemporaneity is built on selfless love, specifically Christian love, as distinct from both Platonic eros and from Aristotelian philia. We find selfless love, in which nothing is expected in return, represented paradigmatically in the figure of Christ, or perhaps in a figure like Dostoyevsky’s Idiot: “The character of Michkin must attain the supreme degree of individual evolution, the point of being able to sacrifice oneself for the benefit of all. To do so, he must be free of individualism and egoism” (Bezzera).

The concept of repetition, from an ethical standpoint, is also central to Kierkegaard’s work and “means the task set for the individual to persevere in time, to stay with the flux, to produce his identity as an effect” (Caputo, Radical Hermeneutics 20). In contrast to the metaphysical tradition that sought either to deny time or to submit it to eternity, both Kierkegaard and Gadamer defend a way of thinking and knowing that conserves the two and connects them. According to a Kierkegaardian perspective, the ethical individual is one who has learned to struggle with and in time, without trying to escape from it, in a repetition that creates his identity. As John Caputo states, “Repetition on the ethical level is the constancy and continuity of choice by which the self constitutes itself as a self, by which it returns again and again to its own innermost resolution and establishes its moral identity. [...] It means a recurrent cycle of growth and development by means of which the self becomes itself” (Radical Hermeneutics 30). My approach to the notion of repetition, however, begins not so much from an ethical standpoint as from the level of epistemological–ontological knowledge, which unfolds masterfully in Gadamer’s notion of the hermeneutic circle.

3.3. The epistemological–ontological level: Kierkegaardian repetition in Gadamer

The central concept of Kierkegaard’s 1843 work Gjentagelse has been translated into English as repetition and into German as Wiederholung. Although many commentators have not attributed great importance to this concept, it certainly exercised a radical influence on the work of Heidegger, as well as on Gadamerian hermeneutics. Heidegger, for his part, applied the concept of repetition to Dasein’s way of being, understanding, and knowing:

What Dasein can be is a function of what it has been; what Dasein has been opens up a spectrum of possibilities for Dasein, so long as Dasein is resolute. That circular movement Heidegger calls Wieder-holung, which [...] has the sense of “retrieval” or “recovery,” of retrieving a possibility which has been handed down to Dasein, of making actual a possibility which has all along been lingering in what Dasein has been. [...] Repetition is always an originary operation by means of which Dasein opens up possibilities latent in the tradition, bringing forth something new [...]. Repetition is a new beginning which aims at the possible. (Caputo, Radical Hermeneutics 90-91)

One of Kierkegaard's main concerns lay in trying to work out a coherent conceptual connection between time and flux, time and existence, time and eternity, in response to traditional metaphysics with its efforts to conceive existence beyond time or timelessly. He therefore critiqued the Platonic concept of repetition as recollection, in the sense of anamnesis, because it upholds a notion of knowledge as a movement toward the past, where the truth supposedly lies. And he likewise critiqued the Hegelian concept of mediation (Aufhebung), which ultimately submits time to necessitarian logic. For Kierkegaard, in fact, "repetition is an existential version of kinesis, the Aristotelian counterpoint to Eleaticism, a movement which occurs in the existing individual" (Caputo, Radical Hermeneutics 11). One of the central dimensions of Gadamer's hermeneutics consists precisely in reconnecting time and flux cyclically without the supremacy of one pole over the other.³ Gadamer's philosophical project takes up this Kierkegaardian perspective, diverging only in the field of application. Whereas Kierkegaard conceives of repetition in relation to Christianity, Gadamer does so in terms of knowledge, which cannot be reduced to its scientific–methodological aspect—which either ignores time or submits it to the notion of eternity—but rather must be understood ontologically. It is in this sense that Kierkegaard's work proved crucial to Gadamer's reconfiguration of ontological–philosophical hermeneutics in contrast to a scientific–methodological model:

The hermeneutic problem reached its philosophical radicalization when the ideas of Dilthey (and Kierkegaard) began to provide the foundation for existential philosophy. This was when Heidegger formulated the concept of a "hermeneutics of facticity," imposing [. . .] the paradoxical task of interpreting the "immemorial" dimension (Schelling) of "existence" and even existence itself as "understanding" and "interpretation," i.e., as a projection to possibilities of oneself. At this time, a point was reached in which the instrumentalist character of the method, present in the hermeneutic phenomenon, had to revert to the ontological dimension.

