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# THE KIERKEGAARDIAN MIND

*Edited by Adam Buben, Eleanor Helms,  
and Patrick Stokes*

 **Routledge**  
Taylor & Francis Group  
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2019  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN  
and by Routledge  
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

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*British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Buben, Adam, 1977- editor.

Title: The Kierkegaardian mind / edited by Adam Buben, Eleanor Helms, and Patrick Stokes.

Description: 1 [edition]. | New York : Routledge, 2019. | Series: The Routledge philosophical minds | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018061160 | ISBN 9781138092716

(hardback : alk. paper) | ISBN 9780429198571 (e-book)

Subjects: LCSH: Kierkegaard, Søren, 1813-1855.

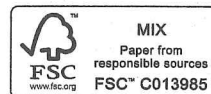
Classification: LCC B4377 .K4995 2019 | DDC 198/.9—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018061160>

ISBN: 978-1-138-09271-6 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-429-19857-1 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo  
by Apex CoVantage, LLC



Printed in the United Kingdom  
by Henry Ling Limited

# CONTENTS

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <i>Acknowledgements</i>  | ix  |
| <i>List of abbreviations for Kierkegaard's Works</i>   | x   |
| <i>List of contributors</i>  | xiv |
| <br>   |     |
| Introduction: Kierkegaard's life, context, and legacy<br><i>Adam Buben, Eleanor Helms, and Patrick Stokes</i>    | 1   |
| <br>   |     |
| <b>PART 1</b>  |     |
| <b>Methodology</b>   | 15  |
| 1 The passion of Kierkegaard's existential method<br><i>Lee C. Barrett</i>                                       | 17  |
| 2 Johannes Climacus and the dialectical method: from dialectics back to existence<br><i>Claudine Davidshofer</i> | 28  |
| 3 Kierkegaard's experimenting psychology<br><i>William McDonald</i>  | 39  |
| 4 Methodology and the Kierkegaardian mind<br><i>Jamie Turnbull</i>   | 52  |
| <br>   |     |
| <b>PART 2</b>  |     |
| <b>Ethics</b>  | 65  |
| 5 Ethical reflection as evasion<br><i>Rob Compajen and Pieter Vos</i>  | 67  |

|  |  |            |
|--|--|------------|
| 6  | Kierkegaard on moral particularism and exemplarism<br><i>Karl Aho</i>  | 78         |
| 7  | Beyond worry? On learning humility from the lilies and the birds<br><i>John Lippitt</i>  | 89         |
| 8  | Did Napoleon teleologically suspend the ethical? A dilemma for some<br>'Hegelian' readings of <i>Fear and Trembling</i><br><i>Ryan S. Kemp</i> | 100        |
| 9  | An ethics of home and hope: Kierkegaard's exile and Heidegger's emigrant<br><i>Megan Altman</i>  | 110        |
| 10   | Love for humans: morality as the heart of Kierkegaard's religious<br>philosophy<br><i>Sharon Krishek</i>                                       | 122        |
| <b>PART 3</b>                              |  |            |
| <b>Aesthetics</b>                          |  | <b>133</b> |
| 11   | The ethical life of aesthetes<br><i>Ulrika Carlsson</i>  | 135        |
| 12   | Kierkegaard on nature and natural beauty<br><i>Anthony Rudd</i>  | 145        |
| 13   | Kierkegaard's transfigurations of the sublime<br><i>Samuel Cuff Snow</i>   | 156        |
| 14   | Kierkegaard on the value of art: an indirect method of communication<br><i>Antony Aumann</i>   | 166        |
| 15   | Deleuze on Kierkegaard<br><i>Andrew Jampol-Petzinger</i>   | 177        |
| <b>PART 4</b>                              |  |            |
| <b>Philosophy of religion and theology</b> |  | <b>189</b> |
| 16   | Kierkegaard's existential mimesis<br><i>Wojciech Kaftanski</i>   | 191        |
| 17   | Becoming a subject: Kierkegaard's theological art of existence<br><i>Peder Jothen</i>  | 203        |

|                           |   |            |
|---------------------------|---|------------|
| 18                        | Engendering atonement: Kierkegaard on the cross<br><i>Deidre Nicole Green</i>                         | 215        |
| 19                        | On faith and reason(s): Kierkegaard's logic of conviction<br><i>K. Brian Söderquist</i>               | 227        |
| 20                        | Coming to an understanding with the paradox<br><i>Mark A. Wrathall</i>                                | 239        |
| 21                        | Kierkegaard's defense of nature and theology against natural theology<br><i>Will Williams</i>         | 254        |
| <b>PART 5</b>             |   |            |
| <b>Philosophy of mind</b> |   | <b>267</b> |
| 22                        | Consciousness, self, and reflection<br><i>Patrick Stokes</i>  | 269        |
| 23                        | Conscience, self-deception, and the question of authenticity<br>in Kierkegaard<br><i>Claudia Welz</i> | 281        |
| 24                        | Imagination and belief<br><i>Eleanor Helms</i>  | 293        |
| 25                        | Agency, identity, and alienation in <i>The Sickness unto Death</i><br><i>Justin F. White</i>          | 305        |
| <b>PART 6</b>             |   |            |
| <b>Anthropology</b>       |   | <b>317</b> |
| 26                        | Kierkegaard's post-Kantian approach to anthropology and selfhood<br><i>Roe Fremstedal</i>             | 319        |
| 27                        | Images of the closed self in <i>The Sickness unto Death</i><br><i>Anna Louise Strelis Söderquist</i>  | 331        |
| 28                        | The Kierkegaardian self: convergences and divergences<br><i>Jack Mulder, Jr.</i>                      | 341        |
| 29                        | Kierkegaard and the desirability of immortality<br><i>Adam Buben</i>                                  | 351        |



|   |                            |            |
|---|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>PART 7</b>   |                            |            |
| <b>Epistemology</b>   |                            | <b>363</b> |
| 30 Christian epistemology and the anthropology of sin: Kierkegaard on natural theology and the concept of 'offense' |                            | 365        |
|   | <i>Karen L. Carr</i>       |            |
| 31 Varieties of existential uncertainty   |                            | 376        |
|   | <i>Rick Anthony Furtak</i> |            |
| 32 Irony and the conversion experience  |                            | 386        |
|   | <i>Walter Wietzke</i>      |            |
| 33 Logic, language, and existential knowledge   |                            | 397        |
|   | <i>Mélissa Fox-Muraton</i> |            |
| 34 The incognito of a thief: Johannes Climacus and the poetics of self-incrimination                                |                            | 409        |
|   | <i>Martijn Boven</i>       |            |
| <b>PART 8</b>   |                            |            |
| <b>Politics</b>   |                            | <b>421</b> |
| 35 Lukács, Kierkegaard, Marx, and the political   |                            | 423        |
|   | <i>Alison Assiter</i>      |            |
| 36 Kierkegaard: the dialectical self and the political  |                            | 435        |
|   | <i>Shoni Rancher</i>       |            |
| 37 Kierkegaard, Hegel, and Augustine on love  |                            | 446        |
|   | <i>Thomas J. Millay</i>    |            |
| 38 The covetous canary: Kierkegaard on the problem of social comparison and the cultivation of social courage       |                            | 457        |
|   | <i>Paul Carron</i>         |            |
| <i>Index</i>  |                            | 468        |

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Putting together a volume of this size is not for the faint of heart. Fortunately, with an editorial team evenly spread across the globe, it can honestly be said that the sun never set on this project. But it wasn't just our hard work that brought it to fruition, and we'd like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to those who helped make this book a reality.

