

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Silence: The Phenomenon and Its Ontological Significance.* By Bernard P. Dauenhauer. (*Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy.*) Indiana University Press, 1980. 213 pages. \$15.

The thesis advanced by this book is that silence is not a merely negative or privative phenomenon, derivative from something yet more fundamental. Rather silence co-constitutes and is equi-primordial with the multiple strata of the domain of discourse. Silence opens the way for a distinctive modification in the way in which our surroundings are experienced and expressed. Silence is an essential element in the complex, multi-strata interplay between man and world.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part is phenomenological, directed towards the isolation of the essential features of silence. The second and longer part of the book is divided into two sections, the first of which is a criticism of other views of silence. Hegel, Husserl and Sartre come in for critical discussion. The second part of the second section deals with Dauenhauer's own ontological interpretation and/or theory of silence. Thus, in addition to developing its central theme, the book makes critical use of phenomenology, intentional analysis in particular, to illumine, clarify and support ontological analysis.

Phenomenologically, silence is (1) a founded intentional performance which is required for the concrete clarification of the sense of inter-subjectivity. Silence (2) does not intend any fully determinate object, but is rather motivated by finitude and awe. Hence, it cannot be entirely autonomous, but is rather a response to the relative pre-eminence of the world. Silence (3) interrupts an "and so forth" of some particular stream of intentional performances intending determinate objects. Silence (4) is not the opposite or privation of discourse, but rather establishes oscillation and tension between the several levels of discourse, and between the domain of discourse and the domain of pre-predicative experience. Valuable as this intentional analysis of silence is, it is not clear whether Dauenhauer has isolated a formal-generic essence of silence common to all levels and types of discourse, or whether this essence of silence is "irrecusably polyvalent." If the latter is intended, the author does not undertake to show how the essential features of silence appear in concrete cases, and/or whether they undergo concrete modifications. This gives to the book a rather formal and abstract cast as the author himself admits.

In his ontological interpretation of silence, Dauenhauer argues that silence requires ontological interpretation in order to clarify concretely the senses of intersubjectivity. The Hegelian claims of complete speech and absolute knowledge serve as his foil for developing his own more modest ontological interpretation. For the most part he is generous towards those with whom he differs and seeks to incorporate the truth present in various mis-takings from silence. His sympathies clearly are with the existential philosophies of finitude, although he is by no means uncritical of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, etc. However, his ontological interpretation of silence does not really illumine the various senses of intersubjectivity, but only shows that silence makes possible multiple interpretations of such. Being as the interplay between man and world provides no criteria and no norms for deciding between the various specific interpretations of this concrete totality -- whether faith or disbelief, defiance or despair. To be sure, Dauenhauer points out that an interpretation of silence cannot finally decide these ontological questions. But one is left wondering whether the formalism of both the phenomenological descriptions and the ontological interpretation does not revenge itself upon the

material riches of Max Picard's *World of Silence* which gave impetus to Dauchauer's own work. The two books deserve careful consideration together.

Robert R. Williams  
*Hiram College*

*The Arrogance of Humanism*. By David Ehrenfeld. Oxford University Press, 1978. viii and 286 pages. \$10.95.

David Ehrenfeld claims at the outset that humanism should be recognized for what it is, namely, the dominant religion of the late twentieth century. At its heart, humanism is "supreme faith in human reason – its ability to confront and solve the many problems that humans face, its ability to rearrange both the world of Nature and the affairs of men and women so that human life will prosper." As in the case of the other religions whose social functions it has assumed, humanism is grounded upon untestable assumptions, the most basic of which in this instance is the conviction that human reason can successfully resolve any problem that might present itself as a challenge. Unfortunately, the state of the world today – politically, economically, and ecologically – stands in powerful judgment upon the arrogance of such contemporary humanism.

After asserting that humanistic optimism permeates much development within modern technological societies, Ehrenfeld glumly observes that the humanistic attitudes which underlie such development pay insufficient attention to the final results of technological advance. He supports his claim with references to certain well-known perplexities which have arisen recently, such as the storage of nuclear waste and the nightmarish possibilities of recombinant DNA research. While Ehrenfeld persuasively makes his point that contemporary humanism in technological societies is short-sighted, it is unfortunate that he does not attempt to treat the complex relationships which obtain between the expressions of humanism in technologically advanced countries and in those nations which are either developing or remain relatively undeveloped. It would seem that the discussion of such a topic is crucial for any argument which hopes to show the global significance of contemporary humanism, which appears to be one of Ehrenfeld's aims.

One of humanism's most egregious conceptual and practical errors is rooted in its anthropocentric evaluation of the nonhuman aspects of the natural world. Those creatures which 'are not known to be useful to us are considered worthless unless some previously unsuspected value is discovered' in them. Such value is usually economic, although other kinds of worth, such as recreational, are sometimes advanced; in each case, though, human interest is seen to be the criterion of the value of nonhuman entities. What is needed, Ehrenfeld argues, is a more ecologically-balanced view of the patterns of relationships which constitute the fabric of the universe, and with it a new sense of the value of a creature simply because it is.

While much of what Ehrenfeld says is to be commended, there are some serious problems in his argument. One of the most critical difficulties is his apparent belief that, once one adopts an ecologically-sensitive, nonanthropocentric view of the relationship between human and nonhuman creatures, he or she will spared much (if not all) of the often painful decision-making which occurs as one recognizes conflicts of claims between representatives of different species of life, knowing that one must decide in favor of some claim(s) at the expense of others. In a word, human beings will still have to set value-priorities as they deal more respectfully

with their fellow creatures. Ehrenfeld's assertion that "for those who reject the humanistic basis of modern life, there is simply no way to tell whether one arbitrarily chosen part of Nature has more 'value' than another part, so ... we do not bother to make the effort" simply will not do.

Possibly the most important point Ehrenfeld makes in the book is that cultural attitudes must change if nonhumanistic arguments can succeed as options to anthropocentric, humanistic thinking. Unfortunately, it is in the discussion of this point that one finds Ehrenfeld's most glaring deficiency. It is never made clear exactly how Ehrenfeld's alternative to anthropocentric humanism escapes the charge that it, too, is human-centered. When he describes the "transcended" humanism he advocates, Ehrenfeld says that we yearn to see the human spirit freed once again from the fetters of self-adulation, so that it may soar aloft if favorable winds occur." How, though, is one to ensure that such flight is not to be like that of Icarus? Ehrenfeld does not specify how such a radical transformation may occur so that when people "soar," they actually do so nonanthropocentrically.

David G. Trickett  
*Southern Methodist University*

*Atheism and Theism.* By Errol E. Harris. (Tulane Studies in Philosophy, Vol. XXVI). Tulane University, 1977. XI and 157 pages.