"Understanding" no longer means one behavior of human thinking among others that can be methodologically disciplined, thus constituting a scientific procedure, but it makes up the background mobility of human existence. (Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen 103)

Conceiving knowledge ontologically means "to think not in terms of permanent presence but in terms of movement where movement means principally existence and freedom" (Caputo, "Hermeneutics" 420). This claim likewise undergirds the Gadamerian philosophical project, specifically in its concept of the hermeneutic circle, in which a person advances toward a presence to be realized in the present but that is not yet so. Past possibilities become future possibilities and are thus repeated at the time of decision making. By taking the future into account, the concept of repetition is dynamic and must be distinguished from static repetition; it "has the courage to impose constancy on the flux, the constancy of the circle in which in the midst of change, we return to the same. It fuses Being and becoming, constancy and novelty" (Caputo, "Hermeneutics" 421). This is a decisive distinction for Gadamer's hermeneutics: "It is by virtue of human finitude that I subject everything to review and revision, and consequently, a dynamic repetition would seem to be universal for the kind of knowledge at issue in hermeneutic experience" (Risser 39). Dynamic repetition

is what defines the character of presentation (Darstellung) in aesthetic understanding in which there is an "accretion of reality" (Zuwachs an Sein). A dynamic repetition is what defines the character of historical understanding where the tradition speaks again, speaks in a new voice. A dynamic repetition also identifies the basic trait of linguistic understanding insofar as our finite discourse "brings a totality of meaning into play, without being able to express it totally." (Risser 39-40)

Alongside Kierkegaard, Gadamer was able to argue that knowledge—irreducible to the realm of epistemology—is, in a way, always a repetition, not a literal repetition of the real, but a recreating and enlivening one performed by historical subjects. In Kierkegaardian philosophy, Gadamer found arguments to connect time and eternity, flux and Being, in the constitution and explication of knowledge and the human being. This undertaking is inexhaustible and mobile, so that understanding, ultimately, is always a recreation of our way of being between time and eternity, being and becoming, rather than a repetition of the same. Philosophy is, so to speak, a process of repetition that recreates our way of thinking and expressing the real, and

it must never submit to the logic of the repetition of the same, the characteristic logic of tertium non datur. Whereas Kierkegaard emphasizes the need for the dimension of participation and the mediation of the Christian faith, Gadamer argues for intrinsic participation and the mediation of the subject in the process of thinking and knowing, the subject being always self-implicated in the process of reflection.

4. Final considerations

Through this reflection, I have sought to demonstrate the undeniable and decisive contribution of Kierkegaard to the formation of Gadamer's philosophy. Although I have been researching Gadamer's philosophical project for a number of years, I must admit that I had not yet perceived the marked and decisive influence of Kierkegaard on the construction and elaboration of his philosophical hermeneutics. Beyond tracing and uncovering Kierkegaard's impact on the "contemporary Socrates," I have sought to highlight the philosophical comprehensiveness and relevance of both thinkers, especially as regards a way of thinking that takes human existence seriously in its search for happiness. It could be said that both thinkers denounce a philosophy that would kill poetry, since they knew that besides "being born aboard" the real, we live much more than a conceptual construction or static repetition of what has already been said or experienced. Life is, in fact, a matter of art, an attempt to connect flux and eternity as creative repetition: "The circle of repetition therefore is the circle in which freedom works itself out. [...] Repetition is a growth in freedom, a shattering of worldly ambitions and selfish goals in order to be brought back to the one thing necessary, to one's innermost and utmost potentiality" (Caputo, "Hermeneutics" 421-22). In Gadamer's work, the Kierkegaardian concepts of contemporaneity and repetition are crumbs that become like mustard seeds: as seeds they are tiny, but when they germinate they become large, vigorous trees. Thus, if analyzed carefully and patiently, Kierkegaard's apparently insignificant influence proves to be vital and vigorous in the structure and procedure of Gadamer's hermeneutics. Finally, from my perspective, their tremendous contribution to contemporary philosophy lies in their critique of abstract systems in the name of the value of life. That is why both of them turn to a Socratic method of philosophizing and defend a dialogical concept of philosophy as an unceasing attempt to recreate, in language, what it means for us to live happily.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Professor Jaqueline Stefani (UCS) and Clóvis Gedrat (CAPES) for their suggestions during the composition of this article.