To begin with, this project has been supported by our respective home institutions: Leiden University in the Netherlands, California Polytechnic State University in the United States, and Deakin University in Australia. For a number of reasons, which include hosting conferences and other events that helped forge the ideas presented in this volume, we are also grateful to the Hong Kierkegaard Library at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, and the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre at the University of Copenhagen.

We are especially grateful to the late Robert L. Perkins, series editor of the *International Kierkegaard Commentary* (Mercer University Press), whose list of abbreviations is used throughout the volume. We'd also like to offer our thanks to the following people who have provided help and encouragement at various stages of the project: Andrew Burgess and Janice Schuetz, Jon Stewart, John Davenport, Gordon Marino, Joakim Garff, and Rebecca Shillabeer and Gabrielle Coakeley at Routledge.

Finally, we thank our respective friends and families for their support and encouragement, and especially Megan Altman for her assistance with various last-minute editorial tasks.



# ABBREVIATIONS FOR KIERKEGAARD'S WORKS

## Standard English translations

- BA *The Book on Adler*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- CA *The Concept of Anxiety*, R. Thomte in collaboration with A. B. Anderson (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- CD *Christian Discourses* and *The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- CI *The Concept of Irony*, together with 'Notes of Schelling's Berlin Lectures,' H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- CUP 1 *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to 'Philosophical Fragments'*, vol. 1, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- CUP 2 *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to 'Philosophical Fragments'*, vol. 2, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- COR *The 'Corsair' Affair*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- EO 1 *Either/Or*, vol. 1, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- EO 2 *Either/Or*, vol. 2, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- EPW *Early Polemical Writings*, J. Watkin (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- EUD *Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- FSE *For Self-Examination* and *Judge for Yourself!* H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- FT *Fear and Trembling* and *Repetition*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983.
- JC *Johannes Climacus*. See *Philosophical Fragments*.
- JFY *Judge for Yourself!* See *For Self-Examination*.

## Abbreviations for Kierkegaard's Works

- JP *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, seven vols., H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong, assisted by G. Malantschuk (eds and trans), Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1967 (vol. 1); 1970 (vol. 2); 1975 (vols. 3 and 4); 1978 (vols. 5-7).
- KJN 1 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 1, Journals AA-DD*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, G. Pattison, V. Rumble, and K. B. Söderquist (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- KJN 2 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 2, Journals EE-KK*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, G. Pattison, V. Rumble, and K. B. Söderquist (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- KJN 3 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 3, Notebooks 1-15*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, G. Pattison, V. Rumble, and K. B. Söderquist (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- KJN 4 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 4, Notebooks NB-NB5*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, G. Pattison, J. D. S. Rasmussen, V. Rumble, and K. B. Söderquist (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- KJN 5 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 5, Journals NB6-NB10*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, G. Pattison, J. D. S. Rasmussen, V. Rumble, and K. B. Söderquist (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- KJN 6 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 6, Journals NB11-NB14*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, B. H. Kirmmse, G. Pattison, J. D. S. Rasmussen, V. Rumble, and K. B. Söderquist (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- KJN 7 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 7, Journals NB15-NB20*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, D. D. Possen, J. D. S. Rasmussen, V. Rumble, and K. B. Söderquist (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014.
- KJN 8 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 8, Journals NB21-NB25*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, D. D. Possen, J. D. S. Rasmussen, and V. Rumble (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015.
- KJN 9 *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks: Volume 9, Journals NB26-NB30*, N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, D. Kangas, B. H. Kirmmse, D. D. Possen, J. D. S. Rasmussen, and V. Rumble (eds), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017.
- PC *Practice in Christianity*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- P *Prefaces and Writing Sampler*, T.W. Nichol (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- PF *Philosophical Fragments* and *Johannes Climacus*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- PV *The Point of View*, including *On My Work as an Author*, *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*, and *Armed Neutrality*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- R *Repetition*. See *Fear and Trembling*.
- SLW *Stages on Life's Way*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- SUD *The Sickness unto Death*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- TDIO *Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions*, H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.



- TA *Two Ages*, H. V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978.
- TM *The 'Moment' and Late Writings*, H. V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- UDVS *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits*, H. V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- WA *Without Authority*, H. V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- WL *Works of Love*, H. V. Hong and E. H. Hong (trans), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995.

**Danish texts (Søren Kierkegaard's Skrifter)**

- SKS 1 *Af en endnu Levendes Papirer; Om Begrebet Ironi*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Kondrup, and F. H. Mortensen (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 1997.
- SKS 2 *Enten—Eller. Første del*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Kondrup, and F. H. Mortensen (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 1997.
- SKS 3 *Enten—Eller. Anden del*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Kondrup, and F. H. Mortensen (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 1997.
- SKS 4 *Gjentagelsen; Frygt og Bæven; Philosophiske Smuler; Begrebet Angest; Forord*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Kondrup, and F. H. Mortensen (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 1997.
- SKS 5 *Opbyggelige taler, 1843–44; Tre Taler ved tænkte Leiligheder*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, J. Kondrup, and F. H. Mortensen (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 1998.
- SKS 6 *Stadier paa Livets Vei*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, J. Kondrup, and F. H. Mortensen (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 1999.
- SKS 7 *Afsluttende uvidenskabelig Efterskrift*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2002.
- SKS 8 *En literair Anmeldelse; Opbyggelige Taler i forskjellig Aand*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2004.
- SKS 9 *Kjerlighedens Gjerninger*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2004.
- SKS 10 *Christelige Taler*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2004.
- SKS 11 *Lilien paa Marken og Fuglen under Himlen; Tvende ethisk-religiøse Smaa-Afhandlinger; Sygdommen til Døden; »Ypperstepræsten«—»Tolderen«—»Synderinden«*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, A. M. Hansen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2006.
- SKS 12 *Indøvelse i Christendom; En opbyggelig Tale; To Taler ved Altergangen om Fredagen*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, A. M. Hansen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2008.
- SKS 13 *Dagbladsartikler 1834–48; Om min Forfatter-Virksomhed; Til Selvprøvelse*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, A. M. Hansen, J. Kondrup, T. A. Olesen, and S. Tullberg (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2009.
- SKS 14 *Bladartikler*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, A. M. Hansen, J. Kondrup, T. A. Olesen, and S. Tullberg (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2010.
- SKS 15 *Et Øieblik, Hr. Andersen!; Johannes Climacus eller De omnibus dubitandum est; Polemik mod Heiberg; Bogen om Adler*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Kondrup, T. A. Olesen, and S. Tullberg (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2012.
- SKS 16 *Synspunktet for min Forfatter-Virksomhed; Hr. Phister som Captain Scipio; Den bevæbnede Neutralitet; Dømmer Selv!*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Kondrup, T. A. Olesen, and S. Tullberg (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2012.
- SKS 17 *Journalerne AA-DD*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2000.
- SKS 18 *Journalerne EE-KK*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2001.
- SKS 19 *Notesbøgerne 1–15*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2001.
- SKS 20 *Journalerne NB-NB5*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2003.
- SKS 21 *Journalerne NB6-NB10*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2003.
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- SKS 26 *Journalerne NB31-NB36*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, A. M. Hansen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2009.
- SKS 27 *Løse papirer*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, A. M. Hansen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2013.
- SKS 28 *Breve og dedikationer*, N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, A. M. Hansen, and J. Kondrup (eds), Copenhagen: Gads, 2013.