The purpose of this book is to demonstrate that the atheistic position is untenable and that it is possible to give "a rational interpretation of the main Christian doctrine" (vii). Harris attempts to accomplish this purpose by starting with an examination of the basis of the atheist's claim and moving to a discussion of the Christian concept of God. In the last two chapters he discusses two topics central to Christian doctrine: evil and the incarnation. There he brings to a conclusion the line of argument developed in the earlier part of the book.

According to Harris, the adoption of either theism or atheism must be justified. A careful examination of the grounds on which leading atheists, such as Nietzsche, Marx, Engels, Freud, and Sartre, base their arguments reveals that atheism has no scientific grounding and is a matter of faith just as is theism. Yet, atheism performs a positive function, the criticism of unjustified elements in theism, such as bigotry and intolerance, superstition, and primitive anthropomorphism. But, the argument leads beyond the refutation of atheism and the admission of its constructive value. While atheism is a good purgative for theism, Harris examines "the possibility of a theism supported by reason and demanded by the intellect in search of ultimate explanation" (p. 47). Avoiding Pascal's wager argument, Harris accepts Pascal's point that we must "... learn that man infinitely transcends man" and contends that to be aware of our own finiteness, we must presuppose a criteria of judgment "even if I am not explicitly aware of its complete and exact contents" (p. 52). If we recognize ourselves as incomplete (finite), we must presuppose a criterion of completion. And this completion would be absolute. From the acceptance of this understanding of man's self-transcendence Harris moves dialectically in an Hegelian manner to God, an "infinite, omniscient, self-conscious, spiritual being, actualizing the potencies of physical and biological nature, supra-personal in character and including in his single unity a multiplicity of spirits — a kingdom of ends, an integral union of all minds in one transcendent individuality" (p. 101).

In the last two chapters Harris discusses the problem of evil and explicates the doctrine of the incarnation in the light of rational theism. Of particular interest is his answer to Blanshard's question in *Reason and Belief*, "How, then, can God be

at once omnipotent and benevolent?"

While Harris' handling of atheism is interesting and his discussion of Blanshard's question useful, little is new to those familiar with Hegel. Unfortunately, to those familiar with Bradley's work and his discussion of the place of terms and relation in self-transcendence, Harris' failure to answer Bradley is a serious and devastating omission.

Thomas O. Buford  
Furman University

*Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*. Edited and translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, assisted by Gregor Malantschuk. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Vol. 1, 1967, 539 pp., \$25.00. Vol. 2, 1970, 616 pp., \$27.50. Vol. 3, 1976, 925 pp., \$29.50. Vol. 4, 1976, 782 pp., \$27.50. Vol. 5, 1978, 557 pp., \$27.50. Vol. 6, 1978, 647 pp., \$35.00. Vol. 7, 1978, 132 pp., \$20.00.

The first four volumes which strike me as the most philosophically significant are part of a seven volume set (the fifth and sixth volumes including autobiographical entries from the *Breve*), the seventh volume containing a complete index and composite collation with the definitive Danish edition.

One cannot be too lavish in praising the scholarship of Howard and Edna Hong, who meticulously edited and translated the *Journals and Papers (Papirer)*. Gregor Malantschuk has provided, in the first four volumes, brief but especially informative commentaries on the basic themes alphabetically classified herein – and there are excellent footnotes and bibliographical references throughout. Credit must also be extended to Indiana University Press for bringing this very important piece of the Kierkegaard corpus to English-speaking audiences.

I would fervently hope that the Hongs and Indiana University Press can see fit to either issue these volumes in paperback (the cost of the first four volumes in hardcover alone is \$109.50) or perhaps more feasibly abridge the often prolix style of the first four volumes to a more manageable one or two volumes and issue these separately in paperback. As it stands now, the classroom use of the *Journals and Papers* (hereafter *JP*) is ruled out by the excessive cost. Until that time, English-speaking students will have to make do with the excellent but nonetheless incomplete journal selections in the respective volumes edited by Alexander Dru and Ronald Gregor Smith. Since at times Kierkegaard engages in the "kaleidoscopic hustling together of the same batch of ideas" he himself warns other journal writers about, this caveat not-well-obeyed lends itself to the suggested abridgement.

Readers will especially appreciate the Hongs chronological listing of the journal entries selected, as well as the thematic development which they have classified alphabetically by topic. There are, however, some oddities resulting from their topical classification system. The famous discussion of the "teleological suspension of the ethical" in *Fear and Trembling* is listed in but one paragraph, and other major Kierkegaardian themes such as the absurd, authority, and repetition are not treated as classified at any considerable length. Also some passages in *JP* are so brief (e.g., 90, 781, 2794-2797, 2831) and/or so gratuitous (e.g., 16-19, 494, 3239-3242, 4955, 5675, 5836), one wonders why they were selected for inclusion.

However, there is a considerable nexus between the many thematic entries in *JP*, so that while one thematic category, alphabetically classified, might prove slim, it is often dialectically interwoven with other themes in this set of volumes. As but one of a number of possible examples, sections 712-731 deal with "Death," but in section 253 on "Certainty" we find the Epicurean admonition: "What is this life, where the only certainty is the only thing one cannot with any certainty learn any-

thing about: death; for when I am, death is not, and when death is, I am not.” One cannot, the morale appears, ever pigeonhole the desultory Kierkegaard. (I would add that the two topics selected for discussion in this review in sections I and II cannot be thoroughly discussed apart from Kierkegaard’s more synoptic views on the role of the individual, self-knowledge, and the nature of the “essentially Christian.”)

At the age of 24, Kierkegaard resolved on July 13, 1837, to keep a journal in order to (1) gain self-knowledge by letting “the thoughts come forth with the umbilical cord of the original mood”; (2) to attain fluency in writing; and (3) to record ideas which a person may only get once in his life. Philosophical readers will be glad he made and so successfully carried out this resolution.

Kierkegaard was reported to have had a high desk in every room of his house to better enable him to write down his thoughts. This practice, despite its considerable merit, doubtlessly contributed to his often inconsistent excoriations against marriage, women, the press, democratic procedures, Schopenhauer, the role of reason in philosophical theology, the all-too-human task of becoming a Christian, etc. As a consequence, it is difficult to appreciate the claim of many Danish scholars that the *JP* provide a “key to the Scriptures”.

The *JP* presents the reader with such a wealth of material that no review could possibly do it justice in the usually allotted space. Consequently, I shall focus my remarks on two fertile but somewhat less discussed Kierkegaardian themes found in the respective slogans “the crowd is the untruth” and “suffering is blessed.” The former dictum is a cornerstone of Kierkegaard’s politics; the latter has ramifications for contemporary discussions in thanatology.

## I

The advance of civilization, the rise of the large cities, centralization, and what corresponds to all this and essentially produced it – the press as a means of communication – have given all life a completely wrong direction. Personal existing vanished (*JP*, 4166).

