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George Linsley Pattison

Kierkegaard's Theory and Critique of Art: Its Theological Significance

Abstract

The thesis starts by arguing that Kierkegaard's emphasis on the tension between the aesthetic imagination and religious experience deserves attention in the context of contemporary discussions of religion, imagination and art. After discussing some of the main relevant aspects of the literary and philosophical background the thesis presents an exposition of Kierkegaard's own philosophy of art. This provides a theoretical account of aesthetic experience, establishes principles of aesthetic criticism and offers a critique of aesthetic experience. A comprehensive account of the first form of this philosophy of art in the early Papirer is given. Kierkegaard describes art as developing through a sequence of dialectical stages until it touches upon themes and questions which require a religious or existential, not an aesthetic, approach. The use to which Kierkegaard put this understanding of art in his mature work is examined with particular reference to his works of aesthetic criticism and to his 'novels'. His work as a critic shows how art approximates to religious and existential concerns, without being able to give adequate expression to them, but it is in his 'novels' that he delineates most finely the boundary between the aesthetic and the religious. His account of this boundary is seen to be closely connected with his concept of angst. Though he emphasizes the difference between the aesthetic and the religious he does allow art a proper autonomy. His stress on the priority of the religious may even be construed as beneficial to art in an age when art is threatened by a pervasive nihilism which only religion can decisively challenge.

Kierkegaard's Theory and Critique of Art:
Its Theological Significance

By

George Linsley Pattison

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-5. DEC. 1983

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Declaration

None of the material in this thesis in its present form has been submitted previously for a degree in any educational institution. All of the material in this thesis is solely the product of the author's own research.

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Introduction

In the following text references to Søren Kierkegaard's published work will be given in brackets in the text. References will be to the third danish edition of the Samlede Vaerker (1962), and will give volume and page numbers. These references may be correlated with English translations by reference to Alastair Mackinnon, The Kierkegaard Indices. Volume 1: Kierkegaard in Translation (1970). The translations of all passages thus cited are the author's own, although in many cases he has relied heavily on standard translations. A list of English versions of works by Kierkegaard referred to in the text is given in the Bibliography.

References to Kierkegaard's Journals are also given in brackets in the text and, in part, follow the customary mode of reference in the standard Danish edition: P. A. Heiberg, V. Kuhr, and E. Torsting (eds.) Soren Kierkegaards Papirer 2nd ed. I - XI iii (20 vols.). The references will give volume, section and entry number, thus: IV B 17. Where possible, however, the translations have been taken from Howard V. and Edna H. Hong (eds. and trans.) Søren Kierkegaards Journals and Papers, vols. 1 - 6, (1967 - 78). The numeration of entries in the Hong translation runs through the six volumes, and their translation is thus referred to by its number (rather than by vol. and page numbers), which follows the Danish number. Thus (II A 487/1579) will refer to entry IIA 487 in the Danish edition and entry 1579 in the Hong translation. Where an entry is not translated by the Hongs the author's own translation is given, together with a reference to the Danish edition. Page references have only been given in the case of extracts from very long entries. Where the author has used his own translation in preference to the Hongs' the reference number to the Hongs' translation is given in brackets, thus: (II A 487(1579)).

Works of Kierkegaard referred to in the text are referred to by their English title. All other works in other languages are referred to by their title in the original language, except where a translation has been used. All translations from foreign-language titles are the author's own unless an English translation is specifically referred to.

In the case of authors other than Kierkegaard references are to footnotes at the back of the thesis, except in the case of J. L. Heiberg's play Fata Morgana, references to which are given in brackets in the text, giving act and scene numbers. Details of the edition used are given in the footnote to the first quotation from the play.

Chapter One: Kierkegaard and the Quest for Imagination

(A) From Coleridge to Kierkegaard

The attempt to establish some kind of link between aesthetic and religious experience, to highlight or to seek out the imaginative bases of both faith and theology has become a recurrent motif in contemporary theology and in the study of religion in general. (1)

At one level this is simply rooted in the practical, pedagogical concern that the presentation of the christian message should not be overly abstract or intellectual, thereby alienating the so-called 'ordinary man-in-the-pew' who, it is argued, needs something more concrete than an intellectual argument, something more like an image or a story.

At another level however we are dealing with a more profound reflection on the nature and content of the message concerned, a reflection which would see an intrinsic connection between the religious message or experience and such aesthetic categories as 'image' or 'story'. It is at this level that John Coulson claims that ' . . . what we hold in faith is most frequently expressed in metaphor, symbol and story and, as such, prior to and as a condition of its verification, it requires an imaginative assent comparable to that given to poems and novels'. (2) It is at this level too that the question acquires a real theological interest.

The contemporary literature consistently honours its debt to Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 - 1834) and thereby indirectly to the formulations of german romanticism which played a vital part in shaping his theory of imagination. (3) The theologian may well pause for reflection on the fate of this latter movement before uncritically adopting its principles. For though a certain reading of romanticism would see in it nothing more than a reaction to the

Enlightenment and to the conditions of modern technological society (4), romanticism too carried forward some of the secularizing tendencies of the Enlightenment. It could easily promote the cause of art in such a way that art became a substitute for religion, a tendency summed up in Wagner's dictum that 'Man's supreme purpose is art'. (5) Art could thus easily serve as an 'artificial religion for the educated middle-classes'. (6)

The proximity of religion and aesthetics in romantic theory did not, of course, always lead to the utter confusion of the two in some new pseudo-religion (as at Bayreuth). It could also serve as a challenge to engage in a sustained and disciplined reflection on the exact measure of convergence between the two. Such was the case with Coleridge and, as we shall see, with Kierkegaard.

The relationship between Coleridge and Kierkegaard has been summed up by Herbert Read as follows:

It was left for Kierkegaard to pronounce the absolute Either/or - either the aesthetical or the ethical. The final beauty, for Coleridge and Schelling no less than for Kierkegaard, was the beauty of holiness, but it was left to Kierkegaard to point out eloquently, loquaciously, that beauty in man (as distinct from beauty in the work of art) requires a certain perspective, movement, history; and in such a condition . . . we have "passed beyond the spheres of nature and of art and are in the sphere of freedom, of the ethical."

(7)

Although the details of Read's statement are not beyond question the general picture which he gives can serve to locate Kierkegaard in the context of the contemporary quest for imagination. If Coleridge is taken as the representative of the convergence of religion and imagination, Kierkegaard may be taken as the representative of their divergence. Both men used, while creatively recasting, the resources of transcendental idealism and early romanticism. Both saw imagination not merely as operating within a purely aesthetic horizon but more fundamentally as providing a key to the basic dynamics of the mind. Within this wider perspective art has a

special place. The artist reveals, or re-reveals, a vision of the world which we all, artists and non-artists alike, can have or have had. Aesthetic experience is fulfilled in but is not confined to fine art.

In this perspective imagination and art are interpreted in the light of their overall humanistic significance. It is in this broad evaluation that the chief differences emerge. Kierkegaard does not see the poet as the visionary seer who reveals life's mysteries to lesser men, he sees him more as the representative of unredeemed human existence. The aesthetic attitude thus becomes the basis of Kierkegaard's characterization of what later generations of existential thinkers would call inauthenticity or bad faith. (8)

And therefore man loves the poet above all, because the poet is the most dangerous thing for him; for this indeed belongs to a sickness, that the sick man desires most vehemently, and loves precisely that which is most damaging to him. But spiritually understood, man in his natural condition is sick, he is in a delusion, a self-deceit, and therefore desires most of all to be deceived, so that he can get permission not merely to continue in the delusion, but to make himself at home in the self-deceit. And a deceiver, suitable for this task, is precisely: the poet. Therefore man loves him above all.

(SV 19 p. 215)

In such a passage Kierkegaard accepts the romantic identification of the poet as the virtuoso of the imagination; what he rejects is the value to be placed upon it.

Kierkegaard's critique of the romantic position was influenced by his encounter with hegelianism. Hegel's interpretation of romanticism had tried to show how even within an idealist view of life aesthetic experience pointed beyond itself and required its own supersession in religion and philosophy. Such an interpretation implies that the aesthetic is not to be regarded as wrong so much as inadequate, incapable of giving definitive expression to the freedom of Spirit, which is the absolute goal of the life of the mind. It also means that, within certain limits, aesthetic

experience, and that will above all mean art, has a quite proper validity. Hegel's philosophy of art was thus both a theory and a critique of art. It is the argument of this thesis that the same can be said for Kierkegaard's analysis of the aesthetic, that it contains both positive and negative moments, and that the interaction of these serves to qualify its precise dialectical structure. It will be argued that, with due allowance for the unusual nature of his philosophical methods, Kierkegaard had what can properly be called a philosophy of art, and the fact that this philosophy of art was ultimately subordinate to his existential and religious concerns in no way deprives it of its character as philosophy. (9)

(B) Poet or Thinker?

Apart from the anglo-saxon tendency to deny existentialism in general the right to the title of 'philosophy' there are particular reasons why the claim that Kierkegaard had a philosophy of art, or indeed a philosophy of anything, might be greeted with scepticism. Nor are these reasons confined to a reiteration of the anti-rational elements of Kierkegaard's thought, elements particularly obvious in his doctrine of the paradox.

For Kierkegaard, it is sometimes claimed, is to be treated not as a philosopher but as a creative writer, not as a thinker but as a poet. 'No great poet - except perhaps Shakespeare - has had more to endure from pedestrian exegesis', wrote Raymond Cook. (10) From such a position any attempt to read Kierkegaard philosophically will always appear to run the risk of producing just such pedestrian exegesis. But the poetic elements in Kierkegaard's work should not blind us totally to the intellectual thrust of the works in which such elements are embedded. Indeed I hope to show that even Kierkegaard's most literary work betrays a philosophical as well as a religious

intention.

There are two ways of treating Kierkegaard as a poet. The first seeks merely to draw attention to or to analyse those aspects of his work which locate him as a figure of literary history as well as of philosophical and theological history. (11) It would be perverse to deny the existence of such elements and indeed we shall be giving considerable attention to the way in which Kierkegaard used literary forms. Moreover, the presence of such elements means that a serious student of Kierkegaard's work must be prepared to use the methods of literary criticism as well as those of philosophical and theological analysis. Inevitably the cross-currents of these different ways of approaching the texts will not lead to the production of tidy summaries. Such untidiness is however the price to pay for loyalty to the texts.

A second approach however would make this poetic element the key to a total interpretation of Kierkegaard's work. Although it must be conceded that those interpretations which take this line include some of the more exciting works in the secondary literature, the principle itself is highly questionable. A fundamental defect of such works is that they do not take into account Kierkegaard's own theory of art. Consequently they apply a concept of 'poetry' to Kierkegaard's work which may have little or nothing to do with his understanding of poetry and art. This is a recipe for confusion. We shall look briefly at three such interpretations.

Martin Thust's substantial work Soeren Kierkegaard, Der Dichter des Religiösen develops an intriguing theory of the kierkegaardian book as a kind of spiritual puppet-theatre in which the characters

...sollen lediglich bestimmten Geisteshaltungen und Entwicklungsstufen des innersten Selbst versinnbildlichen. Es sind eine Art geistige Marionetten, ... durch keine äussere Situation, durch kein Milieu charakterisiert: leiblos, schattenhaft, gespensterartig sind sie lediglich die Geschöpfe des Dichters, der sie sich zu dem einen Zweck ausgedacht hat, dass

sie bestimmte Bewegungen des Geistes mit absoluter Präzision vollziehen und veranschaulichen.

(12)

Kierkegaard's work and in particular his pseudonymous authorship, comes to be seen as involving a special concept of the book as a 'stage for the Spirit' (13), and the emphasis is on the appropriateness of the aesthetic form in relation to the content which Kierkegaard is trying to communicate. If however we look at Kierkegaard's own concept of aesthetic and religious communication, we shall see that it is precisely the tension between the aesthetic form and the more-than-aesthetic content which he intends to evoke in his pseudonymous works. (14)

Similarly Louis Mackey argues that Kierkegaard's writing, even the most ostensibly theoretical is not syllogistic but figural. The unity and consistency of his thought, not at all apparent to logical scrutiny, is a metaphoric unity. (15) Mackey bases his argument on a conventional analysis of the sign-nature of language. A sign is both itself a thing and a significance. Poetry emphasizes the 'thing' aspect of language, that is to say, words are themselves the objects of poetry. Philosophy emphasized the task of language as signifying. (16) This distinction echoes Sartre's argument in What is Literature?, (17) but whereas Sartre therefore rejects poetry as a proper medium for engaged literature, Mackey argues the opposite case, that it is precisely poetry's lack of reference to anything external to itself that makes it an adequate mirror of subjective interest and a challenge to committed action. (18) 'A Poem,' he says 'calls ... not for admiration but for personal appropriation.' (19)

While he is undoubtedly correct in saying that 'the clinical objectivity of Prufrock conveys an intensity of feeling and a conviction of reality that are only dissipated and attenuated by the rhetorical ragings of Allen Ginsberg,' (20) it by no means follows

that the response we make to such clinical objectivity is personal appropriation in the sense of appropriation by action which is the sort of appropriation with which Sartre and Kierkegaard are concerned. Moreover, such claims on behalf of poetry are antithetical to Kierkegaard's own aesthetics, for, as we shall see, Kierkegaard reserves personal appropriation for a different kind of communication. (21)

Kierkegaard's own aesthetics are taken far more seriously by Nelly Viallaneix in her book Écoute, Kierkegaard. She sets out three theses. Firstly, that 'Kierkegaard se déclare "poète et non philosophe"'. (22) Secondly, that 'Kierkegaard se déclare "poète du religieux" et non théologien'. (23) Thirdly, that 'La structure chrétienne de la totalité de l'oeuvre et de l'existence de Kierkegaard ne peut donc manquer d'être sonore'. (24) It is this final point which Ms. Viallaneix makes the guiding thread of her study of the totality of Kierkegaard's work. Picking up the great emphasis given to music and to sonority in romantic theory, she is attentive to the 'musical' or 'sonorous' dimension of Kierkegaard's work, and by doing so undoubtedly contributes to a richer understanding of it. The question is, does she push her central image of Kierkegaard as a poet motivated by the ideals of romantic harmony too far? She even extends this image to his properly religious writings, which she sees as the work of a poet, whose poetry is a testimony to Christ, echoing the ineffable song of divine love. Kierkegaard's work, in its totality, is seen, or rather heard, as a single, grand opera à la Mozart. (25)

There are two points to be made about this. Firstly it leads to a view of the dark side of Kierkegaard's life and work as being just the necessary discord and dissonance which complements the final harmony of the whole. Against this one may well set John Hick's reservations about the 'aesthetic theme' in augustinian theodicy: does

it really do justice to the personal anguish and pain which Kierkegaard so palpably experienced and wrote about? (26)

Secondly, it again pays too little attention to Kierkegaard's own aesthetics, in particular to his concept of the relation of art to suffering. In connection with this it must also be stressed that music did not function for Kierkegaard as the ultimate dimension of aesthetic expression.

Pedestrian it may be, but if we are to talk about Kierkegaard as a 'kind of poet' we must be clear what exactly we mean by 'kind of', which is in itself an extremely vague expression. We need to hear Theodor Adorno's warning that 'wann immer man die Schriften von Philosophen als Dichtungen zu begreifen trachtete, hat man ihren Wahrheitsgehalt verfehlt'. (27)

An appreciation of the poetic dimension of Kierkegaard's authorship is an essential part of any serious interpretation of it - but it is not the key to the inner sanctuary.

(C) The Course of This Enquiry

The aim of this enquiry is chiefly to give an exposition of Kierkegaard's philosophy of art in its double-aspect of a theory and a critique of art. This will itself continually touch upon points of theological interest, although a final judgement concerning its theological structure will not be given until the concluding chapter.

It must however be noted that from the perspective which is opened up by the focus of this study the religious intent of Kierkegaard's philosophy of art is chiefly found within an anthropological horizon. Kierkegaard's philosophy of art does not lead to any conclusions about the object of theology in the strict sense of the word. It does lead to certain reflections on the situation of man 'before God', to use one of Kierkegaard's own expressions. Perhaps

it scarcely needs to be added that there is little or nothing said about man in Kierkegaard's authorship which does not have some bearing on the religious dimension of existence, which does not serve the purpose of showing that the God-relationship is an inescapable dimension of human existence. (28)

The course of the enquiry is accordingly (to use a rather hackneyed phrase) 'from below.' It is concerned; firstly, to give an account of Kierkegaard's theory of art, a theory which is largely confined to aesthetics in the narrow sense; then, secondly; to examine his critique of art, a critique which raises the question of the limits of art, and thus the further question of what lies beyond those limits. It will be argued that these two parts of Kierkegaard's philosophy of art are in fact interdependent, and that we are impelled by the movement issuing from their interaction, to see that the theory as well as the critique is theologically loaded.

To some extent this movement from aesthetics to religion is reflected in the development of Kierkegaard's authorship, which in the beginning shows a greater preoccupation with purely aesthetic matters, and which later turns to a more exclusive concern with religious issues. However, this distinction is not absolute, and when we come to analyse the theory of art in the early Papirer we shall find that the religious dimension is already present.

The greater number of Kierkegaard texts with which this thesis will be concerned stem from the earlier period of his authorship, from the period terminating with the publication of Stages on Life's Way in 1845. This work undoubtedly marks the end of a certain phase in the development of Kierkegaard's concept of the aesthetic. Thereafter his use of the term is more and more dominated by its equation with the concept of 'the aesthetic' in the sense of the inauthentic. (29) The use of textual material is however determined by content

rather than by a strict periodization. This content will be dealt with under three main headings. Firstly, we shall attempt a reconstruction of Kierkegaard's earliest philosophy of art, as it is evidenced in the Papirer. This early philosophy of art contains both theoretical and critical elements, and is the basis of Kierkegaard's writings on aesthetics in his mature authorship. Secondly, we shall elucidate the theory of art in this mature authorship by focussing on those texts which reveal Kierkegaard as an aesthetician and a literary critic. Thirdly, we shall examine Kierkegaard's critique of art as it is embodied in his three major 'novels': Either-Or, Repetition, and Stages on Life's Way. We shall not be dealing with everything which Kierkegaard wrote on this topic, but the texts to be examined are, it is believed, genuinely representative, and will suffice to show both that Kierkegaard had a philosophy of art and what the central structure of that philosophy of art was.

Before turning to Kierkegaard, however, we shall look at some of the forces moulding the intellectual landscape within which his philosophy of art was formed. A complete description of this landscape would, of course, be nothing less than a complete literary and philosophical history of scandinavian and german culture from the 1790s through to the 1830s. We can, however, pick out a number of dominant moments. We shall look, firstly, at some of the leading ideas of early romanticism, taking into account both their philosophical basis and their deployment in aesthetics; and, secondly, at hegelian aesthetics, looking both at the hegelian critique of romanticism and at the constructive aspects of hegelian theory. In both cases we shall have to look at these movements in their danish, as well as in their german forms, and particular attention will be given to the aesthetics of danish hegelianism, a point which, it will be argued, is crucial in understanding Kierkegaard's own development,

but which is largely unknown territory to the english-speaking reader.

In addition to romanticism and hegelianism it is necessary to take into account the impact of the reaction against both by the angry young men of the Young Germany movement. It is in this context that Poul Møller is discussed, a figure who is hard to categorize neatly, but who had a significant influence on Kierkegaard. Although Møller's relation to Kierkegaard has received no little attention in the secondary literature (30), the particular impact of his writings on aesthetics has not been dealt with at any length.

These three forces: romanticism, hegelianism and the post- and anti-romantic-and hegelian movement constitute the three main pillars of Kierkegaard's background - at least in respect of aesthetics. Each of these movements will be dealt with individually, and Kierkegaard's response to them will be dealt with only when all three have been brought into focus.

Even this limitation of the field leaves us confronted by 'big' movements raising 'big' questions and one cannot skip lightly across such a minefield of controversy without risk. It is however in no way my intention to claim that romanticism, etc., is dealt with in its fulness. It is a question merely of saying enough to make Kierkegaard's own concerns comprehensible. In this respect it is possible that too much rather than too little attention is devoted to the background.

It would, however, have been possible to go further afield than this, for Kierkegaard formed and defended his position in the light of a continuing engagement with the tradition, bringing his reading of such diverse writers as Plato, Aristotle, Boethius, Lessing and Hamann to bear on issues relating to art and religion. His approach to the tradition was however in the light of his contemporary situation,

and it is to this contemporary situation we must turn in order to see the main routes by which Kierkegaard approached questions of art and faith. Mention of other influences, e.g. Aristotle, will be made wherever such reference is relevant to the exegesis of particular Kierkegaard texts.

Chapter Two: Romanticism

(A) Germany: Early Romanticism

(A) (i) J. G. Fichte

The expression 'early romanticism' corresponds to the German term 'Frühromantik'. This is a quite specific term in literary history referring to the circle of writers and thinkers centred on Friedrich and A. W. Schlegel and including such figures as Friedrich von Hardenberg (Novalis), Ludwig Tieck, W. H. Wackenroder and E. T. A. Hoffmann. Although this movement, along with romanticism in a wider sense, is often dismissed as being merely irrational (1), the early romantics themselves were concerned to affiliate their vision of the nature and office of art to one of the most demanding forms of contemporary philosophy, namely the transcendental idealism of Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762 - 1814).

In the history of philosophy Fichte appears as the figure who transgressed the Kantian limitations on knowledge of the thing-in-itself, and who thus led German idealism back towards the full-blooded metaphysics of Hegel. (2) Certainly Fichte believed that his philosophy gave an adequate and exhaustive account of knowledge 'without remainder', although the exact status which he assigned to this account is not entirely clear. Is it intended as a description or an explanation of the construction of consciousness or is it both? 'both a phenomenology of consciousness and an idealist metaphysics'? (3)

From the point of view of his influence on romanticism the most relevant aspects of Fichte's philosophy are (a) his statement of the inadequacy of sense-experience; (b) his account of the productive imagination; (c) his emphasis on the primacy of practical reason; (d) his analysis of finite and infinite selfhood; (e) his

account of the intellectual intuition.

(A) (i) (a) The inadequacy of sense-experience

The task of philosophy, according to Fichte, is 'to furnish the grounds of all experience, (4) but, he argues, sense-experience cannot itself be its own ground. His clearest account of the inadequacy of sense-experience (and of many other points of his often obscure philosophy) is in his popularizing work The Vocation of Man. Here he argues that our ordinary, everyday experience of the world is not the naive sense-experience it makes itself out to be, but in fact involves the projection of raw sense-data on to a structure which is not in itself sensed. We do not actually see any 'objects' at all, we see only, e.g. , red, a red impression, which is present in consciousness only as a mere point. However the mind surreptitiously conjoins this red point to a manifold of other red points thereby creating the appearance of a red surface. This is not all, for the mind projects this red surface on to an imagined space which is not itself seen, thus creating the appearance of an 'object' existing in three-dimensional space. This unseen space is thus the bearer of the attributes of the 'seen' object, i.e. the red thing which we see 'out there' can exist for us only by virtue of the postulation of an unseen ground which is perceived as being red. The projection or postulation of such an unseen object is, according to Fichte, a spontaneous function of the principle of causality, the principle that everything must have a foundation or cause. In the light of this analysis Fichte distinguishes two levels of knowledge: 'immediate' knowledge, which is limited to sensation, and 'mediate' knowledge which, by means of the principle of causality, gets behind the 'seen' surface, and enquires as to the basis of what 'appears' in sense-experience. Over against such 'mediate' knowledge the 'immed-

iate is seen as deficient. Naive sense-experience does not provide a foundation for, or explain, knowledge, but itself stands in need of an adequate grounding in terms of a higher principle. (5)

(A) (i) (b) The productive imagination

In the analysis of the projection of appearances on to unseen objects, construed as the ground or cause of these appearances, the concept of the productive imagination has already been anticipated. Fichte claims more for the productive imagination than that it merely projects sense-impressions on to a space which is in some way 'given'. It produces a world of appearances in a still more fundamental way, for the principle of causality by virtue of which this projection is set in motion is itself a postulate of the mind. The space, which acts as the foundation, and in this sense 'cause', of the objects that are seen, is itself a projection of the mind. It is the fundamental form, posited by the mind, by which the mind intuitively. Space is the form of consciousness itself: 'consciousness is ... a projection of myself out of myself by means of the only mode of action which is properly mine - intuitive consciousness (Schauen)'. (6)

'Space - illuminated, transparent, palpable, penetrable space - the purest image of my knowledge, is not seen, but is intuited. And in it my seeing itself is intuited. The light is not outside of me, it is within me, and I myself am the light.' (7)

Consequently in 'seeing' an object I am really only seeing an extension of the mind itself, differentiated as subject and object in accordance with the spatiality of its basic form. Both subject and object ('in here' and 'out there') are aspects of the same mind, which is the deeper 'subject' of consciousness.

This is the basic dynamism of 'the wonderful power of productive imagination ... without which nothing at all in the human mind is

capable of explanation - and on which the entire mechanism of that mind may very well be based.' (8)

(A) (i) (c) The primacy of practical reason

Fichte does not stop here. The world produced in this way is, for him, ultimately a meaningless, pointless world. 'Pictures are: they are the only things which exist, and they know of themselves after the fashion of pictures; pictures which float past without there being anything past which they float ... I myself am one of these pictures; nay I am not even this, but merely a confused picture of the pictures.' (9)

Such an imagined world ultimately lacks interest, it is the world of a disinterested, theoretical knowledge, but reason (Vernunft) has an higher interest than this: the interest provided by the practical, ethical reason. So 'We act not because we know, but we know because we are called upon to act: the practical reason is the root of all reason. The laws of action for rational beings are immediately certain; their world is certain only through the fact that they are certain'. (10) It is because the moral sense, conscience, requires that the persons with whom I have to do are to be treated as real, existent persons (and not theoretical constructs) that we are bound - literally conscience-bound - to regard the world which appears to consciousness as a real world. 'It is only from the command of conscience to follow a certain course of action that there arises our conception of a certain purpose in this action, and from this our whole intuitive perception of a world of sense.' (11)

(A) (i) (d) Finite and infinite selfhood

In his account of the productive imagination and of the practical reason Fichte makes it clear that consciousness spontaneously

manifests itself dualistically, as subject and object, as self and not-self. But it is also clear that Fichte seeks to unite these polarities in a single Absolute self, which will 'contain' or be the basis of both: 'The opposites to be unified lie in the self as consciousness ... Both self and not-self are alike products of the original acts of the self, and consciousness itself is similarly a product of the self's first original act, its own positing of itself.' (12)

The self is thus intrinsically two-dimensional. It exists absolutely, in a mode in which no opposition exists, and it exists relatively, in a mode in which it exists only in a complex of relationships to other objects which limit its free being.

The practical reason represents essentially an infinite activity. It is not conditioned by anything outside itself. In becoming conscious of the practical reason which is my self, I am conscious that 'I am wholly my own creation ... I resolve to be a work not of Nature but of myself, and I have become so by means of this resolution.' (13) But by virtue of the very dynamic by which it posits itself as a self the practical reason becomes finite, restricted, conditioned. Thus in all its intuitions the self exists as finite, bound by the reciprocity of its relatedness to a world of 'seen' objects. Conversely the self is also always at work annulling and transcending the particular specification of finitude in which it finds itself, and aspiring to express itself in its proper infinitude.

(A) (i) (e) Intellectual intuition

If the human mind is always enmeshed in the multiplicity of appearances in which it exists as a finite self how does it become aware of the absolute self?

It does so by means of what Fichte calls the 'intellectual intuition'. As an intuition it has the immediacy which attaches to

all intuition: 'We cannot prove from concepts that this power of intellectual intuition exists, nor evolve from them what it may be. Everyone must discover it immediately in himself, or he will never make its acquaintance.' (14)

As sensory intuition is the awareness of an object (apparently) opposed to the self so the intellectual intuition is an awareness of the primordial activity of the self. In the first instance this is within the context of the subject-object relation in which the self, as finite, exists, accompanying the sensory intuition, but the philosopher is able to distinguish it in its purity as the key to consciousness. 'Intellectual intuition is the only firm standpoint for all philosophy. From thence we can explain everything that occurs in consciousness; and, moreover, only from thence'. (15) In the intellectual intuition the self sees its own absolute nature, sees that it is possessed of 'an absolute activity founded only on itself and in nothing else whatever ...' (16) It is the 'intuition of self-activity and freedom.' (17)

The intellectual intuition thus becomes the means by which the sensible and intelligible worlds which Kant had separated are linked together.

(A) (ii) Fichte and the early romantics

The impact of Fichte on the early romantics is indicated by the following words of Friedrich Schlegel: 'Die Französische Revolution, Fichtes Wissenschaftslehre und Goethes Meister sind die grössten Tendenzen des Zeitalters.' (18) Schlegel himself was one of, if not the seminal figure in the early romantic movement. The esteem in which Schlegel and his fellow romantics held Fichte does not mean that they were strictly loyal disciples. They used Fichte for their own purposes, which were fundamentally quite different. For Fichte it was the ethical which was the decisive factor, it was for the

sake of the moral, active self that his whole system was constructed, though the early romantics did not share Fichte's ethical vigour.

This distinction is pinpointed by Walter Benjamin in his study of the theory of literary criticism held by the early romantics. He says that 'Die Unendlichkeit der Reflexion ist für Schlegel und Novalis in erster Linie nicht eine Unendlichkeit des Fortgangs, sondern eine Unendlichkeit des Zusammenhanges.' (19) That is to say that for the romantics the absolute self does not transcend itself in and for the sake of purposive moral action, but its self-transcendence is interpreted more as a kind of infinite game, a play of the self with its self.

Both the proximity and the distance between the romantic vision and fichtean idealism can be seen in the following statement by

F. Schlegel:

Alle Gedanken sind nur gebrochene Farbenbilder dieses inneren Lichtes. In jedem Gedanke ist das Ich das verborgene Licht, in jedem findet man sich; man denkt immer nur sich oder den Ich, freilich nicht das gemeine, abgeleitete Sich, ... sondern in seiner höheren Bedeutung. (20)

Here we can see Fichte's distinction between the two dimensions of selfhood - the 'common' self, and the self in its 'higher meaning', but for Schlegel this higher self is commensurable with thought, it is essentially contemplative, whereas for Fichte we can only know it through our drive towards ethical action. (21) A similar development of Fichte's thought is to be found in Novalis:

His fundamental formulation reads "the world must be romanticized. In this way one rediscovers its original meaning. Romanticizing is nothing but a qualitative raising to a higher power. In this operation the lower self becomes identified with a higher self. Just as we ourselves are such a qualitative exponential series. This operation is still wholly unknown". Novalis used the verb "to romanticize" to characterize an act of the imagination ... Romanticizing is a "qualitative raising to a higher power", which is the very thing Novalis, in the sense of Fichte, marked as the highest mission of self development to become "the ego of one's own ego". (22)

The most philosophically disciplined fusion of fichtean idealism

with the aspirations of early romanticism is to be found in the work of F. J. W. Schelling (1775 - 1854). Schelling takes up Fichte's philosophical problematic, namely: given the spontaneous splitting of consciousness into subject and object, self and not-self, how is it possible to find a position from which both aspects can be seen in their essential unity?

Following Fichte, Schelling believes that transcendental philosophy takes the path of 'proceeding from the subjective as primary and absolute, and having the objective arise from this.' (23) The philosopher therefore directs his attention to the inner sense, which as with Fichte, he can only do by means of an intellectual intuition in which the essential activity of the self is intuited, so that 'one always remains at the same time both the intuited (the producer) and the intuitant.' (24)

Nonetheless, Schelling diverges from Fichte in the emphasis he gives to the relationship of philosophy and art. He claims that:

Philosophy depends as much as art does on the productive capacity, and the difference between them rests merely on the different direction taken by the productive force. For whereas in art the production is directed outwards, so as to reflect the unknown by means of products, philosophical production is directed immediately inwards, so as to reflect it in intellectual intuition. The proper sense by which this type of philosophy must be apprehended is thus the aesthetic sense, and that is why the philosophy of art is the true organ of philosophy. (25)

In the aesthetic intuition, according to Schelling, the mind is at one and the same time productive (and therefore conscious, subject, self) and product (and therefore unconscious, object, not-self). In this intuition the mind intuits the identity of the conscious and the unconscious in the self, and consciousness of this identity. The product of this intuition will therefore verge on the one side upon the product of nature, and on the other upon the product of freedom, and must unite itself in the characteristics of both. (26)

It is above all the artistic genius in whose creativity this union occurs, the product of which is the work of art which he creates. The productive intuition which is the non-dualistic base of consciousness is thus, according to Schelling, the same thing as the poetic gift. (27) It is the imagination which, in the immediacy of the aesthetic intuition, simultaneously apprehends the absolute 'immediately', together with, or under the form of, the sensuous immediacy of phenomenal being.

The romantic imagination is thus an ideal activity. Although there are differences in vocabulary, Jean Paul articulates the same basic vision as Schelling when he writes that

Einbildungskraft ist die Prose der Bildungskraft oder Phantasie. Sie ist nichts als eine potenzierte hellfarbigere Erinnerung, welche auch die Thiere haben ... Aber etwas Höheres ist die Phantasie oder Bildungskraft, sie ist die Welt-Seele der Seele und der Elementargeiste der übrigen Kräfte ... Die Phantasie macht alle Theile zu ganzen ... und alle Welttheile zu Welten ...

(28)

This 'Phantasie' is exercised above all by the active or highest type of genius, who duplicates himself, according to Jean Paul, in the form of a self and its kingdom - in true fichtean manner. (29) The artist of this type does not imitate Nature in the sense of merely copying it - on the contrary it is through the operation of his imagination that the given appearances of nature, of the external, phenomenal world, are irradiated with the light of ideality and are bestowed with meaning and interest. This process Jean Paul refers to as the transubstantiation of Nature, 'diese Brodverwandlung ins Göttliche.' (30)

The truly creative nature of genius is a recurrent theme amongst the early romantics. F. Schlegel could go so far as to say that the artist can be absolutely creative - 'Das Dichten ... erschafft gewissermassen seinen Stoff selbst.' (31) That is to say that the artist does not merely imbue given material with ideal

form, but actually creates the material out of his ideal consciousness.

The romantic concern with nature is therefore far from being an infatuation with the external forms of nature. It is nature as revelatory of, as a medium for, or as an image of, an higher, ideal world which interests the romantic. Schelling wrote :

What we speak of as Nature is a poem lying pent up in a mysterious and wonderful script. Yet the riddle could reveal itself were we to recognize in it the odyssey of the spirit, which marvelously deluded, seeks itself, and in seeking flies from itself; for through the world of sense there glimmers, as if through words the meaning, as if through mists the land of fantasy, of which we are in search ... Nature to the artist is nothing more than it is to the philosopher, being simply the ideal world appearing under permanent restrictions, or merely the imperfect reflection of a world existing, not outside him but within him. (32)

There is thus a certain ambiguity in romantic philosophy concerning the exact ontological status of the world of externally existent things. Are they regarded as merely uninteresting or actually non-existent if considered apart from the idealizing, romanticizing consciousness? Does the mind imprint its ideal meanings on to a given receptive matter, or does it itself create matter? The concentration of the romantics on the special case of the poetic genius does not really help, and nature is left in the ambiguous position of being at once exalted and nullified.

We have already seen how Fichte discarded the world of empirical sense-experience as incapable of providing a foundation for philosophy, and a similar attitude underlies much of the romantics' writings about nature. They could easily slide from the glorification of the natural world as the image or symbol of the ideal to its derogation as a 'mere' image or symbol. Consequently it was not difficult for the romantics to slip from rapturous contemplation of the harmony of all things to a radically dualistic view, and it was precisely this charge of dualism that lay at the base of

Hegel's (and to some extent of Kierkegaard's) critique of romanticism. (33)

The romantic hero was as likely to experience the world as being untrue or deceitful as he was to find it a source of entrancing wonder or overwhelming beauty. Wackenroder's Joseph Berglinger is typical of this dualistic tendency:

Er dachte: "Lieber Gott! ist denn das die Welt wie sie ist? Und ist es denn dein Wille, dass ich mich so unter das Gedränge des Haufens mischen und an den gemeinen Elend Anteil nehmen soll? Und doch sieht es so aus, und mein Vater predigt es immer, dass es die Pflicht und Bestimmung des Menschen sei, sich darunter zu mischen und Rat und Almosen zu geben, und ekelhafte Wunden zu verbinden und hässliche Krankheiten zu heilen! Und doch ruft mir wieder eine innere Stimme ganz laut zu: Nein! nein! du bist zu einem höheren, edleren Ziel geboren!" (34)

This higher goal turns out, in Joseph's case to be his vocation as a musician.

This dualism characterizes many of the concepts and motifs of romantic literature. It can be seen in the importance given to such concepts as premonition (Ahnung) and longing, in the characterization of modern poetry, and in the role given to irony and humour in artistic creativity.

Jean Paul summed up the romantic doctrine of premonition when he wrote that 'Ein unauslöslisches Gefühl stellet in uns etwas Dunkles, was nicht unser Geschöpf, sondern unser Schöpfer ist ... so treten wir, wie es Gott auf Sinaï befahl, vor ihn mit einer Decke über den Augen ...' (35) This premonition of 'something dark' is in fact the anticipation of the vision of existence as an organic whole, it is dark because it is the 'angel of death' to the worldly, i.e. finite, limited life, but it is also the 'superterrestrial angel of the inner life.' (36)

This premonition can also manifest itself as homesickness for the higher life, a recurrent motif in romantic literature, though nowhere more concisely expressed than by Novalis in 'Heinrich von

Ofterdingen,' when Heinrich asks of the Beatrice-type figure who is guiding him on his pilgrimage; "'Wo gehn wir denn hin?'" and receives the reply "'Immer nach Hause.'" (37) It is of course not the physical, spatially situated home which is meant, but the mansion of the eternal, ideal spirit.

Dualism is also apparent in the distinction made by the romantics between classical and modern poetry. F. Schlegel pioneered this distinction in his early philological studies. (38) His basic contention was that whereas classical art based itself upon an ideal of beauty, the production and contemplation of which was disinterested, modern poetry, by which he meant the poetry of the christian, medieval and post-medieval world, sought out the interesting, it had an interest in the reality of its ideal. For Schlegel the terms 'romantic', 'modern' and 'interesting' were effectively synonymous. (39) The interesting is 'subjektive ästhetische Kraft.' (40)

Schelling developed the distinction in his Philosophie Der Kunst. (41) Here he argued that the Greeks inhabited an enclosed mythological world, in which the Idea manifested itself in Being in a static manner, under the forms of nature. It was a world in which there was continuity between the Ideal and the Real, a world in which the Ideal was reflected in primordial images (the gods of greek mythology), incarnated in natural forms. However, in the christian era this static world-totality is broken up, and history becomes the primary context of existence. Here the Idea must manifest itself in action rather than in Being. Change dissolves the supposedly immutable natural forms, and originality supplants loyalty to primordial images as an artistic ideal. Schelling calls the art of the classical world 'symbolic', and that of the christian, romantic, modern world 'allegorical', meaning thereby to distinguish the unbroken relationship which Ideality has to Reality in the former type of

art from the discontinuous, broken, external relationship of ideality to reality in the latter. Whereas in symbolic art the particular is the universal which it symbolizes, in the latter the particular only indicates the universal of which it is the allegorical representation. Although Schelling looks to a coming unity of nature and history, of primordial image and originality, he nonetheless recognizes in 'modern' art a moment of dualism, in which the subjective, the particular, is torn out of the organic whole. (42)

The same tension between particular and universal, finite and infinite, relative and absolute, is found in the concepts of irony and humour. 'For Schlegel', wrote René Wellek, 'irony is the struggle between the absolute and the relative, the simultaneous consciousness of the impossibility and the necessity of a full account of reality. The writer must thus feel ambivalent towards his work: he stands above and apart from it and manipulates it almost playfully.' (43) 'Irony to Schlegel is objectivity, complete superiority, detachment, manipulation of the subject matter.' (44) And writing of Solger, Wellek says that 'Irony means the artist's consciousness that his work is Symbol, that he is aware of the Divine and at the same time aware of our own nothingness.' (45)

E. T. A. Hoffmann, himself an eminent humorist, formulates the concept of humour as 'that rare, wonderful mood which is generated from a deep perception of life in all its aspects and from the conflict of hostile principles.' (46) As with irony, this involves the superiority or detachment of the humorist.

In all these ways the central ambiguity of the romantic understanding of the relationship of the ideal and the real manifests itself, an ambiguity which can be traced back to the tension latent in Fichte's concept of the self as being a dynamic, self-transcending force, at once finite and infinite, at once bound by the mani-

fold of appearances and at the same time infinitely elevated above appearance in its absolute unity with itself. We shall see that Kierkegaard was attentive to all these aspects of romantic dualism. (47)

Much of what has already been said will have indicated something of the romantics' concept of artistic productivity, and the nature of the art-work. The ironic, romantic artist - like the fichtean philosopher - is at one and the same time conscious of the union of finite and infinite in his activity and yet aware of the limited and conditional nature of the work of art which he produces. Although art springs from the absolute it has an inescapable element of relativity. In Novalis' expression the art-work is to art as the citizen is to the king. (48) But the relativity, the particular, finite form constituted by a work of art is freely chosen by the artist, and his consciousness of the limitedness of the work is itself a sign that he is conscious of the infinitude of the creative spirit which has produced the work. In a famous fragment F. Schlegel wrote that 'Die romantische Dichtart ist noch im Werden; ja das ist ihr eigentliches Wesen, dass sie ewig nur werden, nie vollendet sein kann.' (49) Commenting on this fragment, Klaus Peter wrote that

Da sie alles mit allem zu verbinden trachtet, ist sie nie vollendet, stets in Bewegung, ihrem Wesen nach unendlich und deshalb immer "Fragment". Auf diese Weise interpretierte Schlegel den Fichteschen Imperativ, dass das Ich, das seinem Wesen nach absolut, d.h. unendlich ist, es auch empirisch sein sollte. (50)

Consequently the romantics refused to define any particular aesthetic form as the romantic art-form. The artist is thus free to play as he likes with forms and genres - and he can do this even in the context of a single work if it suits him. Thus the romantic novel ideally comprised a manifold of genres: narrative prose, lyrical verse, satire, etc. The romantic novelist played

with literary devices such as pseudonymity and the book within the book - anything which suited the particular expression of the idea which he chose. We shall be looking more closely at this aspect of romantic writing when we come to look at the question of Kierkegaard's 'novels'. (51)

Because of this freedom vis-à-vis its form a work cannot therefore be judged by a predetermined standard of artistic form. The task of reader and critic is thus firstly to listen, to seek out the idea which moves in the work, it is 'verstehen und erklären', (52) and criticism is the completion (Vollendung) rather than the judgement (Beurteilung) of the work. (53) That is to say that criticism develops and articulates the idea which is latent in the work, and the very fact that a work can be criticized means that it has an 'idea', and this already implies a positive evaluation of it. (54)

Through his reading of the interplay of forms which the work contains the critic - or the recipient of the work in general, whether he is or is not 'a critic' - attunes himself to the idea of the work. In a sense he romanticizes together with the artist, and establishes himself in communion with the artist 'in' the idea from which the work proceeds. This attunement is not an arbitrary and irrational enthusiasm, but, at least in principle, was to be the fruit of clear-headedness, or 'Nüchternheit' rather than of the platonic *μαρτία* (55), of carefully-balanced irony rather than of a sudden (so-called) romantic rapture, although it possesses the quality of immediacy. It is a concrete form of the aesthetic intuition. This notion of the attunement in which artist, work and recipient all tune in to a common idea is essential not only to romantic theory but, as will be shown, to Kierkegaard's critique of romanticism.

(B) Romanticism in Denmark

(B) (i) Henrik Steffens and the beginnings of romanticism in Denmark

Cultural links between Germany and Denmark in the early nineteenth century were very close, and the birth of the romantic movement in Denmark involved a figure who belonged almost equally to Scandinavia and to Germany. This was Henrik Steffens (1773 - 1845), a norwegian-born geologist and philosopher, a self-avowed disciple of Schelling, and a sometime member of the Jena circle in which many of the leading figures of early romanticism moved.