Each volume in the *Søren Kierkegaard's Skrifter* series is accompanied by a commentary volume. Where the commentary is cited, a 'K' is added before the volume number (e.g., SKS K12).



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## Contributors

*Philosophy of Death* (Northwestern University Press, 2016), a co-editor (with Patrick Stokes) of *Kierkegaard and Death* (Indiana University Press, 2011), and a contributor to several edited volumes and book series addressing the thought of Kierkegaard.

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## INTRODUCTION: KIERKEGAARD'S LIFE, CONTEXT, AND LEGACY

*Adam Buben, Eleanor Helms, and Patrick Stokes*

### A short, strange life

Kierkegaard's life and authorial career are deeply unusual, even eccentric, by the standards of both his age and our own. Yet Kierkegaard is also very much a product of a quite particular place and moment in European history. His life fits snugly within the period known to us now as the Danish Golden Age, an era of dramatic cultural, intellectual, scientific, political, and artistic flourishing bookended by twin national humiliations: the bombardment of Copenhagen by the British in 1807, and the loss of the southern provinces to Prussia after the Second Schleswig War in 1865. It was a period that produced its share of problematic geniuses, from the brilliant but insufferable Hans Christian Andersen to the restless political and religious energy of N. F. S. Grundtvig and the cultural dominance of Johann Ludvig Heiberg. Thanks in large part to the last figure, Kierkegaard was also both the product and chief critic of a philosophical and theological milieu in which the philosophy of G. F. W. Hegel was exerting an increasing, though never total, hegemony on Danish intellectual life.

Søren Aabye Kierkegaard was born on May 5, 1813, in Copenhagen, the city where he would spend almost all of his life.<sup>1</sup> His father, Michael Pedersen Kierkegaard, was born into poverty, but in his early teens he became an apprentice to a merchant and went on to a prosperous business career, retiring at just forty. In 1794 he married the sister of a business connection, Kirstine Nielsdatter Røyen. At Kirstine's death on March 23, 1796, they were childless. Michael's next marriage, to Ane Sørensdatter Lund, drew attention for two reasons: she was the family's maid, and she was pregnant with their first child at the time of their marriage on April 26, 1797. (This also meant that their romance occurred within the expected year of mourning following the death of a spouse.) Søren was the last of their seven children.

While his childhood seems largely unremarkable, Kierkegaard did experience a great deal of familial loss throughout his adolescence. Only he and his brother, Peter Christian, would make it past 1838, and Michael apparently believed that his own youthful indiscretions had brought on a curse that was to blame for the premature demise of most of his children. Whatever Kierkegaard may have thought about his father's odd dark legacy, it is clear that his father also left him with sufficient financial security to sustain his education at the University of Copenhagen and, ultimately, his career as an independent author. He defended his Magister thesis (equivalent to a

## KIERKEGAARD'S POST-KANTIAN APPROACH TO ANTHROPOLOGY AND SELFHOOD

*Roe Fremstedal*

### Historical introduction

The term 'anthropology' refers both to various views regarding human nature, and to the different academic disciplines that study human beings. The first of these has a very long history, although the term 'anthropology' first appeared in 1501. Regarding the second, anthropology first became an academic discipline in the late 18th century, and gradually became institutionalized in the first half of the nineteenth.<sup>1</sup> From its inception, the discipline of anthropology was divided into two very different fields of study. Contemporary physical anthropology (biological anthropology) goes back to the physiological anthropology of Ernst Platner of the late eighteenth century, a discipline that included not only anatomy but also ethnography and empirical psychology (including the relation between mind and body, a topic that was also relevant to philosophical anthropology). Kant's pragmatic anthropology, by contrast, contributed to the philosophical anthropologies of the nineteenth century as well as to the existential and phenomenological anthropologies of the twentieth (Louden 2011: 67, 81). Kant describes the difference between (Platner's) physiological anthropology and his own pragmatic anthropology by claiming that the former concerns 'what *nature* makes out of the human being,' whereas pragmatic anthropology concerns what *man* 'as a free-acting being makes of himself, or can and should make of himself.'<sup>2</sup> The former sees human beings as objects shaped by nature, whereas the latter emphasizes (1) what we *actually* make out of ourselves, (2) what we can *potentially* make out of ourselves, and (3) what we *ought* to make out of ourselves.

Philosophical anthropology in the nineteenth century was not only concerned with the study of human nature in general and the relation between mind and body in particular; it was also concerned with the evolution of humanity.<sup>3</sup> In addition to this, nineteenth-century anthropology discussed the relation between different academic disciplines extensively, particularly the relation between the humanities and (natural) sciences (Orth 1997; Marquard 1971). Like the German '*Wissenschaft*,' the Danish term '*Videnskab*' includes not only science but also the humanities and anthropology. Kierkegaard argues that science essentially differs from ethics and



religion. Science concerns explanatory and descriptive questions, whereas ethics and religion concern normative questions in the wide sense of how we should live our lives (KJN 9, 187f./SKS 25, 187).<sup>4</sup> Kierkegaard assumes that Christian theology goes beyond philosophy and science by relying on divine revelation. Christian anthropology in particular differs from philosophical anthropology by presupposing divine revelation and central dogmas of faith (cf. KJN 2, 117, 120/SKS 18, 125f.).

Kierkegaard can be seen as contributing to the nineteenth-century discourse on anthropology by distinguishing between philosophical and theological anthropology on the one hand, and between science, ethics and religion on the other.<sup>5</sup> His influential account of human nature and selfhood is also reminiscent of nineteenth-century anthropology. Kierkegaard develops an existential approach to anthropology which focuses on what it means to be an embodied human being and to become a self. He is concerned with what is common to all humans, at least potentially, rather than what is idiosyncratic to different individuals, groups, or historical epochs.