It would seem that Kierkegaard found the modern state’s inability to govern (at least partially) the result of a lack of political authority. Long before Orwell’s double-speak, Kierkegaard recognized the linguistic phenomenon of “concepts turn(ed) around or flop(ped) over” (*JP*, 4238). Even today we can trace this resultant diffusion of responsibility as orders come from “oval offices,” and guidelines originate from pieces of architecture (e.g., a directive from the Pentagon). For Kierkegaard, the events of 1848 continued “the leveling process” resulting in the evasive, deceptive abdication of responsible selfhood.

It seems to me that it is mistaken (however common) to view Kierkegaard’s rugged individualism as *necessarily* antithetical to a notion of human community. True community may very well involve a *unum noris, omnes* – a sum of ones. However, it seems to me that Kierkegaardian scholars fail to sufficiently demarcate how the concept of community differs from that of crowd, the public, the numerical. One wants to know just how is community truly a sum of ones, or as Robert Perkins has put it “the isomorphism of the interests of the individual and the social whole”? I think *part* of the answer lies in the test of whether every member of a putative community would “stand alone with his opinion, even though it be the case that the opinion is shared by many” (*JP*, 2964).

The logic of community would also involve as a necessary feature its individual members having an opinion that each one is willing to suffer for -- to go to the cross with. In addition, these individuals in community must also *single-mindedly*

place a categorical value on the object of their commitment – they must “will the Good in truth.” Cf. *Purity of Heart*, p. 206: “For all clannishness is the enemy of universal humanity. But to will only one thing, genuinely to will the Good, as an individual, to will to hold fast to God, which things each person without exception is capable of doing, this is what unites. And if you sat in a lonely prison far from all men, or if you were placed out upon a desert island with only animals for company, if you genuinely will the Good, if you hold fast to God, then you are in unity with all men.”

Perhaps this task of elucidating how the concept of community differs from that of crowd cannot be definitely provided. Instead of listing necessary and jointly sufficient criteria for the former, we may well have to settle for plotting various family resemblances. I do not find it clearly delineated in the Kierkegaardian corpus – indirect communication notwithstanding. (Indeed, in *JP*, 4861, Kierkegaard finds “the sects” more in truth than the “established,” the latter being held to be an un-Christian concept.) It is all very well to speak of a “Christian congregation” as a “society consisting of qualitative individuals,” but unclarity remains. It may well be that with Kierkegaard we can say no more than “one solitary man cannot help or save an age; he can only express that it is foundering” (*JP*, 4157).

Indeed, there are several passages in the Kierkegaardian corpus that seem anti-community, and even religiously quite unorthodox. For example, in *JP*, 4234, Kierkegaard writes that “when two joined together are related to the idea, number begins, because two indicates number” – all of which (recalling his diatribes against the “numerical”) presents a seemingly blasphemous parody of Christ’s words “whenever two or more are gathered in my name, I am there.”

In *JP*, 2989, Kierkegaard develops an enigmatic parable to illustrate his religious objection to the numerical. He asks us to consider 100,000 Latin words belonging to the same declension. All these words try to impress the grammarian, who remains unimpressed. These words may be important as vocabulary in a dictionary, but grammatically quite insignificant. The word “*mensa*” suffices to represent the declension – the other words are insignificant for the purposes of witnessing declension. In the world of glossology any word of the declension can be a paradigm case. But “in the world of spirit the model for the declension is not accidental, but the vocabulary, the words which are declined according to this declension, the numbering, have no significance at all.” But this metaphor appears to belittle a concept of community. The declension counts not the vocabulary listing. Kierkegaard’s metaphor seems wayward enough to attack his category of the individual. Contrast *JP*, 4227: “By way of these eminent individuals ... the concept of the infinite elevation of what it meant to be man was maintained – that it really meant to be in kinship with God.”

But what if *mensa* represents the true knight of faith? And suppose the other vocabulary words (individuals) of the same declension (species) emulate the same paradigm by serving the same higher Ideal. Is this not a true community? How then could they be insignificant?

I believe we can bring out more forcefully the non-elitism (despite his critique of “liberty, equality, fraternity,” Kierkegaard spoke of living with the common man as “the most salutary respite from my intellectual endeavors”) of Kierkegaard’s problematic concept of community. “What communism makes such a big fuss about Christianity accepts as something which follows of itself, that all men are equal before God, therefore essentially equal. But then Christianity shudders at this abomination that wants to abolish God and create fear of the crowd of men, of the majority, of the people, of the public” (*JP*, 4131).

*Pace* this apparent non-elitism, as is to be expected I suppose from a dialectical lyricist, the ever desultory Kierkegaard at times seems an elitist. Cf. *JP*, 4227:

"Once upon a time to be a man meant something like this: the generation made every effort to raise up and support a few eminent individuals ... Gradually the inferior element in the race triumphed: envy ascended and came to the top. Now everything was changed. Through the power that lies in numbers they wanted first and foremost to get rid of all eminence, and through numbers (by being a group, a crowd, a party, etc.) they wanted to upgrade themselves." The paradox might be dissolved by arguing that Kierkegaard's elitism belongs to the realm of spirit and not that of class, race, office, etc.

The question of whether there are any ethical constraints on the category of the individual is an interesting one that I cannot cover here. I do think that Kierkegaard intended a moral psychology to guide his otherwise more celebrated prescriptivistic rendition of the development of an ethical/religious consciousness. One might here compare in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* the "interestedness" of the individual versus the "aberrant inwardness" of the fanatic or the "subjective madness" of the aesthete.

The Kierkegaardian shibboleth "the crowd is the untruth" provides the framework for Kierkegaard's critique of the modern state. I believe any thorough *philosophical* analysis of the diatribe "the crowd is the untruth" would have to include the following items: (1) the crowd, public, en masse thinking, the bourgeois mentality" is essentially characterless. (Cf. *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*, p. 111: "there are no more individuals but only specimens.") (2) The crowd prevents the political functioning of a constitutional monarchy or bourgeois state -- they emphasize only rights and no corresponding duties. (3) The crowd is manipulated by the press. (4) Government in turn is also a creature of the crowd. Alienation is rampant in the public despite the appearance of cohesive unity. This is the despair of finitude (the placing of self "in the dative case") which to continue the illusion is such that "the world has of course no understanding of what is truly dreadful. The despair which not only occasions no embarrassment but makes life easy and comfortable is naturally not regarded as despair" (*The Sickness Unto Death*, p. 167). (5) Individual responsibility for one's actions is annulled; the I-turned-We is passive, dispassionate, indifferent, insensitive, "dispersed in immediacy" -- all in the service of the anaesthetized conformity of the social group. (6) It leads to a "deifying of worldliness" -- the inverted religion of a deified state. Vox populi replaces vox dei. (Cf. *JP*, 1933: "The crowd" is the authority. "The crowd" is god; "the crowd" is truth; "the crowd" is power and honor.") (7) Ideals are strangled, the age is demoralized, in favor of social haggling. (8) It is egoism run rampant. (Cf. *JP*, 4238: "Perhaps one becomes much shrewder about his egotism, his enlightened egotism ... but less egotistic he does not become, and what is worse, one is spoiled by regarding this official, civic, authorized egotism as virtue -- this, in fact, is how demoralizing civic life is, because it reassures one in being a shrewd egotist.") The cardinal virtues are replaced by the "virtue" of civility. (9) It leads to the demoralization of the age by quantification. Here in criticising the theory "that the greatest number is equivalent to the truth," Kierkegaard is as anti-utilitarian as he is anti-egoistic in (8). (Cf. *JP* 2958: "The numerical changes men, intoxicates them, obsesses them, as if by being many they were something altogether different from what each single individual is.")