In 1802 -3 Steffens delivered a series of lectures in Copenhagen. These had a profound effect on many of his hearers, but most notably on the young poet Adam Øhlenslaeger, who was inspired by these lectures, and by his talks with Steffens, to write the 'first' romantic poem in danish literature, The Golden Horns (Guldhornene), a poem which not only bears the imprint of Steffens' thought, but which echoes his vocabulary, particularly that of the second lecture. (56)

Steffens intended these lectures to be preparatory to a series of more technical philosophical lectures. Philosophy he understood to be the knowledge of the eternal Idea in which finite and infinite are fused, (57) in which the particular, individual thing, maintained in its particularity by its egoistic drive is nonetheless held in harmony with the whole (Det Hele), which exerts an universal, unifying drive. These two basic drives - to particularity and to universality - produce the whole phenomenal manifestation of life by their interaction, and philosophy is the knowledge of the two in their dynamic unity. (58) It is thus distinct from the particular sciences which accumulate facts and data but cannot reach the standpoint from which the infinite harmony of all things can be seen.

Steffens attached a particular importance to premonition (Ahnelse) which he saw as leading the mind which has not been philosophically

trained to an intuition of the infinite harmony, which is the object of philosophical knowledge. He claimed that

Nobody is ever entirely devoid of this premonition. It slumbers deep in the soul of even the most limited of us. It connects us to the whole of nature. It gives everything ... an higher, a nobler significance. It is that which, with the dawning of the day, opens up the radiance and life of nature to every soul, as if an inward sun involuntarily followed the celestial; it raises the infinite multitude of forms (Gestalter) from universal darkness; by it Nature's eternal life speaks to our spirit, as if through a mystical cipher which inwardly we understand. (59)

Premonition not only reveals the unity of nature, but the unity of history too. And it is the poet, above all others, who has the power to evoke this premonition of an higher life.

This premonition likewise links us to history. By its operation times whose habits of thought, whose ways of life, possessed characteristics quite other than our own become comprehensible to us. If we surrender to it and renounce that common posture of the understanding which makes our age and our way of thinking into an universal norm, then it will endow us with a sense for those times which lie hidden in the past. It wakens the warriors from their graves, gods and goddesses come among us, every sound from long-vanished ages resounds with its own unique resonance. It conjures the most advanced epochs back into the most obscure. It is as if the germ of every epoch of history slumbered in each. This premonition, whose object is always infinite, when it is revealed vitally and creatively in an exalted soul (Gemyt) is called - Poesy. No man is utterly devoid of poesy. No age, not even the coarsest, has ever entirely lost it. It is as if nature's own eternal productivity awoke with the poet. Noble and exalted forms (Gestalter) issue forth, a divine, a golden age, illuminated by an eternal sun, arises before our eyes, suddenly, as if by magic. An infinite meaning seems to be concealed behind every form and mystically shines out towards us. We are environed by an exalted and glorious radiance; a deep longing (Laengsel) awakens in our inmost being, and irresistibly draws us to this wonderful and magical world ... (60)

The poet communicates 'holy, radiant images of the eternal.'

(61) Poetic genius is the most immediate revelation of the eternal itself in the finite. (62) It is the revelation in our inmost being of a 'mysterious centre, a divinity in whose image we are made.' (63) However though Steffens later became an avowed Christian his god-talk at this stage is certainly not intended in a specifically christian sense. Indeed there was a definite

'pagan' feel about much of the poetry which took its lead from Steffens.

This is apparent in Øhlenslaeger's Guldhornene. This poem is based on the historical story of the discovery of two golden horns at Gallehus in Jutland, one in 1639, the other in 1734. These horns were from the pre-christian era and were inscribed with runic symbols. However, in 1802 the horns vanished mysteriously and were never found again - presumably they had been stolen and melted down. The poem interprets the horns as gifts from the gods, bestowed on the present prosaic age -

Mystic sacredness enshrines
Ancient signs and old inscriptions,
Forth god's glory trembling shines
From these, eternity's productions.

(64)

But the gift is taken back by the gods, since the age can only see in them their material value, not the higher meaning which they would disclose to those who had eyes to see. (65) In accordance with Steffens' doctrine it is left to the poet to read the eternal message hidden in these memorials of a forgotten age, and to reveal this message to his contemporaries.

Via Steffens the romantic movement in Denmark took over a theory of art which was essentially rooted in the account of consciousness given by the transcendental idealists.

Nonetheless the typical emphasis or mood of danish romanticism is somewhat different from that of early romanticism in Germany. It is more positive, less dualistic. As R. Summers puts it, 'The first phase of Danish Romanticism had given expression to a view of life characterized by life-affirmation and optimism and found its ideal in German Classicism and Goethe - though it was a Goethe without his darker sides that the Danes admired.' (66)

(B) (ii) F. C. Sibbern

The philosopher Frederik C. Sibbern (1785 - 1872) was one of those who reached intellectual maturity under the spell of this first phase of danish romanticism. He is of importance in the study of Kierkegaard's background, not least because he was one of the first thinkers in Denmark to offer a philosophical critique of some of the key concepts of hegelianism. (67) However it is also wise to remember Himmelstrup's contention that, as thinkers, Kierkegaard and Sibbern had nothing in common, and that apparent similarities usually turn out to be deceptive. Sibbern's main interests were in the area of empirical science, which was of little interest to Kierkegaard. (68)

Sibbern also lectured on aesthetics - lectures which Kierkegaard attended (69) - and he wrote a 'romantic' novel Efterladte Breve af Gabrielis which recounts the essentially autobiographical story of a young man recoiling from an unhappy love-affair (in reality Sibbern's passion for Øhlenslaeger's wife Sophie), who seeks to find himself again by returning to the village where he had attended school. The Kierkegaard scholar H. Fenger has recently drawn attention to this book in connection with some of the best-known passages from Kierkegaard's early Papirer, which Fenger interprets as attempts to write a novel on the same lines as Gabrielis. (70)

Sibbern's 1834 lectures on aesthetics were published in that year as Volume 1 of what was eventually to be a 3-volume work, Om Poesie og Kunst, although Volume 2 was not published for a further twenty years. These 1834 lectures are described by Fenger as 'a collective expression of the taste and ideals which the first romantic generation possessed, "the men of 1803", (71) that is, the men of the Steffens/Øhlenslaeger school.

In these lectures Sibbern argued that art had two distinct

roots. On the one hand it was reproductive, mimetic, proceeding by imitating nature, although this did not mean merely copying, but bringing about the rebirth of nature in the medium of ideality. On the other hand, art is expressive (udtalende), it proceeds from the artist's own inner being. These two sources can be united in an higher unity.

This basic distinction between two types of art was reflected for Sibbern in the two words with which he entitled his lectures: Poetry and Art. 'Art' (Konst), relates to that aspect of art which is reproductive, in which the sensuous, external element predominates, 'poetry' (poesie) to that aspect of art which is freely creative and productive. (72)

When art imitates external nature it is akin to 'the simple apprehension of things via the senses', (73) but this simple imitation is always led by an higher, ideal interest, which seeks out the inner being of its object. 'The poet and the artist must have an eye for this "inner" being of things, for this proper and essential nature, if he is to represent nature as it is in truth. It is to this that the seer's eye must penetrate, and from this too that the recreating representation must proceed, and therefore we say that it is an ideal rebirth.' (74) This last expression, 'an ideal rebirth', recurs again and again throughout the lectures.

The artist does not merely imitate the outer shell of nature, he is moved by sympathy for the universal idea present throughout nature, and throughout humanity. The poet[!] is in sympathy with all of nature. Everywhere in nature he sees that which is related to his own spirit (Aand), his own inner being, and he sees it as much in the rest of nature as in the world of men.' (75) This idea of sympathy is also used by Sibbern in his philosophy of nature, as is the notion of the intuitive apprehension of 'the whole' of

nature, an idea which recalls Steffens' concept of the essential task of philosophy. It is this sympathy which makes possible the 'poetic vision of the inner being of the thing,' (76) and which makes possible the elevation of the object into the medium of ideality both in the artist's own idealizing creativity and in the consciousness of the recipient of the work. (77)

In the other, the productive, type of art, the poet is essentially lyrical and musical - '... the poet sang, before he narrated in song.' (78) Such art issues from inner creativity, although it must at some point take up the materials provided by imitative art - Sibbern would not accept Schlegel's idea of the absolute creativity of the artist, he was too much of an empiricist.

True art is a fusion of these two modes. Thus the true artist must at one and the same time remain true to nature and represent things in an higher, ideal medium, as they could be, not just as they are. (79) His eye is guided by a vision of the eternal ideas on which the phenomena of the external world are modelled - Sibbern specifically invokes the platonic doctrine of the ideas to argue against Plato that poetry and art 'just as completely as philosophy, shall mount to those primordial ideas (Ur-Ideer) of things.' (80)

Art however - as opposed to philosophy - always represents its objects individually and concretely, 'in art ... the universal is unified with the concrete in an undivided intuition or feeling.' (81)

Here we see that deeper content (Gehalt) of life and of humanity, which science makes the object of its investigations, appear in the form of its real presence in life ... But the work itself is not to be a summation of investigation and reflection, of scientific development and classification, but it is to bring the object itself before us in the totality of its concrete actuality, but in ideal rebirth, in an ideal representation (Gjenbillede). (82)

Philosophy cannot therefore be considered to be 'higher' than art.

As well as dealing with the relation of art to philosophy

Sibbern also discussed the difference between the aesthetic way of experiencing and the way in which we would listen to a sermon or use spiritual music. (83) He had made a similar point in the Gabrielis novel, where he contrasted the Bible's teaching with the methods of philosophy and art:

In all those other noble and profound thoughts and images there may move a deep philosophy, there may be developed a rich and penetrating view of life, there may live an infinitely noble soul (Gemyt) and heart. But in the words of scripture there moves a holy God; these words come straight from the holy centre of the world-spirit, and engage the soul in its innermost centre. They will not teach us, remind us, or illuminate us concerning this or that, but concerning the one thing which is needful ... In those other realms, in Philosophy or Poetry, there is a profundity in ideas, but in these words the Spirit of the Lord is stirring; those are begotten of genius and profundity, but these are spoken as by Him who has authority ... (84)

However, in his own talk of the world-spirit Sibbern seems to imperil the distinction which he is trying to make. In reviewing Om Poesie og Konst Provost E. Tryde contended that Sibbern had not sufficiently emphasized the distinction between the higher ideality expressed in art and the divine being of God. (85) This is another way of saying that for all his empiricism and scientific interests Sibbern remained within the intellectual horizon defined by Fichte, in which philosophical idealism and christian personalism might conclude a truce - but never with comfort.

This inevitably superficial survey of some of the cardinal points of romantic philosophy in Germany and Denmark is not intended to give a full picture of this rich, vital and revolutionary movement. What it attempts to make clear is that the romantics affiliated their view of life to the idealist philosophy represented by Fichte, and that, for them, the production and reception of art was an ideal activity, in which artist and recipient

united in a sympathetic attunement to the idea incarnated in, or intended by, the work of art itself, and that this aesthetic experience was at the same time an experience of the absolute idea itself, an overcoming of the dualism which, as the romantics believed, characterized experience of the phenomenal world and which was manifest in the rationalism of the Enlightenment. Although they would defend themselves against the charge that in their characterization of the absolute they confused the divine and the human there is little doubt that the experience of art acquired a religious quality in romantic theory, and, as in Steffens' lectures, the poet could be charged with the mission of communicating divine things to mortal men.

Chapter Three: Hegelianism

(A) Hegel

(A) (i) Art and dialectics

The exact significance of Kierkegaard's critique of hegelianism and the measure of common ground left after taking their differences into account continue to be points of discussion in Kierkegaard scholarship.

(1) Here we are confining ourselves to the field of aesthetics and though much that is said will have implications for any overall assessment it cannot be assumed in advance that the Kierkegaard/Hegel axis moves at exactly the same angle through all the fields of philosophy.

G. W. F. Hegel (1770 - 1831) worked with many of the assumptions of his immediate philosophical predecessors, Fichte and Schelling. He shares with them a vision of the self, or Spirit, as essentially active, producing the world of finite appearances out of its own free activity. He differed from them above all in the emphasis he placed on history and on social order, and in his evaluation of the nature and scope of logic in philosophy.

Hegel's name is particularly associated with the concept of dialectics, and, in order to get some idea of the scope of his aesthetics, it will be helpful to start this section by looking at certain aspects of Hegel's dialectics. As with Fichte and Schelling the dialectic is fundamentally rooted in the duality of the self, which can be conceived either according to its absolute nature as infinitely free or according to its bondage to the finite forms by which its appearance is conditioned. The aim of the dialectic is to show the rootedness of finite selfhood in the infinite freedom of the absolute.

From one angle the movement of the dialectic is a movement of

negation; it is the continually repeated negation of the element of immediacy in knowledge, which aims to set a fully articulated account of the way in which things have come to be as they are in the place of the immediate apprehension of things. He polemicizes against the dependence of Fichte and Schelling on the immediacy of the intellectual intuition. Science is not a matter of intuition but the 'product of a widespread upheaval in various forms of culture, the prize at the end of a complicated, tortuous path.' (2) Its method can 'be regarded as the pathway of doubt, or more precisely as the way of despair,' (3) rather than of naive trust in whatever is yielded by our intuition. Hegel plays here on the etymological connection between 'Zweifel'=doubt and 'Verzweiflung'=despair to make his point that knowledge requires the discipline of scepticism to reach its goal.

This movement from the immediate to the absolute is also seen by Hegel as a process of enrichment. The Spirit does not simply discard the forms which it negates, it keeps them, they become its history, and it is the exposition of this history in its totality, as a whole, which constitutes the introduction to philosophy. (4) In this perspective the movement of knowledge is from the mere abstract statement of what Hegel calls 'immediate sense-certainty', which can only say of its object 'that' it is, to the position of science which can say 'what' its object is in every aspect of its being. (5)

This movement is also seen by Hegel as a process of internalization, a movement away from seeing merely the external appearances of things to a concern for their inner relations. Hegel plays on the ambiguity of the term 'Erinnerung' which means both internalization in this sense and also remembrance or recollection. The process of 'Erinnerung' is thus a process which leads from sense to thought, and a process which culminates in a retrospective recoll-

ection of the totality of the process itself. It is in this latter sense that Hegel says that philosophy 'appears only when actuality is cut and dried after its process of formation has been completed ... the owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk.' (6) We shall see an example of Hegel's exploitation of the concept of 'Erinnerung' in his account of the role of the bard, (7) and we shall see Kierkegaard using the cognate danish term in a similar way. (8)

The process of internalization is also a movement from empirical knowledge to logic. In sense-experience the meaning or idea is always at a distance from the form or appearance. In logic, however, content and form coincide. The laws of thought are themselves the content of logical thought. Thinking is at one with itself, all dualism is overcome, not in the 'rapturous haze' (9) of the intellectual intuition but in the disciplined exposition of the system of logic by which the whole dialectical process is governed. (10)

We can now turn to the question of the place of art in Hegel's overall system. He himself defines the need from which art arises in a key passage from the introduction to his Aesthetics.

Things in nature are only immediate and single, while man as Spirit (Geist) duplicates himself in that (i) he is as things in nature are but (ii) he is just as much for himself, represents himself to himself, thinks, and only on the strength of this active placing himself before himself is he Spirit ... This aim he achieves by altering external things whereon he impresses the seal of his inner being, and in which he now finds again his own characteristics. Man does this in order, as a free subject, to strip the external world of its inflexible foreignness and to enjoy in the shape of things only an external realization of himself. (11)

Hegel finds an example of this need in the child's spontaneous delight in producing patterns in water by throwing stones into it, and it is the same need which lies behind the work of art: the bestowal of a human, and for Hegel that means a meaningful or an ideal, content on something which exists externally. Such a work of art is higher than the realm of external things which merely are.

Thus, 'owing to the feeling and insight whereby a landscape has been represented in painting, this work of the Spirit acquires a higher rank than the mere natural landscape.' (12)

Art transcends nature, but it does not, unlike logic, turn away from 'sensuous individuality and immediate determinateness ... the work of art stands in the middle between immediate sensuousness and ideal thought. It is not yet pure thought, but, despite its sensuousness, is no longer a purely material existent either, like stones, plants and organic life.' (13) Art uses sensuous things for non-sensuous ends, with a spiritual interest. The sensuous in art is merely sensuous, it has been reduced to mere instrumentality, to being merely the mode in which the supersensuous is to shine forth. The ultimate end of art is the same as the ultimate end of pure thought: it is the self's (the Spirit's) reconciliation with itself. Thus the vocation of art is to unveil the truth in sensuous form, to articulate an intuited unity and reconciliation of subjective freedom and objective substantiality. (14) Art is the Idea in the form of externality - that is not in its own proper form, but nonetheless it is the Idea.

Thus, though Hegel's description of the locus and function of art coincides to some extent with that given by Schelling (the immediate intuition of the absolute), the differences are just as striking. For Hegel, art is only the immediate form of the absolute, because, for Hegel, immediacy and intuition are, as we have seen, always only provisional.

Hegel develops his concept of art in a majestic historical and analytical panorama. He uses two fundamental schemata by which to order this vision. The one is the division of art into the categories of Symbolic, Classical and Romantic; the other is the ordering of the forms of art, i.e. architecture, sculpture, painting,

music and poetry. In each case the categories are arranged in a scale of ascent towards the absolute.

(A) (ii) Symbolic, classical and romantic art.

The definition of symbolic art is approached by means of a distinction between a conventional sign and the special sort of sign which is a symbol. A symbol in some way carries its meaning within itself, e.g. 'the lion ... as a symbol of magnanimity, the fox of cunning, the circle of eternity, the triangle for the Trinity.' (15)

Nevertheless, Hegel argues, symbols are generally ambiguous - a lion could equally be a symbol of strength, but then so could a bull. Symbolic art is therefore limited to expressing meaning in 'an equivocal and obscure fashion. Instead of beauty and regularity these works of art represent a bizarre, grandiose, fantastic aspect.' (16)

The historical context of such symbolic art is the east in general, more specifically, the religious cultures of ancient Persia, India and Egypt. In Egypt the problematic nature of the symbol becomes more and more obvious. This process is manifest in such a figure as that of the Sphinx in whom 'out of the dull strength of the animal the human spirit tries to push itself forward, without coming to a perfect portrayal of its own freedom and animate shape, because it must still remain confused and associated with what is other than itself.' (17) But the riddle of the Sphinx is resolved in the emergent culture of the greek city-state, and the answer is: man.

Art now enters its classical phase in which the absolute is still represented sensuously, but the particular sensuous form which it utilizes - the human figure - is a more appropriate medium for the supersensuous, for '... the human exterior is not only

living and natural, as the animal is, but is the bodily presence which itself mirrors the Spirit.' (18) Here the inner can reveal itself in the outer, at least in the idealized form which this art gives to the body, casting aside everything in appearance which does not correspond with the concept, for '... only by this process does the Ideal exist in externality, self-enclosed, free, self-reliant, as sensuously blissed in itself, enjoying and delighting in its own self. The ring of this bliss resounds throughout the entire appearance of the Ideal'. (19)

This stage of art is represented in the sculpture of ancient Greece. Because of the harmonious fusion of sense and Spirit, outer and inner, classical art corresponds more closely than any other form of art to the Idea of art as such. Art, for Hegel, is never more beautiful than it was in Greece. But 'what shall live undyingly in song must pass away in life.' (20) The synthesis which constitutes and is expressed in this form of art contains the seeds of its own dissolution. 'The sublimest works of sculptured art are sightless. Their subtle inner being does not beam forth from them, as a self-knowing internality, in that spiritual concentration of which the eye gives intelligence ...' (21) There is a whole realm of inwardness which classical art is unable to open up and make available for consciousness. This task is left to romantic art, which utilizes the media of painting, music and language.

In place of the stone pantheon of classical statuary a new pantheon is developed whose 'element and habitation' (Element und Behausung) (22) is language. This new element is the epic poem. But even though the epic poem represents an advance in inwardness over against the world of statuary, there is still a division between the actual individuality of the bard and the represented

individuality of the epic gods and heroes. It is the bard 'who as the subject of the epic world produces and carries it. His pathos is Mnemosyne, meditation and developed inwardness, the internalization of what was previously immediate essence.' (23) The bard both 'remembers' the hero's mighty acts, and, by reciting them in verse, translates them into the spiritual dimension of ideality. But the hero is still figured as something external; he is spoken of, he does not speak. A higher language is required which will overcome this duality. This is the language of tragedy in which 'the hero is himself the speaker'. (24)

Though tragedy achieves a truer representation of the dialectic of substance and consciousness, outer and inner, the tragic hero is still shown as constrained and subjected to the power of externality embodied in the figures of the gods. The next step must therefore be the demythologizing of the divine powers which constrain the hero. The fruit of greek tragedy is thus, for Hegel, the depopulation of heaven, and out of tragedy the comedy is born in which the gods are relativized, and the drama is revealed as an human concern in which the actors step out from behind their masks. (25) But although the external, or substantial, has thus been stripped of its power the end of this particular movement is not the final self-reconciliation of Spirit, it is the empty scepticism, in which subjectivity denies and questions all received values, without having anything to put in their place. This empty subjectivity cries out for the bestowal of a new content, which will at one and the same time give it substantiality, yet without doing violence to its insight into subjective freedom. It is to this situation that the revelation of the incarnate God, the Christ, addresses itself. Here it is revealed that the divine power 'external' to human consciousness, is, in truth, not external to man. Substance is

not opposed to subjectivity. It is subjectivity. (26) Thus, for Hegel, the dissolution of greek art is as much - perhaps more - a preparatio evangelii as the Old Testament.

The revelation of the incarnate God ends the dissolution of classical art at one level, but it does not end the development of art. On the contrary it gives art a new content, a new theme. It throws open to art the whole realm of suffering, passionate, human activity. Art is elevated to the realm of inwardness, to dealing with feeling, with the heart, instead of with the external acts of gods and heroes. This new 'inner life is indifferent to the way in which the immediate world is configured, because immediacy is unworthy of the soul's inner bliss.' (27)

Whilst romantic art, as this new phase of art is called, starts by taking up into art the stories of Christ, of the Holy Family, of the apostles, martyrs, saints, etc., because of the complete relativization of external reality in the inwardness of the Christ-event, any and every external phenomenon is equally available for treatment by romantic art. Art's subject-matter is widened to 'a multiplicity without bounds.' (28)

Romantic art thus involves an utter disjunction between the absoluteness of its essential content and the accidental externality of its form. This is implicit in the fact that this art takes its content not from the idea of art - as classical sculpture perfectly expressed the beautiful ideal of art, the balance of inner and outer - but from an essentially non-aesthetic event, the Incarnation.

The content of romantic art is in fact ultimately incapable of aesthetic representation. Romantic art points to that which lies beyond art - to religion. Art is no longer a home for the Spirit. Now, at its highest stage 'art ... transcends itself, in that it forsakes the element of a reconciled embodiment of the Spirit in

in sensuous form and passes over from the poetry of imagination to the prose of thought.' (29)

Art is as such only the immediate form of the absolute, it is the absolute in external form, and Hegel goes on to distinguish two further forms: religion, which he calls pictorial thinking, and philosophy, in which thought is finally at home with itself. (30) Art is therefore transcended in religion and philosophy.

If the sitz-im-leben of romantic art was the Middle Ages the transition to an higher level occurs in the Reformation, in which 'religious ideas were drawn away from their wrapping in sense' (31) and so 'no matter how excellent we find the statues of the greek gods, no matter how we see God the Father, the Christ and Mary so estimably and perfectly portrayed: it is no help; we bow the knee no longer.' (32)

Art is relativized both historically, as a stage of Spirit which has been passed through, and structurally, as showing itself inadequate according to the requirements of the Idea. Both these elements are present when Hegel says that 'the peculiar nature of artistic production and of works of art no longer fills our highest need ... Thought and reflection have spread their wings above fine art.' (33) '...art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past ... the philosophy of art is therefore a greater need in our day than it was in the days when art by itself as art yielded full satisfaction. Art invites us to intellectual consideration, and that not for the purpose of creating art again, but for knowing philosophically what art is.' (34)

(A) (iii) Hegel on poetry

In addition to the dialectic of symbolic, classical and romantic art Hegel saw the dialectics of art worked out in terms of the

forms of art, moving from architecture and sculpture to painting, music and poetry. As the culmination of the dialectic of art Hegel's account of poetry has a particular interest.

Poetry has a peculiar proximity to speculative thinking in that it thinks its object as a meaningful whole, but whereas in speculation 'thinking is only a reconciliation between reality and truth within thinking itself ... poetic creation and formation is a reconciliation in the form of a real phenomenon itself, even if this form be presented only spiritually.' (35)

Though poetry deals in figures and images it presents these figures and images not in their external form as such but in the spiritual medium of language. Language is intrinsically a negation of the immediate, in which the perceptual, external element of the image which clings to the products of the imagination is destroyed. (36) Language is rational. It is a system of signs, not of symbols.

The world of poetry recapitulates the whole previous history of the forms of art, since it is the internalization/recollection of previous art. Thus the most primitive form of poetry is still laden with externality providing 'sculptural pictures for our imagination.' (37) This is the world of epic poetry. If epic poetry is absorbed in the external appearance lyrical poetry recollects the musical form of art. Its 'content is not the object but the subject.' (38) This 'content' is 'the individual person ... with all the details of his situation and concerns, as well as the way in which his mind with its subjective judgement, its joy, admiration, grief, and, in short, its feeling come to consciousness of itself ...' (39) The historical appearance of these two modes of poetry is, for Hegel, conditioned by the prevailing social and cultural conditions. Epic and lyric poetry are united in drama, and just as poetry in general recapitulates all other forms of art, so drama recapitulates the

world of poetry. Thus tragedy echoes the epic, comedy the lyric element, and what Hegel calls drama in a general sense unites the two. (40)

The internalizing process by which art transcends itself is not simply a process of turning away from reality. It is intended to be a process of concretion, a process in which the 'higher' forms are richer, possessing more facets, less abstract (in Hegel's sense) than the lower forms. The internalizing of the world is also the taking up of the world in its concreteness into the dimension of thought, it is the discovery of the rationality of the real, (41) seeing the real, but seeing it in the light of the universality of the categories of systematic thought, seeing the interconnection and coherence of what, to the immediate consciousness, just 'happens' to be.

Thus the higher development of poetry is in a sense dependent on the development of social life, as Hegel makes especially clear in his account of the relationship of lyrical to epic poetry. (42) The more organized and shaped the external world is, the more the poetic production will be able to be itself a coherent 'world', rather than a mere saga of heroic deeds, or a mere outpouring of inner feelings. Poetry, like speculation, strives towards universality, towards the structuring of experience into a formed, rational world. But, as will be clear, the husks of sensuous immediacy, which still encumber the poetic imagination, mean that poetry must at the end of the day hand over to speculative thought if we are to attain to a final definitive account of the world.

Hegel's restrictions on the scope of art are specifically a rebuttal of the claims made for art by the romantic movement, and an attack on the medievalism of that movement. However his concept of the way in which we experience art in no way involves denying the

basic structure of aesthetic attunement. It is not that there is no idea in art. There is, and the recipient of the work of art is to tune himself in to it, to find himself in it and reproduce it in his own consciousness. His reflection will however show him that ultimately a higher form is required for this idea. He looks at art only from the outside. Art is only one note in the threefold chord of the absolute.

(B) Hegelianism in Denmark

(B) (i) J. L. Heiberg

(B) (i) (a) Heiberg's philosophical position

The introduction of hegelianism to Denmark was largely due to Johann Ludvig Heiberg (1791 - 1860). Heiberg had 'discovered' Hegel whilst teaching in Kiel, at that time a part of Denmark. Later in Berlin he actually met Hegel. Stopping over in Hamburg on the way back from this trip he 'was gripped by a moment of inner vision, like a flash of lightning' (43) in which the mysteries of the system were revealed to him. This was in the summer of 1824 and by December of that year he felt confident enough to publish an hegelian treatise Om Menneskelige Frihed, which he offered as a contribution to a debate on the nature of freedom then raging in danish philosophical circles. (44)

Following not only Hegel but the idealist consensus Heiberg distinguished between the realms of subject and object, self and not-self, intelligence and nature, Spirit and matter. (45) Spirit, he argued, asserts its infinite freedom only under the conditions of duality, consequently as a striving to achieve the freedom which, absolutely, it is. (46) Thus the eternal Idea spills over into the realm of succession, manifesting its intensity of being in extension, in externality. (47)

The process set in course by this basic dialectical law takes the form of a gradual transition from the lowest forms of natural life to

the realm of intelligence: from mechanics through chemistry, through crystallization, through organic life, through the vegetable realm, through the animal realm where 'the higher animals eat the lower, and relate to these as subject to object ... man asserts the same subject-might over the whole of the objective world, even indeed, in almost unrecognizable gradations, over his own kind.' (48) But at the apex of this pyramid, in bourgeois society, nature is again given its right, and in natural science the crude opposition of man and nature is broken down, for it comes to be seen that it is the same Idea which is the one dynamic ground of each.

Heiberg proceeds from this summary of transcendental philosophy to argue that the debate about freedom is a debate about words, for although we can speak about the human subject being determined at a certain level of its being, this dimension of determinateness, the external realm of nature, of matter, is itself a product of the free Idea. Speculative philosophy overcomes the one-sidedness of preceding philosophies with its method of mediating the contradictions and antinomies thrown up by an inadequate consciousness of the nature of the Idea. (49)

Heiberg develops his ideas further in Om Philosophiens Betydning (50) He asserts that the present age is an age of crisis, of transition, in which religion, art and poetry have all lost the power of conveying 'immediate certainty concerning the divine and eternal.' (51) It is only philosophy which can bring an end to this chaos. Art and religion contain truth, and therefore also philosophy, indeed philosophy is their real substance, but this truth is hidden under the accidental nature of their form. (52)

Heiberg recognizes, however, a genuinely speculative type of artist, and he twins Goethe with Hegel as the highest contemporary representatives of human consciousness. Other speculative poets

include Dante and Calderon, though he does not share the enthusiasm for Shakespeare common both to the romantics and to Hegel.

Om Philosophiens Betydning is a slight book, intended merely as an introductory note to a series of lectures. Heiberg's fullest philosophical account of Hegelianism was Grundtraek til Philosophiens Philosophie eller en Speculative Logik. (53) This is in many ways merely a popularizing reworking of Hegel's own Lesser Logic (54) but it presents an useful statement of Heiberg's concept of philosophy and of his dialectical method, which was the foundation for his aesthetic theories. The aim of philosophy, he stated, is to lead thought from the realm of representation (Forestilling) to that of conceptuality (Begreb). (55) The need for philosophy is deduced from the assertion that the various particular scientific disciplines are ultimately incapable of providing an explanation of their conceptual basis. They do not themselves explain the categories they use, nor can they produce the absolute Idea which they presuppose. But philosophy is absolute, it has no presuppositions, '... Philosophy can be regarded as a presuppositionless science. It must therefore begin with nothing.' (56)

The basic part of philosophy is logic, which takes thought itself for its object - thought understood not as a psychological phenomenon, but as the common basis of nature and Spirit. It is the thought of the creator, of God. Speculative Logic, as the study of this thought, is both metaphysics and logic, it is philosophy as such, it is the 'philosophy's philosophy' of the title. (57)

Philosophy's method 'consists in developing every concept through three stages such that through the last term it returns to the first.' (58)

The first step is the immediate, a spontaneous unity ... The second step is the negation of the first, a difference is asserted ... The third step is the negation of the negation, thus, the positive, but no longer merely immediate

as it was in the first step, but contrariwise a result of the preceding movement, an unity which has been produced from the preceding difference. (59)

Immediate knowledge thus 'knows' its object merely in its specificity, abstracted from the context of the network of relationships in which it actually exists. Knowledge of the second order is called 'dialectical' or 'reflexive', it 'knows' its object by distinguishing it into parts, into essence and appearance, ground and consequence. Knowledge of the third order is conceptual knowledge. 'The concept is reflection's return to immediacy.' It is 'the regaining of immediacy'. (60)

According to Heiberg whatever is to be known must be known through the triple lens of this triadic formula.

(B) (i) (b) Heiberg's aesthetics

Heiberg made this logical theory the basis of his philosophical aesthetics and of his literary criticism. Indeed it is as a literary figure that Heiberg was best known and is best remembered. From 1828 he was writer-in-residence at the Theatre Royal in Copenhagen, and later became its manager. His speciality as a writer was in the field of light comedy. He gave his comedy the name 'vaudeville', and he used hegelian logic to justify the literary status of this genre, and to propound a theory of literature which had wider implications, and which had a specific polemical reference to the romantic movement, represented above all in the person of Adam Øhlenslaeger. Against romantic enthusiasm Heiberg cultivated a poise of polished and urbane nonchalance and aristocratic aloofness, from which he surveyed the literary field with a cool, critical glance.

His first major critical work was published in 1826 and entitled Om Vaudeville. (61) Here he sought to show that vaudeville was not just an amorphous jumble of comedy and song, but a rigorously

structured and defined art-form. The distinction of the various of genres of poetic art is the key to his argument. He asserts that it is a sign of dilettantism to ignore the boundaries of literary genres, for within each genre content and form are related to each other in a specific mode. Thus someone who has seen the play The Barber of Seville cannot say that he knows what the opera The Marriage of Figaro is about, for the content is itself changed by virtue of the new form which it acquires. (62) On the same principle supernatural elements which might be in place in an epic poem have no place in the theatre, for 'the theatre's material actuality and sensuous reality make every spectator ... into a sceptic.' (63)

Heiberg, fairly conventionally, divided art in general into the plastic and the musical, the former being objectified in space, the latter in time. (64) Each side however has an element of the other, and this interaction is above all true in poetry, which unites the two elements and is 'art's art' - as logic is 'philosophy's philosophy.' In its original musical form poetry is lyrical, in its plastic form, it is epic. Drama unifies the two and is thus 'poetry's poetry.' (65) Within drama the lyrical, musical element is present in character, the epic, plastic element in situation. Character develops in time, but situation is extra-temporal for 'every situation is momentary, at least at its highest point.' (66) These two elements, character and situation, unite in the action. But within the unity of all these elements which all drama possesses, tragedy and opera relate more to character, comedy to situation. Heiberg claimed that vaudeville reflected this structure, taking the musical element in it up into the sphere of situation, in which respect it was unlimited. (67)

The knowledge of the place which a poetic genre has in the aesthetic system is essential for the critic, for it is the basis

of heibergian criticism that 'every work which answers to the requirements of the genre to which it must be assigned, is good, and if it answers perfectly to its concept, then it is a masterpiece ...'

(68) This principle is not only the key to Heiberg's own criticism - it is also the key to Kierkegaard's critical practice. (69)

By clearly enunciating this principle and by spelling out the schema of poetic genres Heiberg hoped to contribute to the development of taste. Taste, for him, is not mere subjective feeling, but 'consists in ... the acknowledgement of the objective element of art, and in the individual's subordination to the sceptre of this power.'

(70) And he hoped that the State would set its seal on the objective claims of this comic drama by establishing a national theatre for comedy, for the State is reason in objective form and 'everything which will count as rational must come to existence in and by means of the State.' (71)

Heiberg's schema of poetic genres is further developed in the course of a critical debate with Øhlenslaeger, a debate launched by Heiberg, when he attacked Øhlenslaeger's play The Vikings in Byzantium.

(72) In particular he criticized Øhlenslaeger's use of monologue, calling it an undeveloped lyrical element which had not been adapted to the requirements of dramatic poetry. (73) Øhlenslaeger's genius, Heiberg asserted, is not in dramatic but in lyrical productivity. As a dramatist his best pieces are those which Heiberg assigned to the genre of 'immediate or abstract drama.' (74)

This judgement is not his, Heiberg's, subjective opinion, but is a question of taste, in the sense Heiberg attached to the word. It comes down to a technical question, it is not a question to be solved by the immediacy of intuition or by our immediate reactions to a piece. This distinction between the immediate and the technical is again one of the fundamental points of Heiberg's aesthetic theory. (75)

When Øhlenslaeger says "' Let us not therefore coldly hold to the form, but to the Spirit in a poem," he must be told that it is precisely the form by which we come to know the Spirit ... and the Spirit which does not reflect itself in some form does not exist from our perspective.' (76) When Øhlenslaeger says that 'immediate grief and laughter teach us more than an hundred cold demonstrations' Heiberg tells him that this is what a poet must say - but a critic cannot allow this truth to pass itself off as a critical argument. (77)

Øhlenslaeger is a genius, but his genius is without reflection and is 'entirely to be located in the immediacy of existence.' (78) It 'stands on the level of immediacy, and has thus still not awoken to that struggle with the external world which is called reflection.' (79) Øhlenslaeger might, however, have found consolation in the thought that Heiberg also assigned Shakespeare to this level of drama. In Shakespeare, and indeed in modern tragedy generally, tragedy is based on the comic principle, modern tragedy is 'itself only a flower on comedy's great tree.' (80) For modern tragedy presupposes irony. Irony, unlike genius, is 'an acquired good.' (81) This irony is a consciousness of the limitations which the manifold of contradictory or dialectical elements in a work impose upon each other. Irony is in fact very close to what Heiberg calls taste.

In his dissection of Øhlenslaeger's genius Heiberg is driven into a contorted analysis of the different levels of genius, distinguishing the lyric-epic type of poet (which Øhlenslaeger is) from the lyric genius proper. (82) In doing so he strains the credibility of his own schema, which, it can scarcely be doubted, was in many points highly artificial. (Although Heiberg would not perhaps have seen that as a fault)..

Although Heiberg's schematic formalism is alien to our way of

approaching literature his views were profoundly influential in Denmark from the 1820s through to the 1840s. He is described by one historian of danish literature as the 'Pontifex Maximus of Danish literature' in this period. (83) Kierkegaard too referred to him as 'he who possesses absolute aesthetic authority' (84) - although this reference has to be seen in the light of Kierkegaard's total relationship to Heiberg, which will be discussed below. (85)

Influential in his own right, Heiberg was also the centre of a brilliant circle which included his mother, Thomasine Gyllembourg, a novelist of some repute, and his wife, Johanne Luise Heiberg, a leading actress.

(B) (i) (c) Speculative Comedy

At the summit of Heiberg's table of literary genres stood, not vaudeville, but 'speculative drama.' Poetry, for Heiberg, 'is in its highest development speculative ...' (86) He himself attempted to provide examples of such speculative drama in his speculative comedy Fata Morgana (1838), which proved a 'fiasco' in the theatre (87) and in his Nye Digte (1841), the centrepiece of which was a dramatic poem En Sjael Efter Døden which, though presented as a poem to be read, was, eventually, in 1891, produced theatrically. It is worth looking at these two pieces in more detail, since they provide considerable insight into the project of fusing hegelian philosophy and poetic practice, a project which was to have considerable significance in moulding Kierkegaard's aesthetic theory.

At first glance Fata Morgana is an unlikely candidate for the high office of 'speculative comedy.' It hinges on the interaction between the vengeful passion of a pair of fairy-sisters and the rags-to-riches story of a king's son, who, lost as a baby, is raised by humble fisher-folk. The story has a loose connection to the cycle

of heroic poems by Ariosto - but the point is of course, what Heiberg does with it.

The play opens with the fishermen's wives anxiously watching for the return of their menfolk. They are alarmed by the appearance in the sky of a mirage of the distant city of Palermo, a mirage they ascribe to the power of the fairy Fata Morgana, who represents the power of illusion. This vision has a particular impact on one Clotaldo, who, alone of the men, does not take part in the coral-diving by which the community lives. He is not at home in the everyday world, but feels himself called to poetry. He has, in fact, when the play opens, already been to Provence where he lived as a troubadour and where he fell in love with Margarita, the daughter of Dionisio, Duke of Palermo, in whose fief the village of the fisherfolk lies. 'Fata Morgana! are you merely deception?' he asks as he looks at the celestial mirage,

and is my inner vision itself no more than this? But is there not such a thing as a beautiful deception? And is not Beauty itself a deception? And is a beautiful deception not worth more than that which the world foolishly calls truth? Oh! He who only grasps after actuality - he is deceived by a false appearance. The Eternal is the beautiful image which has neither flesh, nor blood, neither marrow nor bone, but is the light thought of the heavy world, dark actuality's clear vision in the sky. (I,1) (88)

Clotaldo is, in short, a romantic, still under the influence of a world of illusion - in a suitably noble manner. The story of the play could be summed up as the story of his conversion to hegelianism. When the men return Clotaldo's adopted father reveals that he has found corals of exceptional value which he wants Clotaldo to take to Margarita, the Duke's daughter, as a wedding present, in order to win the Duke's favour. He does not, of course, know of Clotaldo's love for her. Clotaldo is at once uplifted at the thought of seeing Margarita again and downcast at the news that she is to be married, especially since her husband-to-be is a rather unpleasant Count,

Count Alonzo, a vassal of the Duke's.

The second act takes us to the fairy-isle to which Fata Morgana has gone to meet her sister Alcina. Alcina has sworn revenge on the royal line from which Clotaldo is descended, and Fata Morgana is moved to assist her sister carry out this revenge, especially as she has learnt that one of this line will one day destroy her realm of magical illusion. Fata Morgana explains to her sister that humanity is under the spell of the web of illusions which she weaves, illusions as varied as knightly glory, sensuous enjoyment and the struggle for daily bread - all forms of the pursuit of what is transitory and illusory. She fears nothing from Clotaldo. 'He', she tells her sister, 'lives only for love and poetry. But among all the blossoms of illusion which grow in the heaven of dreams there are surely none which fade so easily and quickly as these two.'

(II,3) She also tells Alcina how Clotaldo, en route to Palermo, has been overpowered by robbers and had his corals taken from him. In their place she herself gives him a pearl, possessed of magical properties, and this pearl is to trap him in new illusions.

Act Three opens with Clotaldo duly admiring the pearl, which is of rare beauty. As he looks he sees in its depths a vision of Margarita. But then Margarita herself really appears. His powers of poetry fade in the real presence of the object of his love, and he realizes that the magical pearl is itself nothing in comparison with her reality. What it shows 'is only an image,' he says, but 'he who sees the true object praises the image no more, even if it is represented as accurately as it is here ... my dreaming nature was chained to the image in the pearl ... I feel myself set free in spirit, when I offer illusion's phantasm for the true appearance.' (III,2) Fata Morgana's sylphs, who have been watching this scene, are duly dismayed and rush off to tell their mistress what has occurred. It

almost goes without saying that Clotaldo's love is reciprocated by Margarita in the best fairy-tale manner.

We are next introduced to two burlesque characters who, nonetheless, serve Heiberg's speculative aim. The one, Arlecchino, is the superintendent of the arts in the duchy of Palermo, the other, Pierrot, is president of its scientific society. Arlecchino represents the ideality of the self which spurns all contact with external reality, Pierrot the coarse realism of empirical science. Heiberg uses them to make clear that speculation is more than the simple addition of these two parts:

Arlecchino: There is no third position. We two are everything. That is to say we would be if one were to put us together.

Pierrot: What a noble thought! We two are everything. Let me embrace you.

Arlecchino: With pleasure! Let ideality kiss reality. Now we are the absolute.

Pierrot: One moment, Signor Arlecchino! Do not let your fantasy overshoot your understanding! The absolute can never be realized by finite, earthly beings; one can only approach it by an eternally maintained progress towards the unobtainable perfection. Consider, that however tightly we may hold each other, we will nonetheless never fuse into one being. We will never become a single grey figure, despite the fact that you are black and I am white.

(III,5)

But for Heiberg there is just such a third position as that denied by Arlecchino and Pierrot, the position, namely, of speculation. These figures are caught fast in the second moment of consciousness, in which the parts of consciousness are seen only in their unreconciled opposition.

Meanwhile the pearl has been brought to the Duke. He brings it to Arlecchino and Pierrot who give their one-sided explanations of it. Arlecchino can only reiterate the exclamation that it is beautiful, while Pierrot delivers a pedantic lecture on whether the formation of pearls is a sickness or a part of the natural cycle of the oyster. Clotaldo is knighted by the Duke as a reward for the gift, and,

taking the sword which he has been given, he proclaims 'With this sword shall I be reminded of the struggle which is to be carried out on behalf of actuality; and the poet shall not be himself ensnared in his realm of images, but shall struggle for the actual truth.' (III,7)

The pearl turns out to have the peculiar property that everyone sees in it a golden image of his or her deepest wish. The Duke sees golden ducats, Margarita sees the troubadour's (i.e. Clotaldo's) golden harp, Alonzo, her official fiancé, sees the ducal crown he covets, Arlecchino sees himself, and Pierrot sees an archimedean screw. The Duke and Alonzo quarrel over possession of the pearl, a quarrel which ends in the Duke denying Margarita's hand to Alonzo - to the delight of Clotaldo and Margarita. Alonzo vows to seize both the throne and the pearl, and storms off.

