

The Reception of Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* in the English-Speaking World

By JON STEWART

In the anglophone world little research has been done directly on Kierkegaard's *Nachlass*. There exists to date no independent research monograph from the pen of an anglophone scholar dedicated exclusively to this body of material. But this is not to say that the *Nachlass* is wholly unknown to anglophone students and scholars. It has been used primarily for two different purposes.

First, the *Nachlass* has been regarded as a biographical source. Thus, it has been mined for autobiographical statements and anecdotes which could be put together often for the purpose of introducing Kierkegaard to an audience of introductory students. This approach is fostered in part by editions which explicitly present the material as autobiographical or as Kierkegaard's diary. Works that use the *Nachlass* in this way cannot be said to make it an object of real research since they tend to take an uncritical view of the material as a biographical source of information; they simply assume that whatever Kierkegaard writes there must be true and accurate statements about his life. Thus, while these editions have been quite successful in the classroom at introducing Kierkegaard to students, they have not made any significant contribution to anglophone Kierkegaard research as such.

Second, many scholars in the anglophone world tend to make use of the journals in an *ad hoc* fashion in order to support their interpretations and analyses of specific themes in the published works. In other words, the actual object of research is invariably an issue in one of the published works, and the *Nachlass* is used to supplement that when possible. Given the problems with the difficulty of using the material in the *Papirer* edition, it is clear that it was the creation of the three volume index from 1975-78 that made research of this kind possible at all.¹

¹ *Pap.*, vols. XIV-XVI, by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn.

To be sure, with this sort of research the *Nachlass* remained of secondary importance behind the published works; the original constellation of issues that was of interest to researchers was generally one that was set forth in one of the published works. But with the help of the index scholars could use the *Nachlass* in order to illuminate some of these issues. Thus, the *Nachlass* was not considered to be important in its own right but rather was used in an ancillary fashion in order to illuminate the published works.

In what follows I will briefly review the anglophone works that treat Kierkegaard's *Nachlass*. These can be divided into two groups: first those that have the *Nachlass* as the central object of their investigation (Section I), and second those which make use of the *Nachlass* in the service of another end (Section II). Given the lack of material from anglophone scholars, many of the works treated in these first two sections come from the hand of Danish scholars and appear in English translation. In Section III, the different English editions of Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* will be briefly described. Section IV will treat the new English translation of this material based on the new Danish edition, *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*. The goal of this article is to give some sense of what material from or about Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* is available to the anglophone reader and to try to get a sense for what picture of Kierkegaard has been presented to the world of anglophone research by means of these works. Further, it will be noted that in the anglophone world, a number of works from the *Nachlass* have more or less come to be regarded on a par with the published works themselves, i.e., Kierkegaard's posthumously published works, such as *Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est*, *The Book on Adler*, and *The Battle between the Old and the New Soap-Cellars*. For this reason there are a number of treatments of these works; however, these are too numerous to be included here. Instead, I will try to focus primarily on the part of the *Nachlass* that is understood as the journals and notebooks.

I. Research Monographs or Articles on the Nachlass

While there have to date been no works by anglophone scholars on the *Nachlass* as such, there do exist some English translations of works by Danish scholars which treat this material in its own right. These works have exercised a significant influence on Kierkegaard research in the English-speaking world.

A. Written Images, by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Joakim Garff
and Johnny Kondrup

The best introduction to the actual history of the *Nachlass* is a highly readable, short book entitled *Written Images*.² This work is the joint effort of three Danish scholars, Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Joakim Garff and Johnny Kondrup, and has recently appeared in an excellent English translation by Bruce Kirmmse. The work sets for itself three main goals. First, in Chapters 1 and 2, it simply tells the story of the *Nachlass* from the time when it was found by Henrik Lund to its present condition today at the Royal Library. It does an excellent job of describing the birth pains of the publication of the Barfod-Gottsched edition and gives the reader a profound insight into the highly problematic reputation that Kierkegaard had in Denmark in the decades following his death. Second, in Chapter 3, this book attempts to give the reader a sense of the nature and size of the material that is included in Kierkegaard's *Nachlass*: the drafts of the published and unpublished works, the journals and notebooks, letters, biographical documents, loose papers and the books from Kierkegaard's own private library. The fourth and final chapter departs somewhat from the topic of the *Nachlass* and provides a sketch of Kierkegaard's personal habits as a writer in general. This account could apply equally well to his published works and his *Nachlass* and thus has nothing intrinsically to do with the latter. Here his obsession for writing which resulted in his immense productivity is explored. Further, entertaining accounts are given of his somewhat idiosyncratic work habits and of his relations to his personal secretaries, Peter Wilhelm Christensen (1819-63) and Israel Levin (1810-83). Finally, Kierkegaard's relation to his writing tools is explored; this analysis reveals that he was very meticulous in his use of high quality paper and ink.

This work is not a piece of new research but rather aims merely to introduce the *Nachlass* in an accessible manner. It succeeds eminently in this goal. It is readable and informative for both the Kierkegaard specialist and the layman. One of the best features of this work is the fact that, in addition to the narrative descriptions of the material, it

² Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Joakim Garff, Johnny Kondrup *Skriftbilleder. Søren Kierkegaards journaler, notesbøger, hæfter, ark, lapper og strimler*, Copenhagen: G.E.C. Gad 1996. In English: *Written Images. Søren Kierkegaard's Journals, Notebooks, Booklets, Sheets, Scraps, and Slips of Paper*, tr. by Bruce H. Kirmmse, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2003. See the review of the Danish edition in *Kierkegaardiana* 19, pp. 151-152.

contains a number of excellent color pictures of the actual manuscripts, journals, and notebooks and gives the reader a good sense of the kind of materials that are at issue. If one is interested in embarking on a study of Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* with little or no prior knowledge, this book is without doubt the best place to start.

B. Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins, by Henning Fenger

The most significant work in translation is probably Henning Fenger's *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins. Studies in the Kierkegaardian Papers and Letters*.³ This is a translation of Fenger's *Kierkegaard-Myter og Kierkegaard-Kilder*, with the omission of the long final chapter. Fenger's work is somewhat technical and presupposes a far greater knowledge of Kierkegaard than does *Word-Pictures*. Indeed, instead of telling the stories about the different aspects of Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* and its publication in detail, he comments on it in a way that presupposes it to be already familiar to the reader. Moreover, this work goes into a number of philological issues in order to criticize the editors of the *Papirer* edition as well as Thulstrup's reprint. Despite its short length and readability, this work is somewhat difficult to get a handle on. Fenger's analyses, although interesting, are somewhat rambling, and it is not always so easy to discern the main issue. In his Preface Fenger does not state in any very clear terms what the book is actually about; indeed, he does not even mention the *Nachlass*. It is only at the end of the first chapter that one learns that his goal is to explore "the extent to which the papers of the young Kierkegaard are fiction."⁴ This can be regarded as the theme which runs through the entire work. Fenger's thesis is that many of the entries in the journals and notebooks are in fact fictional sketches and thus should not be taken as historically or biographically factual. He uses this intuition to critically reexamine a number of hobbyhorses and standard views in Kierkegaard research.

The general thesis of his first chapter, entitled "Kierkegaard as a Falsifier of History," seems to be something to the effect that Kierkegaard intentionally attempted to lead his readers astray. In trying to

³ Henning Fenger *Kierkegaard-Myter og Kierkegaard-Kilder*, Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag 1976. In English: *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins*, tr. by George C. Schoolfield, New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1980.

⁴ Henning Fenger *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins*, p. 31.

make this claim, Fenger discusses a number of quite diverse topics, moving from the one to the other without any clear transitions. This thesis is of course rather general and does not specifically concern the *Nachlass*, although to be sure Fenger thinks that Kierkegaard attempts to mislead the future readers of the *Nachlass* in much the same way that his pseudonyms in the published works attempt to confuse and mislead.

The genuine discussion of the *Nachlass* itself begins in Chapter 2, "Kierkegaard's Papers and Library." Here Fenger critically discusses the two main Danish editions of the posthumous material. He is quite critical of the *Papirer* for the way in which the editors have rendered their edition difficult to use due to their reorganization of the material. Somewhat surprisingly, he defends the Barfod-Gottsched edition, arguing that their editorial principles were less heavy-handed and created a more coherent and readable text. Fenger's Chapter 3 treats the many often far-fetched theories concerning Kierkegaard's outward appearance as well as his physical and mental health. While one can occasionally find in the *Nachlass* complaints about specific ailments and vast amounts of material for psychological conjecture, Fenger seems primarily concerned with the secondary literature on the topic and with contemporary secondhand reports about Kierkegaard's person. Thus, this chapter does not make a careful study of any part of the *Nachlass* and seems not really to have much to do with it.

Fenger's long Chapter 4 is probably the best in the book and seems to represent his main argument with regard to the *Nachlass*. Here he analyzes the famous Gilleleje entries in the *Journal AA*, where Kierkegaard tells of his summer in North Zealand and of his various excursions. Fenger's argument is that these entries, some of which appear explicitly in the form of letters, are in fact a sketch for a novel in the form of letters. He argues that Kierkegaard had a number of contemporary models for this kind of work in Goethe's *The Sufferings of Young Werder*, Sibbern's *Efterladte Breve af Gabrielis*,⁵ and various works by the Danish poet and novelist Steen Steensen Blicher (1782-1848). He claims further that these sketches are echoed in the "Diapsalmata" in *Either/Or* and that these attempts in the genre of a novel in letters can be seen as the forerunner to "Guilty?/Not Guilty?" from *Stages on Life's Way*. This claim is highly interesting since if Fenger is correct, then this interpretation would seem to imply that most all of the Gilleleje entries have a fictional element and thus cannot be read,

⁵ F. C. Sibbern *Efterladte Breve af Gabrielis*, Copenhagen 1826.

as they almost invariably are, as autobiographical. Fenger is further highly critical of the editors of the *Papirer* edition for what he regards as the dubious dates which they assign to some of the entries.⁶ Whether or not one ultimately agrees with Fenger in every detail is not important. The value of his provocative argument is that it enjoins the researcher and the philologist to caution when working with this material. It can no longer be taken at face value as straightforwardly autobiographical.