In the nineteenth-century context, these issues belong to philosophical (and theological) anthropology. Even though Kierkegaard rarely uses the term 'anthropology,' he is familiar with both nineteenth-century philosophical and theological anthropology, and frequently deals with anthropological issues in his work.<sup>6</sup> For these reasons, I will follow earlier scholarship in referring to Kierkegaard's anthropology, while acknowledging that this anthropology is closely connected to philosophical and theological psychology (cf. Nordentoft 1972; Theunissen 2005). I will also follow Theunissen (2005: 122n) in attributing *The Sickness unto Death* to Kierkegaard, although he published it under the pseudonym Anti-Climacus. Kierkegaard shares Anti-Climacus's views and ideals, but he does not claim to live up to them (KJN 6, 127/SKS 22, 130). For this reason, I assume that the content of *The Sickness unto Death* represents (or overlaps with) Kierkegaard's own views and ideals, although these ideals are highly demanding and difficult to live up to.

### Method – phenomenology, dialectics, negativism

Part One of *The Sickness unto Death* gives a phenomenological description of despair, one which is reminiscent of the account given in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, while also anticipating twentieth-century phenomenology. Like Hegel, Kierkegaard describes, analyzes, and criticizes various forms of consciousness (or self-experience) on their own terms in a dialectical and teleological progression. Like Heidegger (and Sartre), Kierkegaard not only emphasizes historicity and the relational nature of the self (Welz 2013), but also views immediate self-referentiality, *Jemeinigkeit* (mineness), as constitutive of consciousness. At the same time, however, Kierkegaard introduces a normative ethical teleology that breaks with twentieth-century phenomenology (Stokes 2010: 55–60). Although he does not claim to be scientific, he nonetheless provides a systematic analysis of despair. Despair and related phenomena are described from the first-person perspective in a reflective, methodical, and systematic manner that partially anticipates twentieth-century hermeneutic phenomenology (cf. Welz 2013).

Part Two of *The Sickness unto Death* goes beyond the philosophical anthropology in Part One by analysing the kind of despair and sense of selfhood that we experience when we become conscious of existing before God. Whereas Part One criticizes various forms of despair on their own terms, Part Two criticizes them on Christian grounds (Grøn 1997).

Perhaps the most original element in Kierkegaard's account lies in his *negativistic* approach to selfhood. *The Sickness unto Death* indicates that we only understand selfhood negatively through its failure, through despair. Because the never-ending task of 'becoming oneself' presupposes the possibility of failure (despair), becoming oneself is a recurrent problem. Indeed, despair is considered a universal problem affecting all individuals. To get a proper understanding of selfhood, therefore, we need to approach it indirectly by focusing on how despair is overcome.<sup>7</sup>

### Human nature as a synthesis

Following earlier works such as *The Concept of Anxiety*, *The Sickness unto Death* views human nature as a *synthesis of opposites*. These opposites are described as soul and body, freedom and necessity, infinitude and finitude, eternity and temporality. In general terms, the first pole of the synthesis deals with our possibilities and our ability to be free by transcending limitations. The second pole, by contrast, deals with the constraints that limit freedom. Both of these poles are constitutive of human nature; therefore, we cannot identify exclusively with either our freedom or our given character (Rudd 2012: 31–4).

Kierkegaard introduces the concept 'facticity' as that which not only limits freedom but also makes it possible. This concept (together with the related idea of choosing oneself) represents one of Kierkegaard's most important contributions to modern European philosophy (Fremstedal 2014: ch. 3). Facticity involves always already being situated in a particular situation. We are always already particular embodied human beings, with specific histories, who are born into, and entangled in, particular traditions and particular communities. Facticity then refers to the very limits – and possibility – of human freedom, as represented by embodiment and a given (non-circumventable) historical and social context (TA, 77f., 96/SKS 8, 75, 91; KJN 4, 90/SKS 20, 90, see also CI, 281/SKS 1, 316; SUD, 36/SKS 11, 152).

Kierkegaard emphasizes the *interplay* between freedom and facticity (whereas earlier philosophical anthropology focused on activity and passivity in human beings). We choose ourselves in particular situations, which involve constraints that limit our freedom. As a result, there is a fundamental tension between facticity and freedom, which is constitutive of our human nature. This tension will develop into despair that exaggerates either facticity or freedom, unless facticity and freedom are reconciled (Rudd 2012: 48f.).

Table 26.1. Types of despair in *The Sickness unto Death*

|                       | <i>Inauthentic – non-conscious despair</i>   | <i>Authentic I – conscious of despair</i>  | <i>Authentic II – conscious of despair before God</i>                                   |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|
| Passivity or weakness | Despair of finitude;<br>Despair of necessity | Despair in weakness:<br>Despair over<br>(1) something earthly,<br>(2) the earthly, or<br>(3) oneself | Despairing over one's<br>sin;<br>Despairing over the<br>forgiveness of sin<br>(offense) |
| Activity or defiance  | Despair of infinitude;<br>Despair of freedom | Defiance – demonic<br>despair  | In despair to dismiss<br>Christianity   |