Notes

¹ Wherever possible, existing English translations of the texts collected in Wahrheit und Methode: Ergänzungen, Register have been used. Since most of these texts are unavailable in English, however, original translations (indicated by parenthetical citations to the German title) have been made as needed.

² Schleiermacher's phrase: "Ich hasse alle Theorie, die nicht aus der Praxis erwächst."

³ For further details on this point, see Rohden.

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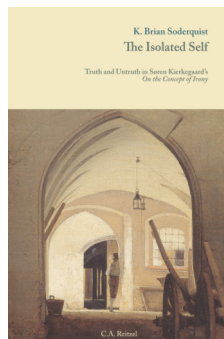
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Danish Golden Age Studies

C.A. Reitzel's Booksellers and Publisher in cooperation with the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre at the University of Copenhagen is proud to announce the publication of a new monograph series entitled, *Danish Golden Age Studies*. The new series is dedicated to advancing international research on different works, figures and discussions from the Danish Golden Age, i.e., the period from 1800 to around 1850 when writers and thinkers such as Hans Christian Andersen and Søren Kierkegaard were active.



K. Brian Soderquist

The Isolated Self.

Truth and Untruth in Søren Kierkegaard's On the Concept of Irony. viii+247pp (2007).

Hard cover US\$ 50. ISBN 87-7876-492-0

While many studies of *On the Concept of Irony* treat Kierkegaard's "irony" primarily from a literary perspective, *The Isolated Self* also examines irony with an eye to the fundamental problem in Kierkegaard's authorship, namely, the challenge of becoming a "self." Kierkegaard's "irony" is a cavalier way of life that seeks isolation from the other, an isolation he considers necessary to becoming a self. At the same time, irony is said to be a hindrance to selfhood because the self fails to become a part of the social world in which it resides. *The Isolated Self* thus puts the existential tension of *On the Concept of Irony* into relief and suggests how it sets the stage for the rest of Kierkegaard's authorship.

As the basis for these findings, *The Isolated Self* reconstructs the horizon of understanding during Kierkegaard's time, including Hegel's interpretation of Socrates and Friedrich Schlegel's romantic literature. In addition, the work explores material from the little-known Danish discussion of irony in the works of Poul Martin Møller, Johan Ludvig Heiberg and Hans Lassen Martensen.



Robert Leslie Horn

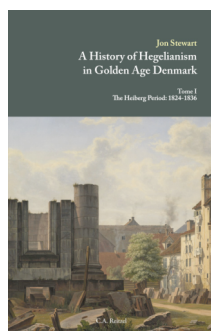
Positivity and Dialectic.

A Study of the Theological Method of Hans Lassen Martensen. xviii+246pp (2007).

Hard cover US\$ 50. ISBN 87-7876-500-5

This work has both an intrinsic and an extrinsic thesis. The setting is within the broader context of the study of the thought of Kierkegaard. The extrinsic thesis is that the work of Kierkegaard is essentially polemical in character and cannot be understood without taking into account the highly specific nature of his polemics against Danish Hegelianism. The special target of these polemics is the attempts of the Danish theologian, Hans Lassen Martensen (1808-1884) to bend the Hegelian philosophical method to his own theological purposes.

The intrinsic thesis is that Martensen's development is almost entirely within the lines of a form of theological intuitionism to which his use of Hegel bears only an external relation. Hence, if it is supposedly Hegelianism which Kierkegaard attacks in the writings of Martensen, it is a highly modified and atypical form of Hegelianism. This work traces Martensen's theological intuitionism through four stages in the period which is pertinent for the study of Kierkegaard, the years 1833 to 1850.



Jon Stewart

A History of Hegelianism in Golden Age Denmark.

Tome I: *The Heiberg Period 1824-1836.* xxi+629pp (2007).