In Chapter 5 Fenger is concerned with refuting the main lines of Niels Thulstrup's *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel*.⁷ Although there are a few pages at the beginning of the chapter that discuss the Gil-leleje entries and try to build on the analysis from the previous chapter,⁸ and although there are also brief accounts of *The Battle between the Old and the New Soap-Cellars* from the *Journal DD* and the post-humous work, *Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est*, this chapter is not primarily concerned with the *Nachlass*. Fenger's highly justifiable criticism is aimed at Thulstrup's undifferentiated view that Kierkegaard had a uniformly negative relation to Hegel throughout his career. Fenger's thesis is that there are many signs that the young Kierkegaard in fact had a very positive view of Hegel, and when the actual break came it had less to do with Hegel's philosophy than with Heiberg's negative review of *Either/Or* in 1843.⁹ Fenger's thesis is more suggestive than it is carefully worked out and documented. But it is, in my view, entirely correct in its essentials and represents a refreshing corrective to Thulstrup's oversimplistic, caricatured picture.

The short Chapter 6 is dedicated to the story of Kierkegaard's much discussed relation to Regine Olsen. Fenger draws on some of the famous journal entries from AA and EE, which seem to concern this relation, and tries to raise the suspicion that they too might be fictional. Unfortunately, this chapter is not very developed, and Fenger's claims remain merely interesting suggestions for future research. Chapter 7

⁶ Henning Fenger *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins*, pp. 86f., pp. 93ff.

⁷ Niels Thulstrup *Kierkegaards Forhold til Hegel og til den spekulative Idealisme indtil 1846*, Copenhagen: Gyldendal 1967. In English: *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel*, tr. by George L. Stengren, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1980. German translation: *Kierkegaards Verhltnis zu Hegel und zum spekulativen Idealismus 1835-1846*, Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer 1972.

⁸ Henning Fenger *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins*, pp. 133-135.

⁹ Johan Ludvig Heiberg "Litterær Vintersæd" in *Intelligensblade*, vol. 2, no. 24, March 1, 1843, pp. 285-292. See Henning Fenger *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins*, p. 147.

concerns Kierkegaard's trip to Jutland in the summer of 1840 which he recorded in the *Notebook* 5 and 6. Here Fenger argues precisely as he did in Chapter 4 regarding the trip to Gilleleje and North Zealand: he inveighs against the editors of the *Papirer* (who print the material in *Pap.* III A 14-84) for taking these entries as historically and biographically veridical. By contrast, he claims Kierkegaard made this journey in part to collect material and ideas for his novel of letters, again with the inspiration of Blicher.¹⁰ Fenger thus challenges the datings of the entries, often in a rather technical way, in order to show that they can only be fictive.

Chapter 8, continuing some of the issues he discussed previously in Chapter 6, returns to Kierkegaard's relation to Regine Olsen. Fenger attempts to reconstruct Kierkegaard's correspondence with Regine and to follow the ups and downs of the relationship which accompanied it. He tries to argue that these letters from Kierkegaard look forward to "The Diary of a Seducer" from *Either/Or* and "Guilty?/Not Guilty?" from *Stages on Life's Way*.¹¹ Further, he draws a parallel between Kierkegaard's treatment of Regine and Johannes the Seducer's treatment of Cordelia.¹²

This is a highly readable and interesting book in many ways, although it is too poorly organized and presupposes far too much prior knowledge to be a useful introduction for beginners. Its merits are primarily its lack of deference for much of the Kierkegaard secondary literature and the refreshing way in which it calls into question a number of standard views in the research. Moreover, Fenger, in his willingness to criticize Kierkegaard's positions and person, represents a highly useful opposition to the many Kierkegaard apologists of the era, not least of all Niels Thulstrup. With regard to the book's main thesis about Kierkegaard's purported novel in letters it must be said that Fenger does not adequately prove his case.¹³ He does, however, explore in a highly interesting manner what the potentially far-reaching consequences of such a view might be if it were taken to be proven. In a sense the bulk of the book is about drawing out these consequences, whereas Fenger's case would have been better served if he had concentrated his energies on proving the original claim.

¹⁰ Henning Fenger *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins*, pp. 173ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 204ff.

¹³ See the discussion in Søren Bruun and Jette Knudsen "Tekstredgørelse" to *Journal AA* in *SKS*, vol. K17, pp. 18-21.

C. "The Retrospective Understanding of Søren Kierkegaard's Total Production," by *Niels Jørgen Cappelørn*

Falling somewhere between the categories of works in translation and works originally written in English is an essay by the aforementioned Danish scholar Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, entitled "The Retrospective Understanding of Søren Kierkegaard's Total Production."¹⁴ Although an article and not an extended monograph, this work is worthy of note for a number of reasons, not least of which is its pioneering nature. This essay was originally delivered as a paper at the conference "Kierkegaard: Resources and Results" that was held at McGill University in Canada in 1980. It was subsequently published in the volume of proceedings that appeared in 1982.

This essay argues for two theses. The first of these is as follows: "The *Journals* are not independent of the entire production but constitute a part of it."¹⁵ This thesis is aimed polemically against the view that the journals are to be conceived as Kierkegaard's diary and thus as something separate and different with respect to genre from the published writings. The second thesis reads thus: "A complete understanding of the entire production can be obtained only through a retrospective process of interpretation."¹⁶ This is more of an interpretative thesis than a polemical one. Although this is not made explicit in the essay itself, this second thesis could be conceived as aimed against those who would argue that individual works of individual pseudonyms can and indeed must be understood on their own without reference to Kierkegaard's other works or the *Nachlass*. It should be noted that by "journals" here the author means the *Nachlass* generally and not what is today understood as the journals strictly speaking, i.e., the journals in contrast to the notebooks or the other parts of the *Nachlass*.

This paper can be divided into three sections. The first section¹⁷ is dedicated to showing that, according to Kierkegaard, his life and work could only be understood backwards or retrospectively. This is demonstrated beyond any doubt by means of a number of journal entries where Kierkegaard says so rather straightforwardly in a number of different ways.

¹⁴ Niels Jørgen Cappelørn "The Retrospective Understanding of Søren Kierkegaard's Total Production" in *Kierkegaard. Resources and Results*, ed. by Alastair McKinnon, Montreal: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1982, pp. 18-38.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-22.

The second section, which is the most relevant for our purposes, is concerned with the *Nachlass* specifically.¹⁸ The main argument in this section is, as just noted, that the *Nachlass* is not to be conceived as a kind of private diary in contrast to the published works. While it is true that there are some journal entries which seem to contain some biographical information or to be based on some factual event in Kierkegaard's daily life, the accounts of these as they appear in the journals always have some fictional or poetic element about them. Evidence for this is also provided by journal entries in which Kierkegaard reflects on his writing praxis and says that he cannot help but embroider on the facts when he begins to write.¹⁹ The conclusion is that it is impossible to distinguish the kind of fictional or poetic writing that appears in the published works from that which appears in the journals. It would be naive to think that Kierkegaard attempted to give a straightforwardly veridical and factual account of the events of his life in his journals, while the rest of his writing was dedicated to creating literary works. Thus, with this claim the conclusion is drawn that the *Nachlass* should not be considered something separate and apart but rather it forms a substantive part of what Kierkegaard conceived as his total literary production. This argument is highly convincing and well documented.

The third section examines Kierkegaard's posthumous work, *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*.²⁰ This section tries to show once again Kierkegaard's own understanding of the authorship retrospectively. This can hardly be doubted since *The Point of View* is itself a retrospective consideration of the authorship as a whole. The author shows how Kierkegaard intended there to be two parallel strands, one of pseudonymous works and one of edifying works up until the *Post-script*, which was the turning point in the authorship. Works from each of these two strands correspond to one another and treat similar issues according to their own genre and style. Thus, texts from the pseudonymous authorship can be said to comment upon and be in dialogue with those of the edifying authorship and *vice versa*.

This is an outstanding article not only with regard to what it says about the *Nachlass*. The second section is noteworthy for its main argument and also for the excellent characterization that it gives of the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-29.

¹⁹ E. g. *JP*, 6, 6843; *Pap.* X 5 A 146.

²⁰ Niels Jørgen Cappelørn "The Retrospective Understanding of Søren Kierkegaard's Total Production," pp. 29-36.

nature of the *Nachlass*. It provides a useful overview of the different kinds of material which it contains and how Kierkegaard used his journals and notebooks in relation to the published works. In one telling entry, journal writing is characterized as a kind of “backstage practice” for the published works.²¹ This article can in some ways be seen as pioneering with regard to the way in which it takes the *Nachlass* seriously and tries to use it to understand not some specialized detail in one of Kierkegaard’s published works but rather Kierkegaard’s project as an author in general.

II. *Research Monographs which Treat or Use the Nachlass*

While the aforementioned works are the only ones in English that are dedicated solely or primarily to the *Nachlass*, there is another group of works, which uses the *Nachlass* for special purposes. In other words, these works make use of the *Nachlass* in the service of an analysis of some specific issue in Kierkegaard’s authorship, which is the real object of investigation. Since nowadays it has become fairly common for works in the anglophone secondary literature to quote or refer to individual passages from the *Nachlass*, it would be impossible to treat all of them in this context; instead I will confine myself to works which make *extensive* use of this material.

A. *Kierkegaard’s Thought, by Gregor Malantschuk*

Perhaps the most noteworthy text in this category is Gregor Malantschuk’s *Kierkegaard’s Thought*.²² This work is unabashedly hailed by its translators as “the best book currently available on Kierkegaard in any language.”²³ The book consists of three long chapters, the first two of which are dedicated in a sense to Kierkegaard’s early journals. The stated goal of this work is to identify the “dialectical structure” and the underlying “comprehensive plan” behind Kierkegaard’s vast and heterogeneous authorship.²⁴ Although Malantschuk rarely mentions

²¹ *JP*, 5, 5241; *Pap.* II A 118. (*SKS*, 17, DD:28, p. 230.)

²² Gregor Malantschuk *Kierkegaard’s Thought*, tr. by Howard V. and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1971. A translation of *Dialektik og Eksistens hos Søren Kierkegaard*, Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag 1968.