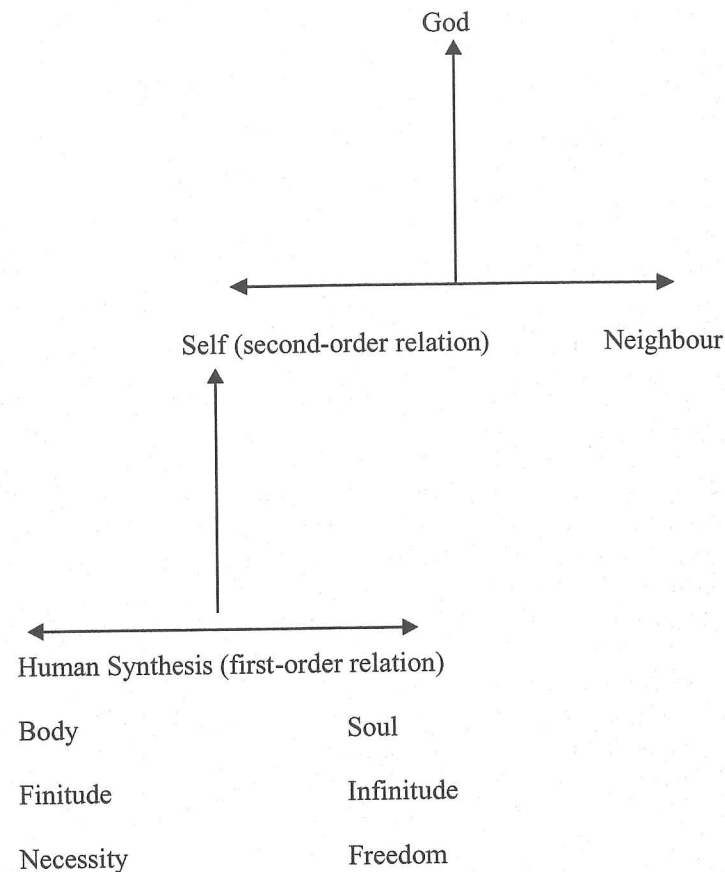


Figure 26.1 The Self and Alterity

### *Inauthentic (non-conscious) despair and self-deception*

Kierkegaard approaches human self-realization *negatively* by studying despair, understood as a deficient form of human agency that involves double-mindedness. He distinguishes between two basic types of despair that need not be recognized consciously. The 'despair of necessity' lacks possibility (and the closely related 'despair of finitude' lacks infinity) (SUD, 33–42/SKS 11, 149–57). This type of despair denies that it is free or capable of transcending facticity. For example, a person could give up the hope of breaking a self-destructive pattern of behaviour such as excessive drinking. This type of despair gives up on life and takes a fatalistic and careless attitude towards existence. It views itself as a suffering victim, entirely in the hands of fortune. It does not try to realize itself, since it lacks the proper awareness of itself and what is involved in the task of becoming a self. It is unwilling to accept the freedom and responsibility that necessarily comes with human existence.

By contrast, the 'despair of possibility' lacks necessity (and the closely related 'despair of infinitude' lacks finitude) (SUD, 30–7/SKS 11, 146–53). It collapses by overemphasizing freedom and self-creation. It regards facticity as a mere hindrance to freedom, instead of something that makes freedom possible. It absolutizes freedom, understood negatively as freedom from

limitations. As a result, freedom itself becomes abstract, fantastic and empty, since it is disconnected from the situation in which it finds itself and does not allow positive freedom to realize anything specific or concrete. Neither does it allow criteria for choosing between different possibilities or alternatives, which means that it results in arbitrariness, since all possibilities are equally valid *and* invalid.

This type of despair wants to *create itself*, without any restrictions, in order to get rid of the constraints of the present situation. This implies, however, wanting to be someone else than the person one actually is (Grøn 1997: 119ff.). The agent is therefore *double-minded* or in despair, since he is split between who he is (actuality) and who he wants to be (ideals). He is stuck in a hopeless situation, in which ideals and reality cannot be reconciled, something which epitomizes despair more generally (cf. SUD, 18/SKS 11, 133f.). The despair of possibility (futilely) wants possibility without necessity, whereas the despair of necessity (futilely) wants necessity without possibility.<sup>8</sup>

Taken together, these forms of despair represent the basic forms of *inauthentic* despair (SUD, 29–42/SKS 11, 145–57), a novel type of despair introduced by Kierkegaard in order to explain self-deception or bad faith. This type of despair is controversial because it need not be consciously experienced as despair by the person who is (supposedly) in despair, although it can be diagnosed from outside. Kierkegaard says that it is not authentic despair, but Theunissen (2005) questions whether it is despair at all. I believe it could nevertheless involve despair, if despair is subject to formal and objective constraints that go beyond subjective experience, just as *eudaimonia* involves such constraints. Not all forms of happiness qualify as *eudaimonia*; we can feel happy without being *eudaimon* by lacking the necessary virtues or external goods. Put differently, we might feel happy (and show no sign of authentic despair) yet be in inauthentic despair.

Eudaimonists see virtue as constitutive of *eudaimonia*, whereas Kierkegaard sees wholeheartedness as constitutive of proper selfhood (spirit). An agent without wholeheartedness is therefore double-minded or in despair, even if he or she fails to realize it. Since despair can be hidden or unacknowledged, Kierkegaard thinks that it is much more widespread than is usually assumed. Indeed, he thinks it is universally self-inflicted yet also possible to overcome (Fremstedal 2014; 2016). Still, despair is not merely a psychological phenomenon or something we can experience or suffer (e.g., a feeling of hopelessness). Despair always involves an *act* whereby we actively despair by giving up hope and courage. We typically suffer a loss or despair over an event, and then attribute infinite significance to it (Grøn 1997: 153).<sup>9</sup> Still, the person in despair may or may not be consciously aware of giving up hope and courage. Moreover, inauthentic and authentic despair seem to be ideal types that actual cases of despair resemble to varying degrees. Although despair generally involves some opacity or self-deception, there is normally some level of self-awareness involved as well. This means that very often the despairing person has at least a dim idea of his or her state (Westphal 2014: 243). Nevertheless, Kierkegaard tells us he deals with inauthentic despair 'abstractly, as if it were not the despair of any person,' whereas authentic despair concerns various actual cases of despair (SUD, 151).

### *Authentic (conscious) despair and selfhood*

For Kierkegaard, the self is not a substance but a self-relating process, in which I relate both to the human synthesis and to the divine and human other (Stokes 2015: 145). The self is therefore conceived of in *relational* and intersubjective terms. My self-relation is (at least implicitly) intertwined with my relation to God and other human beings, so that 'a discord in any' relation 'prevents the others from taking their proper form' (Davenport 2013: 239n). Becoming myself, therefore, requires not only the right self-relation but also a proper relation to God and one's neighbours.



*The Sickness unto Death* distinguishes selfhood from human nature. Human nature has a latent *potential* for selfhood, but the (actualized) self is neither the human synthesis nor one of its poles (such as the soul) (SUD, 13/SKS 11, 129).<sup>10</sup> Instead, the self is a reflexive self-relation that relates actively to the human synthesis by forming *second-order volitions*. More specifically, selfhood requires not only self-consciousness but volitional identification with some first-order motives and alienation from others (Davenport 2012: 117). For instance, I identify with my desire to take care of my son and alienate myself from my desire to oversleep. The self is then only a self insofar as it presides over itself, or exercises self-relation, by forming second-order volitions (Westphal 2014: 238).

In addition, the term 'self' is used in different senses. On the one hand, it represents an *ideal* identity – identified with spirit – that actively overcomes despair at every instant. This is the self we are supposed to become, something that represents a never-ending task that is highly demanding (more on this in what follows). On the other hand, it represents an actual self that consciously despairs.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, one only becomes a self by relating to oneself, recognizing that one is in despair, and by forming second-order volitions. Whereas inauthentic despair recognizes neither selfhood nor despair (as problems or tasks to be dealt with), authentic despair is aware of both. Yet authentic despair lacks the transparency and wholeheartedness that makes it possible to overcome despair by existing before God.

Part Two of *The Sickness unto Death* deals not only with religious faith that overcomes despair, but also with despair that is conscious of existing before God, which I will examine in further detail below. *The Sickness unto Death* thus provides a *typology* of despair. Kierkegaard describes a dialectical progression of various forms of conscious despair that involve more and more self-consciousness, selfhood, and volition. The self is intertwined with self-consciousness and volition, so that intensified (second-order) volition goes together with intensified self-consciousness and selfhood. Except for the ideal self, this process of intensification also involves an intensification of despair that moves increasingly further from faith (SUD, 101/SKS 11, 213). At its most extreme, despair does not seek help, or forgiveness, but it wants to remain as despair even when it is aware of existing before God (SUD, 108–10/SKS 11, 220–2).