Hard cover US\$ 65. ISBN 87-7876-504-8

The present tome is the first of a three-volume work dedicated to exploring the profound influence of G.W.F. Hegel's philosophical thinking in Golden Age Denmark. This initial volume covers the period from the beginning of the Hegel reception in the Danish Kingdom from the turn of the century until 1836. While Kierkegaard's polemic with the Danish Hegelians is a well-known part of his philosophical agenda, the actual texts and ideas of these thinkers have received little attention in their own right. The present work demonstrates that this largely overlooked tradition of Hegel reception played a profound and indeed constitutive role in many aspects of Golden Age culture: philosophy, theology, literature, poetry, law, journalism, and the arts. Moreover, it brought into its orbit most all of the main figures from the period.

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Book Review

**Michelle Kosch, *Freedom and Reason in Kant, Schelling, and Kierkegaard*
(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006)**

Reviewed by Rick Anthony Furtak, Colorado College

The frame of reference is decidedly Teutonic in this knowledgeable and judicious monograph: Kierkegaard's work is situated in the context of post-Kantian idealism, and recent German scholars writing *about* Kant and Schelling receive more attention than Continental philosophers of the past century. As a result, Heidegger shows up only as a commentator on Schelling, while Ricoeur does not even merit the brief mention given to such figures as A. J. Ayer, despite the obvious relevance of his work on freedom and nature to the themes of Kosch's book. Yet there is no shortage of complex and rewarding philosophical material within Kosch's chosen historical domain, especially for readers interested in moral psychology. Moreover, as she demonstrates, the continuity between Kierkegaard's concerns and those of Kant and Schelling is greater than many of us have recognized.

The following observation marks the point of departure for Kosch's entire study: if moral freedom simply consists in obeying the dictates of lawgiving practical reason, then deliberation between one course of action and another becomes unintelligible, as does the possibility of freely choosing the wrong thing. As Kosch points out in her Introduction, this problem for Kantian ethics has larger implications: it links up with the project of accounting for "the place of human agency in nature" (3), one that was at the heart of the philosophical enterprise for Kant and his major successors. Kant's transcendental idealism makes room for human beings to escape mechanistic determination, but only by leaving us unfree in another way. As rational agents we are not bound by empirical laws of cause and effect; but we *are* nonetheless subject to a kind of "intelligible fatalism" (50-51; the phrase is credited to Kant's contemporary C. C. E. Schmid), unless we can freely and responsibly choose either good *or* evil. Although Kant was aware of this problem, Kosch regards him as having failed to resolve it satisfactorily. As she points out, any plausible moral psychology must acknowledge the existential predicament of the person who wonders, "What am I supposed to do?" (215) -- without even knowing how to answer this question, much less being able to actualize his or her best ideas about what should be done.

In his early work, Schelling sought to build upon Kant's *Critique of Judgment* by defending a viable conception of nature's intrinsic teleology. The world is not governed by meaningless causality if everything that happens is effectively the creation of an immanent divinity, a playwright who is *not* independent of his drama or the actors in it (78). On this view, however, the aim of each person's moral striving is "to lose oneself, one's individual personality, through a sort of immersion in a larger order of things, in the absolute" (83). Decades later, as Kosch explains, Schelling -- who by this time was looking back not only on his own earlier work but on Hegel's finished career -- tried to find an alternative to all philosophical systems in which, as Scheler says, the person is nothing but a conduit of impersonal rational activity. What Schelling develops in his late writings is an obscure mythological cosmology, a vision of being according to which the fabric of reality includes chaos and unreason as an "indivisible remainder" (103) that defies comprehension. Rather than a well-ordered universe governed by a rationalistic deity, we have a world in which personality can genuinely exist. This is because individual existence erupts from a blindly churning ground that is prior to being, not a cosmic principle of reason expressing itself in every finite intelligence (121, 136).

Kosch lays out in precise detail the reasons for thinking that Kierkegaard would have been familiar with Schelling's later thought: most obviously through the Berlin lectures he attended and the influence of F. C. Sibbern, but also via his reading of the Schelling-inspired books and articles of such key figures as I. H. Fichte

and Friedrich Stahl. Although current fashion may locate Schelling and his admirers at the margins of 19th-century philosophy, they were very much a part of the climate of ideas that surrounded Kierkegaard during the 1830s and 1840s. And if Kosch is correct, this is also where we should look in order to find antecedents to Kierkegaard's own philosophical concerns as represented in the pseudonymous authorship.