²³ Gregor Malantschuk *Kierkegaard’s Thought*, p. vii.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

secondary literature and focuses almost exclusively on the primary texts, his polemical stance seems to be aimed against those who would deny that there is any such unity in Kierkegaard's authorship and who attempt to interpret individual works in isolation from the other ones and from the *Nachlass*. This work aims to demonstrate, so to speak, the logos in the chaos, and the unity in the plurality.

The first chapter, entitled "Anthropological Contemplation," explores Kierkegaard's various studies in the early journals and tries to show how Kierkegaard "gradually moved away from the objective branches of knowledge toward a steadily stronger emphasis on the subjective elements which bear on man's existential development."²⁵ Malantschuk takes a tip from one of Kierkegaard's entries²⁶ and claims that the unifying theme of these early investigations is authentic "anthropological contemplation."²⁷ These anthropological studies take many forms and cover many different fields, of which the following are listed: "mythology, esthetics, anthropology, philosophy, philosophy of religion, ethics, and – first and last – theology."²⁸ One could also add psychology, which is treated in some detail, although it does not appear on the list. In this initial chapter, Malantschuk examines these different headings in turn on the basis of various passages from the *Nachlass*. Some of the headings are further subdivided; for example, under "philosophy" Kierkegaard's relations to individual philosophers are treated, e. g., Hegel, J. G. Fichte, I. H. Fichte and Kant,²⁹ as well as specific philosophical problems, i. e., ontological problems, the problem of freedom, and the boundary between metaphysics and ethics.³⁰

Disappointingly, Malantschuk's analyses in this initial chapter are rather superficial due presumably to the fact that he wants to give an overview of the material. He thus frequently quotes from Kierkegaard's journals and notebooks, but rarely explores the quoted material in any detail. What is most unfortunate is that Malantschuk's methodology undermines his ultimate goal of demonstrating the unity of the material. By running through so much and such varied material so quickly, he simply reinforces the perception that there is no continuity. This is exacerbated by the fact that the discussions following the individual themes are not always clearly demarcated but rather

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁶ *JP*, I, 37; *Pap.* III A 3.

²⁷ Gregor Malantschuk *Kierkegaard's Thought*, p. 12.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-68.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-93.

blurred together. This can be seen already from the list of themes (quoted above) that he gives. It seems rather odd, for example, that philosophy, philosophy of religion, ethics, and esthetics are listed as separate topics. On the usual understanding, the latter three are thought to be individual branches of philosophy and not discrete topics. These problems are further aggravated in the English translation; while in the original Danish text the long chapters are broken up into individual sections, the English translation has eliminated the section headings and breaks, presenting the reader with a long continuous block of text. The decision of the translators to leave out these section breaks renders the English text considerably more difficult to follow and to orient oneself in than the original Danish one. In any case, in this first chapter little evidence is given for the continuity that this work wants to demonstrate. On the contrary, the reader is simply given a very quick overview, which would hardly facilitate an understanding of the material if the reader was not already familiar with it ahead of time. The original claim to show how Kierkegaard “moved away from the objective branches of knowledge” and toward the subject is never demonstrated.

While Chapter One is concerned with specific themes in Kierkegaard’s early journals and notebooks, Chapter Two is concerned to sketch what Malantschuk regards as Kierkegaard’s dialectical method. The hidden premise in this discussion is that Kierkegaard developed rather early a single method which he used consistently in his authorship from then on. Malantschuk chooses to give an account of this method based not on the published works, as one might expect, but rather on the journals and notebooks due presumably to the fact that he wishes to show how Kierkegaard developed this method there in large part prior to the beginning of the published authorship. The analyses in this chapter are considerably better developed than in the previous one. Here one can see more clearly Malantschuk’s own line of interpretation in contrast to Chapter One, which had more the look of a simple inventory of themes and topics of interest to Kierkegaard. This second chapter is probably somewhat less useful as a discussion of the *Nachlass* as such since the focus seems very clearly to be on Malantschuk’s interpretation of the method and not on the texts of the *Nachlass* in their own right. This is understandable given that Malantschuk was working with the *Papirer* edition which did not allow him to treat any specific journal or notebook as a coherent whole. It is thus natural for him to look through this material with an eye towards a specific theme, in this case Kierkegaard’s statements about method.

The second chapter begins with a brief discussion of the concept of consistency which is hailed as central to Kierkegaard's method.³¹ This, however, cannot be regarded as any particular revelation since presumably any sound method will strive for consistency. Any method which fails to do so could hardly be regarded as credible. Malantschuk then sketches what he regards as the method in terms of Kierkegaard's attempt to see different elements in terms of an organic unity. He is careful to note that this is not to be confused with Hegel's method since "the goal for all Kierkegaard's dialectical efforts ... is simply and solely organic unity and not systematic unity."³² The attempt to distinguish the two thinkers on this point, however, collapses when one recalls that Hegel frequently claims that systematic unity is precisely organic unity³³ and compares the development of the system of philosophy with that of an organic entity.³⁴ The goal of the method, claims Malantschuk, is to see the different kinds of organic unities at all different levels of human existence.³⁵ He claims, "Kierkegaard seeks to embrace the total actuality of the subject within ever new perspectives until he finds an exhaustive interpretation of all the issues related to this actuality."³⁶ Once again, it is not clear how he takes this to be different from Hegel's project, which also aims to give an exhaustive account of the subject at all the different levels. Perhaps the most astonishing of all is Malantschuk's account of what he calls "interdependent concepts" or "coupled concepts."³⁷ Here he claims that an original feature of Kierkegaard's method is to see conceptual pairs such as "temporal-eternal," "necessity-freedom," "finite-infi-

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 105ff. Cf. also pp. 163ff.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 111.

³³ E. g., Hegel *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, ed. and tr. by H. S. Harris and Walter Cerf, Albany: SUNY Press 1977, p. 103; *Jub.*, vol. 1, p. 60: "Philosophy, as a totality of knowledge produced by reflection, becomes a system, that is, an organic whole of concepts, whose highest law is not the intellect, but Reason."

³⁴ E. g., *PhS*, p. 2; *Jub.*, vol. 2, p. 12. *Phil. of Hist.*, p. 18; *Jub.*, vol. 11, p. 45. *EL*, § 161, Addition; *Jub.*, vol. 8, p. 355. (*PhS* = *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. by A. V. Miller, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1977. *Jub.* = *Sämtliche Werke*. Jubiläumsausgabe in 20 Bänden, ed. by Hermann Glockner, Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag 1928-41. *Phil. of Hist.* = *The Philosophy of History*, tr. by J. Sibree, New York: Willey Book Co. 1944. *EL* = *The Encyclopaedia Logic. Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, tr. by T. F. Gerats, W. A. Suchting, H. S. Harris, Indianapolis: Hackett 1991.)

³⁵ Gregor Malantschuk *Kierkegaard's Thought*, pp. 118-119.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

nite,”³⁸ as dialectically related to one another. As every introductory student knows, it is the very hallmark of Hegel’s dialectic that complementary concepts of this kind cannot be regarded on their own but must be conceived in their necessary relation to one another. What is astonishing is that Malantschuk sees Kierkegaard’s conception of dialectic not as derivative from Hegel, as it clearly is (at least on this point), but rather as polemically aimed *against* Hegel.

Malantschuk claims that these “coupled concepts” represent the first aspect of the methodology, which he designates as “latitudinal.” The “longitudinal” aspect contains the movement of these categories through different stages. He identifies three different elements of this second aspect of the method: (1) “the changes which emerge during the subject’s movement through the different levels and positions toward Christianity,”³⁹ (2) the “theory of the leap,”⁴⁰ and (3) “the law of repetition.”⁴¹ Once again these are all understood in contrast to Hegel, although Kierkegaard derived much of the inspiration for the concept of the leap and of repetition from Hegel himself.⁴²

A third element of the dialectical method, in addition to the latitudinal and the longitudinal, is introduced with the term “the depth perspective.”⁴³ This seems to be concerned with the relation to the individual in contrast to an objective body of knowledge. Malantschuk claims that Kierkegaard is interested in arriving at a complete, exhaustive view of the subjective actuality of the human being in contrast to other philosophers who regard things from a larger, more abstract perspective where the experience of the individual is diminished or reduced to irrelevance.

Malantschuk continues with a detailed account of Kierkegaard’s development of his theory of stages in the journals and notebooks.⁴⁴ This is used presumably as an illustration of the method as it has been sketched. Once again there is a conscious and consistent effort to distance Kierkegaard’s theory of stages from that of Hegel. This ends

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴² See Jon Stewart “Hegel als Quelle für Kierkegaards Wiederholungsbegriff” in *KSYB 1998*, pp. 302-317. “Hegel and Adler in the Introduction to *The Concept of Anxiety*” in *KSYB 2001*, pp. 43-77, see section “V. Quantity, Quality and the Leap,” pp. 69-75.

⁴³ Gregor Malantschuk *Kierkegaard’s Thought*, p. 136.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 144f.

with the following rather surprising claim: "Hegel's supreme intellectual principle is the principle of identity, which combines all the dialectical factors into a unity, but according to Kierkegaard it is the acknowledgement of the unconditional validity of the principle of contradiction which leads from the esthetic stage to the next stage—the ethical."⁴⁵ This is surprising since Malantschuk seems to be entirely unaware of Hegel's much discussed polemic *against* the law of identity.⁴⁶ Further, he does not seem to know that Hegel consistently argued that contradiction, albeit in his own idiosyncratic interpretation of it, constitutes the very heart of speculative thinking and methodology.⁴⁷ It is the very mechanism by which the dialectic is driven forward and which creates movement in logic, which *Kierkegaard* frequently criticizes.

Towards the end of the chapter Malantschuk tries to answer a potential objection to his interpretation. By claiming that Kierkegaard's method is concerned to give an exhaustive account of the human subject and represents a unity in the authorship, Malantschuk might seem to be ascribing to him a system or some form of systematic thinking, which, as is well known, Kierkegaard clearly rejects. Malantschuk tries to respond to this charge by pointing out what he regards as significant differences between Hegel's system and Kierkegaard's thinking.⁴⁸ The problem with his defense is that the elements of difference that he mentions are rather general and only indirectly concerned with the methodology that he spends so much time sketching. Certainly no one would claim that Hegel and Kierkegaard are completely in harmony on everything in their thought, and certainly it is not difficult to find places where they diverge; but the original question has to do with Kierkegaard's dialectical methodology and its similarity with that of Hegel. On this point, there can be no question that the method which Malantschuk sketches based on the journals and notebooks has profound

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150. See also p. 172.