It is important to note that the above-listed reasons for why the crowd is the untruth are purely *philosophical* objections. However, it is important to recall that Kierkegaard also had *religious* reasons for holding the crowd is the untruth, all ultimately based on his view that absolute sovereignty resides in God, so that Christendom was a perverse inversion of true Christianity, just as the public was a perverse inversion of true community.

A thorough assessment of Kierkegaard's theological reasons for holding the crowd is the untruth would have to include his despondent recollection of the

shouts of the crowd that Barabbas be freed. He laments the state-religion status of Christianity, and how eternity has been pressed to serve finitude. He warns us that to be Christian is to be salt. Christendom through the numerical so accommodates finitude that (to borrow a Kierkegaardian parable) if asked to catch some trout, it proudly produces a million small carp. Cf. *JP*, 2976: "As soon as Christianity is proclaimed unconditionally in the fear of God, all fall away. When Christianity is proclaimed in the fear of men, all become Christians - this means, of course, making a fool of God; and an accounting will come."

I utterly fail to understand the claim of some Kierkegaardian scholars that Kierkegaard's proposed remedy for "the crowd is the untruth" lies not in Christianity (as opposed to Christendom) but in the religious inwardness of Socrates. Did not Socrates recognize the state? Cf. *Point of View*, p. 117: "The truth can neither be communicated nor be received except as it were under God's eyes, not without God's help, not without God's being involved as the middle term, He himself being the Truth." Such an interpretation seems to commit the err of misrepresenting the Imprimatur: "The Christian fears God's image and therefore does with his whole person what he is commanded to do with the coin - gives himself wholly to the one whose image he bears" (*JP*, 4151). But Kierkegaard's individual is no monad enclosed in splendid isolation. The category of the individual transcends mere selfhood of an egoistic sort. The individual stands in a "redoubling" relation to God and neighbor. Precisely in that relationship of openness to God and neighbor lies true individuality. This view stands in stark contrast to the religious inwardness of Socrates (cf. *Philosophical Fragments*, p. 14: "In the Socratic view each individual is his own center, and the entire world centers in him ..."). Kierkegaard writes: "There is nothing more dangerous for a man, nothing more paralyzing, than a certain isolating self-scrutiny, in which world history, human life, society ... in short, everything - disappears, and ... in an egotistical circle one constantly stares only at his own navel" (*JP*, 1971).

Viewed holistically, Kierkegaard seems rather ambivalent in his views on politics and the state. At times, he suggests that the political process can be saved and rendered meaningful by the "heterogeneity of Christianity as 'resignation'" (*JP*, 4242). But here there would seem to be no crowd, only a community. So the problem of the modern state would be dissolved: "for if it is genuinely led, there is no crowd; where there is genuine leading, eternally understood, there is no crowd" (*JP*, 2935).

More realistically, Kierkegaard sometimes suggests that the true knight of faith can operate in the body politic while yet transcending it, so that by suffering resignation he might imitate Christ. One here values not so much the body politic (which is not dissolved) but the religious individual who employs it instrumentally.

However, on other occasions, Kierkegaard seems to recommend some sort of compromise between the true Christian and a specific body politic. Indeed, in *JP*, 4144, Kierkegaard suggests that a tyrant's rule is preferable to a "people's government." Somewhat naively, Kierkegaard argues the tyrant is at least an individual, so that his will can be escaped. This is quite unlikely to occur in a crowd. "As an individual man a tyrant is so elevated, so distant, that with him a person has the right to live as privately as he wants. It would never in all eternity occur to an emperor to bother me ... But in a people's government 'the equal' is the ruler. He occupies himself with such things as whether my beard is like his, whether I go out to Deer Park the same time as he does ..." Kierkegaard depicts "a people's government [as] the true picture of hell." But if to be a Christian means to be initiated into suffering ("Christianity is suffering truth"), then it would be far more blessed to prefer a people's government to a tyranny (given Kierkegaard's ingenuous assumptions), as the former state of affairs allows greater opportunity for soul-making martyrdom.



So Kierkegaard's recommendation seems inconsistent. Despite his critique of "dialectical secretiveness," there is much of it in the maieutic Kierkegaard.

However, on other occasions, Kierkegaard suggests that no constructive body politic can be realized – at best the state is to be tolerated as a necessary evil. Indeed, he often recommends a hermit-like avoiding of the public altogether "so that you may be able to acquire the criterion of the ideal undisturbed by the nonsense and the haggling of numbers" (*JP*, 2968). Given Kierkegaard's overall pessimistic view on the human condition, it is often clear that Kierkegaard held out no hope for reforming the state. "Who, after all, ever said that the truth will be victorious *in this world*? Certainly not Christ. No, the truth will suffer or must suffer in this world" (*JP*, 4856).

Interestingly enough, in *Point of View*, he suggests this dilemma: one cannot get the crowd on one's side as it has the power, but to attempt to ameliorate the crowd (and thus cleverly avoid its power base) is to mock oneself even though to win the crowd *qua* public is relatively easy: "To win a crowd is no art; for that only untruth is needed, nonsense, and a little knowledge of human passions" (*JP*, 2932). Of course the postulated latter victory would be pyrrhic – it would be a specimen's prize not the triumph of that solitary individual.

In any philosophical analysis of Kierkegaard's views on political and social themes there is always the danger of what Kierkegaard in *Two Edifying Discourses of 1844* called the reader's grasping with the right hand what is held in the author's left hand. Unfortunately, for some of us, Kierkegaard appeared to be only sinistral at times.

## II

Jean De La Fontaine remarked in the seventeenth century that it is "better to suffer than to die: that is mankind's motto." However, for a good number of contemporary philosophers the prevention of suffering has achieved higher priority as a value claim than the preservation of life. Quite clearly, Kierkegaard's gospel of suffering goes counter to the contention that seems to underlie discussions on the morality of killing, namely, that intense, prolonged and often incurable suffering either by the patient directly or guardian indirectly (or both) is bad and there is no redeeming value in such suffering.