The connection with Schelling makes many of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works appear in a new light: for example, a passage in *Either/Or* finds the Judge describing freedom as "participation in the rationally necessary order of things" in terms remarkably akin to those of Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism*, and similar traces can be found in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript's* account of the rationalistic "Religiousness A," in which "the individual sets himself aside in order to find God" (148, 167). Both the aesthetic and the ethical perspectives as portrayed in *Either/Or* embody incoherent notions of agency: the aesthete "A" adopts a contradictory stance toward himself that denies the possibility of moral choice, while the Judge renders vice unintelligible by claiming that anyone who accepts the need for choice will automatically succeed at discerning and willing the good. The inadequacy of the ethical point of view and of Religiousness A, Kosch argues, is that they replicate the errors of Kant and the early Schelling, especially with respect to the phenomenology of human freedom. Leaning on a passage in which the aesthete states that his maxim is "not to begin anything," Kosch suggests that the aesthete's problem is not that he fails to develop an integrated personality but that he makes a logical error -- that is, by taking a normative stance toward his own agency that involves the denial "that there is any addressee of normative claims" (149).

This is an illuminating suggestion, although it does not seem to conflict with other interpretations to the degree that Kosch contends. Why should we assume that the aesthete must be suffering *either* from his failure to become a self *or* from his contradictory notion of moral agency? When the Judge offers an account of why the aesthete experiences the passage of time as tedious and without meaning, it makes little difference whether he places emphasis on one [moral] or another [logical] kind of incoherence. It is true that the ethical "model of selfhood" is "foreign to the aesthetic point of view" (150), but the goal of avoiding contradiction in one's self-understanding is one that appears equally foreign to the aesthete. Either way, the Judge's advice will reach deaf ears unless the aesthete is convinced to adopt standards that he previously did not hold.

If Kosch occasionally seems to protest too much on behalf of her own position and against others that are not incompatible with it, this detracts only minimally from an analysis that is developed with meticulous care and filled with rich insights. Her overall tone is not excessively polemical, and her readings of Kierkegaard in particular are distinct and cogent. By the time Kosch's reader has arrived at her description of what she considers to be Kierkegaard's own ultimate view, it seems fully valid to conclude that the requirement for eradicating despair, as outlined in *The Sickness unto Death*, is nothing more or less than to embrace an adequate conception of human agency: that is, to achieve the ideal of integrating facticity and transcendence as an existing subject aware that one's very existence is owed "to something beyond and above" oneself (203) that can and should be construed in religious terms. Compared to Schelling's view, this one is "more coherent, less strange, better psychologically and phenomenologically informed, but a relative of Schelling's nevertheless and informed by his primary concerns" (139). There may be a significant distance between Kant's ethics of autonomy and Kierkegaard's moral-religious psychology, but Michelle Kosch has shown that the path from the one to the other is direct.

Edward F. Mooney, *On Søren Kierkegaard: Dialogue, Polemics, Lost Intimacy, and Time* (Ashgate Publishing, 2007)

Reviewed by Patrick Stokes, University of Melbourne

The Preface to Edward Mooney's latest volume declares its intention to "work a space where theology and philosophy, literature and ethics, poetry and scripture, artistry and sacrament can mingle, affording mutual attractions and inter-animations [...] I hope that this fruitful comingling points to new possibilities for philosophy and theology." The series of meditations that follow, on a variety of Kierkegaardian topics, succeeds admirably – not to mention elegantly – in enacting this intention.