The pearl is placed in the custody of Arlecchino and Pierrot. While they are being visited by Clotaldo, one of Alonzo's noblemen bursts in and tells them that Alonzo has taken the city and that the Duke and Margarita have fled. On the arrival of Alonzo, Arlecchino and Pierrot transfer their allegiance to him with almost indecent haste, and they are left in charge of Clotaldo, who now faces execution. Clotaldo sees that all this trouble has come about through the pearl and he again contrasts the true beauty of Margarita with the false, baneful beauty of the pearl. 'O Margarita,' he exclaims,

what longing stirs my happy heart. For you, to possess you, I would have fought for and won you, you pearl of pearls, you impress of the soul, phenomenon of truth, you image of the Spirit, whose radiance is not false, not a play of the dark forces of nature, as is this false image, this pearl, which has only earthly value and yet manages to awaken hatred and dissent. (IV,5)

Taking his sword, he strikes and shatters the pearl. Where the pearl had been a rose bush now sprouts, the image of truth' which has no mere external beauty but whose spirit is in its (invisible)

scent.' (IV,6) Out of the rose bush appears a sylph, the spirit of the pearl, who explains to Clotaldo the truth about his royal ancestry and adds that Margarita has been taken by Fata Morgana to her fairy-palace in the sky.

Thus Clotaldo has finally broken through the web of illusion in which he and the other figures of the drama have been ensnared, and the dénouement can begin. He resolves to journey to Fata Morgana's sky-palace, and three winged figures, Troche, Iamb and Molossos come to his aid - representing the technical undergirding of poetic art. And so Clotaldo, knowing the truth about himself, about the pearl, and having at his disposal not merely the romantic charisma of his troubadour days, but a technical command of aesthetic form, sets out to rescue Margarita, the image of truth, from Fata Morgana, mistress of the realm of illusory images.

The final encounter takes place on a bridge which joins the two wings of the sky-palace. Clotaldo has already taken Margarita and has her in his arms when he encounters Fata Morgana.

Fata Morgana:

What does this defiance mean? What superiority do you have?

Clotaldo:

This: that I can now encounter the false delusion with contempt. You are queen of illusion; therein lies your strength - is it not so? And since I was bound heart and soul to illusion's world - because love had entrapped me by its power, as had poetry too - you believe that I am yours eternally and can never free myself. But your thought is mistaken; your understanding does not understand that over against the false there stands the true, the divine, appearance. Your visions borrow their truth from earthly nature, from the transient being which lies behind the wall of actuality; mine take their truth from the Spirit, which has impressed its image in the clay in order to lead it back to the light in which it was. Love is no delusion, though it goes in a robe of clay; poetry consists of truth, even if it consists of images.

(V.3)

Morgana plays her last card. She causes the bridge on which

Clotaldo stands to collapse: but he remains standing, upheld by

his invisible winged servants. Morgana's palace collapses, the clouds divide and separate and the scene is transformed to an earthly scene. The crowds gather around hero and heroine, the Duke arrives with Clotaldo's adoptive parents. We learn that Alonzo's rebellion has been crushed and the play ends with the promise of civic peace.

The play was premiered on the occasion of the King's birthday in January 1838 and like other of Heiberg's plays it is a celebration and a vindication of the actual, earthly monarchy, of the concrete civic order over against the fairy kings and queens of romantic imagination. The union of truth and appearance, of reason and actuality which Clotaldo affirms, is not just an event in his private consciousness but an affirmation very much in the mould of Hegel's statement that the real is the rational and the rational the real.

(89) That is to say it is a tribute to the status quo.

Both the main thread of the plot and the comic interludes featuring Arlecchino and Pierrot serve the purpose of a sustained polemic against the romantic theory of art as Heiberg understood it, against the troubadour-ideal, the self-absorption, the fairy-world, the one-sidedness, the indulgence in imagery for the sake of imagery which romanticism represented for him. In its place Heiberg does not demand a stripping of the altars, a denial of images, but the poetic image must serve the purpose of expressing a rational, and that simultaneously means real, actual truth. If it does this then poetry can indeed - though not in the way intended by the romantics - function as an image of the true, a divine appearance.

En Sjael Efter Døden deservedly achieved greater popularity than Fata Morgana. It is a genuinely comic, clever and cutting piece of satire, and is commonly reckoned amongst Heiberg's major literary achievements. (90) The 'soul' of the title is a Copenhagen petit-bourgeois who has just died. Realizing he is dead he

makes his way, as his surviving family and friends are sure he will, to heaven's gate. However all does not turn out as expected. He is duly met by St. Peter, who demands that the soul go on a purgatorial pilgrimage, following the life of Christ by visiting all the sites named in the gospel narrative. The soul considers this a bit much. He would rather go to America if he had to go anywhere, and anyway, he cannot remember all the places concerned. Surely, he says, the important thing is not to have memorized such details but to understand the Spirit of the scriptures. St. Peter then asks him to explain what that Spirit is. But again the soul demurs, 'for the Spirit does not let itself be grasped in words. St. Peter: 'And yet the word was God.' (91) The soul tells Peter that this statement is allegorical for 'the Spirit can be felt but not uttered, for Spirit and letter are in ceaseless conflict. St. Peter: 'That is so among you - unfortunately - but not in Paradise, in the presence of the Lord. The more clear the Spirit is, so much the less does it economize on the word. He who cannot express his thought in words does not enter heaven.' (92) The soul is astounded at this information. At least, he protests, he had done his duty to God and to his neighbour.

Peter: But you have set aside your duty to God: you have not sought to know Him.

Soul: He is incomprehensible: that is what everyone who seeks to know Him has learnt.

Peter: What do you want here? Tell me, why do you not spare yourself the way to God, if He, after all, does not reveal himself?

(93)

In other words, what is the point of saying that one is seeking God if one does not and never can know who He is? what is the point of seeking Heaven if one can know nothing of the God whose Kingdom it is?

Eventually St. Peter sends the soul off to Elysium, but here too he is challenged - this time by the figure of Aristophanes. Again Heiberg indulges in a little bit of malicious fun at Øhlenslaeger's

expense, Øhlenslaeger having written a play which involved a reconciliation between Socrates and Aristophanes. But the soul lacks classical culture, just as he had previously lacked biblical learning. Again he fails to gain admittance.

At last he comes, without knowing where it is, to the gates of Hell. Here he is greeted by Mephistopheles, and is relieved to be told that anyone can enter - although none can leave. No knowledge is required for admittance - indeed Mephistopheles congratulates the soul on having possessed no knowledge beyond the knowledge of the most recent and most trivial events. For 'here is surface but no depth ... Here there is no distinction between coal and chalk, here freedom and conformity are ready-made, here everything is as new, nothing, however much it hurries forward gets away from the beginning, because the brief, single moment ... severs itself from the moment before ... and begins its eternal A from which no B ever proceeds.' (94) This is why no one can ever leave, because Hell is an eternal beginning, with no before and no after, nothing can ever turn back, just as nothing ever goes forward. Hell has no history, it is the immediate, without reflection, without development. Mephistopheles himself offers this truly hegelian picture of Hell: 'Our realm is immediacy, which no eternity can resolve, because there is no ground in it, because, since it has no prius it becomes eternally only what it was ... My friend, you don't need to delve into all this. It is something no-one can understand.' (95) Precisely. Because immediacy and understanding stand in inverse relation to each other. Where one is the other is not. There is nothing in immediacy for the mind to grasp.

Heiberg here develops in dramatic form the insight with which he had accredited Dante in Om Philosophiens Betydning: 'Hell is for him precisely that self-sufficiency based on immediacy, which is

merely isolation from everything, neither itself moving towards anything, nor itself necessary for anything else.' (96) Hell is an eternity of isolated, incomprehensible moments.

In the context of his account of Hell, Heiberg introduces a poet and an actor, each of whom serve as further material in the polemic against romanticism. Heiberg criticizes the unethical nature of the romantic ideal of the poet, when, through Mephistopheles he says that 'only goodness bestows personality, but all the rest of the sphere of genius, what a poet creates, a thinker knows, the beautiful, the true, whatever one calls it, is estranged effort, by which one falls up to the neck in pantheism.' (97) And so the poet enters, a living (? at least a walking) example of this truth:

If I had not locked myself
Out from goodness and from piety,
Then my song would not have had the sound of longing,
Then I would not have sung so beautifully
Of the soul's craving for God,
With a voice like that of an imprisoned bird

If my unbelief had not been so strong
That it tore me from the church's breast
And cast me out of the nest,
Then my poetic work would not have resounded
With the tone of longing in my voice,
With the sighing after communion.

...

The opinion is quite groundless
That yonder in the paradise of the Lord
One hears a choir of blessed ones;
No, Blessedness has no mouth;
Purely in thought, in a silent way,
It moves in its own orbit.

But he, who must stand outside,
With premonitions of heaven's joy,
Only he can sing of paradise;
What he does not have, but only looks for,
That is what he interprets with the echo of his strings,
And what he lacks trembles on his tongue.

...

(98)

The poet repeats in a more lyrical form the basic misconception of religion which we have already seen expressed by the soul, that

it is a matter of incoherent and inexpressible feeling. Via the poet, Heiberg is also hitting at that element in the romantic concept of the poet which makes the poet solely an instrument, a channel for the mystic revelation which he articulates. No, says Heiberg, the poet must have a clear concept of what it is he is doing.

Mephistopheles takes the soul back to earth to witness Death calling upon an actor. Again Heiberg inveighs against an approach to art which holds art apart from the real world, which uses art as an excuse for not understanding the real world, and which consequently also fails to penetrate to the essence of the art-work itself.

Death: I think you are talking about your stage-rôles, but that is not what matters here; only that which you yourself hold to be true, can bring you either to God or to the Devil.

Actor: My dear Death! How can you imagine that in the theatre one has time and quiet to think for oneself, to work out one's own opinion? One says what the poet has commanded ... one does not know if it is true or crazy.

Death: But what one does not see in a single part, one easily sees in the whole. A poet lets good and bad, impudence and piety, each speak; but the opinion which he himself has, which side he is on, must be made clear in the work as a whole.

Actor: My dear Death! How can you imagine that in the theatre one has time and quiet to occupy oneself with the work as a whole? Truly such a requirement is much too much. It is rare that one really knows one's part; to know another's is much too much.

(99)

The actor is thus pilloried by Heiberg as a bad practitioner of his craft, who never bothers to penetrate or in any way concern himself with the idea of the works he is involved in presenting. Death warns him that 'if you are only an instrument on which, at all kinds of festivities, now a bumbler now a master, plays his song, then things look bad, concerning your salvation.' (100)

When the soul asks Mephistopheles what place it is he has come to Mephistopheles, consistently, tells him that the name doesn't

matter. It is only a name, only a sound without any meaning - for this indeed is what the language of hell, of immediacy, must be. But Mephistopheles is forced by the soul to utter this meaningless sound. The soul is disagreeably surprised. Mephistopheles, however, explains to him that he has in fact spent all his petit-bourgeois earthly existence in Hell 'only people are not so accustomed to call that flabby phlegmatic earthly existence which puts all its trust in reality and doesn't get the slightest glimmering of an Idea.' (101) Hell is really the same as such a life, such a life is really Hell, and it is in such a life that the soul feels himself most at home. He is persuaded by Mephistopheles that Hell really is the best place for him - so much of his familiar Copenhagen is to be found here, including his favourite papers, the works of F. C. Sibbern and of H. C. Andersen, and he is assured that there is little doubt but that his wife will in due course join him. So he happily joins in the common task of Hell, which is to fill a bottomless barrel with water, a paradigm of ceaseless, purposeless activity; for the inhabitant of Hell can say with Heiberg's Mephistopheles, 'I am so busy with so many things,' (102) but for all his busyness he gets nowhere and remains in the superficial immediacy where he started.

(B) (i) (d) How hegelian was Heiberg?

Kierkegaard lampooned Heiberg's conversion to hegelianism, pointing out that 'by a miracle ... he became an adherent of the hegelian philosophy which assumes that there are no miracles.'

(SV 9 pp. 153-4) There are indeed questions to be raised about how genuinely hegelian Heiberg's idealist philosophy was.

He certainly saw himself as an hegelian, linking himself with Hegel in an attack on romanticism, asserting that dialectical logic

was the way in which the absolute is made available to consciousness, rather than intuition, and he certainly modelled his logic on, not to say cribbed it from, Hegel's own logic. But there are significant differences. These appear above all in Heiberg's aesthetic theories, and concern the basic nature of the relationship of philosophy and art. Hegel's aim, as we have seen, was to give a philosophy of art, to see art from the heights of philosophy, to understand the idea which moved in art, and to follow that idea as it moved beyond art. But Hegel specifically eschewed the attempt to lay down laws of taste or to supply rules for the practising artist. (103) His concern was to look at art philosophically. But Heiberg's aim was specifically to contribute to the development of taste, and he is prepared, in his speculative drama, to make the philosophical theory of art the basis of artistic practice. The basic movement of Heiberg's aesthetic theory is thus virtually the reverse of Hegel's.

Moreover the very idea of speculative drama is alien to Hegel's basic aesthetic concepts, for it involves raising art to the status of philosophy and that is something which Hegel does not allow, despite his acknowledgement that art ultimately points to the same truth as philosophy. The concept of speculative drama implies an almost romantic conception of the office of art, for all the differences which Heiberg wishes to draw between himself and the romantics. Likewise his concept of the function of irony has a strong romantic tinge.

Not only does the speculative drama infringe the boundary between art and philosophy which Hegel is so careful to draw, but Heiberg's presentation of it also leaves out any account, or any significant account, of the place of religion in the development of the absolute. For all practical purposes he deals only with art and

philosophy.

To be fair to Heiberg his aesthetic theories were not intended as an interpretation of Hegel's Aesthetics, which were not published until after Heiberg's position had become well-established. Rather, they were intended to be an application of Hegelian logic to aesthetic questions. However the fact that such different results were achieved does suggest something about Heiberg's grasp of Hegelianism.

Heiberg's concept of speculative drama reveals the basically ahistorical nature of his thought in comparison with Hegel's, for it is a concept that has been arrived at by the over-consistent development of his schema of the genres of art. The great strength of Hegel's Aesthetics however is the historical range of Hegel's thought, for he had a much broader grasp than Heiberg not only of the history of art, but of history in general. Hegel is, in fact, prepared to sacrifice formal neatness to historical and factual considerations. Heiberg on the other hand employs the triadic logical formula of immediacy, reflection and concept far more rigidly.

As well as the question of speculative drama this difference can also be seen in the ways in which they ordered the genres of poetry. For Heiberg the scale runs from lyric (=immediate) through epic (=reflection) to drama. For Hegel the series runs: epic, lyric, drama. Heiberg's arrangement is determined by his concept of the logical movement as being from the subjective to the objective to the higher unity. But for Hegel subjectivity, the absolute self in its freedom, is the motor-force of the whole dynamic of the world-process. The dialectical process is the process of the emergence of Spirit in its subjective freedom. The first, immediate forms of consciousness are those which are submerged in externality; the second stage of consciousness is the passing over of these immediate, external

forms to the forms of empty and arbitrary subjectivity. This can be clearly seen in Hegel's account of the development of greek art. (104) In this perspective the process of mind is a process of the emergence of free subjectivity, a process recapitulated in the interiorizing forms of art, religion and philosophy. But Heiberg's arrangement of the lyric-epic forms of poetry shows that his vision of hegelianism is limited by the overemphasis he gives to narrow logical formulae. The weakness of these formulae was moreover shown in the debate with Øhlenslaeger when Heiberg was forced to invent new genres such as the epic-lyric, which in fact functioned as the stage below the lyrical stage, and which was characterized as an immediate objective stage, a stage of immersion in the external. But this concession made nonsense of the triadic formula on which the whole schema of genres was meant to be built. (105)

Hegel's pattern also shows a respect for the historical development of poetry, as that was understood at the time, and he connects the different stages with their socio-cultural settings in the history of the ancient world. Heiberg's formulations on the other hand sprang from the less scholarly requirements of his practice as a poet and as a literary polemicist.

For all their weaknesses, however, Heiberg's theories did, to some extent, achieve what they were intended to achieve : to provide an intellectual foundation for literary criticism. The Heiberg school of criticism, though not unchallenged, dominated the danish literary scene until the advent of Ibsen and Brandes. (106)

As with the other idealist theorists of art Heiberg's concept of the experience of art can be said to rest on the notion of attunement. Whereas for the romantics this meant some kind of immediate intuition, and whereas for Hegel it meant seeing the idea in art philosophically, from the outside, for Heiberg it was somehow both.

In the higher forms of art, filtered as they are through artistic irony, the Idea is transparently and self-consciously present, and is known, not intuitively, but by the reflective consciousness which has 'taste', which knows the laws which regulate the forms of art, which understands the relation of idea and form proper to each genre, which perceives the 'technical' element of the work.

(B) (ii) H. L. Martensen

One of those who responded to Heiberg's promulgation of the new philosophy was the young theologian Hans Lassen Martensen (1808 -84), who was to become Bishop of Sjælland and primate of Denmark. His first major contribution to the idea of speculative poetry was a lengthy review of the dramatic poem Faust by Nicholas Lenau. This review was published in Heiberg's Perseus - a Journal for the Speculative Idea, in June 1837. (107) That is after Heiberg had floated the idea of speculative drama but before he had actually written Fata Morgana and En Sjael Efter Døden.

Martensen begins by observing that to write a Faust after Goethe is a bit like trying to write an Iliad after Homer. But, he argues, we have to ask whether Goethe's Faust is truly the final expression of the Faust-idea. What then is the Faust-idea?

The legend of Faust, he says, is rooted in the christian worldview, in the idea that there is no salvation outside faith. But alongside the blessedness which Christianity sees awaiting 'faith' in heaven are set the horrors of damnation which await unbelief. However by setting good and evil in an essential relation to faith, Christianity establishes evil as something belonging to the realm of Spirit (Aand) rather than seeing it as a power belonging to the realm of nature. Because it is a spiritual reality the opposition of good and evil occurs at all levels of spiritual life, including

the level which Martensen regards as the highest level of all - the theoretical. It is the opposition of good and evil in the theoretical sphere which provides the basis of the idea of Faust.

Although historically the idea of Faust originated in the Middle Ages, the medieval consciousness, which was essentially a consciousness oriented towards the external, could not deal with the idea contained in the legend, and it was left to the protestant world to develop the idea in its speculative and poetic depth. 'Speculative poetry knows no higher tragic object, for the content is here self-conscious freedom, the thinking Spirit (Aand); the scene ... is not the tumultuous stage of events in the outer world, but the quiet realm of thought.' (108) In this intellectual realm Faust 'represents the striving of the human race to establish a Kingdom of the intellect without God.' (109)

Within the general category of 'speculative poetry' Faust belongs to what Martensen calls 'apocalyptic poetry.' 'The symbolism of apocalyptic poetry ... portrays a whole worldly life in relation to religion's absolute Idea ... In that it portrays religion as the absolute power in world-history triumphing over the worldly principle, in that it reveals the nothingness of the finite and the vanity of the world, it is an anticipation of the day of judgement.' (110)

But such poetry is not altogether in the clouds. It must have historic form. Martensen provides a brief history of apocalyptic poetry. His first example is the Book of Revelation, which 'poetically' portrays Christianity's triumph over Paganism and Judaism. His second example is Dante's 'Divine Comedy'. Here, because 'judgement is pronounced on a world which does not stand outside Christianity, but within its orbit,' (111) the interest of the poem is not in the conflict of the great, substantial powers of Christianity, Judaism and Paganism, but in the details of the individual life,

'the abstract-symbolic standpoint is left behind, and the representation becomes more individual, more visible, more picture-like (malerisk).' (112) This poem 'contains the substantial kernel of the whole Middle Ages,' (113) it is the ultimate expression of Catholicism. It is however tied to the external, to the interpretation of the divine in terms of the spatial imagery of hell, purgatory and paradise.

The imagination presupposes these spheres as given, it regards them as established in their own right, and seeks only to apprehend their content; but their own presupposition, their common mid-point, which is the ground and possibility of such 'regions', remains concealed from its gaze. This midpoint in fact is nothing other than freedom itself; for hell, purgatory and paradise are themselves only forms of the revelation of the great, universal kingdom of freedom and self-conscious thought. (114)

A third form of apocalyptic poetry is thus called for in which the action is transposed to the sphere of inwardness - and this stage is reached with the idea of Faust. Here 'self-consciousness is its own symbol.' (115) 'Faust is the expression of thinking self-consciousness, which turns from faith to doubt, and through doubt, which has become the principle of thinking, is brought to despair.' (116)

Martensen interprets this doubt as an essential moment in the development of genuinely free self-consciousness. 'Doubt is thus the medium which the believing intellect must pass through in order to give a foundation to its freedom.' (117) Referring to Franz von Baader, Martensen calls this moment the moment of 'periculum vitae, for here life and freedom are themselves at stake.' (118) In this moment Faust, of course, succumbs. Doubt, which in itself is neutral, becomes the means by which he is damned, and so 'Faust who does not wish to be dependent on faith, has become dependent on Mephistopheles.' (119)

Faust is a protestant phenomenon, for 'with protestantism emerged that great moment in the history of the human race when self-

consciousness turned its gaze into its own depths, when it discovered its own power, and had to survive that great trial of freedom.'(120) Faust is the 'counter-image' of Luther.

Martensen draws an analogy with Christ's temptation in the wilderness. The temptation to turn stones into bread is the temptation of one-sided materialism - Faust resists this. The temptation to cast himself off from the temple is the temptation of one-sided idealism - Faust resists this. But Faust succumbs to the third temptation, for he does not acknowledge the commandment to serve and to worship God alone. His mind is not constrained by a due acknowledgement of his creatureliness, he does not acknowledge that he can no more create his own power of thought than he can create his own being. (121)

Despite his admiration for Goethe Martensen decides that Goethe has not grasped the intellectual core of the Faust-idea - and in this respect Lenau has gone further. (122) Nonetheless a close examination of Lenau's poem reveals that he too has failed to understand the theoretical nature of the point at issue. He concludes that

The real poetic portrayal of the Christian myth of Faust ... must therefore still be awaited. This will first be able to be produced when the impetus to this higher union of religion and art emerges more clearly in the consciousness of the age; when the protestant poet, whose gaze does not merely turn outwards towards nature and history but spontaneously turns towards the intellectual world itself, completely grasps this 'attrait' of his genius, when with clear self-consciousness he feels his prophetic call, his art's universality. (123)

Was it possibly this summons which stirred Heiberg to attempt such a work in Fata Morgana? In any case Martensen found this work an exemplification of his idea, and responded with due adulation. In his review of the play he developed further his theory of speculative poetry.

Poetry, like philosophy, is of an idealistic nature; it idealizes actuality; it continually leads reality back to ideality, and the poetic consciousness is the actual

consciousness's higher truth. But precisely because poetry, like philosophy, is actuality transfigured into ideality, precisely because it always stands one degree higher than consciousness of actuality, it always has the actual consciousness for its basis and presupposition. (124)

Poetry and the consciousness of the age are interdependent. For whilst poetry expresses in a higher form what is implicit in the consciousness of the age, it is also dependent on the content provided for it by the consciousness of the age, by contemporary thought.

Martensen argues that the present age has in fact acquired 'a new content (Gehalt)' (125) which poetry has not yet found a way of expressing. The present age has developed an unique degree of self-consciousness, the age is itself idealistic, the age is itself systematic, 'it is the period of systems, not only in the more strict sense of philosophical and scientific systems, but of religious, poetic, political, yes, even industrial and mercantile systems,' (126) and Martensen says this without a trace of the irony we would suspect if we found such a sentence in Kierkegaard's work. Consequently

... the world, whose [indwelling] thought the educated person now seeks to grasp, is itself a world of conflicting ideas, which as such have established their validity and are recognized as such, and the idea which is sought is therefore the central idea in all the others, i.e. the speculative Idea. To make this visible to us - as far as this is at all possible for art - is poetry's highest task. Only speculative poetry can be the poetry in which we would be able to find, more than a partial, a total satisfaction, because not only is it, like all poetry, a mirror which reflects the diverse ideal strivings and expressions of the human race, but it reflects too the Ideas and Ideals which govern life ... In contradiction to peripheral poetry, which only yields a glimpse of the Idea, speculative poetry is truly illuminating, it kindles an infinity of bright points in the soul, which form themselves into one harmonious, transparent image, which transfigures the darkness of life. (127)

It is, he insists, the task of the age to articulate the speculative idea in poetry. The poet who is to achieve this task must have both visionary genius and technical command. In romanticism the first side is present, whereas we can see the latter in Goethe.

These two aspects constitute the equation which will produce the speculative result.

Such speculative poetry will not be allegorical, it will be symbolic. For 'every form is certainly the image of an idea, but the idea has here concentrated itself to an individual form ... it is image and actuality at one and the same time.' (128) Like ancient mythology speculative poetry will have an absolute substantial content, but this content is produced out of the spiritual existence itself, instead of apprehended in the forms of natural powers. Its symbols will constitute a 'realm of imagination (Phantasie), which has its origin solely in the depths of the Spirit itself ... it is, so to say, a priori, but although it forms a world of appearances it is no delusion, no illusion. This world of appearances is, on the contrary, the eternal essence which actuality conceals within its shell.' (129)

The work of the imagination in producing such a realm of true appearances is fundamental not only to the poetic task confronting the contemporary writer but is also important for religion and philosophy. All three of these forms of the Spirit are formed out of the stuff (Grundstoff) of imagination (Phantasie). (130)

Martensen agrees with Heiberg that the carrying out of this task must be in the medium of comedy. (131) Tragedy is tied to the 'external' distinction of good and evil, but comedy distinguishes between essence and phenomenon, reality and appearance. (132) 'Comedy rests on the contrast between the true and the inverted world, which latter in all seriousness believes in its own reality, but when it is held up against the light of the Idea it is dissolved and evaporates [being seen] as [mere] phenomenon.' (133)

All this Martensen finds exemplified in Fata Morgana though, alas, he has to acknowledge that the public has not yet realized

its deep poetic content. (134) The conflict of the play, he reminds us, is between true and false appearance. Fata Morgana represents the false ideality which leads to disappointment with ideality as such, though this false ideality is itself a (unconscious) product of human freedom itself, so that 'one can say that every man himself creates his own Fata Morgana.' (135) In fact one of Martensen's few criticisms of the play is that it is not made clear enough that Clotaldo's struggle is with himself. (136)

Martensen returns again to the theme of speculative poetry in reviewing Heiberg's Nye Digte which included En Sjael Efter Døden. (137) He notes the appropriateness of the epithet 'new'. 'It is in fact the Spirit of the new age under whose guidance these poems are composed ... what philosophy has long since whispered in the ears of its disciples, poetry now begins to preach from the roof-tops.'

The centre of the collection, Martensen states, is En Sjael Efter Døden. He defends poetry's right to treat religious themes. Because religion is the form of a total world-consciousness it must penetrate every aspect of life, and, since it must be 'in' all aspects of life it must be able to be 'in' poetry too. And indeed poetry can add its witness to the truth of religion, so he states - perhaps surprisingly for a lutheran theologian - '... that hell, purgatory[!] and paradise actually exist, we are assured not only by religion but also by poetry and philosophy.'

These dimensions of the Spirit are both here and beyond, they are not spatially located. Physically two men can stand next to each other, and one may be in hell, the other in heaven. The interaction between this-worldly and other-worldly elements is essential to speculative comedy. Just as Dante discovered large chunks of his familiar Florence in hell, just as Swedenborg wrote of finding Paris and London in the other world, so here Heiberg has translated contemp-

orary Copenhagen into the apocalyptic sphere. This world and the next become transparent to each other.

The Copenhagen which is revealed in this mini-apocalypse is one in which triviality holds sway. The play is indeed 'a contribution to the metaphysics of triviality.' The trivial is the one-dimensional, the non-dialectical, whereas

True science and poetry, like faith, see all objects in a double perspective, they see them at one and the same time in the form of eternity and in the form of temporality. Triviality has no copula with which to link finite and infinite, natural and supernatural, thought and experience, a priori and a posteriori.

Martensen proceeds to contrast Heiberg favourably with Dante.

Dante's Comedy, he says, is not perfectly 'divine' because it has the tragic and not the comic. Dante sees the figures who populate hell in moral and religious, but not in metaphysical categories. He therefore fails to penetrate to the divine of essence and appearance, truth and falsehood in which comedy is at home. Likewise his heaven lacks a truly christian humour. In an humorous heaven

There they will as blessed spirits play with the phenomena of their temporal consciousness which, in all the detail of its empirical reality, in all its infirmity and transience, they will have with them in heaven, because it must serve them as poetic material by means of which their spirit will lay on for itself the enjoyments of its infinite freedom and blessedness. Their temporal, childlike concerns will now play the part of accidentiae in the substance of blessedness.

The souls in paradise will find not only God, they will also find the world again. The eternity of paradise will be a phenomenal eternity. The comic aspect of this vision is essential; for tragedy belongs to this world only, whereas the comic will survive this world's passing away. The tragic vision culminates in the image of divine judgement, but comedy can go on to affirm the good ending, when God will be all in all. He predicts that the dialectic of comedy and tragedy will come to rest in the concept of the humorous

which is not only negatively but positively comic, [it is] the speculative comedy, which relates itself to irony as profundity is related to sharp-mindedness. The 'humorous' which belongs exclusively to christianity includes not only the whole of irony, the poetic nemesis on the fallen world, but also the fulness of love and reconciliation. It comprises the pain of the whole world, but overcome in a rich depth of joy.

In the following issue he gives a resumé of the plot of En Sjael Efter Døden and gives some discussion of the other theological and philosophical poems in the collection. He gives particular emphasis to the distinction between catholic and protestant approaches to nature. He finds the protestant concept of nature superior because it distinguishes between the ideal of nature as a reflection or image of the Idea, and its phenomenal being. The Spirit is not externally manifest in nature, it is invisible, it is a striving for the ideal. Thus nature is not merely an image of the ideal as, according to Martensen, Catholicism and Paganism portray it. He therefore concludes that 'not only is the Spirit protestant, but through the whole of nature itself there runs a profound Protestantism.' (138)

Martensen's review of En Sjael Efter Døden was taken up by Provost E. Tryde, who, despite a more conservative, more personalist, more moralistic approach to art than either Heiberg or Martensen, was able to go a long way with Martensen in his interpretation of 'speculative comedy.' Tryde remarked that

if the poet had merely given himself over to an arbitrary play of the imagination ... then he would ... not have let us see more than we already know, and the poem would not have deserved the very significant name which, as it is, it bears by right. For it is an actual Apocalypse, an actual insight into the condition into which souls enter after death ... and everything here shows itself to us in such a living, clear and natural manner, that all feel themselves grasped by the truth of this vision, feel that it is more than poetry ... (139)

Nonetheless he continues to draw the distinction he had made in reviewing Sibbern's Om Poesie og Konst between God's absolute

personality and man's relative personality, nor does he agree with Martensen that the whole of the phenomenal world in all its contingency will be found again in heaven. Though he accepts Martensen's idea of the humorous he argues that there is a certain element in empirical reality, namely 'the trivial', the irrational, which has no place in heaven. He takes as an example the involuntary gestures and exclamations of a lunatic.

We cannot see how that which is absolutely uninformed by Spirit can become its object, nor in any way provide material for a true spiritual enjoyment. Can the madman who has been healed be reminded of his undeserved insanity without deep sadness - certainly never with pleasure; even if it were possible for him to have a recollection of this condition, which I doubt, does it not seem likely that he, who not without fault, lost himself in finitude, is even less able to think back on his lost life with pleasure? (140)

For Tryde the voice of God speaks to us through conscience, and it is always only by our own fault 'that we allow this natural religious consciousness to be obscured, and that we enter into the realm of the trivial.' (141)

The case of Martensen, and indeed of Tryde, clearly indicates that the line dividing hegelianism from other forms of idealism was not always meticulously drawn in the danish context. Whatever Hegel would have made of Martensen's use of e.g. Swedenborg, he would not have seen in it a true reflection of his own thought.

Martensen places a much greater emphasis on religion than does Heiberg. However his writings on speculative comedy show a clear tendency to confound religion, philosophy and art, despite formal disclaimers concerning the independence of revelation. Tryde's eulogy over En Sjael Efter Døden shows that within the idealist compass it was possible to hold a more markedly personalist viewpoint and yet to allow to poetry the property of genuinely extending our knowledge of the other world.

Tryde did not see himself as a hegelian, Martensen saw himself

as a hegelian who had 'gone beyond' Hegel. In fact Martensen's position is a strange blend of romantic and hegelian elements. Although his approach to art was in intention more intellectualistic than that of the 'men of 1803', concentrating on art more as a way of communicating knowledge than as a way of provoking intuitive insight, he nonetheless shared with them a strong emphasis on the convergence between the content of art and the content of philosophy, and even the content of revealed religion.

Before dealing with Kierkegaard's response to hegelian aesthetics in its various forms we turn to look at another important element in his background which conditioned that response.

Chapter Four: Beyond Idealism

(A) Dissonance

The romantic movement in Denmark, as represented by the 'men of 1803', held, as we have seen, to an ideal of life and art which stressed the harmony and unity of the whole realm of human experience. But in the 1820s and 1830s this ideal came under increasing strain. A new mood surfaced in the literary and cultural world, a mood which found its models in Byron and Heine and the rather loose movement known as 'young Germany'.

R. M. Summers writes that '... a new movement arose in Danish literature which took up the themes of disappointment, frustration and despair expressed by contemporary European youth.' (1) The danish critic Uffe Andreasen distinguishes between the optimistic, harmonizing aspect of the romantic movement and a more pessimistic form of romanticism. (2) This second form represents what we shall here call nihilistic or dualistic romanticism.

In the introduction to his anthology of writings from the era of 'Romantismen' Andreasen writes that 'Around 1830 the understanding of art is changed at certain points. The new generation no longer understood the artist as an harmonious man ... but as a divided, discordant creature.' (3)

The harmony of ideal and real which the romantics of the first wave had cherished broke down. In this situation it became possible for either side of the synthesis to be taken up and emphasized to the exclusion of the other. This new literary generation consequently oscillated between an overstrained, unrealistic idealism and a coarse materialism, which substituted politics for art as its field of ultimate concern.

But despite the obvious differences between this generation

and the first romantic generation there is also a measure of continuity. Despite Byron's attack on the Lake Poets in Don Juan (4) and Heine's annihilating polemics (5) it is nonetheless possible to trace ties of kinship linking the two generations. It can be seen as very much a case of the sons attacking the fathers, and much of their criticism is directed at the failure of the romantics to carry through the emancipatory elements of their thought, and their conversion to establishment politics and establishment religion. (6) Indeed, as we have already seen, although the first wave of the romantic movement in Denmark could be described as optimistic, the theme of dissonance, of discord between ideal and real, lurked in the conceptual structure of early romantic thought in Germany (7) and it was indeed for its one-sided, dualistic character that Hegel criticized it. (8) This continuity can be seen in such small details as the re-edition in 1835 of Schleiermacher's Vertraute Briefe über Schlegels Lucinde by Karl Gutzkow, one of the 'young Germany' writers. Gutzkow found, in this early romantic book a prototype of the ideal of sexual emancipation which his generation shared. Thus Kierkegaard could say that Lucinde 'became "young Germany's" gospel, its blueprint for the rehabilitation of the flesh.' (SV I p.297)

As well as its attack on the romantics, the 'young Germany' movement also turned its attention to Hegel. There was, in fact, substantial overlap between the left hegelians and the 'young Germans', and such figures as David Friedrich Strauss, Ludwig Feuerbach and the young Karl Marx can be seen as representatives of some of its tendencies.

'Young Germany' was never as clearly focussed a movement as early romanticism had been. It was more the expression of an ill-defined but recognizable mood, reminiscent of the student movement of the 1960s. Central motifs however were the attack on idealism

and the rejection of harmony. But apart from the change of key, and the emphasis on politics as a literary theme it cannot be said that this generation clearly broke with the idealist theory of art. It represents more the end of the idealist trail than the actual transition to realism.

(B) P. M. Møller

The difficulties of periodization and categorization are perhaps nowhere more apparent than in the case of Poul Martin Møller (1794 - 1838). In many ways he is to be counted with the 'men of 1803.' He shared their ideals of harmony, and, with Sibbern, he had a preference for the individual, the personal, the psychological, rather than the abstract (as he saw them) formulae of ontology.

On the other hand he worked out his mature thought in dialogue with Hegel, whom he both respected and rejected, and he took seriously the mood of pessimism and materialism which characterized the phase of nihilistic romanticism. He is both a 'romantic' figure and a key figure in the critique of hegelianism which he and Sibbern initiated and which Kierkegaard completed. It is perhaps already to have fallen victim to an hegelian way of looking at things to say 'first came romanticism, then hegelianism, then existentialism, etc.' for in reality it was not as tidy as that. All the movements mentioned here arose within a period of fifty years: many of those in the early romantic movement survived to take account of and, in some cases, to develop a constructive critique of later movements. Conversely, those who nailed their banners to the masts of hegelianism or materialism had, often enough, themselves passed through a period of youthful romanticism.

The strength of such categorizations is rooted in the unity of

the intellectual milieu in which both the early romantics and Hegel were situated. In the early years of the nineteenth century the debate is a debate between men who, for the most part, knew each other and shared a common cultural horizon. But as we move away from this point both in time and space the issues become more tangled. We shall see this in Poul Møller and, perhaps, even more so when we come to deal directly with Kierkegaard.

Like Heiberg, Møller was a man of both philosophical and literary interests. Lecturer in philosophy at Christiania (Oslo) University and (from 1831) at Copenhagen, he was also a respected poet and critic. Uffe Andreassen stresses the importance of the development of nihilistic romanticism for a proper assessment of Møller's work. (9) As well as the literary expression of this mood, Møller took issue with it as he found it represented philosophically in the work of Arthur Schopenhauer. (10)

Møller's philosophical position could be described as idealistic personalism. He repeatedly stressed the importance of the formation of an harmonious 'life-view' (Livs-Anskuelse) or world-view (Verdensanskuelse). These are, in Møller's hands, precise technical terms which are also of considerable importance for Kierkegaard. The elements of such a life-view are (i) conformity of the personality to a realm of higher, ideal experience, (ii) the grounding of the personality in the realm of ordinary, empirical experience, and (iii) participation in the historic tradition of christianity.

His emphasis on the essential role played by such a life-view in the formation of personality led him to criticize Hegel on a number of grounds. Fundamentally he did not believe that Hegel gave sufficient emphasis to the empirical element. Whereas Hegel proposed a mode of philosophizing which would be free from presuppositions and which would develop its own content out of the essence of conceptuality

itself Møller argued that

if anyone will now say that true science, or the pure concept in its immanent movement, has nothing to do with the realm of experience, then we will... assert that such pure science - as they call it - is a one-sided form of knowledge, and can only become true knowledge if it be permeated by living experience. (11)

Hegel's neglect of the personal, of such questions as personal immortality, also clashes with the third element in a 'life-view', namely the 'age-old' tradition of christianity. Hegel's philosophy therefore cannot possibly provide the basis for a genuine life-view, and for Møller this means that it cannot be an authentic philosophy.

His basis criticism of Hegel is reflected in his view of the way in which philosophy should be done. Whereas Hegel attempted to present philosophy 'scientifically', and 'systematically' Møller demanded that the presentation of philosophy be 'individual', that the philosopher should not shy away from allowing his own personality to appear in what he says. '... such an inhumanly logical presentation [as Hegel's] absolutely cannot constitute a perfectly classical work.' (12) Philosophy can, on principle, never be completed but can only be represented by a succession of individual viewpoints. It was the exemplification of this method in their practice that Møller admired in the greek philosophers.

His own practice reflects his theory. He was extremely unsystematic. Most of his surviving work is 'occasional', much of it is unfinished, and was unpublished in his lifetime. He wrote a considerable number of philosophical aphorisms which he called 'Strøtanker' - straw-thoughts. The most complete exposition of his philosophical position is in a lengthy essay entitled Om Muligheden af Beviser for Menneskets Udødelighed (1837), published only a few months before his death. (13) But even here Møller lightened the rigorous philosophic-

al tone by introducing a rather light-hearted anecdote at a crucial point in the argument. (14)

In this essay Møller contends that traditional arguments for immortality have clearly lost their power in the present age. The cause of this he sees in the development of science, and in particular the division of philosophy into two opposed streams, the one stressing the ideal and the free, the other the real and the necessary, and he sees these tendencies exemplified respectively in theism and spinozism. (15)

He distinguishes between the realm of ontology, which is the realm of a priori knowledge, and the realm of the concrete and the organic in which knowledge can only ever be a posteriori. (16) But since a priori knowledge cannot prove the actual existence of any particular thing it certainly cannot prove the immortal existence of any particular thing - or person.

'The chief thing here,' he says, 'is a concrete world-view, the validity of which cannot be demonstrated otherwise than by its full exposition.' (17) This is because such a world-view participates in both realms, both in the dimension of the ideal/free, and in the dimension of the real/necessary. Both sides have to be represented in the philosophical exposition of their ultimate unity.

The key difference between Møller's approach and that of the german idealists, which might at first glance appear to be somewhat similar, is that the transcendentalists sought to establish the unity of the two realms in the activity of the absolute, free self, whilst Møller asserts no other unity other than the always provisional unity which can be exemplified in empirical reality. There is no philosophical vantage-point such as the intellectual intuition which can once-for-all provide the foundation of philosophical knowledge. 'Every adequate world-view has two aspects: it is rooted

partly in the world of experience, and partly it disappears in the supersensuous,' (18) says Møller, and it is telling that he implies that there may be a number of equally valid world-views. Knowledge of the supersensuous is not given by transcendental analyses but by participation in a christian society.

Purely on his own, as a single individual, no-one would come to consciousness of religious concepts: he who believes that he has put aside external authority and solely by free self-activity of thought has gained a new result, which is his purely personal possession has nevertheless ... always received a significant impetus from the tradition, without which his thought would have lost itself in subjective, fruitless fancy.

(19)

But to these two elements - the element of empirical experience and the element of education by means of the tradition - Møller adds a third: the personal appropriation of the supersensuous. It is necessary for the full maturation of a world-view to know 'the presence of the supersensuous in the sensuous, when it becomes the object of an experience of an higher kind.' (20)

What is such an 'experience of an higher kind?' In part it is an echo of the romantic intuition of cosmic harmony such as Schelling or Steffens might have affirmed. But there are notable differences. For Møller the content of the experience is already given by or must conform to the christian tradition, although he emphasizes that this must not be understood in the sense of an external or ecclesiastical authority. (21) It is perhaps a blending of the christian tradition in a narrower, ecclesiastical sense with the wider tradition of faith given by the consensus gentium; it is 'christian culture'.

I believe we can find an excellent example of the sort of experience which Møller is talking about not in his own writing, but in a novel by Thomasine Gyllembourg, Heiberg's mother and a personal friend of Møller's. (22) The novel is Extremerne. Møller reviewed this novel, and in his review acknowledged that the author was a

person possessed of a genuine world-view, which is reflected in the novel itself. (23)

The christian tradition is present in the novel not merely in the external sense that the climax involves a police raid on a village church, but a religious, indeed a specifically christian, theme is woven into the very fabric of the novel. The way this is done not only illuminates the concept of 'experience of an higher kind' in a general sense, but it also makes clear the relevance of this to aesthetics.

The altar frontal of the church raided by the police had been painted in his younger days by an eccentric aristocrat called Palmer, who, having abandoned the conventions of his upbringing, had devoted his life to art. Though not so young, he continues to live freely, wandering through the forests by day and by night and lapsing into occasional drinking bouts.

The hero of the novel is a sceptical, but noble-hearted, young doctor called Rudolph Hermes, and it is to Hermes that Palmer describes how he came to paint the frontal:

"I had often reflected on the circumstance that the great masters who had treated the scenes from the life of Jesus had so often chosen to portray Him in His death and suffering. I could quite easily see that there might be a beautiful idea concealed in the spectacle of the humanity perishing as the divinity tears itself loose, yet still shines forth in the expression of the sufferer. But at the same time it seemed to me that the conflict between the divine and the human was not the right moment for art; not these sufferings, before which nature withdraws a-tremble, and before which the soul cannot feel itself uplifted. The triumph [my emphasis - G.P.] of the divine over the world, of life over death - this seemed to me to be the correct standpoint. Art has indeed on many occasions handled the resurrection; and the highly poetic scenes which followed the resurrection have always spoken to me and riveted me. I therefore chose as the subject of my picture that passage of the holy scriptures where the apostle narrates that the disciples, after the death of their Lord and Master, forsaken and discouraged, persecuted by the Jews, met quietly and secretly behind locked doors, when He whom they mourned stood suddenly among them and said: 'Peace be with you.' " (24)

But the execution of the work, in particular the portrayal of the ethereal character of the risen body, causes him great difficulties. He leaves it for a whole year. When, after that time, he returns to it he experiences a great sorrow.