⁴⁶ See *SL*, pp. 413-416; *Jub.*, vol. 4, pp. 510-515. *EL*, § 115; *Jub.*, vol. 8, pp. 268-269. (*SL* = *Hegel's Science of Logic*, tr. by A. V. Miller, London: George Allen and Unwin 1989.)

⁴⁷ Compare: "Contradiction is the root of all movement and vitality" (*SL*, p. 439; *Jub.*, vol. 4, p. 546). "it is contradiction that moves the world" (*EL*, § 119, Addition 2; *Jub.*, vol. 8, p. 280). "*Speculative thinking* consists solely in the fact that thought holds fast contradiction, and in it, its own self, but does not allow itself to be dominated by it as in ordinary thinking, where its determinations are resolved by contradiction only into other determinations or into nothing" (*SL*, pp. 440-441; *Jub.*, vol. 4, pp. 547-548).

⁴⁸ Gregor Malantschuk *Kierkegaard's Thought*, pp. 169-172.

similarities with Hegel's. Further, these similarities have significant implications for the conception of philosophy as a system; indeed, for Hegel the dialectical method and system are necessarily related.

On the whole the dialectical method that Malantschuk wants to ascribe to Kierkegaard remains rather scattered. However, individual elements of it are clear enough. The problem is that most of these are well known to be key aspects of Hegel's dialectical methodology, which Kierkegaard is often thought to have been in a polemic with. This complicated and problematic relation is not adequately addressed.

Ultimately, this work cannot be said to be about the *Nachlass* in the same way *Word-Pictures* and *Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins* are. Malantschuk's work does not make the *Nachlass* in itself the object of the study and does not address itself to any problem intrinsic to it. In other words, he could probably have put forth this same theory without referring to the journals and notebooks; indeed, this is what he does in the long third and final chapter of the work where he explores Kierkegaard's purported method in the published works. Thus, while this book is valuable for anyone concerned with Kierkegaard's method, it is probably not the best place to go for an account of the *Nachlass*.

B. Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel, by Niels Thulstrup

Niels Thulstrup's aforementioned study, *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel*,⁴⁹ is also highly significant for its use of the *Nachlass*. Thulstrup purports to make a systematic examination of this material looking for possible clues concerning Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel and Hegelianism. As the original Danish title of the book makes clear, this study works through the first half of the authorship, that is to say until 1846. However, it should be noted that by far the bulk of this investigation covers the period from the earliest journal entries until *Either/Or* in 1843. As is well known, Thulstrup's influential thesis is that Kierkegaard was a rabid anti-Hegelian from start to finish. His claim is that "Hegel and Kierkegaard have in the main nothing in common as thinkers, neither as regards object, purpose, or method, nor as re-

⁴⁹ Niels Thulstrup *Kierkegaards Forhold til Hegel og til den spekulative Idealisme indtil 1846*, *op. cit.* In English: *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel*, *op. cit.* German translation: *Kierkegaards Verhältnis zu Hegel und zum spekulativen Idealismus 1835-1846*, *op. cit.*

gards what each considered to be indisputable principles.”⁵⁰ As Fenger has noted, this one-sided thesis overlooks the many positive points of contact between Hegel and the early Kierkegaard. Since there has already been much written on this issue generally, I will forego an evaluation of this thesis and instead focus here on Thulstrup's use of the *Nachlass*.

It is somewhat surprising to discover that Thulstrup treats the *Nachlass* more extensively than he does the published works. He systematically goes through the *Nachlass* as presented in the *Papirer* in search of anything that could be relevant for Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel or Hegelianism. One can see this most clearly when the content of the individual chapters is broken down. After the introductory first chapter, which treats the Hegelian movement in Denmark, Thulstrup embarks on his textual exegesis. Chapter 2 is dedicated to the *Nachlass* from the summer of 1835 to November 1837. Chapter 3 continues with the period from November 1837 to September 1838. Only in Chapter 4 does the reader find the first analysis of a published text, namely *From the Papers of One Still Living*, and even this analysis is rather cursory,⁵¹ while the rest of the chapter is dedicated to the journals from the period from September 1838 to July 1840. Chapter 5 is dedicated to *The Concept of Irony*, but the attention to the *Nachlass* continues immediately in the next two chapters, which are concerned exclusively with it. In the final perfunctory chapter Thulstrup attempts to squeeze in his account of seven different books including the edifying discourses. Thus in sum, apart from the first chapter, the last chapter and Chapter 5 on *The Concept of Irony*, this is generally a work about Hegel and Kierkegaard as found in the *Nachlass*.

Given this, it can be fairly said that this work treats the *Nachlass* more extensively than any other in the category of research monographs which treat or use the *Nachlass* without making it the object of their investigation in its own right. In a sense there is not much that can be objected to the fact that Thulstrup regards the *Nachlass* as so central for the object of his investigation. When one considers texts from the *Nachlass* such as *The Battle between the Old and the New Soap-Cellars*, *Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est*, and *The Book on Adler* (which is not treated by Thulstrup), then it is clear that any extended study of Kierkegaard's relation to Hegel would have to take this part of the authorship seriously. Moreover, a wealth

⁵⁰ Niels Thulstrup *Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-175.

of information can be gleaned from the *Nachlass* about Kierkegaard's relation to the best-known Danish Hegelians, such as Johan Ludvig Heiberg and Hans Lassen Martensen. Thus, Thulstrup is quite right to use the *Nachlass* in this fashion.

Unfortunately, Thulstrup's analyses of this material are not particularly insightful due to the fact that he seems to have already made up his mind about the matter before starting. After the first few chapters, the reader can with some confidence begin to anticipate what Thulstrup, given his thesis, will say about specific passages prior to reading his analysis. For all of the passages where Kierkegaard seems to criticize Hegel or a specific Hegelian, Thulstrup simply reaffirms what he takes to be obvious without further discussion. For passages where Kierkegaard seems to be more positively disposed towards Hegel, Thulstrup, without argument, either dismisses the statements as ironic or underscores that Kierkegaard did not know enough about Hegel's philosophy to make a qualified judgment on the matter. Thus, while it is laudable that Thulstrup makes such extensive use of the *Nachlass*, his actual discussions of the material are not as insightful as what they might be. In any case Thulstrup's book has become a classic in Kierkegaard research and has perhaps made some small headway into bringing the *Nachlass* into the mainstream research.

C. Kierkegaard Studies in Scandinavia, by Aage Henriksen

Aage Henriksen's work *Kierkegaard Studies in Scandinavia* is a prize-winning publication that appeared as the initial volume in a publication series of the Danish Kierkegaard Society.⁵² As the title indicates, this is a work of history of reception. It divides the material into two large sections, the first covering Kierkegaard research from 1869 to 1909, and the second from 1909 to 1949. For the purposes of this essay, this work is important since the first of these sections is introduced with a brief subsection dedicated to the Barfod-Gottsched edition,⁵³ while the second is introduced with a similar subsection dedicated to the *Papirer* edition.⁵⁴ The oddity will be noted: in a treatment of Kier-

⁵² Aage Henriksen *Methods and Results of Kierkegaard Studies in Scandinavia. A Historical and Critical Survey*, tr. by Annie I. Fausbøll, Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard 1951. (Volume 1 of Publications of the Kierkegaard Society, Copenhagen.)

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-22.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-66.

kegaard research in Scandinavia, the author takes as his point of departure not Kierkegaard's primary texts or the later edition of *Samlede Værker* but instead the two editions of the *Nachlass*.

The discussions of both the Barfod-Gottsched edition and the *Papirer* are rather philologically oriented in nature. No account is given of the history of the *Nachlass*, and little is said about its actual content. However, these two discussions jointly do represent one of the best accounts in English of the philological merits and shortcomings of these two editions. The author is generally quite positive about the value of the then recently completed *Papirer* edition, while he is forgiving of Barfod's shortcomings. These accounts are probably a bit too technical to be of any substantial use for beginners since they presuppose that one has had some experience working with the Danish editions under discussion. In addition to giving a brief, informative philological account, the author, in accordance with the goal of the book as a whole, discusses the reception and use of these editions by later authors. He convincingly shows the importance of the *Nachlass* in the later biographical and psychological studies of Kierkegaard. This work is probably not the first place to go when embarking on a study of the *Nachlass*, but its discussions do constitute a useful supplement to the other works mentioned here.

D. Receiving Søren Kierkegaard, by *Habib C. Malik*

The next work to be discussed is Habib C. Malik's excellent study, *Receiving Søren Kierkegaard*.⁵⁵ Far surpassing Henriksen's effort, this profoundly well-documented and researched book is probably the best work on the history of Kierkegaard reception to date. It traces the reception of Kierkegaard's works from his own times to around the outbreak of the First World War. For our purposes this work is worthy of note since it contains one of the rare discussions originally in English of the history of the *Nachlass* and the Barfod-Gottsched edition. This discussion comes at the beginning of Malik's Chapter 6,⁵⁶ where he discusses briefly the story of how the *Nachlass* was moved into the care of P. C. Kierkegaard, who in turn entrusted the publication of the

⁵⁵ Habib C. Malik *Receiving Søren Kierkegaard. The Early Impact and Transmission of His Thought*, Washington D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press 1997. See the review of this work in *Kierkegardiana* 20, pp. 316-318.

⁵⁶ Habib C. Malik *Receiving Søren Kierkegaard, op. cit.*, pp. 211-219.

material to Barfod. There is further a discussion of the note discovered by Barfod, in which Kierkegaard expressed his wish to have Rasmus Nielsen publish his posthumous papers; the misunderstandings that this led to between Nielsen and P.C. Kierkegaard are also briefly treated. Malik's work traces the story of the edition chronologically, i. e., following the appearance of each volume and its immediate influence. Thus, Gottsched's entry on the scene is discussed later in the chapter.⁵⁷ There is no discussion of the *Papirer* edition since it appeared at the turn of century at around the time that Malik's narrative stops.⁵⁸

There is no detailed discussion of the philological aspects of the Barfod-Gottsched edition, but this cannot be conceived as a criticism since it lies outside the purview of Malik's work. Instead, this edition is presented as a part of the history of reception of Kierkegaard's works and thought generally. Following the lead of Henriksen's work, the point that the author makes with his discussion is that with the publication of the *Nachlass* "was born what can be described as the biographical-psychological approach to Kierkegaard and his *oeuvre*."⁵⁹ There can be no doubt that this is correct. It would have been impossible for the obsession with Kierkegaard's personal life and psychological complexities to arise in the secondary literature if it were not for the publication of his *Nachlass*. As has been noted, this material has frequently been taken as immediately autobiographical or as a personal diary containing Kierkegaard's most intimate thoughts. As a result there was an open field for the many biographical and psychological studies that followed.