*Pace* many contemporary philosophers, the proposition "suffering is evil" does not seem to be necessarily true. We have the evidence of St. Paul, Franz Brentano, and Mother Teresa for this point, as well as the silenter testimony of many others. Indeed, it may not even be contingently true in all instances. For example, the infant suffering from some currently incurable physiological ailment (e.g., cystic fibrosis, sickle cell anemia, etc.), and his guardians, could be thankful for his/her affliction which enables them to develop traits of character and mental sets not so readily fostered in a healthy body or non-tragic situation.

Is the proposition "prolonged suffering is evil" necessarily or contingently true? If we mean *instrumentally evil* then the answer is clearly in the negative. If we mean *intrinsically evil*, Kierkegaard at least would again answer in the negative. Indeed he suggests that suffering is "blessed."

If, however, someone comes along who with personal truth dares say: It is blessed to suffer, the world goes stark raving mad, nothing, nothing incites a world so much as this. For the fact that there are those who come to suffer that is, against their will, and then find it anything but blessed to suffer – this the world is able to understand and have sympathy for, because this, after all, is how the world itself interprets enjoying life – since the one who

suffers against his will and finds it an unhappy experience actually is a hedonist, in agreement with the world (*JP*, 4583).

I am not sure if Kierkegaard held that suffering was intrinsically good. To deny that it is intrinsically evil, as he did, is not to affirm its intrinsic goodness. But it does seem clear that he thought some forms of suffering were instrumentally good.

Despite its “mutiny against the world’s whole theory of enjoyment,” Kierkegaard finds value in suffering. Paradoxically enough, Kierkegaard often writes as if people ought to so value suffering – even out of non-religious motivations.

Without these sufferings they would not have become great. Take away their sufferings, given them an easy life, grant them what they desire – and it is all over with greatness. If they had their desire satisfied and the suffering taken away, they would lose even more: ergo, they ought to be happy in their suffering, so happy that they would not wish it removed. But then again they are beyond suffering. I wonder if an individual so situated could really understand this (*JP*, 4590).

In short, Kierkegaard is suggesting that the dismaying leads to the upbuilding, that suffering is a necessary condition for the moral/religious life. The turf of suffering provides virtue’s breeding ground. As such, it is to be welcomed. Nonetheless, Kierkegaard’s encomium of suffering could still be viewed as primarily instrumental in design. “Do you believe, then, that if you were thoroughly healthy you would easily or more easily achieve perfection? Just the opposite: then you would yield easily to your passions, to pride if not to others, to an intensified self-esteem and the like” (*JP*, 4637).

Kierkegaard proceeds to speak of “physical suffering, the infirm body, (as) a beneficial memento.” Indeed, he offers the caveat to any planned worry-free, pain-free utopia, that “to be thoroughly healthy physically and mentally and then to lead a truly spiritual life – that no man can do” (*JP*, 4637). I think the *cannot* here is at least that of physical impossibility, and that Kierkegaard is not indulging in what appears to be somewhat characteristic hyperbole. He is saying, I believe insightfully, that the spiritual life (either a distinctly religious one or a non-religious life of moral integrity) involves essentially a love for and commitment to the virtues, and that such a pursuit of virtue in a hostile environment is bound to tax the mental and physical strength of even a healthy individual.

But such utilitarian justifications or uses of suffering are not entirely to Kierkegaard’s liking. The value of suffering transcends the rationale of the second stage on life’s way. “The purely human conception of suffering can never go further than *either* to interpret suffering as ultimately teleological (one suffers for a time, a certain number of years, etc., in order to achieve this or that or become this or that, etc.) *or*, if the suffering continues, then to bear it patiently, but it is an evil” (*JP*, 4681). As Kierkegaard reminds us so often – one must go further!

Kierkegaard contrasts the “secular mentality” with the Christian view on suffering. The secular mentality relates to a higher goal out of a profit motive, but this inverts the fundamental relationship “for when the lower relates to the higher in order to profit from the relation, then the lower is actually higher than the higher from which one wishes to profit” (*JP*, 4696). By contrast, in the essentially Christian view, one favors relishing suffering in an *active* way and not just suffering passively or patiently. Hence Kierkegaard is recommending that a Christian even choose suffering (cf. *JP*, 4711). Of course, a cancer-afflicted patient does not choose suffering in the sense that he can freely will his illness, but he and those

who care for him might freely choose to accept it. Despite his often outlandish rhetoric, Kierkegaard is offering us no deontology of suffering, for one is not choosing suffering *per se*, but rather as a means “for discerning the witness of the Spirit” (*JP*, 4692). The former leads to a perverted masochism; the latter is truly liberating. Its justification, however, is principally theological and not philosophical. In the conventional moral order, suffering is tolerated principally because of its instrumental worth; in the ethico-religious order it is relished.

From an ethico-religious perspective then, more specifically a Christian one, Kierkegaard is saying that the meaning of pre-mortem life is contained in suffering (cf. his views on Schopenhauer’s “gloomy Indian view”). Christendom, an inauthentic form of Christianity, has fostered the misleading idea that a Christian can acclaim the martyrs from afar and by this ersatz route have suffering eradicated from his life. The *spooneristic* mistake here is to believe that Christianity is really non-rigorous and if it is not so *de facto* perceived then this is due to those wordly forces that have not permitted it to be so actualized. Kierkegaard claims Christendom offers a distorted conception of martyrdom, neglecting that “to be Christian is to be martyred” (*JP*, 4711; cf. 3097). Again, Kierkegaard seems to be suggesting not that human life is intrinsically good so much as that suffering is not intrinsically bad. He is reminding us that the periphery of the Christian’s itinerary is that of the Cross.

Unhappily, Kierkegaard contends, Christendom has managed to soften the view that suffering is blessed by its “blasphemous pandering” (*JP*, 4626). *Pace* the “born-again” surrogates of today, Kierkegaard would insightfully suggest that such phenomena of revitalization are but signs of this misplaced doctrine. Having made this easy accommodation with the secular, Kierkegaard finds it not at all surprising that so-called Christians are not persecuted today on a large scale. Christianity, Kierkegaard avers, has become excessively *propositional* – a Christian is a person who accepts certain doctrines or intellectually assents to certain statements of belief. Instead, Kierkegaard favors a non-propositional view, a mode of existing *qua* Christian, an imitation of Christ. That is, self-renunciation as a doctrine does not embarrass or invite persecution but as a behavior-pattern it is just the reverse. Unfortunately Kierkegaard’s fondness for “aut-aut” gets the better of him here – the two accounts are perfectly compatible (and essential to true Christianity) and the practical strength of the latter is girded on the theoretical foundations of the former.