Kierkegaard takes all despair to be dominated by either weakness or defiance, that is, either by passivity or activity (SUD, 47/SKS 11, 162). The 'despair in weakness' does not want to be itself, whereas 'defiance' desperately wants to be itself. The former despairs over a loss or a misfortune, something that is described as 'despair over something earthly' (SUD, 50ff./SKS 11, 165ff.). This despair can develop into despair over 'the earthly' in general if one does not accept the loss, but sees it as fatal by attributing decisive importance, or infinite value, to it (SUD, 60/SKS 11, 175). Nevertheless, in a general sense, despairing over 'the earthly' implies despairing over oneself, that is, viewing oneself as too weak to overcome or accept the relevant loss. Then one is stuck in a desperate situation in which one cannot cope with the loss or realize oneself (SUD, 60ff./SKS 11, 176ff.). The problem, though, is not so much the initial loss or misfortune, as it is our response towards the loss because we relinquish all hope and courage (Grøn 1997: 153).

At the other extreme, we have the 'defiant,' or 'demonic,' who desperately wants to be himself (SUD, 71–4/SKS 11, 184–7). This creature initially strives to be himself by creating himself, something that he fails to do which leads him to conscious despair. In this situation, the defiant, or demonic, gives up hope that despair can be overcome, because he thinks that it is too late for any improvement. He rejects all help to overcome despair and takes pride in despair and victimhood by identifying with it. He is highly conscious of despair, focusing all his attention on it, while refusing to share or communicate this problem with anyone (the state of 'inclosing reserve,' *Indesluttethed*).

The defiant, or demonic, feels offended by existence, hates it, and rebels against it with rage and malice. He sees himself as the big typo in God's creation which demonstrates just how bad an author God is (SUD, 73f./SKS 11, 186f.). Still, scholars disagree over whether he pursues evil only because it is evil, or because he has a perverse understanding of the good. This is not only an exegetical question, but also a question of whether despair and *acedie* represent counter-examples to the influential view that intentional action is always prompted by something that appears good in some respect.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, even defiance involves some weakness and vice versa. Accordingly, Kierkegaard claims that weakness and defiance are both involved in all forms of despair (SUD, 20, 49/SKS 11, 135f., 165).<sup>13</sup> The 'despair of weakness' does not want to be the self it is, whereas the defiant 'desperately wants to be . . . a self that he is not (for the will to be the self that he is in truth is the very opposite of despair)' (SUD, 20/SKS 11, 136). None of them wholeheartedly wants to be themselves as they are, since they value – or identify with – something they are not. And neither hope to overcome despair. As a result, they find themselves stuck in intolerable situations (cf. SUD, 18, 37/SKS 11, 133f., 153).

### *Overcoming despair – wholeheartedness, ethics, religion*

There is always a tension in the human synthesis between our freedom and its limits, between activity and passivity, defiance and weakness. This tension results in despair (double-mindedness) unless I manage to shape my (practical) identity in a coherent manner. In order to reconcile freedom and facticity, I need not only second-order volitions, but also something that shapes and *unifies* selfhood. A unified self requires a final end, or a ground project, that I am fully committed towards in a non-instrumental manner. If I am only partially, occasionally, or conditionally committed to some project or end, then I cannot shape my whole identity, and thereby avoid despair or double-mindedness. A coherent self, one which reconciles freedom and facticity, requires unconditional commitment to one ground project rather than several conflicting ones. Only unreserved commitment to one ground project always makes it possible to shape my identity and to coordinate other projects and different roles. Without such an underlying commitment or character, my identity would lack coherence or unity, since the different roles and projects I engage in (e.g., parenting and espionage) need not then be mutually compatible even in principle (Rudd 2012: 45, 139f., 187f.).

Kierkegaard describes the process of shaping one's identity dialectically as a process of breaking with *and* returning to finitude or facticity (as alienation *and* reconciliation). It involves both negative freedom (from first-order states) and positive freedom (realized in an ideal self). Kierkegaard writes: 'the progress of becoming [oneself] must be an infinitely moving away from oneself in the infinitizing of the self, and an infinitely coming back to itself in the finitizing process' (SUD, 30/SKS 11, 146). First, one has a specific (traditional or conventional) identity by virtue of being a particular individual in a specific historical and social context. Second, the self distances itself completely from this identity by being negatively free and by imagining different possibilities and ideals. Finally, it returns to finitude by realizing ideals in reality (cf. PC, 190/SKS 12, 189). Instead of just contemplating different possibilities, the self acts in the world by being fully committed to one project. In doing this, the self both breaks with its given (traditional or conventional) identity and returns to it, by taking it over and reforming it in light of its commitments.

But not just any unconditional commitment will do. Although some aspects of life can be morally insignificant or indifferent (*adiaphora*), Kierkegaard denies that our characters or basic attitudes toward life can escape morality insofar as we are free and responsible beings. Moreover, 'Purity of heart,' Part One of *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits*, argues that it is impossible to



be wholeheartedly immoral, since (objective) immorality is parasitic on (objective) morality (and even immoral action may be prompted by something that seems good). For this reason, Kierkegaard concludes that immorality (or evil) involves double-mindedness or despair, whereas morality facilitates wholeheartedness. A coherent self then requires unconditional moral commitment, not just occasionally (in deeds) but consistently at the level of character. Only by willing the good unconditionally can we will one thing and avoid despair (UDVS, 24/SKS 8, 139f.).<sup>14</sup> The choice then stands between willing the good categorically and willing it only partially (or conditionally). Morality requires the former, whereas the aesthetes seem to settle for the latter by prioritizing sensuousness and inclination over morality, at least occasionally (Fremstedal 2015b).<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, we must distinguish between Christian and non-Christian ethics in this context. *The Concept of Anxiety* argues that non-Christian ethics collapse internally because of human guilt and sin (CA, 16ff./SKS 4, 323ff.). Insofar as it fails to live up to its own standards, non-Christian ethics involves despair that is split between the ideals it sets out to achieve and their worldly realization. Christian ethics, by contrast, involves not only consciousness of sin, but also divine (and human) forgiveness of sins. Christian ethics relies on divine assistance, whereas non-Christian ethics relies on human willpower (Fremstedal 2014).

### Theological and philosophical anthropology

Philosophical anthropology differs from theological anthropology (KJN 2, 117, 120/SKS 18, 125f.) insofar as the former relies on human experience and mere reason, whereas the latter presupposes divine revelation. Like other Christian anthropologists, Kierkegaard emphasizes the dogma of original sin and that man is created in the image of God.<sup>16</sup> Kierkegaard rejects Ludwig Feuerbach's claim that 'theology is anthropology' (SKS K7, 363), because it implies a reduction of theology (and theological anthropology) to philosophical anthropology. Feuerbach thinks God is created in the image of man, whereas Kierkegaard assumes the opposite (cf. JP 3, 119/SKS 26, 285).