"Having looked at the picture for some minutes I folded my hands in humble meditation and prayed quietly: O my Lord and Master, whose transfigured features I wished to display to the world; presumptuously confident in my art - not, as you know, through pride, but through love of you and of that art for which I had abandoned everything. If I, sinner that I am, by cause of this love, am not cast off from your grace, quicken my sunken spirit, and let just one ray of your light illuminate the darkness which broods over my soul. In this moment my thoughts turn to the great Raphael, to whom, it is said, the Madonna appeared in a dream. Humanly speaking he was a sinner, as I am, but in art he was a saint.

I felt deeply my smallness, my life seemed to me wasted, but at the same time I felt an inward compassion towards myself and a sort of peace in my conscience. I wept long and heartily, as I have never known myself to weep before or since. Finally I went to bed, but I could not sleep. Nevertheless I rested, with my eyes closed, and a quiet peace, a comfort, refreshed me - I myself do not know how. In this state I fixed my thoughts on my painting, on the scene I had wanted to depict. I had a most lively feeling of the longing, the love, which animated the disciples who had followed Jesus and who had been loved by Him.

Then it seemed that His form became clear to me; in my imagination it appeared to me as if I saw Him draw near from afar, followed by a crowd of people, and go past the place where I was standing under a tree, hiding myself behind the trunk. He went by, but as He stepped lightly by, He threw a glance at me which penetrated my inmost being, and which will never leave it. His robe was of a colour like the sky, as it is sometimes in the rosy dawn. I stretched out my hand to grasp the fringe and press it to my lips, but I drew back, thinking, no I am not worthy so much as to touch this garment. But I did see the imprint of his foot in the sand, and I threw myself down and pressed my face to the holy spot. The joy which I experienced in that moment was beyond words, too great for a mortal breast - my senses abandoned me and I fell into a deep sleep which lasted nigh on twelve hours. But for me this was a divine revelation, which has brought an abiding peace to my heart. I have often sought to recall that feeling, that picture, but in vain. Nevertheless, I have a sure hope that in the hour of my death I shall see it again; this glance will awaken me from sleep; I will take hold of the fringe of my Lord's robe, and by it haul myself up into His Kingdom ..." (25)

Needless to say Palmer can now complete his painting, though he knows that he can never perfectly portray the image of Christ as

it appeared in his vision, in his 'experience of an higher kind.' Rudolph Hermes, despite his own materialistic outlook is stirred by Palmer's account, although it does not make him abandon his agnostic position. In the course of the novel he falls in love with Palmer's niece, Gabriele, whose brother Fritz, a revolutionary student activist, is the object of the police search. After the police have ransacked the church and found nothing

the whole party now left the church. Gabriele came last, and Hermes, who followed her every movement, saw that she hurriedly turned back as she was coming through the church door. Unnoticed he slipped in after her, and now saw the pious girl, who believed herself alone, hasten to the altar. Here she knelt and lifted her folded hands and her radiant eyes in thanksgiving towards the high-altarpiece. The great light in front of it, contrasting with the otherwise gloomy lighting in the church threw a remarkable, magical glow on the painting. Led to it by Gabriele's look, Hermes saw this poetic work of art for the first time. In the exalted state he was in, following all that had just happened, its effect on him was indescribable. It seemed as if he saw with his own eyes the risen one appear; he imagined himself among the astonished and ecstatic disciples, and without himself being aware of it, he knelt behind his prayerful loved one, and, as he stretched out his arms towards the transfigured form which shone out of the picture, he called out, like the doubting, but now in glad certainty, rejoicing Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" Gabriele turned her head in fright, but before she could move. Hermes knelt at her side, took her hand and said: "My Gabriele! Forgive me! Before this holy picture, whose light streams with healing power into my soul, I assure you of my faith. I avow quiet patience and belief. Satisfied with your love I shall renounce my turbulent wishes. I shall not leave you. I shall stay here and shelter you as a brother, without selfish demands, I shall live for you and for my old father, humbly and lovingly. Oh God! I have never felt what I now feel in this moment. It is as if the undying one has appeared to me; even I have received a share of the peace which sounds from those radiant lips." (26)

This little scene is observed by Palmer himself, who praises God that He has used this work as a medium of revelation. The circle is completed. Art issuing from religious experience is itself, by God's grace, capable of becoming a means to awaken that experience in others. In Palmer's and in Hermes' visions we see what Møller means by 'experience of an higher kind:' the personal vision of the ideal in a tangible form, uniting the subject of the experience to

the prevailing tradition of belief, and enabling him to resolve the crises of his earthly life, in Palmer's case the crisis of artistic capability, in Hermes' case the personal crisis of his relationship to Gabriele. And, moreover, this all reflects the world-view achieved and lived out by the author herself.

It is the blending of these components which make up a sound world-view.

The christian tradition, empirical experience, as well as the higher experience in which the supersensuous encounters us in a real form at particular times and places give the discrete points which must have their place in a proper world-view, and the systematic, philosophic exposition only expresses with formal perfection that knowledge which is first present in an immediate way and in an inarticulate form. (27)

The present cultural situation, according to Møller, is one in which the two dimensions which must be united are generally disunited. This in turn encourages nihilism. Nihilism manifests itself in the lack of proper self-respect, (28) the breakdown of communal life, (29) the loss of interest in science, (30) and the end of religion. (31) Also, and most pertinent to the present enquiry, it destroys the foundations of art. For true art can only be based on an harmonious world-view.

True art is an anticipation of blessedness. The perfect harmony of universality and individuality which occurs in the artist's consciousness, when he produces a true work of art, or in the consciousness of one, who with true receptivity receives such a work, is an image of that perfectly transfigured blessedness, in which the individual life without resistance is filled by the will of the eternal. (32)

Such a consummation of aesthetic experience can only come to one who has an harmonious world-view, but 'he, who feels himself in discord with himself and with existence, cannot possibly be a genuine poet.' (33) Although this theory bestows on art no small dignity there are several points which distinguish it from the exaltation of art in early romanticism or in Heiberg's aesthetic theory.

It is clear that for Møller it is the formation and possession of the world-view in personal experience which matters much more than its articulation in philosophical or aesthetic form. Art is an anticipation of blessedness, but it is only an anticipation. (34) Art is transcended in the reality of the personal life. This entails a relativization of aesthetic form - Møller has no scale of aesthetic genres comparable to Heiberg's, there is no specially religious form of art.

Moreover the apparent - almost naive - optimism of Møller's position, as it has been portrayed so far, is misleading. For his faith in the possibility of the formation of a sound life-view has to be set against his account of the concept and the historical role of nihilism. Nihilism is rooted, according to Møller, in the separation of the ideal and the real. He saw Schopenhauer as its principal philosophical exponent, and saw Schopenhauer's concept of nirvana as a consequence of his general philosophical position, in contrast to the notion of personal immortality, which he himself sought to affirm. But nihilism was not just a stance which the individual could leave or take up at will. It belonged, in a certain sense, to the age. In introducing the Immortality essay he wrote

But I will not deny that I nurture a doubt as to whether the basic view, for whose defence these pages give a provisional contribution, can, by any amount of effort be vindicated in the present time. It is very possible that negation [nihilism] has still not reached the point which must be reached, so that it can be made apparent that the desolation it brings with it is not the sphere in which the human spirit is at home. But it is something: those who do not share the peculiar passion for destruction, may nevertheless seek to build themselves an ark in which they can establish themselves in the hope of better times. (35)

In this, in many ways remarkable, passage, Møller anticipates some of the themes of the twentieth-century discussion of nihilism. (36) His assertion that his contemporaries must continue for some time yet in the wilderness adds a sober note to be set against his more optimistic

tones.

In an unfinished essay on irony he traces nihilism to the philosophy of Fichte and its interpretation by F. Schlegel. '...irony is a consequent development of the fruitless struggle, to construct a self-enclosed ethical system from the standpoint of the individual. This method must necessarily end with the loss of all content, with moral nihilism.' (37)

Møller depicts the state of nihilism in a small collection of aphorisms entitled Ahasverus. 'Ahasverus' is the name of the Wandering Jew cursed to an eternal, rootless existence on earth, and he is used by Møller as a representative of nihilism. The connection of these aphorisms with aspects of Kierkegaard's person and work is a point much discussed in Kierkegaard scholarship. (38)

Two of these aphorisms will perhaps be sufficient to convey the tenor of Møller's conception:

"Your ignorant priests believe that there is an absolute difference between good and evil, but they do not observe that I stand precisely at the zero-point on life's thermometer." (39)

Ahasverus wills nothing. He regards himself as infinitely higher than those who will anything. (40)

The formation of a sound world-view therefore is not something to be had for the asking, it is not a spontaneous irruption of genial creativity in the consciousness of the poet, it is, in the present age, something which must run the gamut of nihilism, something to be fought for.

As well as seeing nihilism exemplified in such an individualistic form as that of Ahasverus, Møller also sees it in some of the political tendencies of the age. This is sharply expressed in some of his poems. In the poem Kunstneren Mellem Oprøret he tells the story of a sculptor whose house and studio are invaded by an insurrectionist mob. When he refuses to join the rebellion they destroy the studio, wrecking his work, and accusing him of cowardice. When

he sees the devastation they have caused he goes berserk, seizes a bludgeon and lays about him. He plays a leading role in quelling the disturbances and is personally congratulated by the monarch. But he can see nothing to congratulate himself on.

I am at home in my art/ As a master in his trade;
I would rather forget/ My bloody work to-day.
Its remembrance will darken/ The radiance of my world of images
And cast a loathsome hindrance/ In place of my visions' dance.

In my studio, that place of stillness/ I say "farewell" to the
world,
And I will never act the judge/ Nor slay my fellow-men.
On the blackboard of memory/ This day's deeds
Will be scrawled, spectre-like/ In a hateful hand.

(41)

In the face of nihilism the artist is forced to retreat into the inner world of his studio. Even his loyalty to his earthly lord, which had been a source of pride to him, has been soured. It would be tempting for the retreat to be more radical still, for the artist to renounce his art altogether. Such a possibility is raised in another poem.

In melancholy hours I often bewail
You, you nineteenth-century rational man.
Poetry's flower has withered in your fields,
You seek the promised land in a wilderness.
Your child is an old man who never jokes,
His music the ringing of the chimes of rebellion;
He is pale with wrath,
And murder is his game.
The small cannibals with bloody fingers
Only dance when the pipes of rebellion stridently sound.

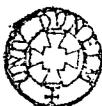
You are right: it is all up for my poetry,
Now I overturn Art's despised altar.

... ..

And yet - what is life, if the artists flee,
If only seriousness remains, dwelling beneath a roof of ice?
A pitch-dark house, without light or lamp,
And the lime-tree before the door with its coal-black branches.
(42)

Møller's affirmation of harmony is thus tempered by the force with which he feels the weight of the nihilistic wave of romanticism. Although, in aesthetics, he remains within a broad idealist consensus,

seeing aesthetic experience as the experience of the infinite in, with and under the finite, a fusion of the universal and particular, a transfigured idealization of reality, this vision of art is conditioned both by his personalist, ethical emphasis and by the weight he gives to nihilism. His account of the way in which a life-view or world-view is structured, shows how the aesthetic synthesis reflects the prior personal synthesis. His reflections on nihilism raise the question whether such a synthesis is possible, either in the personal life or in art. This question is to prove decisive in Kierkegaard's account of the limits of art.



Chapter Five: Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Art in Context

(A) Introduction

It is now time to turn to Kierkegaard himself and firstly, to set his theory and critique of art in the context established by the preceding chapters. It is time to ask how Kierkegaard responded to the romantic and hegelian forces which had moulded the intellectual landscape within which his own thought matured.

As we have already seen there were considerable strains within each of these movements. We cannot therefore resolve the question by labelling Kierkegaard 'a romantic' or 'an hegelian.' We have to determine in what ways he reacted to romanticism, to hegelianism; what he accepted, what he rejected from each movement; how his course was influenced by the specific colouring given to these movements by particular thinkers. And so we ask: what was Kierkegaard's relation to Heiberg, to Møller, etc.? It must further be borne in mind that this inquiry does not seek to answer the vast question of Kierkegaard's relation to romanticism or to hegelianism in general, but focusses on one particular aspect of this relationship, namely, the philosophy of art. At the same time it has to be acknowledged that what is said here does have implications for a broader inquiry directed to the clarification of the overall relationship of Kierkegaard's thought to these great intellectual forces, and to some extent involves the consideration of wider issues, issues which take us to the heart of Kierkegaard's philosophical problematic. Indeed it may well be argued that romanticism at least stands or falls with its philosophy of art, that, insofar as it is a philosophy at all, it is a philosophy of art, a philosophy in which art is the supreme value, indeed the key to unlocking the relationship of man to his world. In this sense romantic art is romantic philosophy and

vice versa, or as Gerhard Niedermeyer put it, speaking of romantic thought: 'sie ist Poesie im Gewande der Philosophie.' (1) The implication of this is that the clarification of Kierkegaard's position vis-à-vis romanticism and hegelianism will lead to the determination of the sense in which Kierkegaard had a philosophy of art. Was it a philosophy of art in this romantic sense, such that his literary creativity is itself his philosophy? or was it a philosophy of art in a sense more akin to Hegel's concept of a philosophy of art, that is, a philosophical view of art from a standpoint which is claimed to be 'beyond art', which looks on art as, in a certain sense, superseded or relativized in the light of some new stage of spiritual existence? And if this latter is the case then what is the standpoint from which Kierkegaard looks at art, and how does it relate to the hegelians' standpoint?

In order to tackle these questions we shall follow a procedure similar to that adopted in the previous chapters. For in order to understand the scope of Kierkegaard's theory of art it is necessary to clarify his philosophical position in general. Such a procedure inevitably runs the risk either of stating the obvious, of saying what everybody already knows about Kierkegaard, or of raising issues which are so controversial as to throw doubt on the possibility of getting any clear picture of Kierkegaard's thought at all, leaving us lost in a gallery of alternative Kierkegaards. Nonetheless some preliminary orientation in Kierkegaard's thought as a whole is vital if we are to achieve a full realization of what he is trying to say with his theory of art.

(B) Kierkegaard's Thought

(B) (i) Philosophy and psychology

What do we mean by 'Kierkegaard's thought'? What sort of 'thought'

was it? Such questions seem almost inevitable when once we have experienced the impact of some of Kierkegaard's more violently anti-hegelian, anti-intellectual polemics. Is it a basic mistake to think of Kierkegaard as having a position at all? Insofar as we do approach him as a thinker, is it not as a socratic thinker, a questioner, a creator of problems rather than as someone with a teaching, a philosophy, an anthropology?

Granted that it would be grossly insensitive to try to fit Kierkegaard's thought into a systematic niche; granted that it is his power of puzzling us rather than his power of enlightening us which makes him such a fascinating thinker (2); granted that in any case such philosophy as his work contains is ultimately pressed into the service of the religious; granting all this and more, it remains the case that there are complexes of consistent and coherent conceptual thought which recur throughout his work and which establish him, at least in certain respects, as being within the intellectual horizon of the idealist tradition.

One such complex is that which is concerned with the structure of selfhood. Although, as we shall see, Kierkegaard defines the delineation of the structures of selfhood as the essential task of psychology his concern with this task provides a link with the idealists, in particular with Fichte, Hegel and their disciples.

As we have seen, both Fichte and Hegel constructed their philosophies around a related, if not quite an identical, vision of the self as the dynamic, practical reason which achieves identity with itself by passing through a succession of stages in which it manifests itself under the conditions of duality, of self and not-self, until these dualities are grounded, or come to be seen to be grounded, in absolute selfhood, in which the self both is, and is conscious of itself as creator of the world of appearances, achieves the freedom

of knowing itself in its 'other-being', its alienated, dualistic form. (3) It is this dynamic, creative and self-knowing self which Hegel calls Spirit (Geist).

In the beginning of The Sickness Unto Death Kierkegaard writes

man is Spirit (dan. Aand= ger. Geist). But what is Spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relationship, which relates itself to itself, or is that which, in the relationship, makes the relationship relate itself to itself; the self is not the relationship, but that by virtue of which the relationship relates itself to itself. (SV XV p. 73)

Although Kierkegaard puts these definitions to a use quite unforeseen by the idealist philosophers the basic structure of the self which he is proposing parallels what they had previously said.

What then are the differences? Firstly, Kierkegaard regards the consummation of the process by which the self is to find itself in and through its alienation from itself as impossible without the (at least) co-operative action of divine grace. Secondly, Kierkegaard defines the locus of this process almost exclusively in terms of the individual, existing self, rather than in terms of a philosophical construct or the collective Spirit of world-history. Both of these points are essentially interdependent: it is because Kierkegaard takes seriously the predicament of the existing individual who suffers anguish, despair and pain, who is confronted by the demand to choose, that he affirms the need for grace - it is because he holds fundamentally to the need for grace that he denies any objective, logical, or historical solution to the dialectics of the self, and is led back to the always unresolved situation of the existing individual.

Kierkegaard's dialectics of selfhood therefore acquire the form of 'psychology' in the hegelian sense of the word, as the exposition of the realm of subjective Spirit. It might be said - putting to one side the socratic dimension of his philosophy - that

Kierkegaard's philosophy is in his psychological writings. Such psychological works are pre-eminently The Concept of Angst and The Sickness Unto Death, but in fact his psychological concern shows itself throughout the whole range of his writings, including his religious works and his 'novels': Either-Or, Repetition and Stages On Life's Way.

As the quotation from The Sickness Unto Death suggests there are three basic elements in Kierkegaard's psychology as there are for his idealist predecessors. There are the two relative forms of selfhood which exist only under the conditions of duality, these being the elements of sensuous immediacy and (one-sided) ideality or reflection. There is also the absolute form of the self which has found and established itself in its freedom, this being the self as freedom. What then is the relation to each other of these three elements of the self? We shall answer this question in the light of three concepts: freedom, suffering and self-knowledge.

(B) (ii) Selfhood: Freedom, Suffering, Self-Knowledge

(B) (ii) (a) Freedom

Fichte and Hegel each emphasized the achievement of infinite freedom as being both the goal and the ground of the process of the self's becoming. Kierkegaard criticized the emptiness of Fichte's concept of freedom on the grounds that it abstracted from the concrete, the particular, the empirical, the sensuous. (SV I pp.285 ff.) To some extent Kierkegaard allied himself with Hegel against Fichte at this point, although he was to bring the same charge against Hegel himself.

Kierkegaard too upheld the transcendence of the self over the realm of the 'merely' sensuous, and was concerned to emphasize the radical freedom of the self in choosing itself as a self. At the

same time however he did not wish to cut human freedom loose from its anchorage in the divinely given order of creation. His closeness to as well as his distance from Fichte at this point is evident in the following quotation from Either-Or, which describes the act of choice by which the self establishes itself as a self:

In that I choose absolutely, I choose despair, and in despair I choose the absolute, for I am myself the absolute, I posit the absolute and am myself the absolute; but I must add, as altogether identical with this: I choose the absolute, which chooses me, I posit the absolute, which posits me ... But what is it then I choose, is it this thing or that thing? No, for I choose absolutely, and I choose absolutely precisely in this, that I have not chosen this thing or that thing. I choose the absolute, and what is the absolute? It is myself in my eternal validity. I can never choose anything other than myself as the absolute, for if I choose anything else, then I choose it as something finite and thus I do not choose absolutely. (SV III pp.198f.)

Kierkegaard is clearly trying to vindicate the scope of human freedom in the task of self-affirmation, for he goes so far as to say, with Fichte, that the self posits itself, and yet, at the same time, he wants to give due scope to divine sovereignty.

In emphasizing the fact that the self which is chosen is a self posited by divine action, Kierkegaard is also asserting that the particular, empirical situation in which the self exists is to be accepted and chosen in the context of the total act of self-choice. The self does not choose itself in a vacuum, alone with God, but it chooses itself as this particular self, existing in this time, in this place. The particularity of time and space, of its situation, is not itself the object of the self's choice, but is a consequence of the fact that the absolute self which is chosen is a self posited by the divine creator who is also creator of space and time, who has set the self at this particular point in the world-order. That which the self encounters in the act of self-choice is both the givenness of the divine ground of its being and the givenness of of the empirical and human world in which it comes to consciousness

of itself. It is this dimension of givenness, perhaps especially in the aspect of the givenness of the empirical realm which serves to distinguish what Kierkegaard is saying from a fichtean position. Emanuel Hirsch's comment on the concept of self-choice in Either-Or makes just this point:

Wenn Fichte in dem entscheidungshaften Augenblick der Geburt des Ethischen das Ich sich als Ich ergreifen lässt (als Ich, das durch diesen Akt, ebenso wie bei Kierkegaard, zugleich entseht und schon zuvor da sich versteht), so ist das damit Bejahte das reine geistige Wesen ichhafter Freiheit; das Konkret-Individuelle findet sich gleichsam nur hinzu als die einschränkende Situation, die dieser Freiheit zur Aufgabe wird. Bei Kierkegaard hingegen ergreift sich das Individuum eben in seiner Konkretion als ichhafter Freiheit. Daher wird Kierkegaard in einem von Fichte nicht erreichten Sinne Individualitätsphilosoph. (4)

Kierkegaard's wrestling with the problem of the proper relationship between divine and human freedom can be traced back to the earliest strata of the Papirer, (5) and continues throughout his authorship. He gives the problem an imaginative expression in the following passage from the Concluding Unscientific Postscript which clearly shows the two-edged nature of the position he is trying to maintain:

In fables and fairy-tales one has a lamp, which is called 'wonderful'; when one rubs it, then the spirit of the lamp appears. This is of course just a bit of fun! But freedom - it is the wonderful lamp; when a man rubs it with ethical passion: then God comes into existence (bliver til) for him. And behold, the spirit of the lamp is a slave (then wish for it, if your spirit lives for its wishes); but he, who rubs the wonderful lamp of freedom, he becomes a slave - the Spirit is the Lord. (SV IX p.115)

He is not of course saying that God only acquires being in a general sense through the self-activation of human freedom, he is saying that God only comes to exist existentially, only comes to exist for the individual, in Luther's sense of 'for us' (6) insofar as we choose the project of freedom, of becoming the freedom we are. The transcendence of God over Man, the Lordship of the Spirit, the submission of Man, itself appears only in the light of the choice

of freedom by Man. This passage from the Concluding Unscientific Postscript screws the tension present in the concept of choice to a new level of intensity - some might say to breaking-point. The situation is, as Kierkegaard himself might say, 'thoroughly dialectical'. Each side only comes into existence through the other.

The problem is not made any easier when we pass on to the consideration that the self is not in fact capable of establishing itself in the project of freedom. This is the basic theme of The Sickness Unto Death (cf. SV XV p.81) and is the message of the Upbuilding Discourses where, as in the discourse To Need God is Man's Highest Perfection he argues that the continued experience by man of his incapacity to establish his own being, that by himself he is and can achieve 'nothing', is at the same time the locus of the experience of divine creativity. (cf. SV IV pp. 282 ff.)

Apart from grace it is as much the case for Kierkegaard as it is for Sartre that man exists both as freedom and as the continual failure to carry through the project of freedom. (7) Yet even in his failure to be the freedom he is, man transcends both the crude determination of his being by merely sensuous life and the insufficiently ethical, insufficiently existential determinations of ideality.

It is important in this last respect to distinguish between different meanings of the term 'Idea'. Kierkegaard speaks persistently about the human enterprise as the project of 'living for the Idea.' (8) For him, as for Fichte, the romantics, and Hegel, this Idea is in an absolute sense nothing other than human freedom itself, this is the Idea, the telos of human existence, to exist in freedom. But Man does not carry out this project, he does not live according to his Idea, essence and existence are divided in Man, therefore the freedom which is not freedom slips through the net of the ideal, just as, at another level, the realm of the sensuous is beyond the scope of the ideal.

(B) (ii) (b) Suffering

Suffering for Kierkegaard has a range of meanings extending from that of the physical suffering to which all flesh is heir, to that of the freely chosen suffering of the martyrs. We are not concerned here to trace all the gradations of his use of the term, but to see how it is integrated into the three-fold schematization of selfhood.

In a certain technical sense 'suffering' in danish, as in other major european languages, is by definition virtually the opposite of self-activating freedom, in the sense that it means that which is acted upon, that which is conditioned by what exists outside it, whether or not it experiences this conditioning as 'painful'. In this sense suffering means 'not-free', and in this sense the dimension of sensuousness is the seat of suffering, for in our existence as sensuous, animal beings we are always only acted upon. Thus the whole of human life on earth considered as a purely biological phenomenon is suffering. We should recognize this formal, philosophical dimension in a statement such as the following which it is otherwise all too easy to ascribe merely to kierkegaardian morbidity: 'Listen to the newborn infant's cry in the hour of birth - see the death-struggle in the final hour - and then declare whether what begins and ends in this way can be intended to be enjoyment.' (Pap. XI ii A 199/729) Yet there is that in human selfhood which resists, which is in opposition to its being-determined, and the mutual pressure of these two poles of existence serves to increase suffering. In a sense, raw, inchoate animal suffering is, in man at least, always to be considered in relation to freedom.

The development of freedom does not for Kierkegaard mean the overcoming of suffering, but, insofar as freedom exists in man as a failed project, as requiring, but not being able to achieve, the

establishing of the self in its selfhood, freedom entails the intensification of suffering. The more freedom is conscious of itself the more it is conscious of its failure, conscious that it is not free, that it is conditioned, that it suffers. **In this way the** development of freedom intensifies suffering by drawing suffering into the constitution of the self. For Kierkegaard the suffering that really matters is not simply the suffering which derives from the fact that man as a free Spirit comes into conflict with external forces which limit his freedom, which cause him physical suffering, but that the conflict between freedom and unfreedom belongs intrinsically to the situation of the self. The self is existentially divided, torn apart, the elements of its being do not cohere but war against each other: in Tillich's expression they become 'structures of destruction.' (9)

In asserting its freedom, in choosing itself as free the self must therefore also take upon itself the burden of suffering which derives from the opposition of freedom and determinateness. To choose freedom is also to choose suffering. This is indeed implied in the analysis of choice in Either-Or which, as we have seen, involves a synthesis of the absolute self in its freedom with a given, a particular situation, given and particularized by God's providential governance. In this perspective it is the task of freedom to humble itself under suffering, not to try and escape or suppress it. (10)

But if freedom thus involves an accepting affirmation of suffering then ideality or reflection, must always deny or soften suffering. In that the hallmarks of ideality are harmony, unity, universality, the ideal cannot express the clash between levels of being in which suffering resides. The law of ideality is 'like is known by like',

it allows only such differences as can be resolved in an higher identity. It is the reciprocity of subject and object, the unification of all phenomena in a common ground which delights the idealistic imagination, not the division of the subject from himself, which is the theme that engages Kierkegaard. It is harmony and not dissonance.

(B) (ii) (c) Self-Knowledge

It is, according to Kierkegaard, a fundamental concern of the self to achieve self-knowledge, or to use an expression which recurs throughout his writings, 'to become transparent' to itself. (11) It might also be described as the attempt to achieve an adequate reflection of the being of the self in the mirror of ideality.

The quest for self-knowledge hangs together with the existential project of freedom. For if it is only in free self-choice that the self first becomes a self, then self-knowledge depends on this free act, for otherwise there is no self to which the self can be transparent. However as we have seen, the project of freedom is in fact a continual failure - apart from grace. Consequently self-knowledge too is unobtainable - apart from grace.

This means that the self experiences its dividedness from itself not only as suffering but also as an opaque presence in the heart of its own being. It is important to note that this obscurity does not simply lie in the sensuousness of one part of the structure of the self, but results from the failure of freedom to establish itself and to bring about the integration of the elements of ideal reflection and sensuous immediacy. Ignorance of self results from the failure of freedom to achieve freedom; it does not result from the material, non-ideal nature of sensuous being. But in the

situation of the divided self the sensuous, the material, becomes opaque, becomes a source of obscurity, becomes a dimension of non-self, in which the self cannot find or recognize itself.

Although the sensuous is thus experienced as a source of ignorance knowledge cannot be found by simply turning to the ideal. For although ideality may function as the medium in which knowledge is expressed, may function, in Fichte's phrase, as the 'pure space' (12) in which that which is known 'appears' or is reflected, may function as the transparency through which what is to be known is seen, it does not itself provide the content of knowledge. This can only come from a dimension which transcends ideality, that is to say, it must come either from the realm of the sensuous or from the realm of free selfhood.

Within the context of psychology the possibility of the ideal reflecting the sensuous is in fact dependent on the prior postulation of the free self, which is that by which the self becomes a self in its three-fold coherence, and by which alone the sensuous - this body, this sensation - becomes mine, becomes part of a total and integrated experience of selfhood. The further consequences of this can be seen by reference to the phenomenological concept of intentionality. According to this concept consciousness is never pure, it is always consciousness 'of' something, it always intends some object. However this intention is, in a sense, double. When someone looks at a piano, his consciousness intends the piano as the object of his looking, but he also, although perhaps less obviously, intends or carries a reference to, himself, as the supporting subject of the total act of consciousness. What concerns Kierkegaard is the problematic nature of establishing himself as a subject in the full sense of the word, and yet, on this analysis, unless the transcendental subject of knowledge is known, neither a full nor

even an adequate knowledge of the world **can be achieved.** (13)

(C) Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Art

We now turn to Kierkegaard's theory of art and apply the insights gained from this detour through his psychological thought to the question of his relationship to romanticism and hegelianism in their various forms. The aim of this section is merely to provide a general picture of this relationship: the vindication of the position taken here and its earthing in the exegesis of what Kierkegaard actually wrote will be the task of the following section of the chapter, and of succeeding chapters.

Firstly it can be stated quite categorically that Kierkegaard shared the basic idealist premisses of both his romantic and his hegelian predecessors concerning the essence of art.

The basic idealist position was that art is a synthesis of the ideal and the real, of the universal and the particular, etc., an embodiment of the idea in sensuous form, a fusion of conscious and unconscious, a lifting-up or rebirth or transfiguration of the real in the realm of ideality. All this Kierkegaard could affirm: the question is what status, what place in the overall construction of mental life is this aesthetic synthesis to be accorded?

Already within the idealist consensus there were, as we have seen, a variety of positions. Is the aesthetic synthesis in some way ultimate, as the romantics claimed? Is it merely provisional, an anticipation of the complete interpenetration of idea and content achieved in philosophical thought, as Hegel argued? Is it an impossible dream, which promises but does not fulfil its promise, as the nihilistic strand of romanticism maintained?

If the account which has been given of Kierkegaard's notion of selfhood is correct then it is clear that he could not regard the

aesthetic synthesis of ideality and reality (understanding reality to be sensuous reality) as itself absolute unless it is brought into relation to the transcendent project of freedom in which selfhood is rooted. Unless this relationship is given then the aesthetic synthesis must point beyond itself. It 'intends' more than it is able to make manifest, for along with the concrete, finished work of art it also intends the free subject who is its real, existential subject, but who also transcends the form which the work of art must take. This is equally the case whether we think of this subject as the creator or as the recipient of the work of art. The structure of the aesthetic synthesis is unable to contain the freedom which is and which must be the ultimate concern of both creator and recipient, it is not transparent to its real subject, unless that subject is given in some other, non-aesthetic way.

This point was made by one of Kierkegaard's first reviewers, writing in the paper Faedrelandet, when he described the concept of the aesthetic presupposed in Either-Or:

The aesthetic reconciliation is an anticipation of the real, infinite reconciliation; what the finite life must first attain through toil and trouble is what art portrays as a reality which has already been attained; the busy restless life is wholly mirrored in beauty's heaven, [where it appears] not in its everyday grime, but cleansed in the regenerating bath of ideality and dressed in its Sunday best. It is for this reason that the contemplation of works of beauty is such a rich source of pleasure and of spiritual joy, and further so uplifting and liberating: as one sees the transfiguration of the finite in the magical mirror of illusion, one is oneself lifted up into another world, in which one again finds oneself, freed of the bonds, which here below hold the infinite psyche in thrall. (14)

But he goes on to point out that art is precisely for this reason abstract, because it abstracts from the difficulties and deficiencies of actual life. Art does achieve a certain clarification or transfiguration of life, but what it offers is only provisional, only an anticipation.

What then is the self to which art indirectly refers, which is

its true, but non-expressed, subject? How does Kierkegaard's concept of selfhood relate to the personalism of Poul Møller, or to the Spirit of Hegel's philosophy?

Kierkegaard's relationship to Møller is a matter of continual interest in Kierkegaard scholarship, if only because of the fragmentary nature of Møller's literary remains, which teasingly promise so much. That the personal relationship between the two was close is beyond dispute; (15) The question is how far did Møller's thought influence Kierkegaard? For us this question focusses on the relationship between the concept of selfhood and the dimension of aesthetic experience.

We may recall that Møller argued that the harmonious development of the self, and the integration of the levels of ideality, of empirical being and of 'tradition' on the basis of an experience of an higher kind, constitutes the sine qua non of the production and appreciation of genuine works of art.

That Kierkegaard admired this point of view and himself adopted it to a certain degree is testified to by his literary reviews, particularly in his early work From The Papers of One Still Living, in parts of The Concept of Irony and in his review of Madame Gyllembourg's novel Two Ages, as well as in the general attitude to art spelt out in the second part of Either-Or. These texts will be studied in their appropriate contexts in later chapters and their connection with Møller will then be defined more closely. (16)

However, as we have seen, the consolidation of selfhood in the completed project of freedom is, for Kierkegaard, always in question. The self fails in its attempt to be a self. This undermines the structure of the life-view and the ideal of harmonious self-development proclaimed by Møller. Indeed as we have seen, Møller himself was aware of the difficulty of carrying out the construct-

ion of an harmonious life-view in the context of what he regarded as the nihilism of contemporary thought. But Kierkegaard stresses the problematic nature of the achievement of selfhood to a much greater degree than Møller did. If Møller faced the prospect of a coming age of nihilism, Kierkegaard found himself a child of that age. He was one of those who stood in the wilderness of nihilism and at the same time made the discovery that this was no abiding home for the human Spirit. This is not to say that Kierkegaard did not believe in the achievement of harmony, of a 'life-view'. He believed in it, but he could only believe in it, because it could, as he thought, be established only on the ground of divine grace.

Despite his admiration for the 'men of 1803' and his desire to vindicate their ideals of harmony, of continuity between the divine and the human, Kierkegaard suffered the strains of dissonance and discord too severely to be one of them. The project of freedom can only be achieved by passing through the experience of discord, by experiencing the otherness, the transcendence of the free self over against the realms of sensuousness and of ideality. The 'men of 1803' did not give this note of discord its due. Consequently their ideal of harmony was an ideal which masked the reality of the suffering of the free self, and they were unable to integrate suffering into their vision of cosmic unity. In this sense both their concept of art, and the art which they produced, concealed both the true freedom of the self and its suffering.

Though Kierkegaard may therefore be said to have belonged to the generation of nihilistic romanticism he chose to turn against the nihilistic stream, and in his own understanding of it his work was an attempt to block this stream at source. That source he found in the philosophy of early romanticism, in Fichte and Schlegel,

and in their separation of selfhood from the realm of concrete particularity.

This too was clear enough to his first readers. Not only were the avowedly anti-romantic polemics of From the Papers of One Still Living, and The Concept of Irony seen as 'replies' to the spirit of nihilism, but Either-Or, the Upbuilding Discourses, and Fear and Trembling, were also received in this context. Kierkegaard was perceived as a writer who had grasped the nettle of the mood of pessimism and self-laceration and who pointed to an ultimate overcoming of this mood. (17) This is not to deny that his later works were to lead his readers into such depths of both literary and intellectual complexity that many erstwhile admirers dropped away! Nor can it be denied that many of his writings show only too clearly how deeply he himself had experienced the mood of despair, and that one result of his work had been to provide a source for precisely the kind of nihilism he sought to refute.

Kierkegaard's answer to nihilism is not an 'answer' in a formal sense; his procedure is rather to show the consequences which flow from developing that position to its logical conclusion, to show that ultimately it demands its own supersession. Such a procedure immediately evokes the image of Hegel's concept of dialectics. How far then is Kierkegaard's method of overcoming nihilism an application of hegelian dialectics?

Before attempting to answer this question we need to look at the differences between Kierkegaard's and Hegel's concepts of selfhood. For Kierkegaard, as we have seen, the free self, which is both the ground and aim of psychic existence, is defined in individual terms, by reference to psychological categories. As we have also seen, this emphasis is intrinsically related to his vision of the problematic nature of the project of free selfhood. The process has a clear

structure which parallels the structure of Spirit in idealist writing, but that a particular individual self will achieve the fulfilment of this structure is precisely what is in question, and which cannot be resolved other than in the sphere of individual self-choice 'in fear and trembling before God'. This in turn leads to an emphasis on suffering and on the impossibility of achieving self-knowledge.

For Hegel, on the other hand, the self acquired an objective structure in the processes of world-history, and in the concrete manifestations of society, of art, of religion and of philosophy. The continuity between the self in its absolute freedom and the self in its merely provisional 'alien' forms is what is emphasized.

These differences can be summed up by saying that for Hegel the process of internalization had as its goal the interiority of pure logical thought, whereas for Kierkegaard it culminated in the interiority of radically free self-choice. Their ultimate purposes differ toto caelo, and no formal similarities of dialectics or of vocabulary should mislead us here. In this respect one is largely compelled to agree with N. Thulstrup when he proposes as the main thesis of his carefully documented research on Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel that '...Hegel and Kierkegaard have in the main nothing in common as thinkers, neither as regards object, purpose or method, nor as regards what each considered to be indisputable principles.'(18) If there is anything to question in this statement it is the inclusion of method. At least as regards aesthetics there are striking similarities which have to be taken into account.

Kierkegaard and Hegel are able to enter into an alliance insofar as they both seek to show that the aesthetic synthesis is unable to give absolute expression to free selfhood, that art is radically incapable of showing the subject it ultimately intends, although it is able to achieve a degree of insight into its own inability to do

this within the confines of the aesthetic, and thus to point the way to its own supersession. For both thinkers this occurs historically in the romantic consciousness. Both understand romanticism as a form of the alienation of the self from itself, a form of the self's dualistic being, and in the light of this understanding Kierkegaard is able to see in the nihilistic romanticism of 'young Germany' and its danish imitators the logical outcome of the theories of early romanticism. The assertion of the impossibility of the aesthetic synthesis (other than as an illusory dream), which appears as a consequence of the divided self of nihilism, is itself a signal that a new, non-aesthetic dimension must be introduced if integration is to be achieved. The transcendence of art is thus demanded on two grounds. Firstly, it is demanded on structural grounds, because the aesthetic synthesis is by definition unable to give expression to the absolute self. Secondly, it is demanded on historical grounds, in the sense that it has now, at this point of history, become apparent that art transcends itself and that a new stage of spiritual existence is required.

The Kierkegaardian, as well as the hegelian, critique of art is grounded in a view of romanticism as a philosophy of art, in the sense of a philosophy which assigns to art, to artistic creativity and to aesthetic experience, a uniquely privileged place in the structure of life, but it sees in the dualistic dimension of romanticism a secret testimony to the inadequacy of art, of aesthetic experience. By focussing on this dualistic aspect, Kierkegaard hopes to undermine and to relativize both art and romanticism (as the ultimate 'philosophy' of art). The failure of romanticism points to the ultimate limitation of art as a sphere of spiritual existence.

It can therefore be said that Kierkegaard had a philosophy of art in a sense akin to that of Hegel's notion of a philosophy of art:

an understanding of art which seeks to place art in the context of a conceptually elaborated account of human being and which seeks to define the inadequacy of art in terms of its inability to articulate the essential freedom of human existence. But although this freedom is for Kierkegaard as well as for Hegel, something which is essentially 'interior' their perceptions of this interior freedom are worlds apart.

It is thus possible to affirm the ultimate difference of Kierkegaard's thought over against Hegel's thought, as N. Thulstrup does, but also to say with S. Crites that 'Kierkegaard was, broadly speaking, a Hegelian in aesthetic theory.' (19) However, we have to be more careful when Crites goes on to say that '...he drew heavily on Heiberg and other Hegelian writers, and even more heavily on Hegel's own Aesthetik ...' (20) Did he in fact draw on Hegel more than on Heiberg - or was it the other way round? As we have seen, there are striking differences between Hegel and Heiberg (and Martensen, who must at this point be counted with Heiberg). To whom does Kierkegaard owe the hegelian elements of his aesthetics? To answer this question we must now turn to look at Kierkegaard's relation to Heiberg.

(D) Kierkegaard and Heiberg

Although it is basic to the approach of this thesis that Kierkegaard be treated as a philosopher, and his writings be examined in terms of their theoretical content, it will be helpful at this point to look at biographical and historical evidence which establishes the link between Kierkegaard and Heiberg.

Henning Fenger cites the witness of several of Kierkegaard's contemporaries in order to demonstrate Kierkegaard's affiliation to the hegelian faction in Denmark. 'One cannot brush aside three separate witnesses such as Sibbern, Holst and Brøchner, when they

assert that Kierkegaard was intellectually dependent upon Hegel and Heiberg in his youth'. (21) We can, however, draw on more evidence than this. Kierkegaard's first published works consisted of an article attacking women's emancipation (1834) followed by a series of three polemical articles directed against the liberal movement in contemporary politics. (22) All of these were published by Heiberg in his newspaper Københavns Flyvende Post. In his recent edition of these articles Teddy Petersen suggests that one of Kierkegaard's basic aims in writing them was 'to demonstrate his literary and polemical abilities to Heiberg.' (23) Heiberg was at that time a commanding figure on the literary scene - to have his seal of approval was to have 'made it' as a man of letters.

Petersen also draws attention to Kierkegaard's gratification that both another newspaper and Poul Møller thought that the first of the anti-liberal articles was actually by Heiberg. (24) Moreover the close link which others perceived between Kierkegaard and Heiberg at this time is suggested by a series of three anonymously published broadsheets, Humoristiske Intelligensblade, which poked fun at the Kierkegaard-liberal debate, and which caricatured Kierkegaard as Heiberg's 'amanuensis'. (25)

Still within the field of journalism Kierkegaard noted in the Papirer that one of Heiberg's literary opponents, George Carstensen, the founder of the Tivoli Gardens, had offered him a lot of money for an article against Heiberg, (cf. Pap. X iii A99/6624) but Kierkegaard not only refused, he took Heiberg's side against Carstensen in one of his own articles, although this was not the main point of the article. (cf. SV XVIII p.13)

The dedication of two of his works of literary criticism to members of the Heiberg household, to Heiberg's mother, Madame Gyllembourg, and to Heiberg's wife, also testify, if indirectly, to Kierke-

gaard's respect for Heiberg, especially since these were both published after the breach with Heiberg which we shall examine shortly.

(26) What was it that made Kierkegaard align himself with Heiberg?

The situation is well summed up by Frithiof Brandt, whose testimony is doubly weighty in that he does not on the whole regard Kierkegaard as in any way an Hegelian. He writes

As an aesthetician Kierkegaard was spiritually akin to Heiberg in the highest degree and understood how to appreciate his work as few others did. He found in Heiberg a philosophically supported theory of criticism, which understood the genres of art and their logical characteristics. Furthermore he found in Heiberg's person that elegant and witty urbanity which was his ideal in his aesthetic youthful years; he found, in general, that highly cultured spiritual aristocracy which was his own. (27)

It was as an aesthetician that Kierkegaard valued Heiberg, and, one might add, as a practitioner of dramatic art. In The Concept of Irony he writes of Heiberg as displaying a similar mastery of art to that possessed by Goethe:

As a poet Professor Heiberg occupies the same standpoint [as Goethe], and while nearly every speech he has written can provide an example of irony's inner economy in the play, there also manifests itself through all his plays a self-conscious striving, which assigns each part its place in the whole.

(SV I pp. 327 f.)

Here Kierkegaard praises Heiberg for a mastery of irony in almost exactly the same terms as Heiberg had himself defined irony. (28) Nonetheless, if Kierkegaard valued Heiberg as an aesthetician, he very soon became aware that outside the limits of the aesthetic Heiberg could not be relied on as a guide, and that Heiberg himself did not always recognize the due limits of art.

Although the sketch of Kierkegaard's psychology in section B of this chapter reflects his mature thought, it may be regarded as a clarification of a position he had adopted much earlier. That he was conscious of the fundamental discrepancy between Hegelianism and his own thought at a very early stage in his development is indicated

by a number of entries in the Papirer, not least in the fragment of a satirical play which poked a great deal of fun at the hegelians. (29)

His acquaintance with Poul Møller would also have put him on the trail which led to the discovery of the difference between a genuinely personalist philosophy and the logical ontology of hegelianism. Apart from Møller's essay on Immortality which appeared in 1838 Kierkegaard would in the same year have read F. C. Sibbern's attack on hegelianism, which, referring specifically to Heiberg, made the point that Heiberg's aesthetic theories had only scratched the surface of the philosophical problematic presented in Hegel's work.