Yet, while Christianity is represented by Kierkegaard as “suffering truth,” it is also modeled on the life of Christ and so joyful: “... it teaches that there is enormous suffering, but that this enormous suffering nevertheless is light ...” Here we have a paradox, more apparent than real! Suffering is the price of God’s love. “Christianity clearly considers suffering to be the mark of the God-relationship: if you do not suffer, you do not have anything to do with God” (*JP*, 4681). It is true, as Kierkegaard avers, that “if you are not willing to suffer, you will then be free from God’s love” (*JP*, 4688), but somewhat questionable whether “the closer to God the more suffering” (*JP*, 4698). I say “somewhat questionable” (for obviously an eighteen year old person suffering from advanced cystic fibrosis could reject belief in God, or, if a believer, need not have suffered that physical affliction to be close to God), but I am not convinced it is false that proximity to God involves at least intense psychological suffering as an essential component of that voluntary *imitatio Dei*. Indeed, it would seem to be the case that, however prosperous the external conditions of a Christian’s life may be, those who deliberately imitate Christ love virtue and hate vice, and in a perfidious world, are bound to suffer

*inwardly* at the apparent triumph of evil. But, unlike Ivan in *The Brothers Karamazov*, they do not “hasten to return the ticket” they have been sent.

John Donnelly  
*University of San Diego*

*Experience, Reason and God*. Edited by Eugene Thomas Long. (Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, Vol. 8). The Catholic University of America Press, 1980. 180 pages. \$25.00.

There are here twelve essays in philosophy and religion, along with an introduction. Long calls for a more profound analysis of both reason and experience to move beyond those approaches which focus rather exclusively on one or the other. The other articles do not seem, by and large, to address this project directly, but several are interesting discussions of particular topics.

Three articles deal with religious language. Louis Dupré begins by saying “That no predicates can be univocally attributed to God and the creature, is a principle on which all theologians agree.” On the immediately preceding page, however, William Alston ends his “Irreducible Metaphors” by saying, “What is suggested to me by St. Thomas ... is that God really (literally) knows, wills, loves, and performs actions. Though the details must differ enormously from human knowledge, will, love, and action, nevertheless when we make our terms sufficiently abstract they do apply literally both to man and God.” Perhaps Kenneth Schmitz sides with Dupré, saying “Speech about the sacred can never be adequate, for the relative can never express the absolute adequately.” That seems to cry out for an explanation of “relative” and “absolute.” Anyway, Schmitz explains that some things we might say about God are unacceptable while others, though “inept”, are acceptable. But it must be something about God which makes some expressions unacceptable while others are merely inept. So we could say, “God is such that  $E_1$  is acceptable (though inept) as a description of Him, while  $E_2$  is unacceptable.” And that would seem to be a straightforward and literal truth about God. Whether it is a case of the relative expressing the absolute, I do not know.

On a different topic, the Cosmological Argument, Frank Dillely argues largely on the basis of “necessities of thought.” We can easily think, he claims, of the world (and of God, too) as never having existed, but we cannot think of either the world or God as coming into existence or passing away.

Now, it is a curious fact that many people, e.g., St. Thomas, have thought what Dillely finds it impossible to think — e.g., that the world came into existence. But maybe facts like this have no general significance. Maybe they are only biographical idiosyncracies. And anyway, what follows from the fact that we can or cannot think a certain thing? Dillely proceeds directly to the corresponding logical possibilities and necessities. But that move is highly doubtful. Whenever I make a mistake in arithmetic or logic I think propositions which are necessarily false and impossible. That is, I think these things in any ordinary sense of ‘think’. Someone may say I do not *really* think them, or *with full understanding*, etc. But then if someone claims to think that there is no God, why should we suppose that he *really* thinks it, and *with full understanding*? The attempt to ground logical notions on physical facts seems to bristle with difficulty.

There are eight other essays for which there is no room here to comment except to say that they form an interesting and provocative collection.

George I. Mavrodes  
*The University of Michigan*

*Historical Explanation: Re-enactment and Practical Inference.* By Rex Martin. (Contemporary Philosophy Series). Cornell University Press, 1977. 267 pages. \$15.

This closely reasoned book is a defense and rational reconstruction of Collingwood's theory of historical understanding as the reenactment of the thought of the agent whose action is to be explained. In the early chapters in which Collingwood's position is examined and interpreted, the author acknowledges that Collingwood failed to analyze adequately the nature of reenactment in logical, as distinct from psychological, terms and that as a result he laid himself open to the charge of radical subjectivism. To make up for this failure, a logical "schema for action-explanations" is presented; and from this point on the effort of rational reconstruction increasingly dominates the development of the argument of the book. What we are offered is thus really a full-scale, independent theory of historical explanation for which a general congruity with Collingwood's intentions is indeed claimed, but the interest and merits of which can be appraised independently of its relationship to Collingwood's thought.

The most distinctive feature of Professor Martin's own theory is that it is designed "to bring ... the 'covering law' and *verstehen* positions together on a middle ground ... to find what is valuable in each and ... to develop a mediating position between them." (p. 252). The element that is taken from *verstehen* theory is the requirement of intelligibility or "appropriateness" for the relation of premise to conclusion in an action-explanation. Martin is not prepared, however, to treat such intelligibility as expressed in the form of a practical syllogism à la von Wright, as an adequate logical basis for action-explanations. Instead, appropriateness can be established in a particular case only if it can be shown to be "founded logically in a *general* assertion of intelligible connection." (p. 100) The latter is said to be neither an "empirical general law" nor "a principle of action"; but the reasons (based on a critique of Hempel and Danto) that are given for denying that they are the former seem much more persuasively stated than those offered in the case of the latter. For this reader at least, the contrast between what is "appropriate" in Martin's sense and what is "rational" in Dray's just does not emerge with any distinctness. These difficulties are compounded when Martin takes up the contribution that the regularity theory can make to the logic of action explanation, and argues that a necessary condition for a judgment of appropriateness is an inductive generalization showing that the various elements in the action explanation are objectively associated with one another with a certain definable probability. One can agree that, when human beings act out of some rationale characterized by internal teleological connections they do indeed generate a kind of regularity in actual fact since through their action certain states of affairs will follow upon others which as we ordinarily suppose motivate them. This fact, however, does not authorize us to argue as Martin does, that the regularities thus generated can be independently identified and then used to make up the deficiencies of a rational explanation in terms of intelligibility or appropriateness. Of course, if the "regularity" elicited through the examination of ostensibly parallel cases yielded a previously unsuspected action-relevant feature of the situation in question, i.e., a feature, that could be integrated into a rational explanation in such a way as to supply the intelligibility missing up to that point, it would obviously have heuristic value; but even then it would not, *as a regularity*, be an element in the final explanation. Without such a contribution to intelligibility, such putative regularities gathered hither and yon would be simply irrelevant or redundant.