Part Two of *The Sickness unto Death* develops a Christian anthropology that focuses on the *theological self* that is aware of itself as existing before God. Here Kierkegaard identifies despair with sin, and interprets it as an unwillingness to be oneself before God that involves an element of self-deception. Despair before God takes three forms:

- (1) the sin of despairing over one's sin,
- (2) the sin of despairing over the forgiveness of sin (offense), and
- (3) the sin of dismissing Christianity.

The person guilty of the first form of despair gives up hope and courage because of their own sin. The person guilty of the second form gives up because they take offense at divine forgiveness, since they assume they are beyond forgiveness. Finally, the third rejects Christianity altogether by denying the incarnation. These forms involve an increased sinfulness and despair, insofar as they move increasingly further away from faith (SUD, 101/SKS 11, 213).

Kierkegaard takes the self to be established by God, so that any conflict in the human synthesis reflects itself (implicitly) in the relation to God. Despair is contrasted with Christian faith, which involves an unconditional (second-order) will to be oneself before God in which 'the self rests transparently in the power that established it' (SUD, 131/SKS 11, 242). Transparency here appears to involve an openness to God and other human beings that is aware of the relational nature of the self, and which affirms it by being unconditionally committed towards Christian ethics, while recognizing the human tendency towards sin, despair, and self-deception. The Christian believer humbly accepts himself as a sinner who is forgiven by God (Westphal 2014: ch. 12).

Still, we may be tempted to ask whether the theological anthropology in Part Two of *The Sickness unto Death* is implicit in the philosophical anthropology of Part One. The concept of infinitude, for instance, may resemble divine infinitude. Yet, *The Sickness unto Death* interprets infinitude in the human synthesis only as the unlimited (Greek, *ápeiron*) that is dialectically dependent upon its opposite (finitude) (SUD, 35/SKS 11, 151). The attempt to abstract infinitude from finitude therefore leads to the 'despair of infinitude.' *The Sickness unto Death* seems to presuppose that God creates us, but Part One only assumes that defiance, the phenomenon of desperately wanting to be oneself, indicates that the self does not constitute itself normatively (SUD, 14/SKS 11, 130). The self despairs because it is confronted with constraints on selfhood that are not self-imposed (e.g., one's facticity). These constraints are external to the will, so the agent cannot set all the rules of its existence autonomously, nor the rules for setting the rules (SUD, 68f./SKS 11, 182f.).

In *The Sickness unto Death*, the philosophical anthropology of Part One results in despair that prepares the transition to Christian anthropology in Part Two. It then seems that philosophy can help us to 'seek the leap as a desperate way out' (CUP 1, 106/SKS 7, 103) because Christianity fits human subjectivity completely (CUP 1, 230/SKS 7, 210). Christian faith solves the pre-Christian problem of despair, but it cannot be reduced to philosophical anthropology, since it has its own perspectives and language. Indeed, pre-Christian philosophical standards (e.g., first ethics) are valid, yet not sufficient, because they collapse internally by leading to despair.

Despair is only overcome by Christian faith in a wide sense that appears to include hope and charity. Christian hope takes the form of 'hope against hope,' as hope in a (humanly) hopeless situation (FSE, 81–3/SKS 13, 102–4). Indeed, Christian hope only becomes an extant possibility when everything breaks down because of despair (JP 2, 247). Christian hope is a divine gift that, if accepted, overcomes human (pre-Christian) despair. Nevertheless, hope involves not so much wishfulness as expectancy of good for oneself and one's neighbour alike (WL, 260/SKS 9, 259). Without a God that makes everything possible (SUD, 71/SKS 11, 185), there is nothing that secures hope or prevents despair.

### Conclusion

Like Kant, Kierkegaard is a forerunner of twentieth-century existential and phenomenological anthropology. Kierkegaard's approach to anthropology shares some basic features with Kant's pragmatic anthropology. First, both sketch a normative non-naturalistic anthropology that includes teleology, ethics, and religion. Second, both emphasize what is common to all humans, rather than what is specific to various groups and nationalities. More specifically, both are concerned with human actuality, possibilities, and (objective) ideals. For Kierkegaard, the past seems to represent the actual, the future the possibilities, and the present the moment in which the self relates to the whole by taking full responsibility for itself (cf. Stokes 2015: 163). In the nineteenth-century context, Kierkegaard's analysis of historicity and contingency is reminiscent of the German historicism that was part of the nineteenth-century discourse on anthropology after Herder. It is particularly by introducing the concept of facticity and richer notions of historicity and selfhood, that Kierkegaard's account goes beyond Kant's anthropology, and offers an account that anticipates twentieth-century phenomenology and existentialism (Fremstedal 2014: ch. 3).

*The Sickness unto Death* represents perhaps Kierkegaard's most important contribution to anthropology, moral psychology, and theories of selfhood. Kierkegaard's approach is original particularly because it involves a negativistic phenomenology (Gron 1997) and a typology of despair that covers everything from non-conscious despair to demonic despair. Kierkegaard's



views on anthropology and selfhood have been highly influential, particularly in continental philosophy and theology. Rudd (2012) and Davenport (2012), however, show that they are also relevant to debates on practical identity and narratives in Anglophone philosophy after MacIntyre and Frankfurt.

### Related topics

'Kierkegaard's experimenting psychology,' William McDonald; 'Conscience, self-deception, and the question of authenticity in Kierkegaard,' Claudia Welz; 'Agency, identity, and alienation in *The Sickness unto Death*' Justin F. White; 'The Kierkegaardian self: convergences and divergences,' Jack Mulder, Jr.