... indeed we see him [Heiberg] treat the whole matter rather lightly, in that he rhapsodically moves around certain of the more easily approachable and pleasant parts of the hegelian realm of ideas; indeed, [so that I may] put the matter in a word, he shows himself to be a philosophical dilettante. (30)

To call Heiberg a dilettante was the supreme insult: it was to further the rout of dilettantism in aesthetics that Heiberg had propounded his doctrine of taste and his philosophically-based theory of criticism. Dilettantism was Heiberg's supreme anti-value. Sibbern also came to the defence of Poul Møller, who had been seen by Heiberg as a 'deserter' from the hegelian ranks. Heiberg had claimed that Møller was like someone who goes away from the stream in order to find water. Sibbern argues that the question is precisely whether the hegelian philosophy is the stream which contains the real, the water of life, which must be the source of an authentic christian philosophy. (31) In the same year Kierkegaard would also have known about (if he did not actually see) Fata Morgana and would have read Martensen's review of it, which would have given him further grounds for doubt.

The next chapter will show how the basic structure of Kierkegaard's thought in the period of the early Papirer points to a

religious position fundamentally at odds with hegelian conceptions. What is being argued here is that it would have been possible for him to distinguish between Heiberg the aesthetician and Heiberg the philosopher, and that consequently within the sphere of aesthetics it would have been possible for him to deploy heibergian categories and methods whilst remaining sceptical about their applicability outside that sphere. The next two chapters will show how and to what extent he did operate as a member, however ill-disciplined, of the 'Heiberg school' of literary criticism.

We turn now to Kierkegaard's attack on Heiberg in the period of his mature authorship where we will see that even in the midst of his attack, Kierkegaard draws a distinction between the sphere of aesthetics and whatever it is that lies beyond aesthetics, so that in even his most bitter polemics there remains a residual respect and an acknowledgement of Heiberg's positive contributions - both to literature in general and to his, Kierkegaard's, own development as a writer and thinker.

These polemics were provoked by Heiberg's haughty and uncomprehending review of Either-Or. (32) In the entries in his Papirer written in response to this review, Kierkegaard jotted down a veritable arsenal of anti-Heiberg barbs. (Pap. IV B 25-29). Heiberg's assumed authority in literature is attacked and ridiculed: 'Professor Heiberg is also accustomed to "preside at the Day of Judgement" in literature. Have you forgotten what happened to Xerxes? he had even taken with him the scribes who were to record his victory over little Greece.' (IV B 41) Heiberg's concern with the requirements of the age is pilloried: 'For some years now Prof. Heiberg has sat, all dolled-up, in the window of literature and waved to those going by, especially if it was a dressed-up man and he heard a small "Hurrah" from the next street'. (IV B 49)

Kierkegaard regards himself as a 'wild young horse' in contrast to the 'less lively' Heiberg, who is merely a 'paradeur'. (IV B 37)

Kierkegaard traces Heiberg's 'fall' to the hubris of the enterprise of speculative literature. He writes

It may now be just about two years ago that Herr Professor, from being the witty, jocular, hilarious poet of vaudeville, who sometimes seemed to be a bit unorthodox in matters of faith, the triumphal polemicist, the aesthete of well-measured step, became Denmark's Dante, the brooding genius, who, in his apocalyptic poem, gazed into the secrets of eternal life, became the obedient son of the church, from whom the reverend diocesan clergy expected everything that would serve the best interests of the church. (IV B 46)

The reference is of course to the poem En Sjael Efter Døden and to its enthusiastic reception by the theologian Martensen and the churchman Provost Tryde.

Heiberg was to damn himself still further in Kierkegaard's eyes by an equally condescending and uncomprehending reference to Repétition. (33) This again provoked Kierkegaard to a frenetic bout of writing (Pap. IV B 100-124) which gradually formed itself into the little book Forewords which - unusually, if not uniquely, in his pseudonymous works - names Heiberg as the butt of its satire. In the Papirer entries and in Forewords it is again made clear that Heiberg has offended by transgressing the proper limits of his genius. Kierkegaard takes particular delight in mocking Heiberg's newly developed interest in astronomy and again voices doubts as to Heiberg's suitability for the part of Denmark's Dante.

I already began to be afraid, when, a few years ago, Prof. Heiberg unveiled heaven's secrets in his apocalyptic poem, and a serviceable critic, an officious opinion, let it none too obscurely be understood that Heiberg had now become Dante. He, who at that time was among the more careful observers of our trifling circumstances will certainly not deny that sometimes symptoms were manifested which seemed to presage the fearful event that the Professor, who had moreover always been a philosopher, should suddenly undergo a new metamorphosis and reveal himself as the one who was to make clear the riddles of theology.

(Pap. IV B 119; cf. SV V pp. 217f)

In a nutshell then, Heiberg had failed to realize that in the religious art comes up against an absolute limit. 'Perhaps Professor Heiberg believes that Christianity is a subject for vaudeville', (Pap. IV A 105) wrote Kierkegaard scathingly - and indeed Heiberg's theory and practice of speculative comedy bore this comment out.

An example of Kierkegaard's ambiguous attitude to Heiberg is to be found in Stages on Life's Way where he develops his own analysis of the present age as an age of reflection in which the immediacy appropriate to poetry has been undermined, and in which comedy must emerge as the most appropriate form of art - all this is in the true heibergian mould. But Kierkegaard twists this analysis and puts it to unexpected use:

A comic poet will lack a public, since not even the public can be in two places at once - in their seats and in the play. Moreover the comic poet has his stronghold in a pathos which lies outside the play, and he proves by his existence that the age of poetry is past. He who would set his hope upon a speculative drama serves poetry only insofar as he serves the comic. If a wizard or a sorcerer were to bring such a thing to pass, if by the assistance of a speculative thaumaturge (for a dramaturge would not suffice) it were to satisfy the requirement of the age as a poetic work, this event would indeed be a good motif for a comedy.

(SV VIII p.211)

Again the point is that there is a limit to what a dramaturge can achieve, and there is of course no such thing as a thaumaturge for Kierkegaard. Consequently the whole concept of speculative comedy pushes the aesthetic beyond its proper limits.

Kierkegaard returns to the theme of speculative comedy in the Concluding Unscientific Postscript where he writes

I have read prof. Heiberg's Sjæl Efter Døden, indeed I have read it together with the commentary by Provost Tryde. I wish I had not done so, for in reading a poetic work one enjoys oneself aesthetically and does not demand the uttermost dialectical accuracy, which is appropriate to a reader who seeks to order his life in accordance with such guidance. If a commentator compels one to seek such a thing in a poem, then he has not helped the poem.

(SV IX p.143)

Although Kierkegaard's scorn is directed in this case at the comment-

ator rather than at the poem, there can be little doubt, on the basis of his other remarks on this theme, that he regarded the whole project of speculative comedy with a wary eye. And if Heiberg, by virtue of his poetic genius, managed to skate across the thin ice, his commentators crashed through into the icy depths below. There are two points to make about this anti-Heiberg polemic.

Firstly, the terms of Kierkegaard's criticism themselves owe something to Heiberg. For it was precisely Heiberg's chief principle that each genius was suited to production within the sphere of a particular genre. By becoming metaphysical Heiberg had, according to Kierkegaard, ignored this basic rule of aesthetics. In other words Kierkegaard's criticism of Heiberg parallels Heiberg's criticism of Øhlenslaeger. (34)

Secondly, Kierkegaard is dissenting from the Heiberg orthodoxy at a point where a more orthodox Hegelian would also have had to draw breath. For as we have seen, Heiberg's concept of speculative drama is not at all in the spirit of Hegel's aesthetics. Hegel would have agreed with Kierkegaard that a clear distinction would need to be made between the aesthetic and the religious, despite the differences in their understanding of what the religious is.

(E) Conclusions

Was Kierkegaard a romantic? Was he an Hegelian? As regards aesthetic theory such questions cannot be answered by a simple negative or a simple affirmative.

Kierkegaard experienced in himself and gave articulation to the consciousness of the divided self of nihilistic romanticism. On this basis, and understanding 'romanticism' as the expression of this unhappy consciousness, it is possible to see the point made by A. Vetter when he writes that

In Bildern von sprachgewaltiger und witziger Einprägbarkeit hat Kierkegaard das haltlose Umschlagen und Vermischen der Gefühlgegensätze anschaulich gemacht. Er hat damit ein Selbstbekenntnis der Romantik geschaffen, wie es schonungsloser kaum vorgestellt werden kann. (35)

At the same time Kierkegaard did not simply give expression to, he was also seeking a way out of, the wilderness of nihilism. Thus we can also affirm with Walter Rehm that 'Kierkegaard's schriftstellerisches Werk lebt von diesem ihn innerlich bedrängenden, ohnmächtigen Kampf gegen die Romantik' (36)

In what sense however can we say that it was 'powerless'? Not in the sense that he saw no way out. He did. But the way out he saw was not an option which man, unaided, had it in his power to choose. The freedom in which nihilism was to be transcended was not solely a human work, but though a fully human freedom it was to be rooted in divine creativity.

In this struggle against nihilism Kierkegaard was, in part, seeking to re-affirm the ideal of harmony treasured by the 'men of 1803', amongst whom Kierkegaard's teachers, F. C. Sibbern and, with due qualification, Poul Møller, are to be counted. Nonetheless I cannot agree with Ms. Viallaneix when she states that Kierkegaard was a romantic, whose thought was characterized in its totality by the sonority of an achieved harmony. (37) There is too much striving and too little achieving for that. It is important however to bear in mind that Kierkegaard was stirred by that ideal and was particularly influenced by the emphasis on harmony in the personal life, which is to be associated with Poul Møller.

We encounter a similar complexity when we turn to hegelianism, where it is tempting to agree with Jean Wahl in his assertion that in the early Papirer (though the point could be made in respect of a wide range of Kierkegaard's writings), 'Hégélianisme et anti-hégélianisme sont unis dans plusieurs passages d'une façon inextricable.' (38)

Nor is the situation made any easier by the varieties of hegelianism, and particularly by the fact that the hegelians whom Kierkegaard actually knew, such as Heiberg and Martensen, were not entirely loyal disciples of the master. We can, however, make a number of points.

Firstly, Kierkegaard did take from Heiberg certain key elements of aesthetic theory, and found in Heiberg a model of literary criticism. There is thus an heibergian dimension to Kierkegaard's theory of art and his own practice as a literary critic.

Secondly, even at the point where he disagreed with Heiberg concerning the commensurability of aesthetic form and the absolute idea of infinite freedom, the way in which he saw art pointing towards its own supersession has an hegelian quality. Indeed it is tempting to say that at this point Kierkegaard was closer to Hegel than Heiberg was. Nonetheless his vision of what it was that was to be found beyond the aesthetic owed more to the interaction between nihilistic romanticism and Poul Møller's personalism, as well as to the pietistic religion of his upbringing, (39), than it did to Hegel.

Thirdly, in addition to the hegelian/heibergian elements in Kierkegaard's writing on art there is also a definite impress of the ideas of Poul Møller, especially in the way in which the requirement of an individual life-view is brought into play in the practice of literary criticism.

Kierkegaard was neither a romantic nor an hegelian. He used elements of both and discarded elements of both. He was not, however, merely eclectic. The selection and rejection were guided by his own vision of what art was about, and his own understanding of the place of religion in human life and of the office of philosophy. His philosophy of art however was a philosophy of art more in the hegelian than in the romantic sense. It looked on art from the

perspective of a position which, he assumed, was 'beyond' that of art. From this position it would also be seen that the world of aesthetic forms possessed a specific dialectical structure which pointed towards this 'beyond'.

The fleshing out of these conclusions will be the task of the following chapters of this thesis, as we turn first to the theory and critique of art in the early Papirer.

Chapter Six: The Theory and Critique of Art in the Early Papirer

(A) The Nature of the Sources

The earlier volumes of Kierkegaard's Papirer contain a proportionately greater amount of 'aesthetic' material than the later volumes, although such material never entirely vanishes. The aesthetic material is particularly plentiful in the first three volumes of the Papirer which cover a period from 1834 when Kierkegaard was twenty-one to 1842 when he wrote Either-Or, his first major work. For the purposes of this chapter we shall also include the section of Aesthetics in volume IV of the Papirer which is dated 1842-3.

The interpretation of these early Papirer is beset with difficulties. The terms 'Journals' and 'Diaries' which are sometimes used in English translations are themselves potentially misleading, for these 'papers' do not constitute a day by day diary of external or psychological events. What we are dealing with is a mass of notebooks and loose papers. To add to the confusion, some of the notebooks are written with pagination running both from front to back, and from back to front. Nor is the type of entry typically 'diaristic'. It is in fact an extraordinarily diffuse collection of written material. We are faced with lecture notes, translation exercises, excerpts from books (sometimes very lengthy), reading lists (although we do not always know if Kierkegaard actually read the books contained in these lists), projected plays, novels, lectures, sermons, essays, newspaper articles, speeches, as well as odd thoughts jotted down in fragmentary form, thoughts whimsical and momentary as well as the deeply passionate and personal thoughts which might most usually be associated with Kierkegaard's Diaries. Some of the entries are not even full sentences whilst others run into many pages.

Even when the entries have been categorized many problems remain. These can be focussed on the twin issues of chronology and autobiographical reference.

These issues have a direct bearing on the interpretation of those entries which relate to aesthetics because many commentators have seen these Papirer primarily as the first-person testimony of a romantically wayward youth. To some extent the issue here is akin to that which was discussed in the first chapter under the heading 'Poet or Thinker'. (1) Do these entries represent a personal confession or are they contributions to a theory of art, a theory of romanticism? Moreover, if we have here the outlines of a theory of romanticism, is this theory written from a romantic standpoint, or from an hegelian or some other position? Our answers to these questions have already been anticipated in the previous chapter, where it was argued that though Kierkegaard felt the force of certain romantic conceptions and experiences, his writing witnesses to his attempt to construct a critical theory of romanticism, a theory which incorporated both hegelian and personalist elements derived chiefly from Heiberg and Møller respectively.

It may, however, be retorted that this position was argued for by referring to Kierkegaard's mature psychological theory which was made the pattern for his treatment of art and that it is therefore still possible that Kierkegaard did at some point have a 'romantic' period, in relation to which his later critique of romanticism and of art in general is as much the theoretical justification ex post facto of a personal conversion as it is the outworking of a consistent philosophical approach to the matter in hand.

Nelly Viallaneix, for instance, writes of the period 1835-38 that 'Ce court intermède constitue ce qu'on peut appeler la période romantique de Kierkegaard. Au cours de sa jeunesse il ne fut sans

jamais hégélien. Mais il fut romantique et, dans une certaine mesure, il le resta.' (2) Similarly Søren Holm asserts that '... he embraced romanticism with a passion', (3) 'S.K. experienced romanticism; he read the romantic poets of Germany and Denmark, and was so much influenced by them that he was able to describe the aesthetic stage as one who had himself been an aesthete.' (4) Gerhard vom Hofe also claims that 'Kierkegaard begann wie Hegel als leidenschaftlicher Romantiker, und diese Tatsache erklärt u.a. die Intensität seines späteren Kampfes gegen romantische Spekulation, Ironie, Aesthetik und Poetik, gegen die Symptome romantischer Geisteshaltung und Existenz'.(5)

While not denying that Kierkegaard did feel in himself certain 'symptoms' of romanticism the question remains whether these symptoms are sufficient for us to diagnose the whole body of his early Papirer as 'romantic'. There are in fact a number of considerations which weigh against such a conclusion.

Firstly, if the thesis that the positive aspects of Kierkegaard's relation to Heiberg need to be given more attention than has often been the case in Kierkegaard studies, it must be underlined that the period of Kierkegaard's closest association with Heiberg (the anti-romantic polemicist), the period of his contributions to Heiberg's papers, the period when he was lampooned as Heiberg's amanuensis, falls right in the middle of his so-called romantic period. (6) There is moreover the evidence of the texts themselves that in this period Kierkegaard was at the very least experimenting with the application of heibergian/hegelian categories and methods to aesthetic questions. In the presentation of the material I shall in fact argue that it permits a much stronger 'hegelian' interpretation than this.

Secondly, there is the evidence that in his approach to romanticism Kierkegaard had an ultimately theological interest. R. Summers writes:

There was a serious purpose behind his interest in Romanticism,

which far from being a rejection of or escape from Christianity could have been motivated by it. For having once recognized that Christianity was a particular view of life and that there was a problem of its relation to other views of life, Kierkegaard was compelled, as a matter of personal urgency, to come to grips with the dominant trends of the age, as expressed in literature and sensibility, some of which were certainly not favourable to Christianity. (7)

Gerhard vom Hofe, who, as we have seen, does to some extent subscribe to the view that Kierkegaard had a romantic phase also acknowledges that '... schon die frühen Tagebücher zeigen ein bemerkenswertes Widerspiel von reflektierter Romantik-Aneignung und kritischer Infragestellung romantischer Poesie und Philosophie', (8) and he argues further that over against literary and historical speculation

...entwirft Kierkegaard in den frühen Tagebüchern gleichzeitig eine theologische Deutung des Romantischen - ein Versuch, das romantische Stadium in einen heilsgeschichtlichen Rhythmus einzuordnen und die Funktion des Romantischen innerhalb der transhistorischen Teleologie der christlichen Heilsgeschichte zu bestimmen. (9)

This emerges with particular clarity in Kierkegaard's deployment of the category of humour and his use of his reading of Hamann which dates from 1836. (10)

Lastly there is the overall pattern of Kierkegaard's writings in the Papirer on art and on romanticism, for these writings tend to see romanticism from the outside, to look at it from a non-romantic standpoint. To interpret these Papirer as the writings of a romantic in fact foreshortens the perspective, so that we see only a selection of the material. It is contended here that the presentation of these writings as writings about romanticism from a standpoint beyond romanticism actually permits the most coherent and total reading of the available texts. In this sense the actual exposition of Kierkegaard's theory of art on the basis of his own writings is the best argument against a 'romantic Kierkegaard'.

Closely connected with the question of whether Kierkegaard had a youthful dalliance with romanticism is the question of how far we can

read the early Papirer as having an ultimately autobiographical reference. Emanuel Hirsch suggested that many entries which might appear to lend themselves to an autobiographical reading are in fact notes for or fragments of a projected epistolary novel, which Hirsch calls the 'Faustian Letters'. (11) If this is accepted, then many of the best-known entries, entries which evoke the mood of nihilistic melancholy - a mood which has become virtually synonymous with the name 'Kierkegaard' - would not represent Kierkegaard's own position, his own life-mood, but could be seen as written with a larger aim in view, namely as a contribution to a critique of just such a position of nihilistic melancholy.

The issues can be concretized by reference to a particular entry.

I have just now come from a gathering where I was the life and soul of the party; witticism flowed from my mouth, everybody laughed, admired me - but I left, yes, the dash sought to be as long as the radii of the earth's orbit --

and wanted to shoot myself.

(I A 161/5141)

Frithiof Brandt, followed by Lowrie, sees here a straightforward autobiographical statement. He even believes that he can specify the date (the entry is undated) as June 4th 1836, the occasion as a farewell party at the Heibergs, and the cause of Kierkegaard's sudden despairing departure as a dressing-down from Poul Møller. (12) Hirsch however sees it as a part of the Faustian Letters, in which case we would not be justified in seeing in it a direct statement of Kierkegaard concerning himself, although we would equally not be justified in assuming that he did not have such experiences. (13)

Hirsch's hypothesis has been taken up with polemical brilliance by Henning Fenger who has brought his acquaintance with danish literature to bear on the question and who has shown that certain appar-

ently autobiographical episodes cannot possibly be such because they contain gross internal contradictions and/or descriptive elements which clash with empirical, e.g. geographical, facts and he has argued that these episodes are best seen as attempts to emulate certain contemporary writers. (14)

The more the autobiographical link is weakened the harder it becomes to maintain the hypothesis of Kierkegaard's romantic youth, and one starts to suspect that the reason why these Papirer have been read in this way is not because the texts themselves require such a reading, but because of the literary principles of the first generations of Kierkegaard scholars, who worked in the shadow of Georg Brandes and his demand that literature be read with reference to the life, the psychology and the social situation of the author. (15)

But if the writings in the early Papirer which deal with art do not represent the self-consciousness of a romantic poet, what do they represent?

No interpreters have erred so much as to maintain that all the material is autobiographical, and it has long been accepted that Kierkegaard was engaged on some sort of project which had something to do with literature and art in this early period. Can we say what sort of project it was?

The editors of the standard danish edition of the Papirer, who in general, worked with the 'autobiographical' model of interpretation, describe it, somewhat ponderously, as a

contribution to the characterization of the spirit of the Middle Ages by means of a broad historical study of the phenomena peculiar to the period, with reference to all areas of cultural life - literature, art, religion, science and social relationships - concentrating on a more exhaustive concrete study of the medieval Volkgeist's manifestation in poetry, saga, tales and legends, and particularly the representative ideas of Don Juan, Faust and the Wandering Jew which had sprung from the popular medieval consciousness ... (16)

Walter Lowrie sees it in similar terms:

He had in mind a grandiose plan, a history of the Middle Ages illuminated by its secular ideals as they are exhibited in the predominant interests of the common people ... The plan he had in mind must have been singularly attractive to this versatile young man because it combined history, literature, aesthetics, and philosophy. For it was to have been a philosophical work in the manner of Hegel ... (17)

Certainly the scope of the project was wide, probably too wide, but did it have a primary focus, and if so what was it? Was it the Middle Ages as the editors of the Papirer and Lowrie suggest, or was it something else?

R. M. Summers argues that 'Kierkegaard's interest in the Middle Ages was limited, however. Medievalism was only an aspect of Romanticism ...' (18) and the present writer would agree with that judgement. It does more justice to the general scope of these notes and to the wording of particular entries to regard the interest in romanticism as primary and the interest in things medieval as secondary rather than vice versa. Kierkegaard, following the romantics themselves and their critics, saw an intrinsic connection between romanticism and the Middle Ages, as we shall see. (19) In the light of this connection it is easy to see the root of possible confusion concerning the primary focus of these studies.

If Kierkegaard's primary interest was at that time the study of romanticism this also means that questions of aesthetics would never have been far from the forefront of his thinking, for, as we have seen, romanticism was in certain essential respects a philosophy of art. In fact it could be argued that the texts are better seen as contributions to a theory and critique of art ~~than~~ as contributions to a theory of romanticism. In a certain sense this is virtually saying the same thing in different words, given the aesthetic nature and ideals of romanticism. However it does point to the more

general philosophical and theological significance of what Kierkegaard was trying to do, for by seeing these writings in terms of their reference to art as such, we can see that Kierkegaard was simply taking up one of the perennial problematics of idealist thought, namely, the relationship between the good, the beautiful, and the true, or, in other words, between religion, art and philosophy. Kierkegaard's vision of romanticism was conditioned by a philosophical perspective which was wider than that required for a mere reaction to a particular, contemporary cultural movement. In romanticism he saw the contemporary manifestation of a recurrent human dilemma, a dilemma which could be elucidated philosophically, and resolved religiously

If we therefore regard the project of these early Papirer as an attempt to form a christian philosophy of art the question arises as to how far this project is 'aesthetic' in a narrower sense.

G. Vom Hofe argues that Kierkegaard's critique of romanticism was basically philosophical and only secondarily based on considerations arising out of art-theory more narrowly understood.

Aesthetische Kriterien begegnen bei Kierkegaard nur selten, sie spielen keine entscheidende Rolle ... Kierkegaard hat keine Aesthetik (im Sinne einer Kunstlehre oder Poetik), gleichwohl aber eine Theorie des Aesthetischen in seiner Stadienlehre entwickelt. Die christlich begründete Anthropologie bestimmt die Intention des Gesamtwerks. (20)

As we have seen, such a distinction between art-theory and philosophy of art is made by Hegel in his Aesthetik, but on the other hand Heiberg is prepared to use philosophical formulae in constructing what is very much a theory of taste, a theory of art in a more specifically aesthetic sense. (21) It might also be argued that, owing to the nature of the subject, Hegel's restrictions on a philosophy of art do not hold in practice, and he himself constantly digresses into concrete exemplifications and splices the logical base

with a vast range of aesthetic analyses and judgements - all of which have contributed to the success and relative popularity of his Aesthetics. (22)

There is then the possibility of a sliding scale running from the pure detachment of a philosophy of art in the sense which Hegel proclaims but does not practise, through Hegel's own practice, to Heiberg's philosophically-based theory of art, down to aesthetic criticism conducted on an ad hoc basis, such as Heiberg would have called dilettantism. Where on this scale is Kierkegaard's philosophy of art to be found?

Although Kierkegaard sees art in a philosophical perspective (a perspective itself limited and determined by his ultimate religious concerns), he has at the same time a keen interest in the application of aesthetic principles to the evaluation and judgement of works of art. This is, of course, most clearly evidenced in his own practice as a literary critic, (23) by the notes on literature and, albeit to a lesser extent, on the other arts, which we find in the Papirer. The philosophy has to mesh in with, to be applicable to, the actual production and reception of works of art. Kierkegaard's philosophy of art, therefore, is not only about the delimitation of the sphere of art in a general way, but also provides signposts to help the reader find his way about within the aesthetic sphere itself.

Conversely, Kierkegaard's ultimate concern is not aesthetic but religious, and it is in the drawing of the boundary between these spheres that the philosophical character of Kierkegaard's theory of art emerges. His writings on romanticism and on art thus contain elements both of art-theory in the narrower sense and of philosophical aesthetics. This is true of the authorship as a whole as well as of the early Papirer. Kierkegaard's philosophy of art is both a

theory and a critique of art. This theory and critique of art, as it is sketched in the early Papirer, will be dealt with under three headings: 'Art and Ideality'; 'The Representative Figures'; 'The Dialectics of Romanticism'. A fourth section will deal with the notes on aesthetics in Papirer IV.

(B) Art and Ideality

In one of the earliest entries in the Papirer, Kierkegaard spells out the basic connection which he sees as holding between art and the ideal.

The reason I cannot really say that I positively enjoy nature is that I do not quite realize what it is that I enjoy. A work of art, on the other hand, I can grasp, I can - if I may put it this way - find that Archimedean point, and as soon as I have found it, everything is readily clear for me. Then I am able to pursue this one main idea and see how all the details serve to illuminate it. I see the author's whole individuality as if it were the sea, in which every single detail is reflected. The author's spirit is kindred to me; he is very probably far superior to me, I am sure, but yet he is limited as I am. The works of the deity are too great for me; I always get lost in the details. (I A 8/117)

In this entry Kierkegaard is describing the ideal attunement which we have observed to be of the essence of the idealist - whether romantic or hegelian - concept of the aesthetic experience. The work of art is constituted as such on the basis of 'one main idea' which unites artist, work and recipient.

In the same entry Kierkegaard goes on to consider the significance of the figure of the blind bard, such as Homer or Ossian. The fact that genius in such figures is allied to blindness indicates to Kierkegaard that the true artist does not copy the beauty of nature in a merely external sense but receives his poetic vision in an 'inward intuition'. The idea, not the sensuous form is the basis of artistic beauty, and it is on this basis that the external form is constructed. Kierkegaard then mentions the case of

François Hubert, a writer on bees, which suggests that he might have been prepared to apply the same principle, at least at this early stage of his development, to the natural sciences. The reference to the bard evokes Hegel's description (in the Phenomenology) of the bard whose 'pathos is Mnemosyne', and although it does not follow that Kierkegaard knew this passage at that time the similarity of their interpretation of the bard is suggestive of a significant overlap in their conceptions of art. (24)

The approach to art indicated by this passage not only links Kierkegaard to the mainstream of idealist aesthetics but also points to a connection between his concern for art and the other problems with which he occupied himself in the early Papirer. Again and again we find him wrestling with the task of finding unity in diversity, of attaining the archimedean point, the intuition of the whole in which relativity is mastered.

We can see such a struggle taking place in his thoughts on the relationship of predestination and human freedom vis-à-vis the problem of evil. For, as Kierkegaard sees it, this problem turns on the question whether there is one single power directing the manifold of phenomena or whether, as in Manichaeism, there is an ultimate dualism, in which case there is no way out of relativity. (25)

The question recurs with regard to the natural sciences, and the inadequacy of merely accumulating data. Though he emphasizes the difficulties involved, Kierkegaard thinks that, in principle at least, natural science can raise itself to the level at which intuition of the ideal unity of the manifold is possible. There are some scientific researchers

...who through their reflection have found or are trying to find that Archimedean point which is nowhere in the world and from that point have surveyed the whole and have seen the details in their proper light. As far as they are concerned, I do not deny that they have had a very salutary

effect on me. One rarely finds tranquility, harmony and joy such as theirs.

(I A 72/5092)

For most men however, science is merely the accumulation of facts, not the achievement of such a speculative standpoint.

(II A 29/1182)

The same tension is present, but with a more existential slant when it comes to facing and choosing between the many possibilities which life offers. Kierkegaard - or the faustian letter-writer - states that 'the crucial thing is to find a truth which is truth for me, to find the idea for which I am willing to live and die' (IA 75/5100) The task of finding this idea is the 'inward action of man', the 'God-side of man', and it is this 'which is decisive, not a mass of data, for the latter will no doubt follow and will not then appear as accidental aggregates or as a succession of details, one after the other, without a system, without a focal point.' (ibid.) To find this 'idea' is also, he says, 'to find myself.' (ibid.)

In all this Kierkegaard is only saying what could have been said by any romantic idealist. The postulate of the unity of the manifold being found in an ideal 'intuition' provides a clear link to Steffens' lectures, and to those such as Sibbern who were inspired by them. (26) On the other hand his emphasis on despair as the motive power in this quest for unity (II A 29/5092) recalls Hegel's definition of philosophical method as a 'highway of despair'. (27) Nor does the ethical emphasis which emerges in the identification of the 'idea' as the self involve a break with the idealist consensus in which the 'idea' and the self in its absolute, productive, original nature are one and the same.

In all these cases, in theology, in natural science and in the situation of existential irresolution, Kierkegaard emphasizes the problematic nature of the attainment of the ideal, integrating intuition. Art however is an exception. In the encounter with the

work of art we can have an experience of wholeness, because we can experience an ideal attunement with the ideal focal point which indwells the work of art - since, as we have seen, this idea is posited by a spiritual subject who is spiritually on the same level as we are - and communion is thus possible.

Not every human production, however, has this characteristic which belongs only to a true work of art, nor indeed is every work which claims the status of art truly art, truly a product of ideality. Only the genuine work of art is able to constitute an 'organic whole' in which the individual parts, while remaining independent, are coordinated with each other in the context of the whole. (I A 32/5063) He commented on Samuel Warren's Passages from the Diary of a Late Physician that, despite the 'piquant and interesting' situations described in it, the book lacks a genuinely poetic vision. The reader is overwhelmed by the mass of material instead of being granted that 'harmonious joy' which is the highest aesthetic experience. (I C 123/5199) (28)

A novel, for instance, must contain and communicate a 'resultant totality, given through the presentation of the manifold of discrete parts', and when this balance of whole and parts is achieved it exemplifies the rule that 'what is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable'. (II A 312(/5361)) That is to say that what Sibbern had described as the 'ideal rebirth' of reality in the aesthetic experience is achieved: the ideally integrated totality stands out of the flux of transiency in which everything that exists in mere particularity is dissolved. It is this unity and totality which Kierkegaard, like Schlegel, finds in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister. In this work he discerns a 'well-balanced guidance which pervades the whole,' (I C 73(/1455)) not only in that the guiding hand of the author is at all times firmly in control, but also in the way that

the hero himself is led to take up the world-view, the 'fichtean moral world-order,' as Kierkegaard calls it, which the author himself presupposes. The novel 'is truly the whole world seen in a mirror, a true microcosm.' (I C 73 (/1455)) He also finds such a 'fichtean moral world-order' in F. M. Von Klinger's Der Faust der Morgenländer. (I C 50/1186)

The 'ideal' novel gives the reader the possibility of a sort of experience comparable to the intuition which would harmonize and explain the totality of the phenomena of the natural world, leaving aside the question as to how far Kierkegaard conceived of that intuition as scientific or existential. The novel is not just a slice of life, it is a whole world, constructed on the basis of, or in the medium of, the ideal. Ideality may however be embodied in different ways in the production of works of art. The Idea (or absolute) is refracted into a manifold of 'ideas', and only in this way does ideality become serviceable for the artist. Every true artist has a particular genius, and he must find that idea which most suits his genius. Many of these 'ideas' come down to us from the past. Examples of this are the ideas of Don Juan, of Faust, of the Wandering Jew. The artist's choice of 'idea' is to some extent determined by the age he lives in, by his historical and cultural situation, (IC 61/511) and even an old idea will be handled in accordance with the presuppositions of the artist's contemporary age. (I A 88/1177) As we have just seen Kierkegaard considers there to be a specific correlation between the novels of Goethe and von Klinger and the contemporary fichtean philosophy, and it is not likely that he would have regarded the synchronicity of the novels and the philosophy as merely accidental, although he did not go as far as Martensen in seeking a formal correlation between philosophy and art. (29)

Nonetheless the artist is not tied by the ideas which are handed

down to him by the past, (I A 86/119) although Kierkegaard criticizes Heine and the young Germany movement for going too far in the direction of a cult of the new for newness' sake. (I A 223/5157) A great artist or writer will distil his idea from his own spiritual individuality. 'An author's work should bear the imprint of his likeness,' (II A 270/5351) Kierkegaard claims, and he notices how a great individual can articulate life's hard-learned lessons in a concise and memorable phrase, sublimating life into literary expression. (I A 121/4386)

The recipient of the work of art must also have the speculative capacity, be able to see the part in relation to the whole. This is something which, in Kierkegaard's view, most people lack. They do not see the tragedy or hear the opera, they see and hear only monologues and arias, only the parts, not the whole. (I A 111/2245) When the idea is perceived and the aesthetic experience of attunement is consummated then life is poetically 'transfigured', (I A 264/1629) a term which Kierkegaard takes over from the tradition, and uses in the sense of the lifting-up or rebirth of the real in the realm of the ideal.

Kierkegaard describes how such an experience of transfiguration comes to him through reading fairy-tales:

When I am weary of everything and "full of days," fairy tales are always a refreshing, renewing bath for me. There all earthly, finite cares vanish; joy, yes, even sorrow, are infinite ... one completely forgets the particular, private sorrows which every man can have, in order to plunge into the deep-seated sorrow common to all ... (II A 207/5287)

In the infinity of the ideal medium of aesthetic experience even the experience of sorrow is refreshing. (30)

Aesthetic experience thus acquires a privileged role for Kierkegaard. Here an attunement is possible such as could only be achieved with great difficulty, if at all, in other spheres of life - in

natural science, in theology, in existential experience. But what is the scope of the privilege enjoyed by art? Is the aesthetic experience absolute or merely provisional, anticipatory? And if it is only provisional, by what is it limited?

Kierkegaard quotes with explicit approval from K. E. Schubarth's lectures Ueber Goethe's Faust that

" ... Statt das also das Absolute in die Philosophie aufzunehmen sei, wo es stets starr, trocken, todt, ungeniesbar verbleibe und verrückte Combinationen veranlasse, gehöre der Begriff desselben recht eigentlich der Poesie an, die ihm allein Giltigkeit zu verschaffen und ihn durch das grenzenlose Schwärmen der Einbildungskraft, dem er entspricht, erst lebendig, wirksam, wahr, so wie ergötzlich und heiter zu machen im Stande sei." (I C 97)

The superiority of poetry over philosophy is likewise indicated by Kierkegaard's approval of Poul Møller's insertion of an humorous episode into the Immortality essay as being a dramatic device which improves on a merely scientific presentation. (II A 17/5201)

However it must be noted that Hegel too acknowledged that poetry had an intrinsic similarity to speculative thought which put it 'above' merely dry, rationalistic, abstract philosophy. (31) These passages are to some extent prophetic of Kierkegaard's later work, of his method of presenting philosophical and theological issues in the imaginative, 'unscientific' fashion, but it is important to note that in these early Papirer aesthetic experience is expressly relativized. It does not represent the absolute.

Although the first entry which we examined in this section described the experience of works of art as being able to give an experience of ideal harmony such as would not be possible in an encounter with phenomena of the natural world, this quality of the experience of art also indicates its restrictedness. Such aesthetic experience leaves the question of the ultimate unity of phenomena in actuality, in the real world, unanswered - nor does it answer the young man's existential question as to what he should do with his life, nor does

it resolve the theological question concerning the origin of evil, of other-than-divine forces, and the place of such forces in the universal order.

Aesthetic experience, aesthetic attunement, thus stands in a problematic relation to the actual situation of man-in-the-world. Typically, Kierkegaard asserts that the wholeness which poetry and art project and bestow is not to be found in reality. As we have already seen, the refreshment which he finds in reading fairy-stories stands in contrast to the weariness he feels in life. Elsewhere he refers to the 'poetic morning-dream of our life' being related to reality as Moses is related to Joshua: the one sees the promised land, but it is only the other, the follower, the epigone, who enters. (II A 165/859) However much poetry attempts to engage itself with reality there is a point of separation which can never be crossed. Just as Pharaoh dreamed first of the lean cattle and secondly of the wasted corn, thereby moving from a less to a more adequate symbol of famine, so poetry can make its symbols more and more precise, it can bring them closer and closer to reality, but without touching it: Pharaoh's dreams remain dreams. (II A 551/3651)

An experience which is essentially akin to aesthetic experience is the pantheistic mood in which

One dozes, as it were, in the totality of things (a pantheistic element, without producing strength as does the religious) in an oriental reverie in the infinite, in which everything appears to be fiction - and one is reconciled as in a grand poem: the being of the whole world, the being of God, and my own being are poetry in which all the multiplicity, the wretched disparities of life, indigestible for human thought, are reconciled in a misty, dreamy existence. But then, regrettably, I wake up again, and the very same tragic relativity in everything begins worse than ever
...
(II A 125/1019)

Although this is intended as a description of a psychological mood with no specific connection to the experience of art, the comments that 'one is reconciled as in a grand poem,' that 'everything

appears to be fiction,' that God, the world, the self, have become 'poetry', all signal that there is considerable overlap between such a mood and the mood which aesthetic attunement evokes in us. Earlier in the entry the mood is described as 'vegetative', and this, together with the term 'oriental', and indeed the whole tenor of the description, link it to the aesthetic vision of Friedrich Schlegel. (32) Kierkegaard's account of this mood, however, makes it clear that he regards such an experience as powerless to resolve the real conflicts of existence, to which the dreamer must always return.

The connection between pantheism and aesthetic experience is also made in another entry which contrasts such a mood with the demands of Christianity. The middle section of the entry runs:

The caricature of pantheism is obviously the evaporation of the person brought about by the luxuriousness, the poetic world that the individual projects, in which authentic conscious existence is surrendered and everything is poetry, in which the individual is at most like a flower woven in a damask cloth. (IIA 464/ 3890)

The world constructed by poetry in the medium of ideality is a dream-world, a pantheistic world. In his attunement to the idea as it is present in a work of art the individual transcends himself into an infinite, ideal dimension, in which he experiences a joyous, harmonious integration of himself with the divine and with the world. Such an integration can however only be at best provisional and at worst illusory. It is a loss of self rather than a finding of self. It is a dream in which the boundaries of self and not-self disappear, so that the dreamer can ask with von Eichendorff (quoted by Kierkegaard): ' "—Träume ich denn, oder träumt diese phantastische Nacht von mir? ?" ' (II A 405) And in a fragmentary entry which seems to be a preliminary working of II A 125 (the description of the pantheistic mood), we read of a 'misty, dreaming, fairy-like existence - the purely aesthetic - ...' (II A 618). The pure aesthetic experience is a 'misty, dreaming, fairy-like' condition, the volatilization of the personality.

It is the experience, the despairing experience, of the contradictions of existence which, as we have seen, motivates the pursuit of the intuition of ideal harmony, (II A 49/1569) and it is a similar experience of duality, of "Zerrissenheit" which lies at the root of the creative power which produces the aesthetic world. The joy of aesthetic experience is a child of sorrow.

When one understands Brorson's words

When the heart is most oppressed

Then the harp of joy is tuned

not religiously, as they were written, but esthetic-ally; then he has in them a motto for all poetic existence, which necessarily must be unhappy.

(III A 12/800)

Even in describing the relativity of art, however, Kierkegaard does not deny its relative validity.

The poetic ... is the cord through which the divine holds fast to existence. Therefore one could believe that they are the blessed, those gifted individuals, those living telegraph wires between God and men.

But this is most certainly not true ... their lot...

[is] annihilation of their personal existence as being incapable of enduring the touch of the divine ... his fate: to know a thirst which is never satisfied. The poetic life in the personality is the unconscious sacrifice ... it is first in the religious that the sacrifice becomes conscious and the misrelationship is removed.

(III A 62/1027)

The realm of poetry, of art in general, is ambiguous. On the one hand, as illuminated by the power of ideality, as the transfiguration of life, it is akin to the divine. But in such aesthetic experience of transfiguration the self is dissipated in the ideal, it does not find itself.

Kierkegaard's presuppositions here are at once religious and philosophical. Religiously he presupposes a gulf between the existent self and the divine, a gulf which cannot, in the first instance, be crossed from the human side. This means that consciousness is required to be clear about the difference, the separateness of human and divine selfhood. Thus any such confusion of divine and human as occurs in the pantheistic mood veils the divine rather than

bringing it closer.

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Philosophically, Kierkegaard's thought at this point echoes the idealist tradition from Fichte to Hegel, and in particular Hegel, in that it requires that the 'idea' does not exist merely one-sidedly, as an idea in opposition to reality, but also comes into relationship to reality. Aesthetic experience however involves the suspension of the consciousness of reality and transposes the self into a realm of pure ideality. It is a flight from reality rather than the integration of the manifold of the elements of reality into an ideal unity.

Putting these religious and philosophical analyses together, we may say that art, aesthetic experience, is the sublimation of the painful experience of existential self-contradiction rather than the facing and overcoming of this contradiction. Consequently the 'cure' which religion proposes for the unhappy consciousness of the poet is, as the last-quoted extract makes clear, not the introduction of a new object into consciousness, but rather an increase in consciousness. The cure consists firstly in the self acquiring insight into its contradictory predicament. The poet's problem however, is that he is unable to come to a clear understanding of the duality by which his existence is defined, but when such knowledge is attained, then the 'sacrifice' becomes conscious and the misrelationship is removed.'

(III A 62/1027)

In this perspective, the nihilistic or dualistic phase of romanticism reveals the true nature of the idea in art, for it reveals the discord, the pain, the suffering, which is the real root of the world of harmonious images, the world of aesthetic experience.

To see the way in which Kierkegaard envisages the increase of consciousness which will lead to the overcoming of the aesthetic self-misunderstanding we turn firstly to his discussion of the 'Representative Figures'.

(C) The Representative Figures

In these early Papirer there are a considerable number of entries relating to the three 'representative figures' of Don Juan, Faust and the Wandering Jew (in Danish the 'eternal' Jew). The relevant entries comprise reading lists, notes and excerpts from primary and secondary sources as well as Kierkegaard's own observations and insights. The vast majority of these entries are from the years 1835-6, not from the very earliest strata of the Papirer but still early. It is a period which Nelly Viallaneix and those who share the 'romantic Kierkegaard' hypothesis see as his romantic phase. (33) The treatment of the representative figures however shows the application of a dialectical method akin to Hegelian rather than to romantic procedures. Kierkegaard's interest in these figures does not disappear, and he continues to refer to them and to use the lessons he had learned from his study of them in the period of his published authorship.