Like the other works featured in this section, *Receiving Søren Kierkegaard* does not treat the *Nachlass* as an object of study in its own right but rather makes use of it for its own end, the history of Kierkegaard reception. Although the discussion of the Barfod-Gottsched edition does not cover many pages, it is a useful general introduction to the material which covers some of the same ground as *Word-Pictures*. The author does an excellent job setting this early edition in its proper historical context. Thus, although there are no analyses of the actual content of the *Nachlass* itself, this work is still a highly valuable contribution to an understanding of its historical importance both for Kierkegaard reception and for Danish culture at the time.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 271-272.

⁵⁸ The *Papirer* edition is mentioned in connection with its editor P.A. Heiberg, see *ibid.*, p. 341.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

E. Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion, by Louis Pojman

The next work to be examined is Louis Pojman's book, *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion*⁶⁰ from 1999. This work is a slightly revised edition of Pojman's *The Logic of Subjectivity* from 1984.⁶¹ In his Preface to the revised version, the author states that, while much has happened in Kierkegaard studies in the interim, his theses in the original work are still relevant.⁶² He thus puts them forward again in modified form some fifteen years later. For the sake of simplicity, I will take the revised edition as my point of orientation for the purposes of this overview. The author has made only very minor changes to these sections in the second edition, and thus what is said here about that work is equally valid for the original study. While this work refers to Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* throughout, there are two sections which purport to treat Kierkegaard's "papers" explicitly.

The first section relevant for the *Nachlass* appears in the initial chapter of the work and is entitled "Christianity and Philosophy in Kierkegaard's Early *Papers*."⁶³ The first chapter in general and this section in particular can be regarded as a kind of first outline of an intellectual biography. The author uses various entries from the journals and notebooks from 1835-40 as documentation for a sketch of Kierkegaard's development from philosophy to Christianity. The picture of Kierkegaard that is presented is that of a young existentialist struggling forward to true faith. In this short section Pojman, in a rather unsystematic fashion, sketches a handful of issues which will become central for Kierkegaard's authorship later, e.g., "the concept of subjectivity," "the relation of philosophy to Christianity," "the stages of existence," and "free will."⁶⁴ He further sketches, also very briefly, a couple of Kierkegaard's early influences: Schleiermacher, Hamann, and Martensen. The discussion in this section is rather superficial, which is perhaps due to the fact that it is, after all, merely intended to be an introduction. This section thus serves only to flag certain issues presumably for later use, but it presents no extended argumentation or analysis on its own.

⁶⁰ Louis Pojman *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion*, San Francisco, London, Bethesda: International Scholars Publications 1999.

⁶¹ Louis P. Pojman *The Logic of Subjectivity. Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion*, Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press 1984.

⁶² Louis Pojman *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion*, p. xi.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-26.

⁶⁴ See his overview, *ibid.*, p. 25.

The second section that purports to treat the *Nachlass* appears in Chapter 8 and is entitled “‘Faith’ and ‘Hope’ in Kierkegaard’s Later Papers.”⁶⁵ This section, appearing as it does in the body of the work and not as a part of the introductory chapter, seems to promise a more detailed analysis of the material. This expectation is, however, disappointed. The section is dominated by a rather analytic discussion of the concepts of faith and hope and their relation to one another. The author in fact only quotes four passages from the *Papirer* edition⁶⁶ and only three of them can be said to belong to the later papers, which is usually taken to mean after 1846. Moreover, these are quoted *after* he has already given his main analysis of the concepts at issue. Thus, this section in no way gives an overview of the relation of faith to hope in the later papers as the section title would seem to promise.

This work does not treat the *Nachlass* as an independent object of research. The author himself explains his use of this material in the Preface: “Although most of this book is directed to the pseudonymous Johannes Climacus writings, I have used material from Kierkegaard’s private *Papers* as well as other of his published works where the context warrants their use in providing further support or illustrative material for the issue or argument at hand.”⁶⁷ This means that the author does not treat any of the problems intrinsic to this body of material. He uses, for example, the early journals to be straightforward autobiographical statements about Kierkegaard’s intellectual growth and development. This work, for whatever its other merits may be, cannot be said to represent a contribution to a new understanding of the *Nachlass*.

F. Kierkegaard Biographies in English: Lowrie and Hannay

In this context mention must be made of Walter Lowrie’s classic biography of Kierkegaard, which first appeared in 1938.⁶⁸ As a brief glance at the apparatus of endnotes will show, this work relies heavily on the *Nachlass* as a source of biographical information about Kierkegaard. The reader is first impressed by Lowrie’s early recognition of

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 219-225.

⁶⁶ *Pap.* IV A 108. *Pap.* IX A 311. *Pap.* VIII 1 A 650. *Pap.* IX A 32.

⁶⁷ Louis Pojman *Kierkegaard’s Philosophy of Religion*, *op. cit.*, p. xiii.

⁶⁸ Walter Lowrie *Kierkegaard*, London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press 1938.

the value of this body of material at a time before the *Papirer* edition was complete and even before there were any English translations. He writes in his Preface, "I recognize now that it was absurd to expect to know S.K. without becoming acquainted with the eighteen volumes of his Journals and Papers which can be read only in Danish."⁶⁹ While this seems to be reason for praise, when one sees what Lowrie means by this claim, his understanding of the use of the *Nachlass* becomes more dubious. Lowrie takes not only the *Nachlass* to be in large part autobiographical but also the published works.⁷⁰

In this book Kierkegaard's life is sketched with the help of numerous often lengthy quotations from the *Nachlass*. Lowrie notes that he is compelled to quote so extensively due to the fact that the material is otherwise not available in English translation. While this is certainly understandable, the second reason he gives for the extensive use of quotations appears more dubious. Lowrie argues that Kierkegaard should be allowed to tell his own story in his own words; he claims that he as author or secondhand witness could not begin to approach the accuracy or stylistic felicity of Kierkegaard's own autobiographical account.⁷¹ Here it becomes obvious that Lowrie makes use of the material in an entirely uncritical fashion. He strikes one today as almost positivistic in the way in which he seems naively to believe that whatever Kierkegaard writes in his journals, while using the first person singular, is a true autobiographical statement. While feigning humility in wanting Kierkegaard to tell his own story, Lowrie seems oblivious to the fact that he is the one who is taking the individual passages from the *Nachlass* and putting them into a specific biographical context; in other words, he does not seem to realize how he is shaping the interpretation of the individual entries for his reader ahead of time.

For all of its hermeneutical naiveté, Lowrie's biography was a major event not just in anglophone Kierkegaard research but also internationally. Its success is attested to by the fact that he was later commissioned to write another shorter biography of Kierkegaard which appeared for the first time in 1942 and was reprinted subsequently.⁷² This work follows generally the same methodology as the first biography. The main difference is that in the later work Lowrie is less dependent

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. viii f.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. ix f.

⁷² Walter Lowrie *A Short Life of Kierkegaard*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1942, 1970. German translation: *Das Leben Sören Kierkegaards*, tr. by G. Sauxitzki, Düsseldorf and Cologne: Diederichs Verlag 1955.

on extensive quotations of the material since in the interim a number of things had appeared in English translation. With regard to Lowrie's big biography, his use of the *Nachlass*, however uncritically, was one of the very first glimpses of the material that the English reader ever received. He is to be lauded for the fact that he takes the *Nachlass* so seriously unlike many later authors. For these reasons this work must be regarded as highly significant for the history of reception.

Also in the biographical genre is Alastair Hannay's recent intellectual biography of Kierkegaard.⁷³ This work makes extensive use of the *Nachlass* towards its end, which is rather different from that of Lowrie. Right away from his Preface it is easy to see that Hannay is in no way uncritical in his use of this material.⁷⁴ On the contrary, he is highly reflective about the relation between the written text, be that *Nachlass* or published work, and Kierkegaard's biography. It should also be noted that Hannay's work is an *intellectual* biography and not a biography in the straightforward sense that Lowrie's is. Thus, while Lowrie's use of the *Nachlass* is invariably related to Kierkegaard's actual life, Hannay can make use of individual entries to understand Kierkegaard's works and intellectual development without making any commitment about the true biographical Kierkegaard. Thus, Hannay's use of the material is very much in line with any number of other works in the secondary literature today, which quote individual entries in order to illuminate some aspect of one of the published works. Needless to say, this is methodologically on much safer ground than Lowrie's approach. This book can be highly recommended for any number of reasons having nothing to do with Kierkegaard's *Nachlass*. For our purposes, it distinguishes itself for the way in which it makes extensive use of this material to tell a biographical story, while avoiding the methodological pitfalls to which Lowrie fell victim.

III. English Translations of the *Nachlass*

Given that there has never been any tradition of research in the anglophone world on the *Nachlass*, the history of the reception of this

⁷³ Alastair Hannay *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001.

⁷⁴ If further proof for this is required, one merely need have a look at Hannay's highly reflective article in this volume on the use of the *Nachlass* for interpreting Kierkegaard's works.

body of material from Kierkegaard's authorship is defined not just by the aforementioned works but also by the history of the different translations of it. Thus, if one wants to see how Kierkegaard's journals and notebooks have been used and understood in the anglophone world, one is obliged to look at how the different editors and translators have presented the material to the anglophone public.

There is to date no complete English translation of Kierkegaard's voluminous journals and notebooks and other *Nachlass*. There are, however, a number of different abridged editions which use differing principles of selection. Needless to say, the principles for selection play an enormous role in the picture of Kierkegaard that emerges from a given edition. In a sense the main editorial problem facing English translators was no different from that facing the Danish editors. The question for both was how to present the enormous mass of material to their readers in an accessible manner. In the case of both the translator and the Danish editor, it was clear that some principle of organization had to be adopted. For potential translators, it was implausible to attempt a translation *in toto* of Kierkegaard's journals from the *Papirer* edition. Thus, for practical reasons a principle of selection had to be found which would enable them to present this body of material to their anglophone audience.