"Enacting" is precisely the right word here, for this text accomplishes the fusion of academic analysis and prayerful reverence that is the topic of its final chapter. Mooney's prose has always had a refreshingly poetic cast to it, a style that explicitly seeks to overcome the gap between a *scholarly* understanding of the existential dimension of Kierkegaard's work and a properly *existential* grasp thereof. The "city of readers" of Kierkegaard's work, as Mooney puts it, has been expanding since 1855, but the question remains whether *this* city "has done better than Copenhagen at *heeding* the aim of [Kierkegaard's] mission" (p.37). To this readership Mooney offers the stark reminder that "We are full-time human beings even as we're professional academics" (p.228) and that "Kierkegaard's aims outstrip the aims of solely *academic* philosophical work. [...] Academic work can ask readers to *see* the truth, but it falls short of asking anyone to *live* in that truth" (p.131). He enjoins us to remain open to the first-personal direct address of Kierkegaard's writing, "the unnerving shift from reading him to *being read*" by Kierkegaard (p.6).

Part One considers at length the relationship between Socrates and Kierkegaard, a relationship that Mooney claims is ultimately one of identity: seen from our interpretative perspective, Kierkegaard *is* Socrates in precisely the same sense as that in which Kierkegaard claims Socrates *has become* a Christian (p.54). Mooney argues that Kierkegaard's Socratic identity is motivated not merely by Kierkegaard's love of Socrates' inquisitorial and deflationary dialectic, but by the *irresistible* aspect of Socrates himself, the way Socrates *in his person* embodies a commitment to love and piety well beyond the warrant his abortive dialectical inquiries can furnish him with. In this manner Socrates instantiates what Mooney calls "tactile" knowledge, an embodied, non-theorised knowledge, inaccessible to rational interrogation (but the contours of which can be traced through the negative action of dialectic).

Mooney's claim that Kierkegaard simultaneously bears Socratic and Christian identities depends upon a somewhat controversial claim: that the Socratic is neither surpassed by nor subordinated to the Christian, for there can be no possibility of a coordinating scale of value by which to rank them: "Since neither Christ nor Socrates is dispensable, both are *indispensable* [...] we lack an *independent standard* for calibrating their comparative indispensability" (p.28). Mooney cites five textual grounds in support of the claim that the Socratic need not necessarily give way to the Christian. I won't rehearse these all here but his fourth ground deserves a special mention. Mooney claims that "Johannes Climacus supports the idea that "B Religiousness" is an advance on "A Religiousness," but he leaves the existential *feel* of the *transition* to the Christian under-described" (p.30). Kierkegaard's "attention to the experiential tenor of the contrast between Socratic and Christian attunements is scant indeed" (p.48). This paucity in the description of what, subjectively, is given up and gained through the transition from "Socratic" to "Christian" religion stands in sharp contrast to the "fulsome" descriptions of the Aesthetic/Ethical transition given by e.g. Judge William. Still, the *Postscript* could equally be read as claiming that Religiousness B's actuating paradox makes the life it generates essentially indescribable, just as Abraham's faith puts him beyond human communication.

A key element in Kierkegaard's Socratic project, with its emphasis on openness and attunement to "tactile knowledge" is his use of words as "arcs of meaning" that, in their otherness, compel personal response. In light of this capacity of texts to compel subjective engagement, Mooney calls for a recovery of the Humanities:

Sites among the humanities open text-like worlds – worlds that Kierkegaard spits out, cities of words and notes and steps. We're asked to imagine felt contours of rising or descending life, of fluid grace or tempestuous disorder. Intimacy with how these are lived out is the opposite of abstraction, but *also* the opposite of fact or method. (p.73)

The re-acquisition of such "lost intimacy" and its incorporation into moral formation is now firmly beyond the scope of academic theory, for "cultivation of one's moral person has no obvious place; it's not in the curriculum" (p.79). Mooney effectively defends something like the "Liberal Humanism" so out of vogue in English Literature departments, yet he mounts his defence not from a position of pre-theoretical naivety but from a concern to anchor theoretical activity in the existential needs of reader and student. In an age where Humanities educators increasingly seem to feel they must articulate the value of their disciplines in purely instrumental terms in order to survive, the call is timely.