These entries form a distinct group and it is clear that Kierkegaard had in mind some literary project in which the three figures were collectively involved. In the perspective which has been adopted for this study they can be seen as playing a key role in the theory and critique of art. Although the editors of the Papirer use Kierkegaard's preoccupation with these figures as evidence for their hypo-

thesis concerning his study of the medieval spirit (34) it may be argued that they are not studied so much as historical phenomena, as embodying the spirit of the late Middle Ages, but as ideas. Kierkegaard himself defines them as the 'three great ideas representing life in its three tendencies, as it were, outside of religion...' (I A 150/795). Moreover his interest in them is typically focussed on their use as artistic ideas, in the sense described in the previous section of this chapter. (35) As artistic ideas they were of direct contemporary relevance, since they had been taken up by Mozart (Don Juan), Goethe (Faust) and nihilistic romanticism (The Wandering Jew). (36)

Kierkegaard seeks to relate these ideas to their appropriate aesthetic media. At one point he argues that Faust, as the most mediated figure, 'contains' both Don Juan and the Wandering Jew, and he supports this claim by arguing that Don Juan is essentially represented lyrically, i.e. musically, the Jew epically and Faust dramatically. (I C 58/1179) It is a guide to Kierkegaard's intellectual orientation in these studies that this point explicitly reflects Heiberg's arrangement of poetic forms - lyric, epic, dramatic - precisely at the point where Heiberg's aesthetic schema differs from Hegel. The same entry implies that there is an intrinsic dialectical connection between these figures, they are not just chosen at random from the manifold of cultural history.

It is tempting to draw the conclusion that we see Kierkegaard here as an aspiring man of letters in the school of the hegelian Heiberg. Why should we resist this temptation? Indeed such a conclusion is encouraged by the consideration that these entries date from the same period as Kierkegaard's journalistic debut in Heiberg's Københavns Flyvende Post. As a good heibergian Kierkegaard is seeking to formulate the correct relationship of each idea to its

corresponding aesthetic form.

At an earlier stage Kierkegaard had been interested in the 'idea' (understood in a similar sense) of the Master-Thief as represented in various folk-tales. (37) But this idea does not get worked into the complex of Don Juan, Faust and the Jew. Yet the Master-Thief too would surely serve as a figure representing one aspect of life outside religion? Could it be that for a young heibergian the triadic logic of aesthetics means that three is company and four a crowd? Is this why the figure of the Master-Thief falls by the wayside?

Whatever the answer to these last speculations, the dialectical, indeed the hegelian, nature of Kierkegaard's approach to these 'ideas' is manifest in a lengthy entry reflecting on the mozartian personae: Cherubino, Papageno and Don Juan, (I C 125/4397) reflections which are later taken up in Either-Or. (38) Kierkegaard believes that these three figures represent three stages in which 'Mozart has consummately and perfectly presented a development of love on the level of immediacy.' (ibid.) Don Juan himself 'is the unity of both stages and is the final stage of the development of immediacy.' (ibid.) Following Heiberg, Kierkegaard equates the 'immediate' quality of these figures with the requirement that they be presented musically. He says that 'naturally, all three stages, being immediate, are purely musical, and any attempt in another presentation is likely to endow them with far too much consciousness.' (ibid.)

The three figures - Don Juan, Faust, the Jew - represent respectively sensuousness, doubt and despair. But as 'ideas' they are not subject to moral or religious judgement. Such a moralistic, judgmental approach only becomes possible if an individual tries to live in accordance with these ideas. (I A 150/795) The implication - if they are understood as essentially aesthetic ideas - is that the

realm of art has its own autonomous principles of judgement distinct from those of morality and religion.

The importance for art of a correct understanding of what it is that each idea represents is demonstrated by Kierkegaard in his comments on Goethe's Faust. Goethe is wrong, he asserts, to let Faust convert. (I A 104/1178; I A 292/1181; I A 72/5092) Faust is doubt personified and as such he cannot be shown as going back to a state of pre-doubting innocence without ceasing to be Faust. He is nailed to the spot to which the dialectic of the idea confines him. Likewise Lenau is criticized for having Faust commit suicide which again, according to Kierkegaard, shows a misconception of the Faust idea. (II A 50/1183; II A 56/1184)

One might be permitted at this point to suspect that Kierkegaard is displaying the typical heibergian weakness of making the actual aesthetic material fit the logical schema rather than the other way round.

If an artist wants to portray a position of despair, beyond doubt then he must, according to Kierkegaard, allow 'the idea hovering over all its actual forms' to potentiate itself to a new idea - the Wandering Jew. (II A 56/1184) Though this entry again shows the inherent dialectical interrelatedness of the ideas it suggests a new arrangement. Instead of Don Juan - the Wandering Jew - Faust, we now have Don Juan - Faust - the Wandering Jew. What is the significance of the new arrangement?

Basically it means that now the idea of life outside religion is seen as potentiating itself through increasingly inward, increasingly self-conscious levels of despair. This despair was only implicitly conscious in the immediate, genial form of Don Juan but it comes to a full consciousness of itself in the figure of the Jew, whose character is summed up for Kierkegaard in words which he excerpts

from E. T. A. Hoffmann, who writes that the Jew "...durch das bunteste Gewühl der Welt, ohne Freude, ohne Hoffnung, ohne Schmerz, in dumpfer Gleichgültigkeit, die das caput mortuum der Verzweiflung ist. wie durch eine unwirthbare trostlose Einöde wandelte (I·C"60)

This arrangement also suggests that Kierkegaard is free from any rigid adherence to heibergian dogma, but in no way does it necessarily put him outside the hegelian pale. On the contrary the dialectic of the development of a self-consciousness of estrangement from the substantial divine ground which Kierkegaard develops here parallels Hegel's account of the 'Unhappy Consciousness' in the Phenomenology. This does not mean that Kierkegaard derived this pattern from Hegel - it may simply be the consequence of the application of the dialectical method to similar material, with certain common presuppositions. (39)

The culmination of the dialectics of despair in the figure of the Wandering Jew also links Kierkegaard's speculations to Poul Møller. Møller, as we have seen, wrote a set of aphorisms depicting the character of Ahasverus, the Jew, as the embodiment of the nihilistic attitude. If Kierkegaard too saw the essential characteristic of the present age revealed in nihilism it would be consistent for him to have the dialectics of despair culminate in the Jew, in nihilism.

Can the dialectic of the three figures in fact be projected on to the screen of history? By piecing together excerpts from various entries we may conclude that it can.

Though in one sense all three figures emerge from the folk-consciousness of the Middle Ages, Don Juan belongs to this period in a special way. This is implicit in a number of entries in the Papirer and is stated explicitly in Either-Or. (SV2p.83) Faust however - as Martensen had maintained (40) - is a parody of the reformation, (II A 53/1968) and the Jew is said to be essentially a figure of the modern age. (I A 181/737)

This historical sequence can now be related back to the characterization of the figures as artistic ideas and it is seen that they represent the process of development of the consciousness of art of its separation from the substantial divine ground, or, in other words, three stages in the secularization of art, leading to the self-annihilating insight into the emptiness of its content. Art can attain to knowledge of this situation but cannot itself resolve it. This is the significance of the Wandering Jew who represents a limit for art; art cannot go beyond this idea. If it does it ceases to be art, for the next stage is not aesthetic - it is religious.

The representative figures are thus patient of interpretation as essentially aesthetic ideas which by the dialectic of their development point to the need for the transcendence of the aesthetic as such. For Kierkegaard as for Hegel the Reformation constitutes a watershed: this side of the Reformation we cannot avoid the consciousness that art is unable to give a satisfactory form to religious belief, that the spirit now requires the inwardness of faith, not the externality of the image. (41) The three figures reveal the negative aspect of this process: the imagination's acquisition of the consciousness of its inner emptiness, of the knowledge that the content of art is irrevocably secular, unavoidably relative.

This reading of these fragmentary notes carries further the analysis of the ideal status of art in the preceding section. It acquires support from the larger body of notes which we shall examine under the heading 'The Dialectics of Romanticism.'

(D) The Dialectics of Romanticism

(D) (i) The Dialectical Nature of Romanticism

Kierkegaard regarded romanticism as intrinsically dialectical,

in a sense which he was prepared to acknowledge was hegelian:

It is quite curious that, after being occupied so long with the concept of the romantic, I now see for the first time that the romantic becomes what Hegel calls the dialectical, the other [= second, i.e. second stage of the dialectical triad, G.P.] position where

Stoicism - fatalism
Pelagianism - Augustinianism
Humour - irony
et.

are at home, positions which do not have any continuance by themselves, but life is a constant pendulum movement between them.

(I A 225/1565)

This means that the essence of romanticism can only reveal itself through a sequence of one-sided positions. In this respect it can be contrasted with classicism which represents a position of self-enclosed unity and harmony. Kierkegaard spells out this contrast in a number of ways. In discussing these positions Kierkegaard claims that they are not so much historical forms as ideal possibilities latent in every age and in every dimension of aesthetics, (I A 171/3804) but nonetheless most of what he actually says on the subject presupposes the identification of the classical with ancient Greece and of the romantic with the Middle Ages.

He formulated the distinction between the two with regard to the different ways in which they reflect the polarities of ideality and reality (or actuality). In the classical the ideal and the real are perfectly integrated, but in the romantic such integration can never be achieved. (I A 135/16) That is to say that the classical has no ideals other than those which are capable of actualization in the forms of finite existence, whereas the romantic spirit posits an ideal which perpetually transcends reality. (I A 221/853) Consequently classicism expresses itself in images of repose, romanticism in images of restlessness. (I A 203/3806)

In principle each attitude requires the other:

When I consider the matter entirely in abstracto, I must in all consistency come to the conclusion that the romantic resolves itself into a classicism,* although every attempt

to demonstrate the classical period in time is naturally of a mythological nature and arises only because of the human weakness which can never grasp a concept in all its infinite evanescence but must always stake it off by using boundaries ... every attempt to say "now it is finished" is an attempt to transform it into mythology.

*[...] romantic striving is a self-consuming, and I cannot render it eternal, since then I would get an eternity consisting of an infinite aggregate of moments - yet all this in abstracto.

(I A 294/3815)

The unbalanced state of the romantic spirit, Kierkegaard is saying, reaches out for and requires the stability of the classical - although the romantic spirit can never entirely be captured in any finite particular form. This in turn means that if the romantic without the classical tends towards a 'self-consuming' formlessness, then the classical without the romantic will tend towards the reduction of ideals to the level of the particular. Classicism, he says, 'has no ideal - or, what amounts to the same thing - it has an ideal attainable in this world.' (I A 221/852) Consequently classicism, left to itself, would bring about a situation where 'the esthetic ideal is replaced by national taste, yes, town-and-class taste, and the most correct copy of it.' (I A 222/853) Each concept will therefore tend to cancel the other while at the same time requiring the tension which the other gives it.

Kierkegaard jots down a considerable number of notes showing how the basic difference in structure manifests itself. In dramatic art, for instance, the use of masks in greek tragedy exemplifies the classical concept of character as something static, whilst the romantic actor presupposes a more open, a more fluid concept, and his performance is consequently a constant striving to represent an imagined character whose persona is not completely fulfilled and cannot be represented in its entirety in any one moment or in any one appearance. (I A 219/3811) In sculpture the romantic spirit is expressed by the use of drapery as opposed to the simple nudity of greek

statuary. (I A 218/3810) Kierkegaard also sees the reconciliation of the ideal and the real in the representatives of contemporary neo-classicism, amongst whom he numbers Goethe, Hegel and the danish sculptor Thorvaldsen. (42)

The dualism of the romantic consciousness is again manifested in the romantic concept of time. The romantic spirit can only see time in a negative aspect. Consequently 'the romantic Middle Ages comprehends only one side of eternity - the vanishing of time.' (II A 100/832) The same dissatisfaction with time is evidenced in the latter-day romantics' wish to recall the age of chivalry, although Kierkegaard sees their wish as essentially in vain. (I C 86) The way in which time is apprehended thus becomes another criterion for distinguishing the romantic and the classical from each other: 'The classical is present tense; the romantic is aorist.' (I A 137/17)

The romantic consciousness of time is reflected in the status which music comes to possess in romanticism. In Molbech's Forelaesninger over den Nyere danske Poesie Kierkegaard read that music is the most romantic of the arts 'for it exceeds all other art in dealing with the infinite, the inexhaustible, the unfathomable in the soul, but here only through feeling, immediately intuited ...' (I C 88/5135) He notes that the essential element of music, the perfect tone, is not a logically or mathematically definable point, but is rather a constant oscillation between the mathematically perfect and the imperfect. (II A 711/1024) In this respect, in its lack of static perfection music mirrors the dialectical structure of the romantic idea. The essential musicality of the romantic spirit appears again in romantic poetry, the predominant element of which is tonality. (I A 250/2304) The close historical connection between music and romantic (=medieval) poetry is noted by Kierkegaard in connection with his reading of Friedrich Diez, Die Poesie der Troubadours.

The dialectical structure of romanticism is also traced by Kierkegaard to its historical genesis out of the marriage of Christianity with the northern cultures, with their conception of life as a struggle, and thus as a constant self-surpassing striving. (I C 85/5131) Although we have described the essence of romanticism as being rooted in the split between the idea and reality Kierkegaard also describes it as a split within the idea itself.

The romantic actually arises from the two halves of one idea being kept apart by some intervening foreign element. When Adam was created, Adam's idea craved its supplement in Eve ... Eve comes, and the romantic is over, there is repose ... Is echo romantic? Yes, but when it answers, the romantic is over.

The romantic period always has something in mente. (I A 140/3801)

The last sentence indicates again Kierkegaard's idea that the romantic ideal always transcends the actual available forms which might serve for its manifestation.

We shall now develop this dialectical conception of romanticism under three further headings: The Dialectic of Moods; The Dialectic of the Middle Ages; Irony and Humour.

(D) (ii) The Dialectic of Moods

The essential mood of romanticism reflects the basic dualism of the romantic idea. It is a mood in which there is both presence and absence, a mood which, like the musical tone, cannot be fixed.

In his notes on Molbech's lectures Kierkegaard recapitulates Jean Paul's description of this mood:

Jean P. likens the romantic to the illumination of an area by moonlight or to the tone waves in the echo of a ringing bell, of a stroked string - a trembling sound that swims as it were, farther and farther away and finally loses itself in us and still sounds within us although outside of us it is quiet.

(I C 88/5135)

The romantic is 'a continual grasping after something which eludes one,' (I A 303/3816) and can only be expressed allegorically - the romantic image testifies as much to the absence as to the pre-

sence of its object, it gives 'only the image of the shadow,' (I A 303/3816) because 'the whole idea cannot rest and be contained in the actual expression,' (I A 214/3807) There is an inescapable dimension of mystery in the romantic. (II A 78/1682)

The typical romantic mood may therefore be described as a mood of yearning or longing. Although some theorists of romanticism located the essence of the romantic in its delight in the manifold, Kierkegaard dissents. (I A 155/3803; I A 315/3817; II A 638/1945) For the manifold itself is called into being by a longing, which is thus prior to the manifold and which the manifold is incapable of satisfying. (I A 155/3803)

Kierkegaard accordingly finds the situation of Ingeborg in Frithiof's Saga archetypically romantic, as she sits on the seashore watching the departing sail of Frithiof's vessel. (I A 136/3800)

Similarly

I find an absolutely perfect example of the romantic in the Old Testament, in the Book of Judith, chapter 10, verse 11: "And Judith went out, she and her maidservant with her; but the men of the city watched her until she came down from the mountain, until she came through the valley and they could see her no more. And they proceeded onward in the valley."
(II A 197/3822)

Why are such scenes 'romantic'? Because they evoke the mood of longing, a mood in which consciousness reaches out after a vanishing object and seeks to transcend the boundaries set for it by the solid data of immediate sensuous experience. This longing is 'the umbilical cord of the higher life.' (II A 343/4409) It is a movement from the given to the possible.

The typically romantic landscape is thus, for Kierkegaard, one in which monotony predominates, because the absence of landmarks by which to judge distances or to guess the places of origin of the sounds which reach the ear, allows the mind to exercise itself in precisely this kind of stretching-out, this disportment in the possible. Such

romantic landscapes are the Jutland Heath or the Arabian Desert. (I A 131/3797); II A 68/2279) The same motif recurs in Kierkegaard's observation that the favourite romantic sports are hunting and fishing, and he notes that in such sports the sportsman's consciousness is preoccupied with the possible - what might be caught. Such sports stand in contrast to the 'classical' sports such as athletics, which involve hard, constraining discipline. (I A 132/3798) The relativization of boundaries which both encourages and is demanded by the mood of longing is also shown in the importance of 'wandering' in the romantic Middle Ages. Kierkegaard sees this characteristic exemplified in the wandering knights, scholars, minstrels, religious, etc. of that era. (IA 262/3814; II A 428/4927)

The same structure is reflected in the kindred mood of premonition (dan. Ahnen or Ahnelse, tr. by Hong and Hong as Presentiment). Once more with reference to Molbech Kierkegaard notes that 'the romantic has been called the poetry of presentiment.' (I C 88/5135) We have already seen the importance which Steffens gave to this idea, and Kierkegaard cites Steffens in this connection, though he does not cite the 1802-3 lectures. (II A 32/3551; II A 588/3555) Premonition, he says, 'is the homesickness of earthly life for the higher, for the perspicuity which man must have had in his paradisiac life,' (II A 191/92) a statement which reflects the definition of longing as the 'umbilical cord of the higher life.' (II A 343/4409)

For Kierkegaard premonition is ambiguous. It can relate to evil as well as to good, as is evidenced by the use made of it in folk-tales:

folklore is also permeated with a profound, earnest melancholy, a presentiment of the power of evil, a quiet resignation which allows every age to pay its tribute to this unyielding power, that is why execution sites, ravens and crows, prisons, seductions etc. play such a large role [...] All presentiment is murky and rises all at once in the consciousness or so gradually fills the soul with anxiety that it does not arise as a conclusion from given premisses but always manifests itself in an undefined something ... (II A 32/3551)

Premonition can not only receive warnings of impending evil, it is itself a dangerous power for it can arouse a fear of evil which leads to the execution of the act which it anxiously anticipates.

A certain presentiment seems to precede everything which is to happen (cf. a loose sheet); but just as it can have a deterring effect, it can also tempt a person to think that he is, as it were, predestined; he sees himself carried on to something as though by consequences beyond his control. Therefore one ought to be very careful with children, never believe the worst and by untimely suspicion or by a chance remark (a flame of hell which ignites the tinder which is in every soul) occasion an anguished consciousness in which innocent but fragile souls can easily be tempted to believe themselves guilty, to despair, and thereby to make the first step toward the goal foreshadowed by the unsettling presentiment ...

(II A 18/91; cf. II A 19; II A 20/5205; II A 584/3999)

Premonition is thus a mood in which the anxious consciousness of original sin can be aroused. (II A 32/3551; II A 33/3552; II A 588/3555) Indeed what Kierkegaard says about premonition in these early Papirer lays the foundation for his later development of the concept of angst, and it is notable that the adjectival forms of 'angest' appear in several of the entries mentioned here.

Although the predominant tone of premonition is anticipatory, it can also be described as a beholding of the future in the mirror of the past. (II A 558/3553) This provides a link to its function as the agency of the arousal of the consciousness or original sin, especially since the danish term 'Arvesynd' means literally 'hereditary sin', and explicitly links the individual not just to the race but to the past of the race from which this sin is inherited. It also provides a link to another mood akin both to premonition and to longing. This is melancholy (dan. Veemod cf. ger. Wehmut).

Melancholy is a term naturally associated with bereavement, being the consciousness of absence or incompleteness. It can be objective, a quality belonging to a landscape. Such objective melancholy is evoked in Kierkegaard's description of Gurre Lake, a lake gradually being overgrown by rushes and so reclaimed by the land. 'Here

around Lake Gurre there rests a quiet melancholy; the region lives, so to speak, more in the past.' (I A 64/5095)

The association with bereavement is brought out in one of the well-known entries in the Gilleleie-Journal in which Kierkegaard - or his Faustian letter-writer - describes how, on a walk along the cliff-tops near the fishing village of Gilleleie, he experiences a momentary feeling of communion with his departed loved ones: 'but then the seagull's harsh screech reminded me that I stood alone, and everything vanished before my eyes, and I turned back with a heart full of melancholy to mingle with the world's crowds - without, however, forgetting such blessed moments.' (I A 68/5099 adapted) Here the word melancholy has a double resonance. It evokes both the melancholy which the loss of his loved ones had in the first instance induced and it also evokes the moment of melancholy which follows the withdrawal of imaginary communion with them, a moment in which the first bereavement is also made elsewhere.

This sort of melancholy must be distinguished from the melancholy which Kierkegaard discusses in his published work, and with which his literary personality is regrettably but irrevocably linked. This latter sort of melancholy translates a quite distinct word - 'Tungsind' - literally 'heavy-mindedness', perhaps more suitably translated as 'depression'. (43)

There is a certain parallel between the relation of veemod-melancholy to tungsind-melancholy and the relation of premonition to angst. The second term in each case marks a subjectivization, an internalization, an intensification of the first term. In both cases we can see how Kierkegaard's typically existential concepts grow out of the development of concepts originally employed in the analysis of romanticism.

The romantic moods of longing, premonition and melancholy all

betray the same dualistic structure, and point to the concepts of irony and humour in which the romantic consciousness fulfils and transcends itself. We shall not however, proceed directly to the exposition of these concepts. We turn next to the characterization of the Middle Ages as the romantic era par excellence, which will also lead us to irony and humour, and which will amplify the perspective in which these concepts are to be seen.

(D) (iii) The Dialectic of the Middle Ages

The dualism which characterizes the romantic spirit and which can be traced in the structure of typical romantic moods can be seen again in Kierkegaard's characterization of the Middle Ages. Indeed he sees this dualism everywhere in the life of the Middle Ages. Although medieval culture was based on the Church and on organic social forms the manifestations of medieval life are consistently polarised into dialectical pairs. Thus the Middle Ages had separate scientific and poetic languages, (I A 213/2698) poetry itself was divided into nature-poetry and art-poetry, (I A 226/2699) the cloister existed in tension to the chivalric ideal, (I A 267/2745) as the ideal of celibacy stood in opposition to the idea of courtly love. (II A 429/2581) Even in the liturgy the clergy were divided from the people. (I A 284/2702) The same predisposition to duality emerges in the many self-contradictory features of the chivalric sagas and narratives. (II A 36/5209; II A 43-5/5212-4) It also appears in Gothic architecture and scholastic method, both of which, Kierkegaard claims, involve the continual refraction and repetition of the same basic patterns. (III A 92/755)

It is perhaps above all in the figure of the licensed fool that this dualistic tendency can be seen. The fool is the dialectical counterweight to the knightly hero. The figure of the fool appears

in the legends of all of the representative figures who emerge in the Middle Ages. Thus Don Quixote has his Sancho Panza, Don Juan his Leporello, Faust his Wagner. (I A 122/4387) This Fool, or clown, who in von Eichendorff's phrase is 'der Doppelgänger aller menschlichen Torheiten,' (I A 157) represents the chorus in the world-tragedy and provides a constant reminder of the social split between the nobility and the lower classes, and a reminder too that in such a situation of division it takes both parts to make the whole man. (I A 145/1670)

In the figure of the fool the dialectic of the Middle Ages potentiates itself to the standpoint of irony. However, since the Middle Ages is essentially a period in which life is manifest in objective or external forms, irony too can only appear in objective forms, such as the fool, or the children's crusade, which Kierkegaard calls 'history's sarcastic comment on chivalry.' (I A 281/2701) Such objective irony is indeed a recurrent element of the folk-tales which originate in the Middle Ages:

...in order to extort some gift from a troll it was only a matter of getting in between (the stones) when the troll wanted to go down under. But the really remarkable thing is the nemesis that was likely to follow when someone became involved with them, for how often we hear of someone's having gotten the good sword, the bow, the arrow, etc., he asked for, and yet there usually was a little "but" that went with it in that he often thereby became an instrument in the hands of fate to wipe out his own family, etc., how many tragic consequences resulted from the minor circumstance that this sword, once drawn, cannot be put in its sheath unless it has been dipped in warm human blood. (I A 144/5133, cf. I C 84/5130)

Irony is a manifestation of the imbalance between ideality and reality which underlies the whole of the romantic development. In irony the self or ideal pole is unable to overcome the world, but is tied to the world in its dialectical or dualistic forms. (IA 154/1671) Within the realm of finitude in its separation from the infinite idea such irony cannot be avoided. Every development culminates in its own parody and ends in self-contradiction.
(I A 285-288/4066, 5178, 2209, 4067)

In this way idea and reality, or the two halves of the idea in its separation from itself, come into contradiction with each other. Consequently despair belongs to the essence of romanticism, a despair which is figured in the person of the Wandering Jew. (II A 50/1183) This despair was contained in the Middle Ages by the objectivity of the forms in which it appeared, for the medieval dialectic was based in the stabilizing context of social and ecclesiastical cohesion. (II A 114/1698; II A 383/35; II A 385/1978; II A 468/2707) The 'desperate' nature of irony could only be fully revealed in a further development in which the individual was subjectivized, torn out of the organic wholeness of religion and society and thrown back upon his own resources. We see this take place in the dialectic of irony and humour.

(D) (iv) Irony and Humour

Humour and irony are frequently juxtaposed by Kierkegaard. Humour is in a sense a potentiation of irony in terms of subjectivity and self-consciousness. 'Humour is irony carried through to its most powerful vibrancy.' (II A 136(/1699)) what appears objectively in irony is subjectively and individually appropriated in humour - 'irony in nature and humour in the individual.' (II A 608/1711 cf. II A 102/1690) When irony sees into its own nature it destroys itself, seeing its own nullity, but it is precisely this insight which humour presupposes. (II A 102/1690)

Humour, like irony, reflects a dissonant relationship of self and world. But whereas in the ironic stage the individual who knows his "difference" from the world and who tries to act upon this knowledge ends up being mocked by the world, the humorous individual cannot be touched by the world. Humour and irony are likened to the two ends of a seesaw: humour lies above the point of balance, irony

below. (I A 154/1671) But humour is not merely a potentiation of the concept of irony. For the concept of humour coalesces with the concept of character. The position beyond irony can equally well be labelled humour or character. Both transcend both the immediate and the dialectical stages of existence. (I A 239/1676) This new position of humour/character is however not merely the result of a spontaneous self-development by the dialectical stage, which, as we have seen, is represented in the romantic consciousness and which culminates in irony.

Humour does not stem from the dialectical self-development of the idea, but from the christian revelation. It is essentially a christian category, for it presupposes the christian negation of the world in its totality, the devaluation of all hitherto received values. Here all is made new. (II A 608/1711) Humour sees that

everything which hitherto had asserted itself in the world and continued to do so was placed in relation to the presumably single truth of the Christians, and therefore to the Christians the kings and the princes, enemies and persecutors, etc., etc., appeared to be nothing and to be laughable because of their opinions of their own greatness.
(I A 207/1674)

The humorist thus assumes, or perhaps posits, a separation of self and world far more drastic than that which is present in the ironic self-consciousness. The separation is here made absolute, the world is relativized in its entirety, whereas in irony it was only the case that one aspect of the world was played off against another aspect.

In accordance with this separation of self and world the humorist is essentially solitary, like a beast of prey (II A 694/1719) or like Robinson Crusoe on his desert island. (II A 136/1699) Humour is 'absolutely isolated, independently personal.' (*ibid.*) In this respect there is a certain similarity between the humorist and Ahasverus, the Wandering Jew, as described in Poul Møller's aphorisms. Kierkegaard, for instance, imagines 'a travelling

humorist who is making preliminary studies, preparatory work for a theodicy - he travels about seeking as far as possible to experience everything in order to prove that everything is a disappointment.' (III A 98/1736) Such a figure is very close to the Ahasverus of Møller's 17th aphorism: 'Your stupid philosophers believe that every philosophical system which appears is new; but in many milieux I have learnt that philosophy has gone through its natural stages, and I have heard the same squabbles about the same difficulties. For me the whole thing is only a cycle of pieces on a barrel-organ.' (44) Both represent the philosophy of the Preacher that ' All is vanity,' that 'there is nothing new under the sun.' (45)

We have seen that art is essentially a sublimation and a masking of a deep existential suffering. When the dialectic of art reaches its limit in the culmination of the dialectic of romanticism, in the acquisition of insight into the absolute dualism of idea and reality, we are at the same time faced with the revelation of suffering, suffering no longer sublimated, but raw, exposed and aching. This is an insight which the humorist makes his own.

When an ironist laughs at the whimsicalities and witticisms of a humorist, he is like the vulture tearing away at Prometheus's liver, for the humorist's whimsicalities are not capricious little darlings but the sons of pain, and with every one of them goes a little piece of his innermost entrails, and it is the emaciated ironist who needs the humorist's desperate depth. His laughter is often the grin of death ... (like the dead man's grin which is explained as the muscle twitch of rigor mortis, the eternally humorous smile over human wretchedness) ... (II A 179/1706)

The self-consciousness of suffering which is achieved in the humorous standpoint means that the misty dreams of poetry can no longer function as a satisfactory expression of self-consciousness. With humour art is transcended. '... humour is not an esthetic concept, but life ...' (II A 136/1699) It can only find ambiguous expression in literature, for the act of writing itself presupposes a degree of reconciliation with the world which would falsify the

split presupposed by the humorist. J. G. Hamann - for Kierkegaard the preeminent representative of the humorous standpoint - is thus seen as having been true to his idea in bequeathing a merely occasional, fragmentary literary inheritance to posterity. (II A 138-9/1700-01; II A 658/1713) In a similar vein the humorous nature of Christianity is testified by its proclamation of a truth which is concealed in mystery, which Kierkegaard takes to mean that the truth is not merely hidden, but is concealed even in the act of revelation. (II A 78/1682)

But the humorist's vision is not merely negative, not merely world-denying, for ' ... humor is also the joy which has overcome the world.' (II A 672/1716) The christian humorist is like a plant whose roots alone are visible, but whose flower unfolds before an higher, an invisible sun. (II A 102/1690) His pessimism is an outward shell or, to use a later expression of Kierkegaard's, an incognito.

As well as signifying a standpoint which is beyond art, beyond poetry, the inner joy of the humorist is also the fulfilment of poetry, the actual accomplishment of joy in despite of pain which the poet too had sought. 'Humor is lyrical (it is the most profound earnestness about life - profound poetry, which cannot form [gestalt] itself as such and therefore crystallizes in baroque forms - it is hemorrhoidal non fluens - the molimina of the higher life),' (ibid.) It is 'profound poetry', poetry which is beyond form, which fulfils the dialectic of romanticism, not by the postulation of a new, 'classical' synthesis, but by the intensification of the split in the romantic consciousness.

In accordance with Kierkegaard's general approach humour is described as having a history, emerging in objective form in the Middle Ages, in the existence of the Church, which stood in a humorous (denying) relationship to the world as a whole and which

also expressed its humour in its own life. (II A 114/1698) A typical manifestation of this humorous aspect of the Church's life was the ritual inversion of ecclesiastical authority on specified occasions, in such phenomena as 'der Narrenpapst, der Kinderbischof, der Abt der Unvernunft.' (II A 85/1687) These examples are taken by Kierkegaard from Walter Scott's The Abbot. But to find its essential expression humour has to move beyond these objective forms, for as we have seen, it is essentially individual and inward.

In his development of the negative aspect of humour, Kierkegaard departs from his model humorist, Hamann, who, according to Ronald Gregor Smith, never gave up on finite, corporeal existence. Smith sums up Hamann's position by quoting from Hamann himself (as Hamann comments on Descartes' argument for existence) ' " ... was Cartes von seinem cogito sagt, davon überführt mich die Thätigkeit meines Magens." ' (46) Smith comments that ' The connexion between God and the world is not broken.' (47)

Kierkegaard is however closer to Hamann in denying that the humorist can as little be a systematic thinker as he can be a writer in a conventional sense.

... the humorist himself has come alive to the incommensurable which the philosopher can never figure out and therefore must despise. He lives in the abundance and is therefore sensitive to how much is always left over, even if he has expressed himself with all felicity (therefore the disinclination to write). The systematizer believes that he can say everything, and that whatever cannot be said is erroneous and secondary. (II A 140/1702)

The analysis of humour crowns Kierkegaard's early studies on the spirit of romanticism which in turn constitute the working-out of his analysis of the experience of art. As we have seen, these studies at many points show the impress of hegelian conceptions, not least in the way in which Kierkegaard deploys the dialectical method in his analysis of romanticism. The concept of humour itself functions to a certain extent as a mediating concept

in the hegelian sense. That is to say it links two spheres of experience: the aesthetic and the religious. It is developed as an intensification of the dialectical process which culminated in irony and at the same time marks a radically new departure. Thus far it reflects the conventional ambiguity associated with the hegelian term 'Aufhebung', which means both the annulment or abolition of what has gone before as well as its sublimation or preservation. (48)

On the other hand, the individualistic, anti-systematic and agonized elements of the humorous standpoint show that Kierkegaard's orientation is ultimately different from that of the hegelians. The similarity in method does not hide the difference in goal and results. Dialectics could be used to analyse but not to overcome the dualism of the romantic consciousness. Such an overcoming could only be achieved through the positing of non-dialectical categories, such as humour or character. The dialectic does not lead to the logic of pure thought, but to the anguished conscience of the solitary individual.

Kierkegaard understood, or felt, the nihilistic mood of his generation too well to think that it could be satisfied by a return to some new form of classicism, which would inevitably end in the crass bourgeois philistinism which both he and the nihilists despised. The only authentic response to the sting of dualism was to live the "Zerrissenheit" of the dualistic consciousness through to its uttermost potentiation, to move from irony to humour, to affirm the freedom of absolute selfhood in despite of this total cleft within the self. In place of rebirth into the ideal world of aesthetic experience, Kierkegaard counsels rebirth in an individualizing, religious sense, and he points to the promise that in Christ "all is new" as the basis of this rebirth.

This pattern, worked out in the early Papirer, was taken up and

developed, expanded, modified in the mature authorship, which, despite all modifications can be seen to be fundamentally and recognizably an expression of the same essential insights.

(E) Notes on Aesthetics in Papirer IV C

When Kierkegaard had worked out the basic structure of his philosophy of art, and had explained to himself how and in what direction the aesthetic had to be transcended, he did not simply abandon his interest in aesthetics. The authorship itself testifies to this. So too does the group of notes collected in Papirer IV C and numbered 102-127. These notes date from November 1842 - early 1843, a period which saw the completion of Either-Or. They constitute a distinctive group in the writings on aesthetics in the Papirer, for though they show the same general structure as the writings we have just been examining they reflect a new reading of Aristotle and Lessing. And at the same time as he was reading Aristotle's Poetics and Lessing's Hamburgische Dramaturgie and Letters he was gaining insights from both authors which would prove decisive in the formulation of his critique of the epistemological foundations and religious consequences of Hegelian idealism. (49)

A point of contact between these and previous notes on aesthetics is the concern to establish the limits of art, a concern which appears in reflections on the relation of aesthetics and ethics and on the definition of tragedy and comedy. This question of the limits of art is raised in connection with the general question of 'boundary disputes in the sciences.'

Some of the most difficult disputes are all the boundary disputes in the sciences - the boundary between jurisprudence and ethics; moral philosophy and dogmatics - psychology and moral philosophy, etc. Usually a single science is treated by itself; then one has much to say and gives no thought to the possibility of everything suddenly being dissolved if the

presuppositions must be altered.

This is specially true of esthetics, which has always been assiduously cultivated, but almost always in isolation. Many of the estheticians are poets. Aristotle is an exception. He easily perceives that it has a relation to rhetoric, ethics, and politics.

(IV C 104/143)

The relation of aesthetics to ethics is taken up in the following entry

The relation between esthetics and ethics - the transition - pathos-filled not dialectical - there a qualitatively different dialectic begins. To what extent are poetry and art reconcilable with life - something is true in esthetics - something else in ethics?

(IV C 105/808)

Despite the sketchy nature of this entry we are able to see the direction in which Kierkegaard's thought is moving. He is grappling with the question of how to define or how to treat the qualitative distinction between the two realms. The comments on dialectics imply a vindication of our analysis of the way in which such personalist, individualistic categories as humour and character are used by Kierkegaard to resolve the dialectic of romanticism, categories which correspond to what he here refers to as 'pathos-filled'. Dialectics can cope with the realm of aesthetics, aesthetic phenomena can be treated in terms of dialectical laws (a sign of Kierkegaard's continuing indebtedness to Heiberg) but a qualitatively different approach is required outside this realm. So different is the aesthetic realm from the ethical that Kierkegaard is prepared to consider that different criteria of truth may have to be employed in the two realms. This sharpens his position regarding the inapplicability of moral criteria to a figure such as Don Juan regarded as an aesthetic 'idea'. It is a point which serves both to limit and to recognize the autonomy of art, of the aesthetic sphere.

From another angle the question he is wrestling with is that of the relation of art to reality, specifically to the real existence of the individual subject as involving the experience of suffering.

'To what extent are poetry and art reconcilable with life,' (IV C 105/808) he asks. How far does the aesthetic attunement really resolve the discords of life? This question is raised again in another very sketchy entry:

... "All poetry is imitation" (Aristotle) - "better or worse than we are." Hence poetry points beyond itself to actuality and to the metaphysical ideality. - Where does the poetic center lie - As soon as it is directed toward sympathy - Therefore we cannot say that we sympathize with Christ. Scripture also says the opposite. See Hebrews 4.

(IV C 109/144)

Once more we see poetry occupying the familiar ground between external sensuous actuality (reality) and metaphysical ideality: poetry points beyond itself in both directions. The poetic centre, it is suggested, lies in the sympathetic power of poetry, sympathy, that is, in the sense of F. C. Sibbern, (50) sympathy by which the idea indwelling the work of art is apprehended and appropriated in aesthetic experience. Such sympathy is not possible for us when faced with a reality such as the suffering of Christ which cannot be transposed into aesthetic terms.

The further qualification of the operation of this sympathy is related by Kierkegaard to Aristotle's definition of the effect of tragedy on the spectator, namely that through fear (phobos) and pity (heleos) it effects the purification (catharsis) of such passions. Kierkegaard's thoughts on this are shaped by his reading of Lessing's Hamburgische Dramaturgie and the correspondence between Lessing, Nicolai and Moses Mendelssohn. Kierkegaard's interpretation of this definition is that it means

that by means of pity and fear (the medium - the necessity and esthetic significance of these) tragedy effects the purification of these by ennobling the sympathies. As egotistical determinants $\xi\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ and $\phi\acute{o}\beta\omicron\varsigma$ are the condition for making an esthetic impression; the effect is that $\xi\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ and $\phi\acute{o}\beta\omicron\varsigma$ become purely sympathetic, that I forget myself in esthetic, purely sympathetic $\xi\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ καὶ $\phi\acute{o}\beta\omicron\varsigma$. Generally speaking this is the calming effect produced by the esthetic, not through the thought that

others suffer more but through the loss [of oneself] in contemplation of the esthetic itself, of the esthetic suffering.

(IV C 110/4826) (51)

This restates an insight which we have already seen formulated in earlier pages of the Papirer, namely, that aesthetic form itself, by virtue of the transposition of its subject-matter into a realm constituted on the basis of ideality, softens or calms the tensions and contradictions experienced in real life, (52) although this is only achieved at the cost of a loss of selfhood. Lessing had used Aristotle's definitions for the purpose of constructing a purely aesthetic theory, but Kierkegaard puts Lessing's reformulation of Aristotle to use in developing a critique of art as such.

The fact that the reconciliation accomplished in aesthetic experience is only provisional and simply distracts from, rather than resolves, the contradictions of existence is developed in another entry in this group:

In tragedy the hero succumbs. This is supposed to reconcile me with actuality. Is it through grasping how greatness consists precisely in succumbing that I am supposed to be inspired to a similar heroism? But in that case I am, in fact, at loggerheads with actuality, inasmuch as I assume actuality to be such that the fate of greatness is that it must succumb.

(IV C 113/4829)

In aesthetic experience it is only the phantasy which is reconciled, reconciliation is only in the medium of phantasy, of ideality.

(IV C 117/4833) In the same entry in which he states this Kierkegaard copies the following citation from Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy in which the figure of Philosophy rebukes the Muses of

Poetry:

"Who," she demanded ... "has allowed these hysterical sluts to approach this sick man's bedside? They have no medicine to ease his pains, only sweetened poisons to make them worse. These are the very women who kill the rich and fruitful harvest of Reason with the barren thorns of Passion. They habituate men to their sickness of mind instead of curing them." (53)

But Kierkegaard continues to recognize a dialectical progress-

ion within the autonomous sphere of the aesthetic. Here he sees poetry as developing from tragedy to comedy, the tragic remaining closer to the sensuous, to historical fact, whilst comedy approximates more to the metaphysical detachment from the historic. Kierkegaard asserts that the historicity of tragedy is

indirect evidence against the absolute reconciliation of poetry and art, that I do not believe them in and for themselves when they show the extraordinary but demand external proof; on the other hand, I believe the comic and demand no historical proof. If I am depicting a fool, I do not need to give him a historical name, because if I do, I weaken the effect; if I want to depict a hero, I must try to find a historical person, otherwise no one believes it. (IV C 121/4837)

The metaphysical character of comedy is mentioned in connection with Hegel, whose Aesthetics Kierkegaard had by this time read, (54) and with a snide comment directed at Martensen, doubtless referring to Martensen's writings on speculative comedy. (IV C 108/1738) The identification of comedy with metaphysics is also justified by reference to Aristotle. Kierkegaard notes that 'that comedy approaches the metaphysical is seen also in this, that it has the universal as its object in a sense different than tragedy.' (IV C 120/4836; cf. IV C 118/4834)

Kierkegaard of course did not allow the metaphysical character of comedy to seduce him into speculations about speculative comedy. The favourable mention of Hegel and the aspersions on Martensen suggest that for Kierkegaard, as for Hegel, the dialectic of the forms of art, the movement from tragedy to comedy, points to the transcendence of the aesthetic as such.

This implication is supported by the final entry in this section, an entry which shows that at least at one point he was hoping to draw all these threads together into a systematic exposition.

The Plan For My Lectures

1.

On the Concept of Poetry

2.

The Movement through Esthetics

3.

The Comic Esthetics Abrogated
 Cultus des Genius

(IV C 127/5608)

The comic - not coincidentally - thus comes to occupy a border-line position similar to that occupied by the concept of humour. It is tempting to identify the two. Against such an identification it must be noted that humour was not, as we have seen, regarded as itself a dialectical concept, but in the sense of IV C 105/808 (55) a pathetic position, a position beyond dialectics. Comedy however is the culmination of the dialectical movement, it is at the frontier of, but still within the realm of aesthetics. The thin line dividing comedy and humour is thus the nearest we have come so far to defining the boundary between the aesthetic and the religious - we shall, however, see Kierkegaard define it still more closely than this.

The significance of the note Cultus des Genius is hard to assess. If it refers to the romantic notion that genius is a quality of personality, an endowment of the capacity for aesthetic intuition, rather than a particular gift for working with the technical structures of poetry, it might be suggesting that this is an improper attempt to move from aesthetic categories to 'life'. Such a 'cult of genius' is a response to the perceived limitation of art which, whilst it is prepared to abandon art in a formal sense, retains the aesthetic approach. It is the attempt to turn life into art. Kierkegaard however would say that the limits of art are also the limits of the aesthetic categories.

This group of aesthetic entries is significant in several respects.

It shows that Kierkegaard, like Hegel, approached the question of the transcendence of art not only through an analysis of the stages of art (classical, romantic) but also through an analysis of the forms of art (tragedy, comedy), although as far as the Papirer goes his notes on this latter theme are relatively sparse. However, as we shall see in the next chapter, the application of the schema of immediacy and reflection to tragedy and comedy is well attested in his published work.

The use of Aristotle and Lessing provides also a link between Kierkegaard's aesthetic writings and his critique of idealist epistemology. In particular his equation of ideality with possibility, with the 'merely imagined', with 'contemplation' and the parallel analysis of reality in terms of 'actuality', 'existence' and 'the ethical' provide a bridge between the two fields. Thus although his theory of art has in many points an hegelian structure and feel to it, his critique of art taps the same sources as his critique of idealism. If Kierkegaard's aesthetics were merely critique then we would be dealing with little more than a repetition of his better known critique of philosophy, but it is precisely in the interaction of theoretical or positive and critical or negative elements that its distinctiveness lies. These entries also show that Kierkegaard's concern with aesthetics extended beyond the aim of providing a critique of contemporary literary and aesthetic trends, and that he was grappling with the much wider-ranging question of the definition and significance of art as such.

Although the critique of art points to the limitation of hegelian categories and methods in the face of the existential situation of the individual it does not altogether deny philosophy. For it still allows, indeed it sets itself, the philosophical task of distinguishing and defining the boundaries between aesthetics and re-

ligion. Although this is to be done in the interests of religion the task is nonetheless itself philosophical. It is a question of elucidating the 'grammar' of the relevant concepts. Kierkegaard practises a critical philosophy which is more humble and more tentative than absolute idealism. It is above all in his so-called 'novels' that Kierkegaard applies this critical philosophy to art. Before examining these 'novels' we turn, however, to the purely aesthetic application of his dialectics of art, to his practice as a literary critic.