### Notes

- 1 The term 'anthropology' is more established in continental philosophy and Kantianism than in analytic philosophy. In the early twentieth century, anthropology was re-established as a philosophical discipline in Germany, something that led to theoretical controversies regarding vagueness, empiricism, scientism, reductionism, and reification (cf. Marquard 1971; Orth 1997; Honenberger 2015). It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss these controversies in great depth. Nevertheless, I will say that Kierkegaard's existential approach to anthropology cannot be easily dismissed, since it posits vital questions regarding our very existence, identity, and self-understanding. In this respect, Kierkegaard's anthropology differs strongly from scientific studies of man as an object. Still, one may discuss whether Kierkegaard's work is best described in terms of anthropology, psychology, or selfhood.
- 2 Kant (Akademieausgabe 7:119) quoted from Loudon (2011: 67). To some extent, this chapter also draws on Fremstedal (2014; 2015a; 2015b; 2016).
- 3 Still, philosophical anthropology is not only supposed to give knowledge about human nature (as one topic among others), but it also sees human beings as the locus of all possible understanding, including the understanding of nature in science. Nineteenth-century philosophical anthropology therefore focuses not only on the experience of the human being but also on how all science, and other human activities, rely on human experience. Instead of merely focusing on the nature of man, anthropology focuses on the problem of experience in general, our total 'encounter with and understanding of the world' (Orth 1997: 522). For an analysis of Kierkegaard's view of human experience and consciousness in general, see Stokes (2010: chps. 2–4).
- 4 Even if *Videnskab* includes normative legal theory, political theory, and economics, it may still not include ethical normativity. Nevertheless, *The Concept of Anxiety* describes ethics as a *Videnskab*, something that is unusual for Kierkegaard (see CA, 16f./SKS 4, 323–5).
- 5 In addition, the 'Interlude' of *Philosophical Fragments* argues that contingent truths, in historical and empirical disciplines, differ essentially from necessary truths (e.g.,  $2 + 2 = 4$ ). The 'Interlude' argues that it is not only the future that is contingent but also the past. History, both future and past, involves transitions from possibility to actuality that cannot be predicted or fully comprehended, since it is based on free agency that contingently intervenes in the world by actualizing some possibilities, while annihilating others. For instance, the king decides that Denmark is allied with France, not England. It is not only history itself that is fundamentally contingent, however, but also our interpretation of it. *Philosophical Fragments* suggests that we should relate to the past just as we relate to the future, namely by forming historical beliefs (PF, 76f./SKS 4, 276). History is construed by agents, freely deciding to form one belief over another, selecting one interpretative possibility over others. Of the different possibilities, one is actualized and the others annihilated. Forming beliefs results from acts of will, in which we decide to interpret history in one way instead of another (something that can be supported by reasons to varying degrees). Historical knowledge, then, represents the beliefs and interests of historical agents that take part in society; it does not involve a disinterested ahistorical spectator without presuppositions (Fremstedal 2015a).
- 6 'Anthropology' is spelled both with and without the letter 'h' by Kierkegaard. There are sixty-two occurrences in the Danish electronic edition (which covers almost all of Kierkegaard's corpus), although fifty-one of these are from the commentaries. It is often the case that some important terms and names occur more frequently in the commentaries than in the primary sources, however, partially because

the latter presuppose context. Important material can therefore be implicit and somewhat hidden to modern readers. Nevertheless, Kierkegaard's familiarity with the nineteenth-century discourse on anthropology is indicated not only by his own account but also by his references to anthropology. For different overviews, see JP 7, 6 (on theological and philosophical anthropology); JP 1, 13–7; [http://sks.dk/zoom/search.aspx?zoom\\_sort=1&zoom\\_xml=0&zoom\\_query=ant\\*ropologi\\*](http://sks.dk/zoom/search.aspx?zoom_sort=1&zoom_xml=0&zoom_query=ant*ropologi*) (2018/21/02).

- 7 This is the central, negativistic thesis of Theunissen (2005) and Grøn (1997).
- 8 Kierkegaard describes these conflicting elements, which are constitutive of despair, as conflicting wills: '[E]veryone in despair has two wills, one that he futilely wants to follow entirely, and one that he futilely wants to get rid of entirely' (UDVS, 30/SKS 8, 144). The Danish word for despair, *Fortvivelse*, is even based on the numeral two (*tví*), just like the German *Verzweiflung* is based on *zwei*.
- 9 Inauthentic despair normally refers to a form of consciousness that speaks about itself and claims to be free of despair, typically by claiming to be safe and content (Grøn 1997: 127ff.). There is a conflict between what inauthentic despair says and what it shows, between what it intends and what it achieves, that makes it possible for the observer to conclude that it misinterprets the situation. This misinterpretation results from a complex interplay between cognition and volition, in which we tend to deny problems to ourselves, so that we do not even realize our state of despair. For these reasons, inauthentic despair implies self-deception and a volitional failure rather than a mere cognitive one. Although all forms of despair involve some self-deception, inauthentic despair involves a particularly strong form of it that denies its state of despair and its need to be improved or cured (Grøn 1997; Fremstedal 2016).
- 10 Kierkegaard's account of human nature seems either to be a form of broadly Aristotelian hylomorphism or a two-aspect account of body and mind. See Davenport (2013: 234).
- 11 For the distinction between ideal and actual self, see Stokes (2015: 178–80; cf. EO2, 259/SKS 3, 246f.). Stokes (2015) argues that the self only exists in the present, whereas the human being is temporarily extended. Stokes also discusses the relation between practical and metaphysical identity in this connection.
- 12 For the influential view that we always act under the guise of the good (*sub specie boni*), see, for example, Loudon (2011: 115–20).
- 13 Davenport (2013: 238n) says that 'the way one wills to be oneself or not is [...] also a way of willing to be what God created one to be or not.'
- 14 Davenport (2012: 98f., 122ff.) argues that moral standards represent an objective basis outside of first-order states that makes it possible to shape our identity coherently, without being at the mercy of the contingencies of time. Rudd (2012: 91ff., 112ff.) argues that the idea of the good is needed (at least regulatively) if we are to shape and improve ourselves in a substantially rational manner. For we cannot assume that we are unable to make ourselves better or worse, by standards external to our will, unless we think that instrumental rationality suffices and let non-rational cares and commitments dominate.
- 15 Nevertheless, wholeheartedness requires not only a unified identity, which appears to take a temporal and narrative form, but also a naked self that takes unconditional responsibility for its whole life in the present. It is controversial whether the narrative reading of Kierkegaard, defended by Davenport (2012) and (Rudd 2012), can account for the naked self that takes complete responsibility for itself in the present (Stokes 2015: 167). It seems that unless the self takes full responsibility for itself, it cannot fully endorse itself reflectively or accept itself completely. Without full acceptance, or unconditional willingness to be itself, the self is in despair, because it is split between actuality (that it does not fully accept or endorse) and ideals (that it identifies with). To despair is 'to lose the eternal' (JP 1, 346), since 'the eternal' represents the present in which the self should take responsibility for its whole life.
- 16 See, e.g., Kierkegaard's notes on Christian anthropology from H. N. Clausen's lectures (KJN 3, 18–82/SKS 19, 23–84). For Kierkegaard's views on original sin and *imago Dei*, see Fremstedal (2014); Nordentoft (1972: chps. 4 and 6).

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### Further reading

- Davenport, J. (2013) 'Selfhood and spirit,' in J. Lippitt and G. Pattison (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Kierkegaard*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 230–51.  
This entry gives a useful overview over Kierkegaard's account of spirit, selfhood, and human nature.
- Rudd, A. (2012) *Self, value, and narrative: A Kierkegaardian approach*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
This work shows the relevance of Kierkegaard for contemporary debates on selfhood, practical identity and narratives.
- Westphal, M. (2014) *Kierkegaard's concept of faith*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company.  
This work gives a useful overview over Kierkegaard's pseudonymous authorship by focusing on Kierkegaard's concept of religious faith. Chapter 12 deals with selfhood and despair in *The Sickness unto Death*.