The principles that these translators and editors used and the way in which they presented Kierkegaard to their readers had an impact on the way in which he came to be understood and appreciated. The forms that the editions took played a subtle but profound role in the reception of his thought. Kierkegaard's journals provided the editors with a vast body of material which constituted the palette with which they could paint their picture of Kierkegaard and his thought. Thus, depending on which passages they selected and how these passages were organized and put together, these editors could present a Kierkegaard with a number of different faces.

A. The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard,
translated by Alexander Dru (1938)

The first edition in English appeared in 1938 under the title *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*.⁷⁵ This pioneering effort was the work of

⁷⁵ *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*, ed. and tr. by Alexander Dru, London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press 1938 (2nd edition 1951).

the English translator Alexander Dru. It will be noted that at the time the Danish edition of Kierkegaard's *Papirer* by Heiberg, Kuhr and Torsting was still not quite complete.⁷⁶ In 1938 the final two volumes appeared: volume XI-2 containing the entries under the section "A" from October 1854-January 1855 as well as the loose papers from 1853 to September 25, 1855, and volume XI-3 containing the entries under the section "B" from 1854-1855. Thus, these last two volumes were not included in Dru's edition, and for these final years of Kierkegaard's life he was obliged to use volume IX of the Barfod-Gottsched edition.⁷⁷ Dru's edition had the goal of presenting Kierkegaard's biography. This is obvious given the fact that for his selection of entries Dru followed the German edition of *Die Tagebücher* by Theodor Haecker (1879-1945),⁷⁸ even though he translated from the Danish text.⁷⁹ The organization of Dru's edition is purely chronological. There are no chapter divisions or breaks in the long continuous body of entries. Dru provides a lengthy introduction about Kierkegaard's life which gives some background to the text. In keeping with the concept of the volume as biographical, it also contains an appendix with contemporary descriptions of Kierkegaard from Henriette Lund, Israel Levin and Hans Brøchner.⁸⁰ This brief section can be regarded as an early forerunner of Bruce Kirmmse's excellent *Encounters with Kierkegaard*.⁸¹ Dru's edition contains no apparatus of commentaries.

While Dru's edition was an excellent work for its day, it falls victim to the Achilles' heel of all editions which conceive of the journals as primarily autobiographical. The problem is that it is a matter of great interpretive complexity to try to determine what in Kierkegaard's journals are in fact genuine autobiographical remarks and what are not. The real danger here lies in the fact that the entries, as they are presented in the *Papirer* edition, are almost entirely episodic, and as a

⁷⁶ *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer*, vols. 1-16, ed. by P. A. Heiberg, V. Kuhr and E. Torsting, Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1909-48; supplemented by Niels Thulstrup, Copenhagen: Gyldendal 1968-78.

⁷⁷ Alexander Dru "Appendix III" in *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*, *op. cit.*, p. 574.

⁷⁸ Søren Kierkegaard *Die Tagebücher*, vols. 1-2, ed. and tr. by Theodor Haecker, Innsbruck: Brenner Verlag 1923.

⁷⁹ Dru apparently had a great appreciation for Haecker's work. See Habib C. Malik *Receiving Søren Kierkegaard*, p. 391.

⁸⁰ Alexander Dru "Appendix I" in *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*, pp. 555-564.

⁸¹ *Encounters with Kierkegaard. A Life as Seen By His Contemporaries*, tr. and ed. by Bruce H. Kirmmse, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1996. The obvious Danish forerunner is Steen Johansen's *Erindringer om Søren Kierkegaard*, Copenhagen: Hasselbalch 1955.

result one often does not have enough context to determine the nature of a given entry. As Fenger has argued, there is no obvious reason to assume immediately that the journals and notebooks are autobiographical. It is well known that Kierkegaard used his journals and notebooks to sketch drafts of possible works or scenarios that he might later work out in more detail for publication. Moreover, he often used the first person in doing so in order to portray a certain fictional character's impressions and reactions to specific events. Such character portrayals may or may not overlap with those of the real, historical person Søren Kierkegaard. Like any good writer of fiction, he doubtless used many situations and scenes or dialogues drawn from his own personal experience. But, also like any good writer of fiction, he doubtless gave these situations and scenes a number of fictional or poetical elements. To separate the fact from the fiction is very difficult to do today since it is hard to find corroborating evidence for the factual aspect of what he writes.

Thus, Dru's edition is problematic in its attempt to present the journals as autobiographical. Despite these editorial problems, this edition was an important first effort at introducing Kierkegaard's journals to an anglophone public at a time when Kierkegaard was not particularly well known. Moreover, the felicitous language of Dru's translations is highly praiseworthy.

B. The Diary of Søren Kierkegaard,
translated by Gerda M. Andersen (1960)

Another selection of Kierkegaard's journals is entitled simply *The Diary of Søren Kierkegaard*.⁸² This edition was published in 1960 and was not based on the *Papirer* but rather on an edition entitled *Søren Kierkegaards dagbøger*,⁸³ edited by Peter P. Rohde, later the editor of the third edition of Kierkegaard's collected works.⁸⁴ The selection proved to be very popular and was reprinted several times. One can

⁸² *The Diary of Søren Kierkegaard*, ed. by Peter P. Rohde, tr. by Gerda M. Andersen, New York: Philosophical Library 1960, London: Owen 1960. Reprint: New York: Wisdom Library 1971. Also reprinted in 1990.

⁸³ *Søren Kierkegaards dagbøger*, ed. by Peter P. Rohde, Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag 1953. (3rd edition 1973.)

⁸⁴ *Samlede værker*, 3rd edition, vols. 1-19, ed. by Peter P. Rohde, Copenhagen: Gyldendal 1962-64. (Vol. 20 *Terminologisk Ordbog* by Jens Himmelstrup and *Sammenlignende Register*.)

see this edition in a sense as trying to respond to the discontinuities of the *Papirer* edition and to present a more continuous selection of texts that is easier for the reader to use. As is indicated by the title, the editor rather unapologetically selects various passages from Kierkegaard's journals which he takes to be autobiographical. These are then put together and ordered into eight chapters in such a way that they tell a more or less continuous story. But this does not mean that the entries appear in a strictly chronological order. Instead, often entries written at a much later period are inserted into a place where they illuminate earlier events.⁸⁵ This edition also contains a minimal commentary apparatus at the end of the work.

Perhaps the most egregious thing about this edition is the way that it misleads the reader into thinking that what it is presenting is actually Kierkegaard's diary. The reader is not adequately informed or forewarned that what he or she is reading is in fact an artificial construct of the editor. An attempt is made to justify this heavy-handed editing in the Preface, where Rohde writes,

[The journals] confront us with the thinker as he existed, and etch a life in glimpses which, though fragmentary, constitute something unique in world literature. It is precisely their fragmentary character that relieves us of the obligation which the finished works place upon us, viz. to respect their wholeness – for it is non-existent. However, from their 8,000 to 10,000 pages it is possible to distil some one hundred and fifty pages that contain the true essence.⁸⁶

Thus, Rohde entirely gives up on any notion of continuity in the journals at all. This then he takes as giving him editorial license to do what he wishes with the journals and to put them together in any way that he likes. Moreover, he seems to take this to be an argument for him to even assign a title or genre to the *Nachlass*, i. e., as a diary.

Rohde uncritically presupposes that the journals and notebooks are in fact autobiographical. But this presupposition completely overlooks a number of interpretive difficulties associated with the richness and diversity of the material. There is a tremendous amount of material which is more abstract in nature and thus has nothing *per se* to do with Kierkegaard's biography. Moreover, as was noted above, even most of the passages which lend themselves to an autobiographical interpretation are highly poetical, suggesting at least some fictional element.

⁸⁵ See *Søren Kierkegaards Dagbøger*, p. 9; *The Diary of Søren Kierkegaard*, p. 11.

⁸⁶ *Søren Kierkegaards Dagbøger*, pp. 7f.; *The Diary of Søren Kierkegaard*, p. 8. Translation slightly modified.

The real absurdity of Rohde's position lies in the claim that there is no "wholeness" in Kierkegaard's journals and papers. (It will be noted that this is the claim that makes possible the heavy-handed principle of selection that he employs.) It might well be that there is no "wholeness" in the *Papirer* edition, but this is because the editors have reorganized the material according to their own whim. But there is a "wholeness" in Kierkegaard's own organization and ordering of the journals and notebooks into discrete units under the headings AA, BB, CC, etc., and NB, NB2, NB3, etc. In other words, there has always been an obvious continuity in the journals and notebooks, but it has until now never been respected by later editors. Thus, Rohde seems to blame Kierkegaard for the fact that later editors have put together his journals in a confusing fashion. Moreover, he justifies his own editorial principle based on the shortcomings of the earlier editions.

In a sense a translation can be no better than the original which it uses as its textual basis. Given the shortcomings of Rohde's original edition, it is hardly surprising that the English translation is in many ways inadequate. This edition was considerably shorter than Dru's selection, containing less than 200 pages of primary text. It has not made any new contribution to research, although it has doubtless served to introduce Kierkegaard to introductory students in the English-speaking world. One can, however, call into question the value of such an introduction.

C. The Last Years: Journals 1853-1855,
translated by Ronald Gregor Smith (1965)

Another edition in English appeared in 1965 under the title, *The Last Years: Journals 1853-1855*.⁸⁷ This selection contains some 350 pages of translated text. As the title indicates, this edition features passages from the journals from the last two years of Kierkegaard's life. Thus, there is no pretence, as with the first two editions treated, to give a general overview of Kierkegaard's biography. The editor has added a brief heading before the individual entries conveying the sense of the content of the entry in question. The references to the *Papirer* edition are given at the end of each entry. While there is a quite good general index as well as an index of biblical texts, there is no commentary ap-

⁸⁷ *The Last Years: Journals 1853-1855*, ed. and tr. by Ronald Gregor Smith, London: Collins 1965 (2nd edition 1968).

paratus. This edition also contains a chronological survey of Kierkegaard's life,⁸⁸ following that presented in the *Papirer*.