Chapter Seven: Kierkegaard as Critic

(A) The Theory and Critique of Art and the Aesthetic Authorship

The term 'aesthetic authorship' is used here to denote the group of pseudonymous works which Kierkegaard published between 1843 and 1845: Either-Or; Fear and Trembling; Repetition; The Concept of Angst; Forewords; Philosophical Fragments; Stages on Life's Way. Kierkegaard himself defines these works as constituting a specific group within the totality of his authorship. (1) He also indicates that the polarity of the aesthetic and the religious provides the key to the interpretation of these texts, and that despite their aesthetic form these works point to the religious question. (2)

But in what sense does Kierkegaard describe these works as 'aesthetic'? In The Point of View, where he takes stock of his authorship, he is looking back at his work from an explicitly religious 'point of view', and 'the aesthetic' is used somewhat ambiguously - its meaning hovers between the sense of aesthetic = concerning art, and aesthetic = inauthenticity. Thus he applies the term - without really distinguishing between these two senses - both to his purely aesthetic literary review of Madame Heiberg as Juliet, (3) and to the condition of those living in Christendom who think they are Christians although they do not live in decisively christian categories. (4)

Bearing this distinction in mind it becomes possible to distinguish within the aesthetic authorship a group of writings which are aesthetic in the specific sense of dealing with the nature and scope of art, of the validity of artistic interpretations of the human situation.

Although The Point of View looks at the authorship in the double-perspective of 'the aesthetic' and 'the religious' the authorship itself more frequently juxtaposes 'the aesthetic' and 'the ethical'.

This emerges with particular clarity in the very structure of Either-Or, the most obvious reading of which is the confrontation of the aesthetic and the ethical points of view, but the same duality emerges in e.g., the discussion of aesthetic and ethical silence in Fear and Trembling. (5)

In a quite general way this means that art is limited by life in the sense that though we may spend an evening in the theatre or reading a novel we have also to acknowledge that there comes a time when we must leave the theatre, put down the novel, and act, make decisions, assume responsibilities, etc. The beauty which can be figured in a painting or in any other work of art is not the beauty we are to find or to create in life. (6)

However we will want to define the boundaries of art and life more closely than this. In fact a study of Kierkegaard's writings on the subject leads us to see that he distinguishes three levels in the relationship of art and life.

Firstly there is the level at which art and life are indifferent to each other, such that although art does not reflect ethical or existential concerns it does not impede the ethical. In this way art and ethics constitute two distinct, autonomous spheres.

Secondly, there is the level at which the relation of art and life is actually positive, such that the work of art reflects a genuine ethical concern, and may itself, to however limited a degree, contribute to the shaping and nurturing of an ethically concerned view of life.

But thirdly, there is the level at which art is opposed to ethics, where the artistic expression or interpretation of a situation is in fact culpable, obstructing and obscuring the ethical interest, thereby preventing it from taking form and acting.

In a general way we may say that these three levels correspond

to the three stages of the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious. Thus the opposition between art and life only emerges when life is understood in a religious perspective. The ethical as such is not opposed to art, but can indeed enter into an alliance with art, albeit under certain conditions. We shall elucidate these three levels of the relation of art and life in such a way that it will be seen that Kierkegaard's position is the outworking both of a genuine aesthetic concern for art, which involves and which presupposes a theory of art constructed on purely aesthetic principles, and of a religious concern to make the distinction between aesthetic and religious categories. The first two levels are best illustrated by reference to Kierkegaard's work as a critic. The third level is brought into focus by Kierkegaard's so-called novels.

We now turn to Kierkegaard's critical work. It must, however, be noted that in fact this aspect of his work is not confined to his 'aesthetic' authorship in the sense in which that was described at the beginning of this chapter, although these works are 'aesthetic' in the usual sense of the term. Several of the pieces which will be examined here, namely the reviews of Andersen's Kun en Spillemand, Schlegel's Lucinde and Thomasine Gyllembourg's To Tidsaldre, were in fact published under Kierkegaard's own name. Of the other pieces, one, the review of Madame Heiberg as Juliet, postdates the period of the aesthetic authorship proper, although Kierkegaard himself connects it with this authorship; (7) another piece, the review of Herr Phister as Captain Scipio, although complete, was never published by Kierkegaard but is printed with Papirer IX.

Not every one of Kierkegaard's critical writings is examined here, but only those pieces which can count as aesthetic reviews properly speaking, pieces which are fully-formed, complete pieces of writing, and which focus on a specific work or a specific port-

royal. Consequently those pieces of aesthetic criticism which Kierkegaard never got further than sketching in the later Papirer are excluded. (8) The chapter on Tieck's dramatic writing in The Concept of Irony and the essay on The Ancient Tragical Motif in Either-Or on the other hand are too general to really count as 'reviews'. The point here is, after all, not to repeat everything Kierkegaard said on aesthetics but to present his aesthetic writings in a framework which will make sense of the whole, including those passages not represented here.

Kierkegaard's critical writing has been relatively neglected in the secondary literature, both by the theological/philosophical and by the literary commentators. Indeed in his study of danish literary criticism in the nineteenth century, Paul Rubow cast doubt on whether Kierkegaard had written anything which would count as literary criticism in the normal sense of the word. He says that

The works which he subject^s to criticism serve him only as occasions for making some protest or other ... he is an ideal critic in Oscar Wilde's sense, an artist, who takes his stuff from art and can transform a hum-drum bourgeois comedy into a deeply ironic phantasy. (9)

A recent monograph, Kierkegaard som Kritiker, by Merete Jørgensen has, however, been devoted to this aspect of Kierkegaard's work. (10) Ms. Jørgensen categorizes the critical writings under two headings, the aesthetic and the ethical. Under the former she counts those writings which approach their theme with purely aesthetic categories; under the latter she reckons those which confront the work of art with ethical claims. She notes that the former group were published, or were planned to be published, pseudonymously, whereas the latter appeared under Kierkegaard's proper name. There is only one exception to this - a footnote in Stages on Life's Way which is ascribed to the pseudonymous representative of the ethical position, Assessor Wilhelm. (11)

One of Ms. Jørgensen's aims is to rebutt the position which she finds in Adorno's Kierkegaard, that Kierkegaard's writings on art presuppose a crude division between the realms of ideality/inwardness and reality (actuality). (12) She argues that the ethical criticism quite clearly seeks to bring the ideal and the real together, to relate artistic meaning to actual existence in the world. (13) However, although she does note the distinction Kierkegaard makes between ethical religiousness and specifically christian religiousness, she does not really take full account of the division within the ethical. She says that '... the ethical and the religious do not stand in opposition to each other, but slide together in an ethical-religious existence, where faith is immediate and unproblematic (new immediacy).' (14) Art, constructed on an ethical basis can consequently function as an expression of this new immediacy. (15)

That there is a level of ethical existence at which art and ethics can be brought into a mutually-affirming relationship is not to be denied, but it is also necessary, especially in a theological reading of these texts, to see that there is another level of the ethical at which the ethical breaks away from the external into the inwardness of religious existence, and that at this level art and ethics have become mutually exclusive. Although it is misleading to overemphasize the division between art and the ethical in Kierkegaard's work, it is also misleading to overemphasize the degree of convergence. Everything depends on getting the points of contact, which are also always points of tension, established with absolute precision.

The present study does not use Ms. Jørgensen's categorization of Kierkegaard's critical writings into the aesthetic and the ethical, but approaches them according to the nature of the aesthetical

material which they study. Again two categories emerge: the theatrical reviews, and the reviews of novels. To a considerable extent these categories overlap with those of the aesthetic and the ethical as defined by Ms. Jørgensen. What this method of categorization does make clear, however, is the continuity in Kierkegaard's critical methods. That aesthetic methods are employed on theatrical pieces, and ethical principles brought to bear on novelistic literature is not accidental, but is revelatory of some of the basic presuppositions of Kierkegaard's theory of art. In particular it suggests the continuity between his approach to literature and Heiberg's doctrine that a work of art must be judged by its conformity to the requirements of the genre to which it belongs. It is at least entirely in keeping with this approach that Kierkegaard brings different standards to bear when dealing with the novel, and there are good reasons for believing that he would have maintained that the novel as such makes a claim to, and requires assessment in the light of, an intrinsic relation to the real world in its complex concreteness. (16)

Kierkegaard himself expressed the basic tenet of heibergian criticism in a speech he made to the Student Association of Copenhagen University in 1836. He said that 'form is nothing but the coming into existence of the Idea in the world, and ... the task of reflection is only to investigate whether or not the Idea has gotten the properly corresponding form.' (17) The critic is the 'réflecteur' who seeks out the ideal kernel in the work and then judges whether this ideality has received an appropriate expression in the work. It is also his task, as critic, to help others to tune in to this idea, and to facilitate their consummation of the aesthetic experience. It is as such a 'réflecteur' that we see Kierkegaard the critic.

It should be emphasized that the aim of this survey is not to

enter into the details of Kierkegaard's analyses of the pieces which he reviews, but to focus on the main outlines of the theory of art which he presupposes in his work as a critic.

(B) Kierkegaard's Theatrical Criticism

(B) (i) Don Juan

The application of heibergian principles, the requirement of the coincidence of idea and form, is clearly evidenced in the lengthy essay on Mozart's Don Giovanni (hereafter Don Juan) in Either-Or, a piece which Kierkegaard entitled The Immediate Erotic Stages or The Musical Erotic.

We have already seen something of Kierkegaard's perhaps improbable preoccupation with Don Juan as one of the three representative figures, who show life outside religion in its three major forms. (18) Don Juan, it will be recalled, represented the 'lowest' of these figures in respect of the degree of self-consciousness manifest in each. Don Juan is sensuous immediacy incarnate, he is 'the expression for the demonic determined as the sensuous.' (SV 2 p.86)

Kierkegaard argues that whilst both language and music negate immediate sensuousness, addressing themselves to the ear, in the medium of time, only language is absolutely spiritual, containing, as he argues, an intrinsic reflectiveness. Music, on the other hand, is determined by its relation to Spirit but is excluded from Spirit in its absolute nature (which is only open to language). Music thus expresses an immediacy which, spiritually determined, is also excluded from Spirit. (SV 2 pp. 64-9) It is therefore the most appropriate medium for dealing with the figure of Don Juan. For Don Juan does not represent the immediate sensuous genius in the undetermined immediacy of nature or childhood, but immediacy in its

opposition to Spirit.

As in the Papirer, Kierkegaard makes it clear that he is not regarding Don Juan as an individual, but as a representative figure, an idea. He says 'Naturally therefore we must not overlook the fact that we are not talking here of desire in a particular individual, but of desire as a principle, spiritually determined as that which the Spirit excludes.' (SV 2 p.81) Because of the immediacy, or, as Kierkegaard also calls it, the abstractedness of this idea it is not in fact possible for the idea to acquire a concrete individual form: '... to think of the sensuous in an individual cannot be done. Don Juan exists in a perpetual hovering between being an idea, that is to say force, life - and being an individual. But this hovering is the musical vibration.' (ibid., p.88) We have already seen how Kierkegaard regarded the musical tone not as a point, but as a constant oscillation. (19)

The absolute coincidence of the idea (Don Juan) and the form (music) means that the opera Don Juan constitutes a classical work. Again the heibergian tone is struck in the assertion that

Only where the idea has been brought to repose and self-transparency in a determinate form, can there be talk of a classical work ... This unity, this reciprocal indwelling belongs to every classical work, and one can easily see that every attempt to classify the various "classics" which takes as its point of departure a separation of matter and form, or idea and form must eo ipso go wrong. (ibid., p. 53)

The musicality of the idea of Don Juan means that the critic, whose medium is language, cannot himself communicate the idea directly, but he can seek to bring about the appropriate attunement in his reader by leading him to the frontiers of language and pointing the way across to the realm of music. So Kierkegaard writes

...I shall constantly seek out the musical element in the idea, in the situation, etc., tune in to it, and when I have brought the reader to be so musically receptive that he seems to hear the music, although he hears nothing, then I have completed my task, then I will be quiet, then I will

say to the reader as to myself: listen. (SV 2 p. 83)

The opera Don Juan will only reveal its essence to the listener who genuinely listens, who suspends his reflective judgement and really listens.

It is therefore notable that Kierkegaard's own language itself rises to moments of almost pure lyricism. Commenting on this essay, F. Billeskov Jansen says that 'this incomparable piece of lyrical prose is an outstanding example of how Kierkegaard can both paint images in and make music with the Danish language.' (20)

The converse of all this is, of course, that any non-musical interpretation of the Don Juan theme will miss the mark, and in this connection Kierkegaard discusses Don Juan works by Molière, Byron, Heiberg and the Danish writer Hauch. With regard to Byron, Kierkegaard says that 'that Byron was in many respects perfectly equipped to produce a Don Juan is certain enough, and one can therefore be sure that if the project miscarries the fault is not in Byron, but lies deeper, ' (ibid., p.100) namely in the misrelationship of idea and form.

Kierkegaard returned to the Don Juan theme in a two-part article published in the newspaper Faedrelandet. (21) He entitled this article A Cursory Observation Concerning a Detail in Don Juan. For Kierkegaard however, there are no insignificant details in aesthetics, and the apparently unassuming title masks a polite but damning appraisal of the production of the opera staged in the Theatre Royal, Copenhagen, early in 1845. The nub of the argument is that the male lead has construed his role too reflectively - and therefore misconstrued it. Given that, for Kierkegaard, the whole opera is merely the unfolding of the idea of Don Juan himself, this means that the whole opera is misconstrued.

(B) (ii) Madame Heiberg as Juliet

Perhaps Kierkegaard's most successful piece of theatrical criticism was the review he wrote of Madame Heiberg in the role of Juliet, a role with which she had made her reputation as budding actress and to which she returned when in her thirties. It is the later performance which Kierkegaard reviews. As with the review of Herr Phister, which we shall be examining shortly, the piece is something of a personal tribute. Its theme is basically that 'age has not withered her,' and that, on the contrary, she is now able to bring to the part an artistic maturity which enables her to play it more successfully, to communicate more fully, the 'idea' of the part, which Kierkegaard defines as the idea of 'feminine youthfulness.'

Basic to Kierkegaard's argument is a distinction, similar to that between Don Juan as an individual and Don Juan as an idea, between feminine youthfulness and the idea of feminine youthfulness. The former is what the public wants. It wants 'a damned pretty and a devilishly smart lass of 18. These 18 years, this damnable prettiness and this devilish smartness, that is the art appreciation - and also its bestiality.' (SV 14 p.107) All it wants is the same quality as that which enables a girl to cause a sensation for a season in society. (ibid., p.108) A genuine aesthete however is in search of the idea. The time for the manifestation of this idea comes with what Kierkegaard calls the metamorphosis, which will in fact only occur if the artist's genius is in tune with the artistic idea, in this case if the girl possesses the idea, as well as the appearance, of feminine youthfulness.

Time can in fact help this metamorphosis to come about. For by stripping away the merely external bloom of feminine youthfulness,

it can serve to make the idea the more manifest, so that the actress 'can now in full and conscious, in acquired and dedicated command over her essential powers truly be the servant of her idea, which is the essential aesthetic relation and essentially different from the 17th, [sic] year's immediate relation to its own youth.' (SV 14, p.122) The essential aesthetic relation, that is, is the self-transparency of the idea in the vehicle of its expression, whether that be understood as the play or the artist.

Kierkegaard distinguishes two ways in which this essential aesthetic relationship can develop in an actress. One way is what he calls the metamorphosis of continuity, and the other is the metamorphosis of potentiation. The former is a metamorphosis in which the artistic idea develops itself through a sequence of forms, it is

a process, a succession, a continual transformation over the years, such that the actress gradually, as she grows older, changes her field, takes older roles, again with the same perfection as that with which she had performed her younger parts. (ibid., p.123)

The metamorphosis of potentiation on the other hand is that which he acclaims in Madame Heiberg, it is 'a more and more intensive return to the first,' (ibid., pp. 123-4) to the first role, the first idea: feminine youthfulness. In this return

an ideality of recollection will again cast a bright light over the whole performance ... This pure, calming, rejuvenating recollection will irradiate the whole performance like an idealizing light, and in this light the performance will be perfectly transparent [to its idea] . (ibid., p.123)

Both forms of aesthetic idealization are able to withstand the corrosive workings of time, the metamorphosis of continuity by its gradual achievement of perfection through time, the metamorphosis of potentiation by allowing its one idea to shine more and more brightly through it. It may indeed even be said of the actress who achieves the metamorphosis of potentiation that by expressing the idea of feminine youthfulness more and more perfectly she actually

becomes younger. (SV 14, p.124)

In discussing the metamorphosis of continuity Kierkegaard refers to his own (under the pseudonym of Assessor Wilhelm) lengthy footnote on Madame Heiberg's theatrical rival, Madame Nielsen, who thus comes to be billed as the model of this type of metamorphosis. (cf. SV 8 pp. 118-9)

(B) (iii) Farce at the Königstäter

We now turn to Kierkegaard's reviews of comedies. It will be remembered that in Heiberg's schematization of the genres of poetry comedy is regarded as essentially reflective. Like everything else however, it has its three stages and the immediate stage of comedy is farce. Kierkegaard turns his attention to farce in Repetition in a section which, although not marked off as such, is in effect a self-sufficient piece of theatrical criticism. It is concerned with the presentation of farce in Berlin's Königstäter Theatre, and in particular it focusses on the genius of two of the leading members of the company, Beckmann and Grobecker.

As with any other work of art the idea must be transparent both to actors and audience if the work is to be properly appreciated. Because of the immediacy of the genre the actors most suited to farce

are not so much reflective artists, who have studied laughter, as they are lyricists, who themselves plunge into the abyss of laughter and now allow its volcanic power to hurl them on to the stage. They have not therefore calculated much on what they will do, but they let the moment and the natural power of laughter be responsible for everything. (SV 5 p.141)

This same spontaneity will also characterize an audience which really knows how to enjoy farce, for

One cannot therefore rely upon one's neighbours or upon the newspapers if one is to know whether one has enjoyed oneself or not. Each individual must decide this for himself; and hardly yet has any critic succeeded in prescribing a ceremonial for the educated theatre-going public, which would look in

on a farce; in this field no bon ton can establish itself at all. The otherwise so reliable reciprocal respect between actor and audience is broken, one can get into the most unpredictable mood when seeing a farce, and one can never know with certainty whether one has conducted oneself in the theatre as a worthy member of society, who has laughed and cried at the appropriate places.

(SV 5 p.140)

Kierkegaard describes his own enjoyment of the production at the Königstäter thus: '... I reclined in my box, cast aside like a swimmer's clothes, stretched out beside the stream of laughter, of playfulness and of jollity, which foamed uninterruptedly past me.'

(ibid. p.146)

In a sense there is therefore no task for the critic, the 'réflecteur', since reflection is out of place. All the critic can do is to warn the spectator of what he must leave behind, and it is precisely his knowledge of the genres and of the laws governing them that tells him to let himself go.

(B) (iv) The First Love

The situation is however very different with comedy proper. Kierkegaard gives us two comedy reviews: The First Love by A. E. Scribe and Herr Phister as Captain Scipio.

The review of The First Love, like the eulogy of Mozart's Don Juan appears in the first part of Either-Or. In his review of Either-Or Heiberg, commenting on the review of The First Love, wrote of it that 'out of a pretty little bagatelle he [the author] has sought to make a masterwork and ascribed to it an intention which is virtually the opposite of that which Scribe openly acknowledges.' (22) Nonetheless Kierkegaard shows that here too he is dependent on heibergian principles. For the quality he is seeking here, which he finds and which he praises, is the quality of reflection which belongs to comedy intrinsically, according to the heibergian table of genres.

In accordance with this quality of reflection, and again in accordance with Heiberg's stipulations, it is above all the situational dimension of the comedy which Kierkegaard seeks to emphasize: 'let the dialogues in the play be never so witty, one will forget them; one cannot possibly forget the situations, when one has seen them.' (SV 2 p.256)

Likewise the reflectiveness of comedy means that it is in a way 'higher' than tragedy:

People generally believe that the comic is more a thing of the moment than is tragedy; one laughs at it and forgets it. whereas one often returns to the tragic to lose oneself in it. Now the comic and the tragic can consist either in dialogue or in situation. Some people are totally stayed on the dialogue, they preserve it in memory and often return to it. Others are totally stayed on the situational element, to reconstruct it for memory. These last are the contemplative natures ... a comic situation ... if it is in other respects correct, will, more than tragedy, tempt one to lose oneself in it. (ibid., p.242)

In contemplation of a tragic situation the soul comes to rest in an 'infinite melancholy (Veemod)', but

The comic situation indeed has a similar permanence for contemplation, but at the same time reflection is moving in it, and the more one discovers, the more infinite the comic situation becomes within itself, as it were, and the more one gets dizzy, and yet one cannot stop staring at it. The situations in The First Love are of precisely this kind. The first impression they make is already that of a comic effect, but when one reproduces them for the intuition, then the laughter grows quieter, but the smile clearer [forklaret = transfigured, explained], one can scarcely tear one's thoughts away from it again, because it is as if something still more laughable might come. (ibid., p.243)

Kierkegaard goes on to liken this enjoyment to the pleasure of a smoker (on several occasions Kierkegaard refers to his penchant for a good cigar (23)) who sits back and watches the patterns of his smoke. Though Kierkegaard does not develop this image it is quite apt. For that which the smoker contemplates is essentially nothing, it is contentless, merely a screen for the mind's dreamy projections, and his contemplation is therefore a pure reflection

of his own consciousness without objective or substantial reference. Likewise the comic situation hinges on the revelation of the essential nothingness of the characters and of their interrelationships.

There must not be a single figure in it, not a single dramatic relationship, which could lay a claim to survive the downfall which irony, right from the beginning, has been preparing for everything in it. (SV 2 p.252)

The curtain falls, the play is over, nothing remains standing, only the broad outline, in which the situation's fantastic Schattenspiel, directed by irony, remains for contemplation. The immediately real situation is the unreal situation, behind this a new situation reveals itself, which is no less topsy-turvy, and so on, and so on. In the situation one hears the dialogue - when it is most reasonable it shows itself to be at its maddest, and as the situation distances itself, so the dialogue follows, more and more meaningless, despite its reasonableness. (ibid., pp. 255-6)

Again Kierkegaard uses his role as critic to help provide the reader with the appropriate attunement, to get the reader into the proper mood for a full appreciation of the work. To this end he starts the review with a rather whimsical introduction, which despite its rather irrelevant appearance, is deeply connected with the theme of the review. Two points in particular serve to indicate this connection.

Firstly it develops the notion of the importance of occasion for a writer - both for a truly creative writer and for a reviewer. He claims that even if someone is brimming over with ideas it requires an occasion, possibly a quite trivial occasion, for these ideas to come out and acquire aesthetic form. In fact the occasion 'is always the accidental, and this is the monstrous paradox, that the accidental is altogether absolutely as necessary as the necessary.' (ibid., p.216) 'A creation is a production out of nothing, the occasion on the other hand is the nothing which lets everything come out.' (ibid., p.218) This is of course precisely what we have seen the content of the play, and indeed of the review itself, to be: nothing, a something whose content is nothing; the

lives and personalities of whose dramatis personae are nothing, content-less, null and void.

Secondly the introduction tells a fictitious love-story. The reviewer tells how he was once in love, but his shy and bashful romantic love could not express itself, until he saw in the paper that a play called The First Love was to be performed. The title fills him with enthusiasm, 'This play will by its poetic power, cause the love which is in my heart to break forth, will cause its flower to burst open like a passion-flower.' (SV 2 p.223) At the theatre the girl of his dreams is coincidentally present, which gives an added poignancy to the piece. 'I will think only of her and of my love; everything which is said in honour of first love, I will apply to her and to our relationship.' (ibid., p.224)

Of course no kierkegaardian love-story has a happy ending, and this little affair peters out. Some years later the youth meets the girl again to find that she is now engaged to another, who, she tells him, is her first love.

This story anticipates the theme of the review, that the play The First Love is actually an ironic annihilation of the concept of 'first love.' This twofold reflection of the content of the review is itself a mark of the reflective quality which the reviewer is seeking to incite in the reader, and itself reflects what the reviewer thinks is the appropriate mood in which to receive the play.

(B) (v) Herr Phister as Captain Scipio

The same quality of reflection is called on in the review of Herr Phister as Captain Scipio in the musical play Ludovic by J. H. Vernoy de St. Georges. Captain Scipio is a comic character, a character, that is, who will turn out to be a nothing, a self-negating character, since, as Heiberg says, comedy demands the

triumph of situation and the annihilation of character.

Captain Scipio is a Captain in the Papal police. This, according to Kierkegaard already involves a contradiction. By his military uniform he lays claim to the dignity of the military - but he is also a civic functionary who has to look after gutters and sewers. (IX B 68 pp.389-90) Thus 'in every moment the civilian's idiosyncrasies make a mock of the soldier.' (ibid., p.390)

Captain Scipio is also perpetually tipsy. But this contains another contradiction - he is both drunk and not drunk for he 'has reached the maximum at which he cannot get drunk.' (ibid., p.395) It is the easiest thing in the world to portray a drunk - but it requires reflection to portray the ambiguity of a state such as Capt. Scipio's. 'The immediate is in a certain sense negated; it must never be immediately apparent that he is drunk, for he is not drunk in that way.' (ibid.) The drunkenness is revealed precisely in the portrayal of the way in which it is concealed. (ibid., p.396)

Herr Phister is able to achieve this task because his forte is reflection. (ibid., p.383) The critic must respond to such accomplishment with a corresponding reflection.

In response to reflection and to a reflective performance it is absolutely meaningless to say neither more nor less than bravo! or even bravissimo! and it can only weary and tire the reflection which is the object of such admiration ... In relation to reflection admiration has to be expressed in the language of reflection. Reflection is this: why? - because; why is the whole arranged thus? - because; why is this little stroke put in here? - it is because, etc., everything is consciousness. Admiration is therefore again being able to discover and to understand the whole: why? - because. True admiration in the relation of reflection and reflection (and only like understands like) is therefore perfect comprehension, neither more nor less. In a certain sense there is therefore no 'admiration' in the relation of reflection and reflection. (ibid., p.386)

In accordance with this doctrine and consistent with his praise of the abiding interest a comic situation can arouse, Kierkegaard concludes the review by commenting

This little article is a recollection; it is many years since its author saw Ludovic, and it is already some years since the play was performed. I am therefore involuntarily tempted to make the following observation: the usual theatre-critics go on the first night of a new play; and just seeing it once is enough for them to judge the play and every actor in it - a Phister, a Nielsen, a Wiehe, a Madame Heiberg, a Madame Nielsen, et al., who have sometimes expended months and all their genius, all their thought, all their energy in order to achieve the set task. It is otherwise with this little article. (IX B 68 pp. 399-400)

(B) (vi) The Nature of Theatrical Art

It will be apparent that the arrangement of the theatrical reviews here emphasizes Kierkegaard's dependence on the basic dialectical structure of the forms of art propounded by Heiberg, since we have moved from the immediacy of opera through to the totally reflected self-transparency of comedy. It will be seen too that - despite Kierkegaard's aesthetic respect for such a practitioner of the comic art as Herr Phister, and despite his admiration for what he sees as the ironic annihilation of the concept of first love in Scribe's play - the revelation of the nothingness of its content by comedy, if comedy is understood as the culmination of the dialectic of the forms of art, indicates a cul-de-sac which cannot but prove unsatisfactory for the human spirit, and which suggests, as Hegel's analysis of classical comedy was intended to show, (24) that beyond comedy some new form of spirit is demanded, in which a new relation to reality is established, in which content or substantiality is restored to the empty soul.

The theatrical reviews do not discuss the relation of the aesthetic ideas which they call upon to reality in a wider sense. They are treated purely on aesthetic grounds. Why is this? Is it because the theatrical form is in fact abstract to such a degree that it neither makes a claim on nor provides a challenge to reality?

Some support for this view might be found in the general observations on theatrical art which are attached to the discussion of farce in Repetition. Here Kierkegaard writes

There is surely no young man of any imagination (Phantasi) who has not at one time felt himself caught by the magic of the theatre and desired himself to be transported into that fictitious reality, so that like a Doppelgänger he can see and hear himself, to split his self up into all manner of possible differentiations of himself from himself, so that each differentiation is in turn a single self.
(SV 5 p.135)

The writing is somewhat tortuous but the point is fairly clear - that in the spectacle of the theatre, in the manifold of the dramatis personae, we see and identify with what are really all possibilities of any and every personality: we sympathize with the character on stage because he or she is or represents an aspect of what we each could be. (25) He continues

It is naturally only at a very young age that such a desire expresses itself. Only the phantasy is awake in this dream of personality, every other faculty is still sound asleep. In such a fantastic self-contemplation the individual has no actual form, but is only a shadow, or rather, the actual form is invisibly present, and is therefore not content with casting one shadow, but the individual has a multiplicity of shadows, which all resemble him, and for each moment have an equal claim to be himself. The personality is not yet discovered, its energy announces itself only in the passion of possibility ...
(ibid., pp. 135-6)

Kierkegaard thus calls the theatre the shadow-play (Schattenspiel) of the hidden individual: the real personality is like a concealed point of light, which from its hidden centre casts an array of shadows, all of which equally represent and distort it. An analogy with Plato's parable of the cave is not too hard to find.

But the theatre does not cut across the field of the ethical personality because it simply does not operate at the same level. The hidden individual is the individual with no clear sense of personality, and it is indeed precisely through the shadows he projects that he first arrives at a provisional conception of personality.

There does however come a moment when the personality is re-

quired to wake up, to leave the cave and to walk in the light,
there comes a moment when

the cock now crows, and the twilight figures flee away, the voices of the night fall silent. If they continue, then we are in a quite different domain, where all this goes on under the disquieting eye of responsibility, then we are on the border of the demoniacal.

(SV 5, p.137)

The actual machinery of the theatre is, however, as Kierkegaard observes, arranged to provide just the right sort of environment for the Schattenspiel of the hidden personality, to ensure that the harsh light of reality does not disturb the half-light in which the ephemeral forms of the fantastic consciousness move. (ibid.)

In one sense this is all clearly a deficiency in the theatre, but from another angle, it means that, as long as it keeps within its own proper sphere, theatrical art is to be regarded as immune from moralizing interference. The magic of the theatre is regulated by its own proper laws and structures. Kierkegaard's theatrical criticism therefore appropriately floats in a medium of ideal disengagement from the claims and projects of the existing individual. In the theatre it is only the aesthetic appropriateness that matters. The ultimate achievement of theatrical art is the teasing insight into the nullity of its own figures which is attained in the work of such reflective comedians as Herr Phister. Against Heiberg, however, the figures of the stage can never be more than possibilities, projections, aesthetic ideals. They can never be 'true appearances' of the Idea in an absolute sense, as Heiberg had claimed in Fata Morgana, but are only the shadows cast by the hidden light of the self in its dream of personality.

(C) The Literary Reviews

(C) (i) The Principles of Novelistic Literature

When we turn to Kierkegaard's reviews of novelistic literature we find ourselves in an atmosphere quite different from that of the fantastic half-light of the theatre. Here a different set of criteria is brought to bear on the work of art, and, in particular, aesthetic production is tested against the standards of an ethical 'life-view'.

The broad congruence of the theatrical with the purely aesthetic criticism, and of the literary with the ethical criticism does suggest that this move is deliberate and of itself says something about Kierkegaard's conception of the novel. It would seem to suggest that he considers that by its very form the novel makes some sort of claim to count as a representation of reality in a way that the theatre does not, and that, conversely, the novel must be answerable to the claims of reality. Kierkegaard would not be alone in this view for as John Hospers has said 'some formalistically-minded critics ... would say that literature differs importantly from the other arts, and that the appreciation of literature does involve considerations of correspondence with reality, whereas appreciation of the other arts does not ...' (26)

We have already seen how in the early Papirer Kierkegaard found an unity and totality in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister which made it a 'true microcosm' (27) The novel's power of depicting the many-faceted concreteness of the world entails that it is as a representation of the world, of life, that the novel has to be judged. In making this assumption Kierkegaard would be in continuity with the early romantics who regarded the novel as the richest mode of art, incapable of incorporating a manifold of aesthetic forms - and in this respect Wilhelm Meister again provided them with a pattern. (28)

In bringing a different standard to bear upon the novel, Kierkegaard is not necessarily abandoning the principles of heibergian criticism which he had brought to bear on the theatre, for here too the question is whether the work of art answers to the requirements of its genre. However in formulating this requirement vis-à-vis the novel, Kierkegaard invokes the spirit of Poul Møller and Møller's statement that a genuine work of art was only possible on the basis of a sound 'life-view' or 'world-view', (29) and we shall find too that he takes account of Møller's question as to whether the achievement of such a view is possible in the present age.

By connecting the work of art to reality in this way Kierkegaard is not breaking with the broad idealist view of art, for it will be recalled that the 'life-view' itself, as Møller had formulated it (and we shall now see Kierkegaard using it), itself has an idealistic character, being the integration of the manifold of experience into an unity and wholeness permeated by the harmonizing light of the ideal. It is precisely this synthesis of the ideal and the real which the work of art is to reflect in its own medium.

As with the theatrical reviews the aim here is not to enter into a detailed account of the particular aesthetic judgements and analyses which Kierkegaard makes, but to extract the principles which he is applying, to see the theory of art which he presupposes.

(C) (ii) From the Papers of One Still Living

The first of these reviews to be considered is From the Papers of One Still Living, Kierkegaard's first book. It opens with an attack on the nihilistic tendencies of the age, particularly as manifest in such movements as der junge Deutschland, and it criticizes the assumption by this tendency of a split between the ideal and the real. Hegel on the other hand is praised insofar as the negative

moment in his philosophy is just that, a moment, and is used as a means to relate the Idea back to the fulness of existence. (SV 1, p.21) The political left is stringently condemned for its disaffection, its negativity, which can only sap the substantial value of the received forms of social and political life. Such radicalism negates political ideality. (ibid., pp.22ff.)

After this polemical introduction Kierkegaard turns to the contemporary literary scene and before coming to his main item, Hans Christian Andersen's Kun en Spillemand, he refers to the work of Thomasine Gyllembourg, Carl Bernhard and Steen Steensen Blicher. He uses Madame Gyllembourg as an example of what he finds admirable and desirable in a novel. Madame Gyllembourg's work, it is said, contains a 'life-view' which must have a corresponding attitude in the author's own life. This life-view is described (in an impossible sentence - F. Billeskov Jansen refers to the 'detering style' of this review)(30) as

The sublimate of joy over life, the fought-for confidence in the world which results as life's yield, which maintains that even in its most insignificant figures the spring of life's poetry has not dried up; the confidence in people, that there too in their most trivial forms of self-presentation, if one will only seek correctly, will be found a fulness, a divine spark, which, carefully nurtured, can irradiate the whole of life; in brief, the verified congruence of youth's demands and pronouncements with life's achievements, which is her proved not ex mathematica pura but is made visible de profundis, from out of a rich mind's whole inner infinity, and presented with youthful seriousness.
(ibid., p.25)

This life-view is said to give the author's tales 'an evangelistic touch.' (SV 1 p.25) However, it is also hinted that there are certain negative moments in life, certain sorrows, which are not adequately treated in these books, although Kierkegaard's final word on them emphasizes their quality rather than their shortcomings.

He thinks that these novels will find their true readers among the members of the older generation for whom a 'life-view' was a

presupposition of personal development, who possess 'a resignation which is not the consequence of external pressure ... but the development of an inner elasticity, of the joy which has triumphed over the world.' (SV 1, p.26)

He says less about Carl Bernhard and Blicher. Blicher is contrasted with Madame Gyllembourg and praised even though he does not possess the 'life-view which belongs to the individual who has run the race and kept the faith,'but only 'a deep poetic mood, shrouded in the misty veil of immediacy.' (ibid., p.28)

Kierkegaard next turns to his main theme - one might say his main target: Hans Christian Andersen. Employing the heibergian equation of lyric = immediate, subjective/ epic = objective, Kierkegaard finds Andersen lacking as a lyrical writer, for he is devoid of the naive self-confidence of lyrical genius. Andersen is no 'personality clearly marked out by nature, who has no other justification for his remarkable outburst and his remarkable claims on the world than nature's imprimatur.' (ibid., p.29) As a lyricist he is a mere 'elegaic' poet, a mere 'possibility of a personality, caught in a ... web of accidental moods.' As for Andersen's 'epic' quality, which, says Kierkegaard, should succeed the lyrical stage in a writer's development, it is simply non-existent: 'Andersen has leapt over his epos.' By such an epic stage is meant 'a deep and serious embracing of the given reality ... a life-strengthening abiding in it and admiration for it.' (ibid., pp. 29 f.)

This lamentable state of affairs is not entirely Andersen's fault. The transitional nature of the age does not allow much opportunity for such an epic absorption in permanent and supra-personal values. But whatever the cause the consequence is disastrous:

If therefore Andersen was at an early stage ensnared by his own self, he also at an early stage felt himself thrust back upon himself, like a superfluous cornflower in the

midst of the useful corn. And because he was in this way continually pushed back down the funnel of his own personality, his poetic powers, in their self-corroding (and only in this way productive) activity, had - in that his original elegiac mood modified itself by such a type of reflection to a kind of disaffection and bitterness towards the world - rather to show itself as a subdued flame which now and again flares up, than, as would have been the case with a more significant personality, as a subterranean fire, which terrifies the world in its bursting-forth. (SV 1 p.31)

In a word, Andersen utterly lacks what Madame Gyllembourg so pre-eminently possesses - a life-view. (*ibid.*, p.34) Kierkegaard defines a life-view in terms which clearly echo Møller's formulations:

A life-view, namely, is more than ... a sum of statements maintained in their abstract neutrality; it is more than experience, which as such is always atomistic, it is in fact the transubstantiation of experience, it is an unshakeable confidence in oneself, won in the teeth of the empirical manifold; whether it has merely orientated itself with regard to all worldly relationships (a purely human standpoint, e.g. Stoicism), which thereby keeps itself back from contact with a deeper empiricism, or whether it has by being directed towards heaven (the religious) therein found the central point, both for the heavenly and the earthly existence, has won the true christian assurance "that neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, no power, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, or height or depth, or anything in all creation, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (*ibid.*, pp.34f)

This is the life-view which Andersen lacks, and yet it is 'the conditio sine qua non for a novelist of the type to which Andersen belongs.' (*ibid.*, p.35) Andersen does have a recurrent 'idea' in his novels, but this is not enough, for Kierkegaard says that 'I have never asserted that an idea simply as such (least of all an idée fixe) is to be regarded as a life-view!' (*ibid.*, p.37) Everything depends upon the content of the idea. Andersen's idea is the idea of the downfall of everything noble, genial, exalted.' Kierkegaard however registers his protest against calling such a decadent idea a life-view. Even if such an idea were to be conceded this status, he argues, it could only be validly maintained by one who had fought hard with life, and who could set out the dreadful and overpowering

set of events which lead to his hero's downfall. Andersen however merely enthuses about his hero's great ability, etc. - and then, without explanation, goes on to speak of its loss. (SV 1 p.38)

Andersen is fundamentally passive. His genius depends on its environment instead of triumphing over it. Kierkegaard quotes Andersen himself as saying that 'genius is an egg which requires warmth, the fertilizing power of fortune, or else it will become a wind-egg'. (ibid., p.38, n.3) Kierkegaard's idea of genius by contrast is that of antiquity - it springs forth fully-armed from Jupiter's head. (ibid.)

The possession of a proper life-view, of a self-assured transcendence of personal being over the accidents and contingencies of existence, manifests itself in the novel as a kind of providence: it provides a deeper unity which gives the novel 'a centre of gravity' in itself. (ibid., p.39)

The lack of such a life-view on the other hand tends to be compensated for either by using the novel as a platform for some theory, which leads to the production of what Kierkegaard calls the 'dogmatic, doctrinaire novel', (ibid.) or by the intrusion of 'a finite and accidental relation to the author's flesh and blood.' (ibid.) Kierkegaard regards Schlegel's novel Lucinde as an example of the first type of error, as we shall soon see, whilst Andersen is an example of the second kind of failing.

Kierkegaard does not mean that deficient, decadent, doomed or otherwise flawed characters should not appear in a novel but that the novelist must maintain a proper distance from such characters. Accordingly the novelist should not himself be 'immediately' present in the novel but 'in the novel there must be an immortal spirit which survives the whole.' (ibid., p.40) This spirit is the spirit

of the novelist himself. The novelist stands outside the novel precisely in order to function as the providential hand which guides the whole. Andersen's novels however 'stand in such a physical relation to himself, that their genesis is not so much to be regarded as a production but as an amputation of part of himself.' (SV 1 p.41)

On the basis of these principles Kierkegaard proceeds to analyse the style and content of Kun en Spillemand. Needless to say, his judgement is not favourable.

The review is prefaced by a brief introduction which is used in a manner resembling the way in which the introduction to the review of The First Love is used - to anticipate and encapsulate the theme of the review. This little introduction presents a dialogue between two parts of the author's personality. One part is a poetic dreamer who tends to lose himself in 'dark premonitions,' (ibid., p.14) who, having completed the manuscript of the book, will not publish it because of his fear of being received uncomprehendingly. The other half however takes the commanding, no-nonsense line of 'publish and be damned': 'What I have written, that have I written.' (ibid., p.15) This is, in effect, the issue between an Andersen-like figure and the author who possesses a life-view.

It is quite clear from the review that the requirement of a life-view is specifically addressed to Andersen as a novelist; a lyrical poet, for instance, would not need to undergo the objective discipline of the epic stage, out of which the capacity to communicate a life-view artistically is born. This supports the contention made here that Kierkegaard's reviews of novels do not apply a different theory from the theatrical reviews, but apply the same aesthetic demand for the congruence of idea and form at a different level. It is to the novel as a specific literary genre, not to art

as such, that the challenge of the life-view is posed.

In the review Kierkegaard offers two models of the life-view. One, which he calls the stoic position, is a merely this-worldly position, the other relates itself to a realm of higher experience, to what Møller had called 'experience of an higher kind.' (31) But Kierkegaard does not here clarify the nature of this higher experience, nor does he say how far it can adequately be mirrored in aesthetic form. Does the integration of ideality and reality which the life-view achieves, and which is reflected in novels such as Madame Gyllembourg's, survive the destruction of the bridge between ideal and real which occurs in the nihilistic consciousness? Can art, in fact, mirror life without distortion, without an over-emphasis on the ideal, without abstracting from the complexity of experience and in particular from the suffering which experience imposes on the individual? Kierkegaard did after all hint that there were darker themes with which Madame Gyllembourg's genius did not and could not deal. Is there an experience of an higher kind which involves a turning-away from the world rather than an achieved integration of the manifold of worldly experience? These are questions which lurk in the background of this review, questions to which we shall see Kierkegaard return.

(C) (iii) Lucinde

In the section of his Master of Arts thesis (On the Concept of Irony) entitled 'Irony after Fichte' Kierkegaard deploys the insights gathered from his preoccupation with romanticism in the early Papirer to launch a violent attack on the leading representatives and ideas of early romanticism, which, by virtue of its links with the young Germany movement he sees as very much a living force. (32) Many of the themes in this attack are gathered together in the

chapter devoted to Fr. Schlegel's novel Lucinde, a chapter which can stand on its own as a piece of literary criticism.

We have already observed that Kierkegaard regarded this work as an example of a dogmatic or doctrinaire novel which as such signifies the lack of a genuine life-view. Although the specific formulation of the requirement of a life-view for novelistic art is not made in this review we can easily decipher the same basic principles guiding the text.

Giving what he calls a general characteristic of poetry (Poesi) Kierkegaard says that it is

a triumph over the world: it is through the negation of the imperfect reality that poetry opens up an higher reality, extends and transfigures the imperfect into the perfect, and thereby reconciles the deep pain which seeks to darken all things. Thus far is poetry a kind of reconciliation, but it is not the true reconciliation for it does not reconcile me to the reality in which I live, in this reconciliation there occurs no transubstantiation of the given reality, but it reconciles me to the given reality by giving me another reality, an higher and a more perfect one. (SV 1 pp. 305-6)

Poetry, that is to say, creates an ideal world, which endows its forms and figures with a sort of reality - but not the reality of the 'real' world of empirical, everyday experience. Poetry by itself does not therefore answer the requirement of the life-view that reality and ideality be brought into harmony with each other. Its world is an artificial world projected by the ironically creative subjectivity which holds itself aloof from the real world, and, for this reason, poetry, in the sense Kierkegaard gives it here, lacks real content.