In the latter part of the book there is a substantial discussion of "practical inference" in which Martin draws on Wittgenstein's *On Certainty* to supply a wider philosophical rationale for the ordering function of his explanatory schema within

the domain of human action. There is much of interest in this discussion but it does not appear to alleviate the basic uncertainty as to the kind of status that Martin is claiming for his intermediate position. There is also a chapter devoted to "other periods, other cultures" in which a theory of "transhistorical descriptions" is put forward as a solution to the problem of cultural relativism.

It is unfortunate that an otherwise so carefully written book should be marred by a number of irritating stylistic infelicities and at least one down-right howler, i.e. the author's use of 'infirm' as a verb and as an antonym of 'confirm'.

Frederick A. Olafson  
*University of California, San Diego*

*Parables of Kierkegaard*. Edited by Thomas C. Oden. Princeton University Press, 1978. 186 pages. \$10.00.

"The aim of this volume," says Oden, "is to bring together a careful selection of these stories for edification, enjoyment and critical examination."

Enjoyment? Yes, it is a book which can be picked up by anyone; it has the surface appeal of a gift volume of fairy tales. But as inviting as it may be to everyman, this gift of 130 parables and a partial list of 700 more, will have a greater impact on the reader who already knows Kierkegaard: the one who may have come to take that acquaintance for granted in a scholarly or dogmatic response. He who has never made Kierkegaard's acquaintance cannot anticipate where this first meeting will take him; but the other can welcome being caught up once again in the subjective tension which evokes the Paradox and points to religious inwardness. To such a one, I recommend reading the book on the fourth of July, as I happened to, for the initial experience rivals the most elaborate display of fireworks. One parable after another explodes to disclose the dark interiority of subjectivity, so that even the "expert" on Kierkegaard's philosophy can hardly avoid the inward tension which individuates. A strange variety of enjoyment, this. Not the sort one has in reading a Platonic myth in which a fulfilling sense of comprehension develops ultimately into the self's identification with Truth. A Kierkegaardian parable only makes for more and more uneasiness, until the final twist breaks all identification of the self with Truth, to illumine the Paradox which calls for the Moment of Faith.

Edification? Certainly, the parable has, in the course of cultural history, come to be defined as edifying. Yet Kierkegaard, whose aim it was to be edifying, never himself presented such a compilation — perhaps because he understood that religious edification cannot be accomplished without carrying the ordinary sort along with it, as a pole in the Contradiction which uplifts. Yet Oden's collection builds awareness of the need for what such a collection omits: namely, direct communication, ordinary discourse. Unlike myths, parables in quantity are more likely to stupify than edify. They ought to and can often send some readers back (or forward) into Kierkegaard's authorship as a whole, where they occur as part of the fuller process of true up-building which is religious edification.

Critical Examination? I suspect Kierkegaard would regard this as the least appropriate of the responses which could be made to his parables. But the very act of collecting them highlights their place in his thought and raises for the reader the concrete question concerning the relationship between direct and indirect communication. So, yes. Oden's careful and well-chosen collection does us and Kierkegaard an important service. It is a work which, in its intention to speak to

everyman, carries the irony of being only for that "single individual" – just because Oden lets Kierkegaard speak for himself.

Barbara C. Anderson  
*The Pennsylvania State University*

*Transcendence and Hermeneutics: An Interpretation of the Philosophy of Karl Jaspers.* By Alan M. Olson. (Studies in Philosophy and Religion). Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1979. XXIII and 198 pages, diagram, appendix, bibliography. Hard-bound, \$35.40.

Alan Olson provides the reader with an excellent exegesis of Karl Jaspers' philosophy. Jaspers' writing is difficult to read, and his thought is enormously complex, and his language is often difficult to fathom – especially, his use of special terminology. Olson's book serves the interested scholar, thus, with a clear presentation of the systematic dynamism of Jaspersian philosophy. Particularly helpful in this regard is the reproduction of Jaspers' "Diagram of Being" and a translation of those portions of *Von der Wahrheit* which pertain to the Diagram. Perhaps an inherent danger of such a diagram is the possibility of, even propensity to, losing the reader in the visual metaphor. Coming as it does in the appendix, such danger is lessened; Olson's patient, clear, and thorough discussions in Parts I and II of his book prepare the reader for a fruitful encounter with the "Diagram of Being."

Even greater than the author's lucid presentation of Jaspers' philosophy, Olson's critical efforts treat the reader to a genuine manifestation of transcending-thinking after the manner of Jaspers' work. And as he points out explicitly and implicitly, "True philosophizing, then, presupposes transcending; that is, it involves a movement beyond an undifferentiated natural standpoint through what one might call a series of conversions from constrictive to more encompassing horizons of consciousness and thinking" (3-4). Thus, Olson helps the reader determine the true nature of the "objectivity" of transcendence: the *act* of transcending cannot be separated from the "Being" of Transcendence itself.

In fact, the inseparability of the act and Being of Transcendence is the thesis of Olson's book. Moreover, Olson contends, it is precisely in the crisis of Transcendence that we can locate the crisis in the philosophy of religion (IX-XI). Our contemporary crisis is rooted in three momentous historical turns taken by western philosophy of religion. The first was the translation of early Judaic and Christian experience into Greek philosophical thought-forms, the effect of which was the development of a symbol system denoting a spacially remote deity and a mythical conception of a "three-story universe." The second turn was the seventeenth and eighteenth century reaction or protest against the "otherness" and "out-there-ness" of a deity requiring ecclesiastical mediation. While the Protestant Reformation exchanged the dogmatic structure of the Church's mediation for a direct "self" and "holy writ" encounter, it did not solve the problem of transcending-thinking. The third turn – the effects of which are still taking place – was the critical philosophy of the Kantian "Second Copernican Revolution." This last turn ambiguates the meaning of transcendence: it has the double inference of suggesting the extramental status of God while regarding transcendence as epistemological conditions of knowledge.

Olson argues that Jaspers' philosophy address this crisis in its full historical dimension for it is devoted to reinstating Transcendence in a way which loses neither epistemological clarity nor metaphysical depth. From the outset, Olson admits that Jaspers himself may not have recognized the hermeneutic dimension of his work (XVII), yet he attempts to rehabilitate the meaning of Transcendence by showing hermeneutical dimensions.

In Part I, Olson leads us through Jaspers' *Ur*-principles of world-orientation, *Existenz*, and speculative metaphysics. This excursion serves to reflect the growth of consciousness through successive heightened and intensified moments. Olson brilliantly presents this growth of consciousness as a kind of hermeneutic retrieval of transcendence from everyday and scientific objectification.