The translator and editor of this work is Ronald Gregor Smith, who in his Preface gives his rationale for selection for this edition. First, it is stated that the edition was originally conceived as a supplement to the earlier edition by Alexander Dru. Smith writes, "the material here presented has not, with rare exceptions, hitherto appeared in English. The exceptions are some twenty-five pages in Mr. Alex Dru's one-volume selection, *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*, which came out in 1938. At that time the final volume of the twenty-volume Danish edition of the *Papirer* had not been published."⁸⁹ Thus Smith's edition can in a sense be seen as completing the biographical story that Dru began. The second reason behind the selection has to do with the importance of this final period of Kierkegaard's life for his entire authorship. Smith continues, "the last years of Kierkegaard's life saw a remarkable concentration of the motifs which controlled his whole authorship. This comes vividly to life in the present selection of the journals and papers of that time, and casts light on all that went before it."⁹⁰

This edition is very limited in its ambition. It has a clearly defined goal, which it can certainly be said to achieve adequately. At the time it was no doubt a welcome supplement to the Dru edition. But insofar as it is based on the *Papirer* edition and on the same biographical concept as the Dru edition, it ultimately imposes a structure onto Kierkegaard's journals which is foreign to them. But given the resources that Dru and Smith had at their disposal at the time, i. e., the *Papirer* edition, they could hardly have things much differently.

D. Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers,
translated by Hong and Hong (1967-78)

The most complete edition of the *Nachlass* in English is that of Howard V. and Edna H. Hong, entitled *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*.⁹¹ This edition, which appeared from 1967 to 1978, uses the

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-23.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹¹ *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, vols. 1-6, ed. and tr. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press 1967-78. *Index and Composite Collation*, vol. 7, by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press 1978.

Papirer edition as its textual basis, although its principle of selection is entirely different. It comprises six volumes of translations plus a comprehensive index. This edition uses two different principles of selection: one topical and one biographical. Volumes 1 to 4 are organized according to different themes arranged in alphabetical order. Volumes 5 and 6 are designated explicitly as “autobiographical” and thus follow the model initiated by Dru’s edition. These two autobiographical volumes are divided into nine different chapters which treat individual periods of Kierkegaard’s life in a chronological fashion. These chapters are not always even, some containing as much as 430 pages and others as little as 29. This edition also includes a few letters and other documents that are not, strictly speaking, included in the Danish edition of the *Papirer*. It also includes a detailed commentary apparatus, which surpasses even the Danish editions of the period.

In their Introduction, the translators argue for the need for organizing the material according to themes or concepts. They begin by quoting Walter Lowrie’s complaint that with the present editions even in Danish it is impossible to gain an overview of Kierkegaard’s opinions on any specific topic, given the diversity of the journal entries and the lack of a good index. Lowrie writes,

[Dru’s edition] is invaluable to anyone who would understand the life of Søren Kierkegaard or the development of his thought. But there is more light yet to shine from the twenty big volumes of the journals, and perhaps more than one scholar will feel prompted to develop this rich mine further. Not now, however, in a biographical interest ... but rather in a topical way. It is now very difficult to get a comprehensive view of Søren Kierkegaard’s reflections upon the subjects which chiefly concerned him, for there is as yet no index to the journals as a whole. It is therefore all the more important that collections should be made of his more important utterances.⁹²

Prior to computer technology and above all prior to Niels Jørgen Cappeørn’s index to the *Papirer*,⁹³ the problem was how to locate Kierkegaard’s treatment of specific philosophical or theological issues without being obliged to read through every volume.

The Honges seemed to have taken to heart Lowrie’s plea for the need for an arrangement of the entries by topic and even argued that the existence of an index would not ultimately solve the problem. They make the case for their principle as follows: “A colossal index to the *Papirer* to facilitate a more coherent approach to the content

⁹² Søren Kierkegaard *Attack on Christendom*, tr. by Walter Lowrie, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1944, p. 5. Quoted from Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong “Translators’ Preface,” in *JP*, vol. 1, p. xviii.

⁹³ *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer*, vols. XIV-XVI, *op. cit.*

would perhaps be more helpful to the reader than Lowrie admitted, but the reader's use of such an index would still be awkward and fragmented. It is of palpable value, in our judgment, to consolidate the entries on communication, on ethics, on the esthetic, etc., so that the cumulative thought can become apparent."⁹⁴

Thus, the Honges, like many before them, were primarily concerned about the discontinuity of the journals and papers. There was such a mass of material and seemingly little or no order in the sequence of thoughts, insights, reflections, etc. Their suggestion was then to set forth certain running themes and then to assign the various passages from the *Nachlass* to them. In this way, they argue, the continuity of Kierkegaard's thought will become more visible. An attempt was also made to organize the entries assigned to any given theme in a chronological fashion so that the development in Kierkegaard's thinking on any given issue could also be discerned.

In deciding on the themes to be included, they availed themselves of the suggestions of the aforementioned Kierkegaard scholar Gregor Malantschuk.⁹⁵ Malantschuk offered his suggestions with a brief account of the individual concepts and categories. These accounts were then translated and included at the beginning of the section of commentaries which is dedicated to each of the concepts (i. e., in volumes 1-4, which are organized according to concepts). Thus, the reader is provided with a general overview of Kierkegaard's use of specific concepts prior to the more detailed commentaries on the individual entries. Malantschuk's original notes in Danish were subsequently published under the title *Nøglebegreber i Søren Kierkegaards tænkning*.⁹⁶

The problem with a thematic organization of the material is fairly obvious. There is a high degree of arbitrariness at a couple of different interpretive levels. First, it is not clear that the categories and topics themselves can really be separated from one another so discretely even on their own terms. Kierkegaard's universe of concepts is complex and contains countless areas of overlap. Topics such as Christ, Christianity, and faith ultimately belong to the same general constellation of concepts. Thus, it is rather problematic to try to abstract individual concepts from their different contexts and examine them discretely. The editors in part recognize this problem since some of the

⁹⁴ Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, "Translators' Preface," in *JP*, vol. 1, p. xviii.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, *JP*, vol. 1, p. xx.

⁹⁶ Gregor Malantschuk *Nøglebegreber i Søren Kierkegaards tænkning*, ed. by Grethe Kjær and Paul Müller, Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels Forlag 1993.

entry topics are multiple, for example, "Humor, Irony, the Comic." But needless to say, there are also a number of interpretive steps involved in the lumping together of concepts. Moreover, it is not clear that this general procedure of presenting the *Nachlass* in terms of different topics helps to make Kierkegaard less scattered or schizophrenic, but rather it compounds the problem by presenting the reader with a plethora of seemingly unrelated categories and topics.

Second, it is always a matter of some arbitrariness just which topics one decides to use as genuinely central or representative for Kierkegaard's thinking. There is enough difference of opinion in Kierkegaard scholarship about what is central to his thought to make one wary of any attempt to give a catalogue of terms with any pretension of exhaustiveness or accuracy at capturing the essentials of Kierkegaard's thought. Everyone has his or her own favorite concept which is not included in this edition, e. g., mediation, simplicity, or movement. Further, while entries are given to figures such as Benjamin Franklin, Savanarola, and Montaigne who had an extremely limited influence on Kierkegaard's works, undoubtedly major figures such as Marheineke, Schelling, Baader, or the Younger Fichte are omitted. From this the unwary reader might conclude that Savanarola was more important for Kierkegaard than Schelling.

Third, and perhaps even more damaging, the individual entries are in themselves highly complex; there is a great deal of subtlety and variation in even very short entries. Thus, even if one could agree with some certainty on which categories or concepts were central in Kierkegaard, the interpretative task of assigning the individual journal entries to these categories would be extremely difficult. Some entries, indeed most of them, touch on a number of different topics. Would this not imply that a given entry that treated two different topics should be reproduced twice under two different headings? This would lead to the endless repetition of the material under an indefinite number of different headings, which would ultimately make the edition so long as to be unrealistic and would undercut precisely the desired goal of readability. How does one adjudicate which theme of the many treated in any given entry is the central one to that entry?

Moreover, the use of key terms in identifying the main topics in Kierkegaard's thought can be deceptive since often Kierkegaard discusses a person or a topic indirectly. This means that there are entries which have a specific topic as its central theme without that topic as such ever being named explicitly. This fact is recognized in the index to the *Papirer* edition, where references to passages which discuss a

given topic without actually naming it explicitly are given but noted with a small star.⁹⁷ Very often in his published works Kierkegaard discusses the work of some Danish contemporary without ever mentioning the person's name. For example, he constantly talks about Regine Olsen and his relationship to her without mentioning her name. This feature of Kierkegaard's writing requires once again another interpretive step. The editor must be able to recognize that such discussions are about the given unnamed issue or person, so that they can be put in the correct category. But this also works in the opposite direction when Kierkegaard explicitly names a person in order to sketch a general position without ever really meaning to allude to the specific works of that specific figure. In his published works he often writes "Hegel" when he clearly means Martensen or Heiberg (as is evinced from earlier drafts where their names appear instead of Hegel's). Once again this feature of Kierkegaard's writing requires extreme care from the editor who wishes to separate the individual journal entries and divide them into discrete units according to topic.

Moreover, the way in which the entries are grouped according to this principle will then shape the way in which the individual entries are read and interpreted. When a number of different entries are put in certain contexts, specific aspects or themes will emerge, while others, which are not obviously relevant for the heading under which they appear, will fade into the background. This editorial principle will then adversely affect the reader's understanding of Kierkegaard since, instead of presenting the texts in as neutral a fashion as possible in order to leave all of its interpretative possibilities open for the readers themselves to decide upon, this principle leads the reader in a specific direction and ultimately closes off interpretive possibilities by in effect implying that the individual entries properly belong under just the one heading under which it appears.

The volumes 5 and 6 fall victim to much the same problem, although they are not organized according to topic but rather biographically. Although the editors are careful to note that the journals "do not have the character of a diary,"⁹⁸ nonetheless this does not prevent them from making them into one in the last two volumes. While this procedure seems to be on safer ground with regard to interpretation, for reasons noted above it is in fact no less problematic than the procedure followed in the first four volumes.