Part Two extends this critique by directing it against a "Hermeneutics of Suspicion," against which Mooney asserts the primacy of a hermeneutics of trust and charity. This move has important consequences, for "To grant the priority of trust and contact is to refuse the priority of theory" (p.97). Mooney's chosen example of the hermeneutics of suspicion is Joakim Garff's already-controversial biography of Kierkegaard, with its stated aim "to uncover the cracks in the granite of genius." Mooney sees this goal as symptomatic of a misplaced lack of trust that closes off the sort of "tactile" knowledge we encounter in a sympathetic reading, the moments that can only be expressed in the sudden declaration that "*This is Kierkegaard!*" (That such knowledge is available to us in an *Øieblik* is argued for in Chapter Six, which connects it with the notions of repetition and the experience of temporality). Mooney takes issue with Garff's "recurrent digressions along sexual paths that do little to illuminate the life, and even less to illuminate the texts" (p.104) as an example of the distortions such a hermeneutics will generate. However, Mooney does allow for a more charitable interpretation of a project of "uncovering the cracks" that could potentially legitimate Garff's discussion of Kierkegaard's sexuality beyond the merely voyeuristic interest Mooney is prepared to concede to it (p.98). Sexuality is one of the key *animating* features of any human life, especially of its non-theoretical *attunement* towards others and "tactile knowledge" of the world (compare e.g. Christopher Cordner's description of the erotic/romantic "hit" of the other).¹ Hence ascribing Kierkegaard's prodigious authorial output to sublimated sexuality might not be merely to "take Kierkegaard *down* a notch" as Mooney sees it (p.98), but instead open up aspects of the author's humanity and vulnerability. The risk of the "hermeneutics of suspicion" may well be descent into mean-spirited "exposé", but perhaps the potential risk of the hermeneutics of trust is something like unedifying hagiography.

The chapters that follow engage closely with specific texts and take up a variety of Kierkegaardian themes. Chapter Seven turns to Alasdair MacIntyre's treatment of *Either/Or* in *After Virtue*. This is ground Mooney has covered before, but here he argues that Kierkegaard's approach to moral dialogue falls outside MacIntyre's three modes of inquiry (Encyclopaedic, Genealogical, "Tradition"), occupying a "rogue" position that emphasises both the humility of the will (with a relinquishment of assertive freedom) and a corresponding receptivity – a form of living exemplification of truth beyond theory that Mooney labels Socratic (pp.127-132). Among the many themes that Mooney weaves almost musically through his text is a concern for the adoption of roles (hence Kierkegaard toys with the personae Faust, Anti-Faust, the Master Thief, the Wandering Jew, Polemicist, and of course Socrates). Mooney develops new readings of certain Kierkegaardian pseudonyms in this light. Chapter Seven draws a connection between the spectacle of Tivoli and the appearance of *Fear and Trembling*, casting Johannes de silentio as a carnival tout and showman, presenting a peep-show of spirituality. Mooney sees something similar at work in the *Postscript*; Climacus appears to offer us not a treatise but a series of *tableaux* that present various moral options and constitute, in a phrase of Hannay's which Mooney endorses, an "itinerary for personality" (Chapter 11, especially pp.178-83). Repetition is another recurring theme (here and throughout Mooney's work), discussed at length in Chapter Nine. A concern for an existential openness and attunement, beyond the theoretical and abstract, animates and structures all these readings.

This concern finally plays out in Part Three in discussions of the *Postscript* as offering ethical exemplars, bringing Stanley Cavell's model of ethical perfectionism into contact with Kierkegaard's authorial project of showing us our "next, better selves." In this connection Mooney develops a new and nuanced account of the structure of Indirect Communication, one that apparently dissolves some of the more problematic readings of *how* the *Postscript* communicates, if at all. Again, "tactile" knowledge – what's communicated beyond the merely propositional in Lear's "No!" or Molly Bloom's "Yes" – is what is essentially at stake in indirect communication. Mooney also engages at some length with the question of Climacus' revocation of the text, developing its multi-faceted place in this communicative strategy. Mooney finishes with a discussion of the *Upbuilding Discourses*' capacity to both excite and still academic response, raising the perhaps uncomfortable – precisely by dint of its urgency – question of the relation between academic and personal, "prayerful" reading of Kierkegaard.

These comments have done little to convey the richness of themes and eloquence of execution that characterise this book. Kierkegaardians will find much of value here – both as professional academics *and* as full-time human beings.

¹ Corder, Christopher *Ethical Encounter* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001)