But why does consciousness of Transcendence have to be retrieved? Because of its historical situation. Thus the hermeneutic thinking not only retrieves Transcendence as intrinsic to experience but also it must retrieve Transcendence as a hermeneutic of specific symbols sedimented in historic meanings, signs. Following Jaspers' own encounter with Plato, Plotinus, Kant, and Cusanus, Olson elucidates "the source, medium, and goal of Jaspers' retrieval [for they] all share in the conviction that Transcendence is not only that toward which Existence strives, but that which undergirds the very possibility of meaning. It is this shared conviction, we suggest, that similarly underlies Jaspers' contention that Transcendence is a *cipher* of inexhaustible significance" (108). The inexhaustible significance of ciphers of Transcendence accounts for both the historical evolution of their meanings as well as their experiential inevitabilities. At this point, we might say, Olson has uncovered the vertical and horizontal, structural and temporal, aspects of transcendence-thinking. But *ciphers* require reading, de-ciphering – and such is the task of hermeneutics!

Olson turns to this task in Part III in which he extends Jaspers' thinking by attending to its hermeneutic dimensions. He presents this problematic by reference to Jaspers' call for a "re-mythologizing" of religious language – as opposed to Bultmann's project of Demythologizing. But, Olson contends, "Jaspers fails to do what he himself calls for and it is to this extent especially that the subsequent work of both Gadamer and Ricoeur can be viewed as a 'filling out' of Jaspers' intention" (115). Whether it is fair to view these later philosophers as "filling out" Jaspers' intention I think this is a disservice to their originality – is of a little material importance for Olson's argument. What is important can be seen in his use of this view. Jaspers, Olson admits, tends to read ciphers of God in a manner too noetic, as a disembodied Transcendence, thereby collapsing the existential dialectic which renders alive the cipher in the first place. Hence, Olson patiently undertakes "*the authentic task of philosophy ... to unfold the meaning of that which unfolds, but not to unfold it too quickly*" (116). This unfolding is the hermeneutic task of Ricoeur and Gadamer which fills out Jaspers' incomplete task. Olson attempts this task remaining *within* the concrete, historical *givenness* of the hermeneutic circle from which the task is not so much to escape as it is to appreciate its depth and adequacy (113, 169-182). Ultimately, Olson finds Jaspers' "philosophical faith" best expressed by Ricoeur's – and Pascal's – hermeneutic wager (182) or Augustine's "restless heart" (183). Transcendence-thinking remains a task, a task verified by its being pursued and never in its being accomplished.

In the final analysis, Olson must be credited with a success. Whatever minor quarrel a reader may have with either the content or style of this book, one must applaud it as a serious contribution to unravelling the crises of transcendence.

Stephen Skousgaard  
College of the Holy Cross



*Journeys to Selfhood: Hegel and Kierkegaard.* By Mark C. Taylor.  
University of California, 1981. 298 pages. \$22.50 (cloth); \$7.95 (paper).

Mark Taylor's *Journeys to Selfhood* is an erudite attempt "to bring Hegel and Kierkegaard closer together so that their differences can emerge more clearly" (Preface, p. 21). Insofar as one holds the author accountable for clarifying and illuminating the differences, one must judge the results to be mixed. The work is well researched, at times *recherché*.

Proceeding through considerations of spiritlessness (Chap. 2) and aesthetic education (Chap. 3), Taylor correctly locates the places of sharpest disagreement between Hegel and Kierkegaard in the views of Christianity (Chap. 4) and selfhood (Chap. 5). He shies away from concluding that Kierkegaard's understanding of Christianity (and Christian orthodoxy with him) is seriously flawed or simply wrong, although this seems to be where his analysis is leading. In a footnote (p. 122, n. 62), he goes on to reject atheist-humanist and pantheist-mystic interpretations of Hegel's religious standpoint. Does anything remain but that right-wing Hegelian view that seeks to make Hegel not only a "witness to the truth" of Christianity (*pace* Kierkegaard) but the greatest of modern theologians?

Chapter 5 is a clear contribution to the sharpening of differences, and here Taylor plainly suggests the superiority of the Hegelian over the Kierkegaardian self. Chapter 6 (Wayfaring) is an overly long summation of the process of selfhood in both philosophers. Here the author does not seem to appreciate how serious Kierkegaard's orthodox Christianity is (whether or not Kierkegaard is ultimately correct), thus the religious gets short shrift and the moment of forgiveness and grace is overlooked in a Pelagian reduction. Nor does Kierkegaard's religious self culminate in a leap of faith as Taylor suggests (p. 258) but in an existentially tested life-view that can only take shape after action from God's side. That Taylor omits any mention of this important Kierkegaardian category is a notable deficiency.

The work's success is additionally circumscribed in part by the nature of the philosophical productions compared, in part by the author's style.

To bring Hegel and Kierkegaard together, Taylor is obliged to locate a common ground. Thus on the one hand he emphasizes the existential in Hegel at the expense of the architectonic that is Hegel's true greatness, while in Kierkegaard on the other hand he stresses the Hegel critique that is ultimately not Kierkegaard's most noteworthy (even if most noted) fragment. In brief, while the author apparently knows his way about in the respective corpora, the plan of his work requires the comparison of *disiecta membra* that sacrifices overview and a sense of the truly distinctive in each.

The author has a penchant for Kierkegaardian cuteness ("Concluding Preface" and "Prefatory Conclusion"), Heideggerian hyphenation, and Hegelian obscurantism ("For the moment our concern is method, the means -- *die Mittel* -- between the extremes of archè and telos, spiritlessness and spirit," p. 72). And in the course of conducting Hegel and Kierkegaard to a would-be higher ground, he occasionally -- and needlessly -- takes a detour through a scholarly thicket (especially in the Preface and Chap. 3). At times, the language of wayfaring, pilgrimage and sojourn, along with the existential personal interest of the author, tends to undercut scholarly detachment and seems about to posit a new, synthetic, existential Hegelianism.

The abundant footnotes are not quite "germanic." While acknowledging the major interpretive works and expressing sharp criticism of others, the notes frequently represent mere cataloguing of previous scholarship, sometimes only a casual nod toward those whose insights the author has made his own.

But the work takes justifiable pride in its command of both Hegel and Kierkegaard as well as the exhaustive secondary literature. It is a generally reliable guide through individual texts, itself relying on the major interpretations. In the end it is a "Hegel book" in which some will lament the *Aufhebung* of Kierkegaard, whereas others will find it long overdue.

Taylor's work stands finally as testimony to the need to read Hegel and Kierkegaard together and to hold them apart. It also inevitably suggests the question of a *genuine* synthesis (Hegelian still) in which both thinkers and not merely one are *aufgehoben*. Hegel and Kierkegaard remain formidable figures, set apart or brought together, and Taylor has here successfully carved out for himself a place in several important discussions.

Vincent A. McCarthy  
*Central Connecticut State University*