⁹⁷ See Niels Jørgen Cappelørn "Indledning" in *Pap.* XIV, p. XI.

⁹⁸ Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong "Translators' Preface" in *JP*, vol. 1, p. xiv.

The quality of these translations is a matter of some dispute. This was one of the first things that the Hongs translated and published, and there are signs of a less than certain grasp of the language, e. g., the confusion of “*And*” (duck) with “*den Anden*” (the other).⁹⁹ A similar error can be found in a confusion of the word “*Teleologien*” with “*Theologien*.”¹⁰⁰ Another index of this can be seen in the complaint frequently heard about this edition that it sticks too slavishly to the syntax of the original Danish. This edition thus often reads somewhat awkwardly and does not adequately reflect the stylistic brilliance and variation of Kierkegaard's original. However, it should be noted that volume 1, when it appeared in 1967, did receive the National Book Award for translation.

One of the best things about this edition is the apparatus of notes that is provided at the end of the text. This was the first time that Kierkegaard's journals in any language had been provided with detailed commentaries. Hong's commentaries clearly laid some of the groundwork for later more elaborate commentaries including those in *Søren Kierkegaard's Skrifter*. While they are at times rather subjective in their interpretation, these commentaries or notes provide a great deal of useful information about the individual entries. Many of them hold up even today. Howard Hong's achievement in this regard is particularly impressive when one considers the limited resources that he had at his disposal at the time. Today many allusions or quotations made by Kierkegaard to other works can be located by a quick computer search of the collected works of, for example, Hegel, Goethe or others. Back in those days one was consigned to using incomplete indices or worse to scanning through a number of texts manually.

Moreover, this edition should be praised for the sheer quantity of material that it presents. While six volumes is far from being a complete translation of Kierkegaard's journals, it is still very significant, and to this day no other English translator has even come close to rivalling it with regard to quantity. This shows the remarkable dedication and work ethic of the translators. This edition has without doubt played a highly significant role in the reception of Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* in the anglophone world. It is the source which many scholars use today when they want to find supplemental information about Kierkegaard's views on specific themes or topics from the published works. This edition has thus facilitated this *ad hoc* use of the *Nachlass* which has become so common.

⁹⁹ *JP*, vol. 2, 1671; *Pap.* I A 154.

¹⁰⁰ *JP*, vol. 4, 4319; *Pap.* VII 1 C 1. (*SKS* 19, Not13.39, lines 7-8, p. 403.)

E. Papers and Journals: A Selection,
translated by Alastair Hannay (1996)

The most recent edition of Kierkegaard's journals in English is Alastair Hannay's excellent volume, entitled *Papers and Journals: A Selection*, published in 1996.¹⁰¹ This volume is a judicious selection primarily oriented towards Kierkegaard's biography and is obviously the forerunner to Hannay's aforementioned intellectual biography of Kierkegaard.¹⁰² This selection of entries, which contains almost 700 pages, is divided into 7 chapters and a postscript, each dedicated to a more or less discrete period of Kierkegaard's life. The first chapter covers Kierkegaard's youth and includes the earliest entries from 1834 to 1836. The second chapter covers Kierkegaard's period as a student and spans the entries from 1837 to 1839. The third chapter includes Kierkegaard's trip to Berlin and the most productive period of his authorship from 1840 to 1845. Chapter Four deals with the period from the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* in 1846 to the end of 1847 with the first faint references to *The Sickness unto Death*. Chapter Five begins with the political turmoil of 1848 and ends with Kierkegaard's polemics with Martensen in 1849. Chapter Six treats the period from 1850-53 in which Kierkegaard wrote *Practice in Christianity*. The final chapter is dedicated to the attack on the Church in 1854 and Kierkegaard's death in 1855. Hannay gives a brief introduction to each chapter in which he provides the necessary background information about Kierkegaard's biography required for understanding the featured entries. He also provides a minimal apparatus of explanatory notes at the end of the text.

This is a highly readable edition aimed primarily at students. It provides an excellent introduction to Kierkegaard's life and thought. The quality of Hannay's translation is impeccable both with regard to accuracy and felicity. It is generally agreed that the language of his translations is stylistically the best that exists in English today. This is not a minor point given what an important role style plays for Kierkegaard and indeed how closely connected his style is to the actual content of his message. Hannay's translations do an excellent job at capturing the tone and flavor of Kierkegaard's original. It is to be hoped that

¹⁰¹ Søren Kierkegaard *Papers and Journals: A Selection*, ed. and tr. by Alastair Hannay, Harmondsworth: Penguin 1996.

¹⁰² Alastair Hannay *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, *op. cit.*

this edition will continue to be read by students and scholars for years to come.

*F. Various Entries in Kierkegaard's Writings,
translated by Hong and Hong*

In addition to the aforementioned edition of *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, the Hong's have also translated a vast number of journal entries which have been included in the supplement section to the various volumes of their celebrated translation series, *Kierkegaard's Writings*.¹⁰³ As is well known to readers of this series, in the supplementary section following the translations of the individual texts, the editors have collected a series of journal entries, often drafts, related to the featured text. Some of these entries have been taken from their earlier edition and revised, while others have been translated for the first time for this purpose.

This is an excellent resource for understanding Kierkegaard's published works, many of which can hardly be adequately understood without the help of his journals. This editorial innovation was an excellent idea which does not exist in any of the Danish editions. This offers an enormous service to the reader by placing the relevant journal entries conveniently together with the published texts. These various entries can also easily be referenced by means of the cumulative index to the works in the series.¹⁰⁴ The disadvantage of this supplement section is that it is drawn primarily from the "B" section of the *Papirer* and is thus only a very limited selection, which may or may not be representative of all the extant material. But the translators cannot be held responsible for the shortcomings of the Danish edition on this score.

It should also be mentioned that in the *Kierkegaard's Writings* series several texts are presented as individual works, which strictly speaking belong to the *Nachlass*. These include the following: *Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est*, *The Book on Adler*, *The Battle between the Old and the New Soap-Cellars*, *Writing Sampler*, the *Schelling Lecture Notes*. There have also, of course, been earlier translations of some of these works.

¹⁰³ *Kierkegaard's Writings*, vols. 1-26, tr. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1978-2000.

¹⁰⁴ *Cumulative Index to Kierkegaard's Writings*, prepared by Nathaniel J. Hong, Kathryn Hong, Regine Prenzel-Guthrie, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2000.

IV. *A New Edition of the Journals and Notebooks*

There are at present plans for a new edition of Kierkegaard's *Nachlass* in English based on the volumes of the journals and notebooks which are now appearing in *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*.¹⁰⁵ It will appear jointly at Princeton University Press and Walter de Gruyter Verlag and will comprise some eleven volumes under the title *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks*.¹⁰⁶ These volumes will appear over the next ten years, with the first volume being published at the end of 2003 or the beginning of 2004. The initial volumes will be translated by Alastair Hannay, Bruce Kirmmse and George Pattison. The commentaries and critical accounts of the text from *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* will also be translated and (unlike in the Danish edition) will appear in the same volumes as the primary texts themselves.

This new English edition will be revolutionary not by any intrinsic merit of its own but rather by virtue of the fact that its textual basis, *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*, is revolutionary. This edition will present the material in its original form, i. e., in the original journals and notebooks that Kierkegaard himself kept. By restoring the various entries to their original context, this edition, in an apparently simple way, solves the problem that has plagued all of the earlier editors, namely, how to present the vast mass of material in an accessible manner. Most of the individual journals and notebooks are of a size that the reader can get a sense of the general character of the whole. Moreover, the individual entries take on a clearer meaning and continuity when they appear in their original context. There is thus no need to provide this continuity artificially by some adventitious construction of the editor. The continuity is in the works themselves as Kierkegaard organized them. Moreover, this edition avoids being heavy-handed and making interpretive decisions for the reader. On the contrary, it simply presents the material in the form that Kierkegaard himself organized and kept his journals and notebooks, leaving it to the readers themselves to decide whether they believe specific passages are biographical or if there are certain continuities in the texts. These then will come to be a

¹⁰⁵ *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*, 28 text volumes and 28 commentary volumes, ed. by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Joakim Garff, Jette Knudsen, Johnny Kondrup and Alastair McKinnon, Copenhagen: Gad Publishers 1997-.

¹⁰⁶ *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks*, vols. 1-11, ed. by Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Alastair Hannay, Bruce H. Kirmmse, Ian Malcolm, George Pattison, Jon Stewart, Princeton: Princeton University Press. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter Verlag 2003-.

matter of responsible academic discussion based on arguments and evidence. This is where the matter should be debated and not in the privacy of the mind of the individual editor.

The commentaries from *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* will appear in slightly modified form. The modifications that will be made will be with the goal of making the information presented in the Danish edition accessible and appropriate to an anglophone public. The linguistic commentaries, i.e. those concerning old Danish words or expressions, will be omitted since they will be taken account of in the translation of the primary texts. By contrast, additional commentaries will be added for the anglophone reader to supply additional background information presupposed of the reader of the Danish edition. Anyone who has ever worked with *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* knows what a tremendous help these commentaries are in understanding Kierkegaard's texts. With this material available for the first time in English, it will be possible for anglophone scholars to begin to gain a greater appreciation for the sources of Kierkegaard's thought.

It is of course still far too early to say anything concrete about the significance of this edition for anglophone Kierkegaard research. It can be hoped, however, that by presenting Kierkegaard's journals and notebooks in a way that is so unlike any of the previous English editions, and by virtue of the sheer volume of material from the *Nachlass* that it will make available, this English edition could potentially make an important contribution to an understanding of Kierkegaard's authorship.

It can be fairly said that true research on the *Nachlass* in the anglophone world has only just begun. With the present volume and with the forthcoming English translation of Kierkegaard's journals and notebooks, it is to be hoped that anglophone scholars will at long last overcome the old prejudices which regarded this part of the authorship as a source for biographical information or for *ad hoc* aphoristic statements about individual issues treated more extensively in the published works. The hope is that scholars will begin to take the material in its own right more seriously in their investigations of Kierkegaard's thought. Such a move would almost certainly represent an important enrichment of Kierkegaard research internationally. The stage of research characterized by studies which explore the *Nachlass* on its own terms has, however, not yet arrived in the anglophone world.