In the section on post-fichtean irony which precedes and introduces the Schlegel review Kierkegaard makes this point the nub of his overall criticism of the philosophical and literary movement which took its cue from Fichte's philosophy. Arguing that the root of Fichte's philosophy is the infinitizing of knowledge in the relation of the absolute ego to itself, the I=I, he asserts this to be

a purely negative infinity, an infinity without content. He calls this fichtean position such names as 'acosmism' and 'docetism' in that it denies the validity of real, historical existence. (SV 1 p.286)

But whereas Fichte conceived this negative infinity solely in metaphysical terms, that is as an a priori construction of the conditions of knowledge, Schlegel and the romantics applied Fichte's model of the self to actual, individual, historical existence. For them Fichte's 'Self' was not a metaphysical construct, it was the individual 'I' which they endowed with the quality of being able to create its own world. The romantics thus ascribed to the self absolute freedom, 'the power to bind and to loose.' (ibid., p.288) This is what Kierkegaard sees as the essence of romantic irony.

Kierkegaard argues that for the ironic individual who makes this stance his own, the world in fact does come to lose its solidity, experience loses its continuity and becomes a sequence of fragmented moods. The personality of the ironist is dissolved, and he most frequently comes to nothing, just as the romantics themselves implicitly acknowledged in their praise of the 'Taugenichts', the good-for-nothing. (33) This is all a consequence of the split which the romanticist assumes between ideality and reality, and despite the ironist's conceit that he is living poetically, that he is the creator of the moods in which he exists, that he is exalted over the world like a Lord over his domain, a life based on such a split will inevitably fall victim to the manifold, to the changing patterns of the world, for reality cannot just be put to one side. (ibid., pp.291 ff.)

A real reconciliation of the elements in their division from each other can, Kierkegaard says, only be brought about religiously, not poetically: poetry can only achieve an imagined reconciliation. (ibid. p.306) Poetry is an 'exodus' from reality, (ibid.) it is merely 'external' in the sense that in poetic experience I am

'outside' myself, I am not existing in the fulness of the personal life. (SV 1, p.306) Only the religious is able to achieve 'the true blessedness in which the subject does not dream, but in infinite clarity possesses himself, is absolutely transparent to himself.' (ibid.) This is in other words a restatement of the requirement of the life-view.

Kierkegaard addresses himself to Schlegel's principle that to live poetically is to enjoy life, to enjoy the world which if it is not the best of all possible worlds is the most beautiful. (34) But, counters Kierkegaard, if the world which is poetically enjoyed is not the real world, merely a fantastic world, a world external to the world in which my real self exists, then I can neither find myself nor enjoy myself in it, (ibid.) for Schlegel's aim is not merely to enjoy the world in the sense of losing himself in the world, but to be able to feel and enjoy the enjoyment itself, to be conscious of himself enjoying himself in his world. (35) Such a poetical life of enjoyment is castigated by Kierkegaard as not poetical at all because the enjoyment is inauthentic. It is, he says, a 'cowardly' life because it refuses to face the task of becoming transparent to itself in its 'absolute and eternal validity.' (ibid., p.307)

Although the language and style of argument in the Schlegel review are more philosophically and theologically weighted than in the Andersen critique the standpoint is essentially similar. The proper basis of aesthetic productivity is seen as the establishment of the self in a positive relation to a realm of transcendent realities and values which is not merely the projection of the self's own possibilities, but which is an actual encounter with what is other, with what is given to the self by the divine ground of its being. Where such a condition is not attained then the self, far from having the freedom ascribed to it by the ironist, is the victim of the

world it claims to have mastered, its transcendence is a 'transcendence' of avoidance, a refusal to engage in the struggle to achieve authentic selfhood. Far from being ironically elevated over the world such a self in fact suffers (in the technical sense) under the stress of existence. The fault of the doctrinaire novel Lucinde is therefore the same basic fault which Kierkegaard analysed in the 'subjective' novel à la Andersen.

Incidentally, that which is the remarkable thing about Lucinde and the whole tendency which is connected with it is that one, in taking the freedom of the self and its constitutive authority as a point of departure, instead of reaching a still higher spiritual existence only arrives at sensuousness, and so to one's opposite ... But since this sensuousness is not naive, it follows that the same voluntary power which endowed sensuousness with its supposed rights, can in the next moment slip over to affirming an abstract and overdone spiritual existence. These vibrations can now be interpreted, partly as the play of world-irony with the individual, partly as the individual's attempt to copy world-irony.

(SV 1. p.309)

Subjective romantic irony is trapped in the dialectical phase of existence in which concepts relate to each other only as opposites - it does not matter which side one chooses, the real or the ideal, one is unable to see both sides together in their integrated wholeness, one is merely subjected to a cycle of moods. In analysing romantic irony in these dialectical terms Kierkegaard specifically aligns himself with Hegel. (ibid., p.288) This alignment can in any case be inferred from the presentation of Kierkegaard's critique of romanticism in the early Papirer, as we have seen. (36)

We shall not follow Kierkegaard into the details of the novel itself, but again we observe that he assumes the non-problematic nature of the life-view, the attainability of the religiously grounded transparency of the self to its self. Indeed he asserts that 'if this is not possible for every man then life is madness.' (ibid., p.307) This implies that the opposition of self and world, of ideal and real is only provisional, the difficulties can be faced, overcome,

clarified and tranfigured. Again Kierkegaard does not deal with the possibility of a split which cannot be healed; everything, it seems, is possible for him who has courage.

(C) (iv) Two Ages

The third review to be examined in this section is also the most substantial and, like the Ansersen review, was published in book form. It contains a section translated separately into English as The Present Age, which is, in a sense, an appendix to the review itself. (37) This review returns to the figure of Madame Gyllembourg, specifically to her novel To Tidsaldre. It starts however with a general appreciation of the cycle of novels (of which the book under review is one) which began with En Hverdags-Historie. He comments that 'For almost twenty years there has been a good relationship between this author and the reading public, and, as they say of marriages, the two have reached a good understanding with each other.' (SV 14, p.15) This is not just a casual observation but points directly to what Kierkegaard wants to praise in the author, that she has a life-view which has enabled her to be true to herself, to her essential vision. This consistency follows from the characterization of the life-view which Kierkegaard makes. The phenomenal world can make no difference to the steadfastness of the life-view and this must be able to be proved in relation to time.

We hear again that in relation to the manifold of phenomena the position of the author involves resignation, not in the sense of giving up in the face of difficulties, for this resignation radiates 'a quiet joy over life' (ibid., p.16) which comes from the confidence that 'not only does everything gradually become good again but that it was and remained good.' (ibid.)

The life-view which creatively sustains these stories abides the same, while an ingenious inventiveness, the resources acquired from a rich experience, and a fruitful disposition's vegetative luxuriance all serve the production of change within the creative repetition. The turbulence is essentially the same, the pacifying of it essentially the same, the movement in all the stories is from the same and to the same; the tension which is posited has essentially the same elasticity, the peacefulness and relaxedness are also the same, i.e. the life-view is the same.

(SV 14, pp. 16-17)

Against all would-be critics of such sameness he asks 'But is God, with whom the poet is likened when he is described as creative, less admirable in sustaining than in creating the world?' (*ibid.*) The resignation of the life-view is again seen to be essentially related to providential guidance. The sameness is possible because the author has a life-view within herself which, trusting in God's providence in relation to the world, is itself able to function as a kind of stable, sustaining providence in her literary productivity. It is essential that this life-view exists in the author before it is turned to literary use.

The life-view ... must have ripened in the author before he produces. His productivity is not a moment in his development, but when this development has ripened, then it brings forth as its fruit a work of inwardness. It is not geniality, not talent, not virtuosity which constitutes the work, for then the productivity would disappear with the disappearance of these, not the work itself, the possibility of being able to write such works is rather the reward which God has bestowed on the author, as he, twice-matured, won in his life-view, something eternal. (*ibid.*, p. 18)

Kierkegaard makes an important distinction which Ms. Jørgensen finds maintained, though not always specifically referred to, throughout his critical writings. It is the distinction between poetry/poet (Poesi/Digter) on the one hand and authorship/author, writer (Forfatterskab/Forfatter) on the other. The 'poet' represents the immediate, purely aesthetic, approach to art, the 'author' what Ms. Jørgensen calls the ethical approach. (38)

This author, Kierkegaard claims, the author of the 'Tales of

Everyday Life' (referring to the whole cycle of novels), begins where poetry stops.

For poetry does not involve an essential reconciliation with reality, it reconciles through phantasy with the ideal world [produced by] phantasy, but this reconciliation is in the real individual precisely a new splitting away from reality.
(SV.14, p.17)

It is the same argument which Kierkegaard had deployed against Schlegel's standpoint of ironic creativity. Such poetry evades reality, its world is a world produced and sustained solely by the imagination or phantasy. This author on the other hand knows the real world, knows the pain of the real world and is nonetheless able to bear this pain and affirm the goodness of the world.

(ibid., pp.17-18)

Thus whereas a poet may be said to 'transport' or to 'inspire' his reader, the author of these stories 'persuades' (overtale). He invokes neither the excitement nor the despair which the poet can arouse but works with the reader's 'relaxed compliance' as 'the condition for persuasion being able to win a new harmony in place of discord.' (ibid., pp. 21-2) The method of this 'persuasive' approach is

By understanding how to find a milder aspect in which to see suffering, by having the patience which expects good fortune to smile again, by the friendly sympathy of caring people, by the resignation which does not renounce everything but only the highest, and by the contentment that changes the second best into something just as good as the highest ... persuasion is here not a matter between two people, but is the way of the life-view, and the novel leads one in to the world which the (life-) view creatively sustains.

(ibid., p.22)

But this world which is represented in the novel is not a fantastic world such as that produced by the romantic poet: it is an honest reflection of the real world. The novel therefore does not reconcile one with reality by leading one away into a purely ideal realm, it reconciles one with reality by pointing one back to reality, and by communicating the spirit of the life-view by which one can be sustained in reality.

The fact that persuasion is needed, however, does point to the

experience of difficulty, to a break with the easy contentment of immediacy. (SV 14, p.22) There is an experience of suffering in the background of the life-view as there is at the root of the poet's creativity. But the responses of the 'poet' and of the 'author' are quite distinct.

But it is at this point that Kierkegaard introduces a third possibility: the way of religion. It now emerges that the religiosity of the life-view, which in the Andersen and Schlegel critiques was effectively equated with the christian standpoint, is not itself final. The reference to a more radical religiosity is not obtrusive in the context of the review but it is more significant. He says that 'In these stories the author never sets himself the task of dealing with the kind of pain experienced in reality such as could only find comfort in decisively religious categories and in the ideality of the religious.' (ibid., p.18)

This implies that there is a degree or a kind of dissonance between self and world in response to which the self is unable to affirm itself in relation to the world, is unable to integrate the manifold of reality into the harmonizing light of ideality in the way that the life-view does. Equally it implies that the flight into a fictional world of phantasy is not the only response to the experience of the separation of the ideal and the real.

Aesthetically the individual is carried away from reality and transposed into a fantastic medium; religiously the individual is carried away and transposed into the eternity of the religious: in both cases the individual becomes alien to reality. The individual is alienated from reality aesthetically by being put outside it, the individual is alienated from reality religiously by becoming an alien and a foreigner in reality. (ibid., p.22)

The break with reality which the religious presupposes is too drastic to be papered over with the forms of the imagination and too drastic to be healed by the humble good-sense of the life-view.

But because the religious assumes a total break it is able to hold out the promise of a reconciliation which involves a totally new beginning, rather than the compromise with reality represented by the life-view. 'Immediacy [poetry] does not know what persuasion is, because it does not need a healing; but the religious cannot persuade, precisely because it presupposes a new beginning.'

(SV 14, pp.22-3)

The references to the religious in the review perhaps raise more questions than they answer. For what is the nature of this split with reality that only the religious can cure? Is it a dimension of suffering which though concealed from most people most of the time is implicit in all human existence, or is it a special sort of suffering which only some individuals encounter and in either case what, more precisely, is its nature?

We shall keep these questions for a later chapter (39), but there are other questions to which we can give a provisional answer, questions concerned with the distinction of the religious split with reality from the poetic split with reality. Since the religious is described as having its own 'ideality' what is the relation of poetic or aesthetic forms to ideality to religious ideality? Are they different in degree or in kind? Do they relate to each other as the shadows of dramatic art relate to the true centre of light which is the personality itself in its primordial freedom? In that case can we somehow 'read' the presence of the Idea, in an absolute sense, in the projections of the aesthetic imagination, even if it is quite clear that they cannot be read off 'immediately' from the poetic image as certain forms of romantic theory would maintain? But then Kierkegaard has placed the philosophy of the life-view between the poetic and the religious consciousness, such that pure 'poetry', the dreaming imagination of the theatrical shadow-world, is doubly removed from the religious. The life-view stands firmly on the

path from poetry to religion - which suggests too that novelistic literature achieves a greater approximation to the sort of expression which the religious would require than do the pure imaginings of poetry or dramatic art.

The point of division between the aesthetic and the religious is in fact to be found at the point where the project of the life-view fails, where the idea cannot be integrated with the real. Putting the issue in these terms it becomes clear why the aesthetic cannot get beyond this point, why art cannot deal with the religious. For art depends on the synthesis of idea and form - this as we have seen is the basic principle behind Kierkegaard's aesthetic criticism. With regard to pure poetry or to dramatic art the forms are themselves formed out of the fantastic consciousness, with regard to novelistic literature they relate to the real world; but in each case the key question is the correspondence of the particular idea with its form: whether the comedy contains a truly reflective idea, whether the novel reflects a life-view, etc. But if the religious is a response to a split in which the Idea (and for 'Idea' here we may read personal freedom) makes a total break with reality - as we saw in the previous chapter with regard to the concept of humour - then it becomes impossible to speak of idea and form together, the elements of the aesthetic synthesis are separated. If there can be no correspondence of idea and form there can be no art.

In this perspective it might be seen as misleading to talk of the life-view (and of the novelistic form corresponding to it) as 'closer' to the religious, for the interdependence of the life-view and the novel reflects the elements of the aesthetic synthesis just as much as the intrinsic connection between, e.g. the idea of Don Juan and operatic form. Kierkegaard's elevation of the novel over 'poetry' does not so much imply an approximation of the novel to a

religious form of communication but serves more to distance the aesthetic, purely poetic, interpretation of life from the religious, to make sure that the religious is not confused with the poetic ideality. His claim is that the poetic ideality is behind, the religious ideality beyond, the interpenetration of ideality and reality achieved in the life-view.

Kierkegaard's dialectics of art do not therefore culminate in a smooth transition from the sphere of art to that of religion, they end abruptly, with the realization of the incommensurability of human freedom, the Idea in an absolute sense, and external form.

It is for this reason that the present writer differs from Ms. Jørgensen in assessing the significance of Kierkegaard's ethical criticism, the criticism which takes its stand on the principle of the life-view. Although she is correct to draw attention to this dimension of Kierkegaard's aesthetic theory, and its demand for the answerability of certain aesthetic forms to the demands of the real, ethical world, it must be questioned whether she takes sufficient account of the ultimate divergence of the religious from the sort of ethical viewpoint which we find in the life-view. The split between religious ideality and external reality relativizes the standpoint of the life-view as much as it does the standpoint of the purely aesthetic consciousness.

(C) (v) The Life-View and Nihilism

Hegel argues for the supersession of art as a stage of the Spirit both by means of an analysis of the ideal structure of the aesthetic synthesis and by an historical account of the unfolding and ultimate self-transcendence of this synthesis. (40) Similarly Poul Møller saw the aesthetic forms which he valued threatened by the nihilistic consciousness of the new generation, of the 'nine-

teenth century rational man.' (41) Do we find any similar prognostications about the relevance of the age to our perception of art in Kierkegaard's work? Although Kierkegaard's dialectic, like Heiberg's, is relatively ahistorical by comparison with Hegel - and indeed we have seen that Kierkegaard at least theoretically eschews any identification of the classical and romantic stages of art with specific historic periods (42) - he does have a certain historical perspective which is of some relevance to our enquiry.

It is not by accident that the review of To Tidsaldre ends with the well-known analysis of the character of 'the present age'. The novel itself, at least in Kierkegaard's interpretation of it, has had as one of its prime concerns the distinction between the character of the age of revolution, the generation of the period of the French Revolution and of the Revolutionary Wars, the first romantic generation, and the character of the present age, the age of bourgeois compromise as well as of nihilistic rebellion.

This present age is defined as 'essentially rational, reflective, without passion, briefly blazing up in enthusiasm and prudentially relapsing into indolence.' (SV 14, p.63) Reflection here means the negative spirit of doubt, rationalizing reality, breaking-up the given reality into a multitude of parts, dividing, distinguishing, qualifying, sapping natural enthusiasm and spontaneity. Such a spirit of doubt drains the personality, such an age is devoid of character, it is an age of levelling which reduces the individual to an abstraction, a number, a man-in-the-crowd; an age of idle chatter, of superficiality, of formlessness.

In this situation the individual is thrown back upon himself, he cannot stop the process, and is forced either to lose himself in the general formless levelling of the age or to find himself in the radical inwardness of the religious.

In such an age the specific synthesis which is established in the life-view cannot be maintained, for external form is drained of meaning, and the individual is powerless to restore it. It will be recalled that in the Andersen-review Kierkegaard specifically identified the author of the 'Tales of Everyday Life' as a member, not of the present age, but of the older generation for whom the possession of a life-view was the presupposition of their lives and moreover he had asserted that it would only be members of that generation who could appreciate these stories to the full. (SV 1, pp.26-7)

The implication of the analysis of 'the present age' is ~~that art~~ has entered a problematic phase, and that a healing of the division which has split the individual and confounded the proper order of society must precede the restoration of art to its true place in the created scheme of things. For the present this healing can take place only in the secrecy of inwardness and it cannot be communicated directly to others by those who have found it, each must work individually, every man for himself. It may even be that the time for such healing will only come when reflection and levelling have run their course. (SV 14, pp. 98-9)

It is because the middle-ground of the life-view is thus squeezed out, because the integration of ideal and real is impossible when the real itself has become so formless and so abstract, that Kierkegaard is able to narrow his options down to two: either the aesthetic or the religious. In the contemporary climate, as Kierkegaard understood it, the life-view cannot be sustained. A corollary of this is, of course, that the present age will be unable to produce novelistic literature of a satisfactory and satisfying kind, since the novel itself is the form which corresponds to the idea of the life-view. It may therefore be expected that we will find evidence for defining more closely still the point of division of the religious and the

aesthetic in those works of Kierkegaard which have a novelistic form: it is here that we shall see where and how the religious content breaks loose from the aesthetic form, here that we see the suffering, the crises in human existence which art is unable to express, and which can only be grasped in the radical inwardness of the religious.

Chapter Eight: Kierkegaard's Novels (1)

(A) What are Kierkegaard's Novels?

Not only does Kierkegaard's aesthetic authorship include a substantial body of writing about art, such as the works of aesthetic criticism we have studied in the previous chapter, but it also includes a group of works which can be called aesthetic in another sense - in the sense that they are themselves works of art, works of novelistic literature. To a certain extent most of what Kierkegaard wrote contains a great deal of artistry in its use of language, of imagery, etc., but there is a group of writings which possess a specific aesthetic form.

In his study of Kierkegaard's literary art F. Billeskov Jansen devotes a chapter to what he calls 'the great novels' (de store Romanvaerker). He argues that Either-Or and Stages on Life's Way in particular are rooted in a tradition of novelistic art which found its pattern in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister, and he refers to Tieck's Franz Sternbald's Wanderungen, Schlegel's Lucinde, Jean Paul's Titan and Novalis' Heinrich von Ofterdingen as other outstanding examples of this genre. (1) It is the genre of what is called the Bildungsroman, the 'novel of education'.

Louis Mackey takes up Billeskov Jansen's point with the qualification that whereas the German novels follow their hero through a process of growth and development, in a Kierkegaardian work such as Either-Or

There is no narrative resolution of the stretto among A, Judge Wilhelm, the priest from Jutland, and all the real or putative others. Each is stuck fast in his own categories ... the novel in which they live is a Bildungsroman, but without Bildung.

(2)

In a similar vein Carl Roos draws attention to the significance of Goethe's Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers as a model for Kierke-

gaard's various 'unhappy love' stories, particularly Repetition and Guilty? - Not-Guilty? (a section of Stages on Life's Way). He concludes that

As a novelist (novelleforfatter) Kierkegaard knew ... only one form: that of the epistolary and diaristic novel, compiled by an editor... The classical example of this is however precisely Goethe's Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers. (3)

Aage Henriksen entitles his study of Kierkegaard's 'broken engagement' stories (The Seducer's Diary in Either-Or; Repetition; Guilty? -Not-Guilty?); Kierkegaards Romaner - Kierkegaard's Novels.

He claims that

They are novels in a traditional sense: fictional prose accounts in which circumstances and reflection form the links in a coherent action which takes place in a determinate space and which has a certain extension in time ... (4)

He goes on to draw attention to the relation of The Seducer's Diary and Guilty?-Not-Guilty? to the larger works of which they are part and to the literary nature of these larger works:

These books again function as subordinate parts of works which belong to the second type of fictional form employed by SK: dual-works, in which a timeless dialogue is carried on between typified representatives of forms of existence, who talk to each other without influencing each other. (5)

Henriksen also draws attention to the conventionality of the typical Kierkegaardian device of using a pseudonymous narrator to present the predicament of the central character in the narrative. (6)

Henriksen's emphasis on the literary aspect of Kierkegaard's novels is a deliberate self-limitation, and he stresses that a full interpretation of these works would have to take into account their function within the larger works of which they are part and of the authorship regarded as a whole. (7)

In relation to Kierkegaard's early Papirer it was observed that many of his early journal-notes can be construed as fragments of projected novels, a theory advanced by Emmanuel Hirsch and taken up by Henning Fenger. Fenger's work in particular shows the possible

links between Kierkegaard's novelistic style and danish (rather than merely german) models, such as Sibbern's Efterladte Breve af Gabrielis. (8)

The significance of this interpretation of the aesthetic form of Kierkegaard's novels for our enquiry is that, if it is accepted that these works did have an aesthetic form, we must, in the light of Kierkegaard's own aesthetic principles, go on to ask whether the content, the idea, with which they deal is in fact patient of aesthetic representation. We must ask, as Kierkegaard would ask, whether idea and form correspond. An examination of the texts will show that there is no such correspondence - with the possible exception of Either-Or - and that despite their aesthetic form these works are essentially concerned with religious themes, religious in the specific sense of presupposing a split between idea and reality such that not even the ethical endeavours of the life-view can bring about a reconciliation. They are religious in the sense that here we see the realm of inwardness breaking away from external form.

Because of this contrast between the aesthetic form and the religious intentions of the works in question it follows that they can only be called novels in a limited sense. Equally their aesthetic form means that they cannot be directly accounted religious works. Although their ultimate intention is religious, their function is philosophical in the sense that what they achieve is the definition of the boundary between the aesthetic and the religious, an elucidation and clarification of the categories and concepts with which we seek to appropriate and interpret the religious. It is not a purely philosophical exercise in that for Kierkegaard philosophy is pressed into service as the handmaiden of the religious, but it is in its own terms a valid philosophical exercise in that it does not attempt to answer the question of the truth or falsehood of the concepts with

which it deals, but to define and demarcate the fields within which they can validly be deployed. These books are novels in the sense defined by Nietzsche when he proclaimed that

Plato has furnished for all posterity the pattern of a new art form, the novel, viewed as the Aesopian fable raised to its highest power; a form in which poetry played the same subordinate role with regard to dialectic philosophy as that same philosophy was to play for many centuries with regard to theology. (9)

In confirmation of this understanding of the 'novels' it may be noted that various commentators have noted parallels with the platonic dialogues, both in terms of the general function of the novels and in terms of specific textual correlations. Henriksen, for example, notes the similarities between Plato's Protagoras and Repetition (10), and many commentators have noticed the close links between Plato's Symposium and Kierkegaard's own 'banquet', In Vino Veritas, which is the first part of Stages on Life's Way. (11)

The 'novels' to be examined here are Either-Or, Repetition and Guilty?-Not-Guilty? As will have been apparent different commentators work with different 'lists' according to their approach. Henriksen's list for example, is determined by the epic or narrative form of the texts. (12) There is an apparent inconsistency in the present selection in that the first two titles relate to whole works, whereas the last is only a section - albeit a book-length section - of a larger work, Stages on Life's Way. The reason for this is that there is a considerable overlap between the material which constitutes the first part of Stages on Life's Way and Either-Or and that to focus on the second part both avoids unnecessary duplication and, because of the actual content of Guilty?-Not-Guilty?, provides an adequate conclusion to our enquiry.

In keeping with our deference to Kierkegaard's own aesthetic principles we shall firstly examine these novels in terms of their aesthetic form in order to gauge the extent to which they are in

fact affiliated to a clear and definite literary tradition, and then turn to the exposition of the content or 'idea' of each novel.

(B) The Aesthetic Form of Kierkegaard's Novels

The tradition of the novel to which Kierkegaard's work is to be related is rather different from the tradition of the english novel, as will soon enough become clear. The barriers which confront the english-speaking reader in his approach to Kierkegaard are, in part at least, connected with this cultural difference. There is much which strikes the anglophone reader as 'odd' and which he ascribes to Kierkegaard's own 'oddity' (not altogether to be denied), which is in fact a normal part of a particular literary form. This can be seen by reference to some of Kierkegaard's most obvious devices.

The most striking is the use of pseudonymity itself. Without denying that Kierkegaard used this device to an unusual extent and endowed it with more theoretical significance than it may in fact, be able to bear (13), the device itself is quite normal in the romantic novel. This was observed by Brandes (14) and reiterated by Billeskov Jansen who says that 'in this group of German writers the concealment of the author's name, partial or total anonymity, flourished.' (15) Anonymity of course is something different from pseudonymity, and a certain type of journalistic anonymity was anathema to Kierkegaard, but Billeskov Jansen is using the term, as Kierkegaard also did, (16) to include the use of pseudonyms. This is clear when he cites as an example 'Novalis' as the pseudonym of Friedrich von Hardenberg.

It is perhaps significant that the majority of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous names have some sort of "monastic" reference: Victor Eremita, Johannes Climacus, Frater Taciturnus, Johannes de Silentio.

At one time he had also considered using Simon Stylites. (IV B 78/5659) This is partly a coded signal of his religious aim in the authorship (17) but it also echoes the romantic image of the monastery as a place of beauty and art, an image exemplified in one of the epochal texts of early romanticism, Wackenroder's (pseudonymous) Herzensergiessungen eines Kunstliebenden Klosterbruders.

A second striking feature, closely connected with the use of the pseudonymous 'author' as editor, is the device of the text within a text. In Either-Or, for example, the editor, Victor Eremita, claims to have found the manuscripts which make up the book in a concealed drawer in a second-hand desk. The manuscripts fall into two parts, the papers of A and of B. A he cannot name, but B he identifies by internal evidence as Assessor Wilhelm. A's papers contain a variety of essays but also include The Seducer's Diary, an independent piece which A claims to have stolen from the author, although we are left in some doubt about this. (18) B's papers consist of two very long letters from the Assessor to his young friend A and also a sermon, supposedly written by a clerical friend of the Assessor's and passed on by him to A. These pieces all fit together, says Victor Eremita 'like a chinese puzzle-box.' (SV 2 p.14)

A similar complexity is found in Repetition. Here the 'editor', Constantine Constantius, uses the first part of the book to describe both his own experiences and thoughts on a trip to Berlin as well as telling the uncompleted story of a young man of his acquaintance. In the second part he introduces a cycle of letters from this young man which complete the story. The book concludes with a letter from Constantine to the reader prefaced by a page set out as an envelope

'to: Mr. N. N. Esq.,
 this book's real reader.' (SV 5, p.187)

The most bizarre and complex case of texts-within-texts however

occurs in Stages on Life's Way. This work comprises two main sections: the book was actually conceived at one point as two separate books (19), 'collected, forwarded to the printer and published by Hilarius Bookbinder' (SV 7, p.5), who describes how these manuscripts had been sent to him, together with other books, by a literary gentleman - only the papers got overlooked and were found again too long after their despatch to make it worthwhile returning them. He does not himself read them, but his son's tutor persuades him to have them published.

Each of the two parts again falls into two parts. The first half of the book includes In Vino Veritas, an account of a banquet a la Plato, related by one William Afham, coupled with another lengthy letter from Assessor Wilhelm, the banquet and the letter being linked by a brief narrative section. The banqueters include such familiar figures as Victor Eremita and Johannes the Seducer from Either-Or and Constantine Constantius from Repetition.

The second half of the book is entitled "Guilty?-Not-Guilty? and this in turn falls into two parts. Its pseudonymous editor, Frater Taciturnus, described in an introduction how he had by chance fished up a rosewood box from the bottom of the Sjøborg Lake, in which box he found a manuscript of a diary which tells the story of an unhappy love affair.

The diary itself is rather unusual. There are three types of entry in it: morning entries, which describe events taking place exactly a year before, relating the story of the love-affair up to the final rupture; midnight entries, which describe the events of the current year, detailing the inner suffering and anguish of the author, who is the male protagonist in the love-story; and six quite distinct midnight entries, which in various ways evoke the sense of guilt which lies at the heart of the diarist's predicament.

This diary constitutes the first part of Guilty? - Not-Guilty? To this diary Frater Taciturnus appends his own letter to the reader in which he analyzes the situation of the diarist who, he now claims, is his own creation.

Excessive as Kierkegaard's use of it may be, this device of the text-within-the-text, the device itself links him to the novelistic tradition of Goethe and the romantics. Whether it was their reading of the 'play within a play' motif in Shakespeare which inspired them to the use of this device, they certainly adopted it with fervour. As in many other respects Wilhelm Meister provided the paradigmatic example, in the Confessions of a Beautiful Soul, a piece of feminine autobiography which interrupts the account of Wilhelm's passage through life and of his and his companions' adventures. (20) Another example is Hoffmann's Kater Murr. This purports to be the autobiography of a tom-cat called Murr, delivered to Hoffmann for publication. But

When Kater Murr wrote his life and opinions, he unceremoniously ripped up a printed book which he found at his master's and simply used the leaves, partly as an underpad, partly as blotting paper. These papers remained in the manuscript and, by mistake, were printed as if they belonged to it. (21)

As a result fragments of a quite different story are interspersed into the tom-cat's autobiography, a story which concerns Murr's master and, amongst others, Johannes Kreisler who features in other books by Hoffmann. Georg Brandes describes this device of the book-within-the-book as a 'cabinet of mirrors with its duplication of reflection.' (22)

The text-within-the-text is not however itself always a story. As in Wilhelm Meister it can on occasion be a piece of literary or even scientific theory. Wackenroder's Herzensergiessungen is another example, containing essays on the history and theory of art, as well as poems, fictional letters, and the novelistic life of Joseph

Berglinger. The novel in this particular tradition is not solely, perhaps not even chiefly, 'story.' Indeed Schlegel repudiates the idea that it should be the narrative which gives the novel its unity. The unity of the novel, he argues, consists in the unity of its ideal content, it is an ideal unity which runs through the whole work, and which is reflected in the various literary genres which are united in the novel:

Sie behaupten zwar, der Roman habe am meisten Verwandtschaft^d mit der erzählenden, ja, mit der epischen Gattung. Dagegen ... ich kann mir einen Roman kaum anders denken, als gemischt aus Erzählung, Gesang und andern Formen. (23)

Thus the fact that large parts of, e.g., Either-Or consist of pieces of aesthetic theory does not mean that the whole of which they are a part is not to be considered as a novel. What matters is the ideal unity of the work. As we have seen it was indeed a consequence of romantic theory that the division of art and philosophy, of literary theory and literary practice tends to be weakened if not to disappear. (24)

It is in this light that Kierkegaard understands Schleiermacher's Vertraute Briefe über die Lucinde:

It is probably a model review and also an example of how such a thing can be most productive, in that he constructs a host of personalities out of the book itself and through them illuminates the work and also illuminates their individuality, so that instead of being faced by the reviewer with various points of view, we get instead many personalities who represent these various points of view. But they are complete beings, so that it is possible to get a glance into the individuality of the single individual and through numerous relatively true judgements to draw up our own final judgement. Thus it is a true masterpiece. (I C 68/3846)

This passage provides a link between Kierkegaard's reviews and his novels: the review and the novel each have the task of drawing out and elucidating an idea. In the case of the reviews the ideal content is determined by the work to which they are addressed, in the novels, it is freely chosen - but the method is the same.

The novels in this literary tradition are essentially about ideas, and very often the idea which they are about is art itself, as in Schlegel's Lucinde which deals with the idea of poetic love, or Hoffmann's Kater Murr which deals with the idea of art and its relation to bourgeois society. Following the fichtean model of self-reflection the romantic book, the novel, is itself conceived as a reflection on the idea of poetry.

The self-reflective character of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous books, the 'cabinet of mirrors' of which Brandes speaks, is itself a clue that here we are dealing with novels which are also reflections on the nature and scope of novelistic art, novels which are also theory. But whereas for Schlegel life culminated in art, for Kierkegaard the main point is to seek out what lies beyond the aesthetic. These novels point beyond the aesthetic form to a religious content or idea, by which the aesthetic is limited. There is thus a tension between content and form which means that whilst the form invites a reading of them purely as aesthetic works, such a reading cannot be sustained. Despite their form, consciously and deliberately in despite of their form, they cannot ultimately be read as novels, but as works of philosophy in the service of the religious. They are not intended to satisfy, to provide a soothing attunement to a timeless ideal for a weary soul, but to disturb, to unsettle, to raise questions, to increase puzzlement.

The literary affiliations of these works warns us against those readings which see them as veiled personal confessions. When Pierre Mesnard, speaking of the diary in Stages on Life's Way says that the use of pseudonymity here is 'pour couvrir une communication, une message de Kierkegaard,' (25) the point is not at all self-evident. Rather than looking for Kierkegaard's face behind the mask of the text we should direct our attention to the idea which is reflected

in the text.

The tension between the aesthetic form and the religious content also warns us to be careful of such interpretations as that proposed by Martin Thust, that Kierkegaard's 'novels' are specifically designed as an appropriate medium by which to communicate the invisible, spiritual stages of the self in its ascent to the religious, (26) for it is precisely the tension between form and content that Kierkegaard has in mind.

This reading supports Kierkegaard's own thesis that his authorship was religious from the beginning, and that the aesthetic form of his work was intended as a way of meeting people where they were - in the spell of an aesthetic view of life - and of gradually unveiling the illusory nature of the aesthetic. These works are basically 'a pious fraud'. (cf. SV 18, pp. 104 ff.)

We now turn to a closer examination of the content of the novels and of the way in which the religious content makes its presence felt behind the aesthetic form.

(C) Either-Or

(C) (i) The Aesthetic Point of View

In the Point of View Kierkegaard described Either-Or as 'a poetic evacuation which does not however go further than the ethical.' (ibid., p.90) If moreover the ethical is construed in terms which parallel the philosophy of the life-view (as we shall see that it is) then it cannot be said that there is any profound tension between the aesthetic form and the ethical content. Indeed, of the novels, it is Either-Or which, for this reason, has the best claim to be read simply as a novel, as a work of literary art. The tension between idea and form is by no means obvious. It is however not

entirely absent either, as we shall see, and Either-Or prepares the ground on which the boundary between the religious and the aesthetic is to be erected.

The term aesthetic is particularly relevant to the 'idea' embodied in the first volume of Either-Or, comprising the papers of 'A'. In the first place it contains examples of Kierkegaard's critical writings - the essays on Don Juan and The First Love - and other sections dealing with aesthetic themes. Furthermore, it contains one piece of writing, The Seducer's Diary, which can itself be treated as an independent novel - and which has indeed been translated and dramatized in its own right. (27)

The idea represented in this first part was recognized by the more perceptive of Kierkegaard's contemporary readers, like the reviewer in Faerdelandet who heard in it a reverberation of 'the torn and disintegrated condition [of the age] which is audible as a succession of screaming dissonances from many of our time's most gifted children.' (28) Other reviewers saw in it the spirit of negation or of reflection which characterized the age and in particular movements such as young Germany. (29) Kierkegaard was not alone in his vision of a rising tide of nihilism in contemporary culture.

We may therefore expect that the aesthetic stance which is represented in A's papers is that which posits the separation of the aesthetic idea from reality. There can be no question of a life-view here. In fact the aesthetic form which recurs again and again in these papers is that of the theatre, which is precisely the embodiment of a poetic world apart from the real world of ethical care and responsibility. The critical pieces are theatrical, the figures used in the psychological studies are taken from the theatre, and this emphasis makes itself felt in other ways. A's existence is itself

essentially theatrical, it is an existence in the magical theatre of possibility. Two points may be noted in this connection: the fugitive nature of A's personality, and his youth.

The fugitive nature of A's personality is hinted at in the editor's introduction, where Victor Eremita says that he can glean 'absolutely nothing' of A's personality from his papers. (SV 2, p.13) This is not merely accidental, for A's life is a life such as Kierkegaard envisaged as the result of romantic irony in The Concept of Irony: it is a life which has fallen apart into a sequence of fragmented and disconnected moods. It lacks continuity. (SV 1, p.295) This is most clearly depicted in the opening aphorisms, the 'Diapsalmata' and in the chapter devoted to boredom. (SV 2, pp.259 ff.) A's residence is not far from Heiberg's hell of immediacy.

A's lack of personality connects with the theatrical nature of his existence since, as we have seen, the theatre answers to a stage of development which is below the level of personality, a shadow-realm, in which the individual knows himself only in the dark outlines of the dream figures which are projections of the imagination. The theatre belongs naturally to the hidden, cryptic, personality. (30)

Assessor Wilhelm is quite clear about this and sees that A exists only 'outside' himself in the projections of his imagination, in a magic-theatre of possibility. He writes to A

You are constantly hovering above yourself, but the lofty aether, the fine sublimate, in which you are dissolved is the nothingness of despair ... that which you see beneath you is a multiplicity of moods and situations, which you use to find interesting points of contact with life. (SV 3 pp.185-6)

and

You are constantly hovering over yourself and decisive as every step may be, you reserve for yourself a possible interpretation of things, which by means of a single word can change everything. (ibid., pp.16-17)

'A' lives in the 'aether', the ideal medium, which is the medium of poetry, of imagination; he is outside the world, outside himself in

an empty transcendence.

The Assessor also refers constantly to A as his 'young friend.'

He explains his reasons for this as follows:

I feel ... with what justice I call you: my young friend.
A difference of seven years is not exactly an eternity, nor
will I boast of a more mature reason in comparison with you,
but certainly of a more mature life. Yes, I feel that I
really have grown older, but you constantly hold fast to
youth's first flourish. (SV 3, p.85)

Again recalling the excursus on the theatre in Repetition it is to be noted that theatrical art and youth correspond to each other. It will be remembered that Kierkegaard specifically said '... there is no young man of any imagination who has not at some time felt himself caught by the magic of the theatre ...' (SV 5, p.135) and he added that 'the chief thing is that everything happens at the right time. Everything has its time in youth ...' (ibid., p.136)

The theatre is appropriate for youth because youth has not developed to the point where the demands proper to a mature ethical existence can be made. The personality of youth is still latent, still only a matter of possibility. The youth's love of theatre is a healthy part of the process of growing-up.

But it will also be recalled that Kierkegaard spoke of a moment when 'the cock now crows and the twilight figures flee away,' (ibid., p.137) a moment when we must leave the theatre and go out into life.

A's problem is precisely that he has been unable to respond to the demand put to him in this moment. It is not his aptitude for the play of theatrical moods which is wrong, but that he tries to live his life in such moods. Instead of leaving the theatre of childhood and acquiring a life-view he has made the theatre the basis of his life-view. But as Victor Eremita observes in his introduction, such a project can scarcely be carried out in life. (SV 2, p.19)

Of A's papers it is The Seducer's Diary in which we find the aesthetic attitude best summarized. This diary represents the attempt

to live aesthetically, and it represents A's essential idea, (SV 2 p.14) thus the essential idea of this first part in concentrated form. It is here too that we are brought closest to the boundary between art and ethical existence.

The connection between A and the Seducer is in itself an example of the chinese-puzzle motif in Kierkegaard's writing and also of the way in which he uses the narrator (editor) - hero relationship. A claims to have stolen the papers which constitute The Seducer's Diary, and to have put them together with some letters given him by Cordelia, the seducer's victim, he himself being merely the editor. Victor Eremita, however, thinks that The Diary is a poetic work written by A himself, and that A's anxiety with regard to the Seducer is anxiety about himself:

The mood which governs A's introduction [to The Diary] in a manner betrays the poet. It is actually as if A himself had grown afraid of his poem, which like a disturbing dream continues to cause anxiety, even as it is being told. (ibid.)

The world of the seducer is described by A himself as a 'nebulous realm, a dream-world, where every moment one is scared by one's own shadow.' (ibid., p.287) Victor Eremita too, when he thinks of the seducer, thinks of him moving 'like a shadow across my floor.' (ibid., p.15) It is to the shadow realm of the theatre that the seducer essentially belongs, and within this realm he is the most shadowy figure of all. This is how A puts it:

Behind the world in which we live, far away in the background, lies another world, which stands in approximately the same relation to this world as the scene one sometimes sees in the theatre in the background of the main scene stands in relation to this latter. Through a thin gauze one sees as it were, a world of gauze, lighter, more ethereal, of a different quality from the real world. Many people who are physically present in the real world do not actually belong to it but to this other world. But that a man can thus fade away, indeed almost vanish from reality, can have its basis either in health or in sickness. This latter was the case with this man... (ibid., pp.283-4)

The seducer is not merely like a figure in a play, but he is like a

figure in a world which is unreal even in comparison with the illusory world represented on the forestage; he is not just a shadow, but a shadow of a shadow.

This characteristic is constantly reflected in the Diary itself, in the seducer's comments about himself. When he asks himself 'in my relation to Cordelia have I been at all times true to my pact,' he means not his pact with the girl, with Cordelia, who is after all a real human being, but true to his 'pact with the aesthetic.' (SV 2, p.403) His strength is 'that I continually have the idea on my side' (*ibid.*) - or in other words he is only strong in the ideal, not in the real, world.

As he anticipates the final rendezvous with Cordelia, he tells himself 'Everything is symbol, I myself am a myth about myself, for is it not like a myth that I hasten to this meeting? Who I am has nothing to do with it; everything finite and temporal is forgotten ...' (*ibid.*, p.409)

It follows from this that in fact the sort of seduction with which he is concerned, in which his virtuosity is indicated by his title, 'the Seducer', has little to do with the gratification of sensuous passion. The moment of sexual gratification is the least significant part of the process and is partly for this reason (and not merely for the sake of literary modesty) passed over in silence. The essential seduction is something intellectual, it consists in developing the girl to the point where thought or ideality (which for Kierkegaard as well as for the seducer are essentially masculine characteristics) are about to develop in her, and at this point she discovers that the development can only be fulfilled by her giving herself to him, for he it is who has nourished this ideality in her, it is his thought, and she can only have it in him, just as it is really only his own thought which he enjoys in her. 'I have made her light, light as a thought, and now should not this thought belong

to me!' (SV 2,p.404) he cries in triumph to himself.

The seduction is thus 'ideal', an event in the ideal world which is the seducer's true home, not an event in the real world at all; and at the same time there is no real personal reciprocity involved. Johannes describes his method thus:

However I do not spread out my cloak in order to sit with her on the earth's greensward, but in order to disappear with her into the sky in a flight of thought. Or I do not take her with me, but sit myself astride a thought, wave my hand to her, blow her a kiss, and vanish from her sight, only audible in the sighing of the winged words, yet not, unlike Jehovah, becoming more and more visible through the word, but less and less, since the more I talk, the higher I climb. Then she wants to come too, away on a bold flight of thought. (ibid., pp. 336-7)

He is thus able to write to her 'I carry you away, not from one person to another, but out of the world.' (ibid., p.366) For by accompanying him she is indeed leaving the real world for a world of pure phantasy.

Such a purely ideal seduction can have no abiding connection with the world. Its consummation is purely an affair of the moment, only in the moment can the woman transcend her essentially immediate being and exist in the pure translucency of the seducer's ideality, only in, only for, the moment - what comes afterwards, the birth and nurture of children, home-making, etc., all belongs to the realm of nature, to the finite, to the real world and is of no interest to Johannes. It is, he says, the business of husbands, not of seducers. (ibid., pp.398-9)

The fact that he, as a man, is essentially at home in the realm of ideality means that the ideal consummation which he seeks is, as we have seen, only a game carried on within the ambience of his own consciousness, a game in which the woman is only the occasion, not the partner. Johannes is quite clear about this:

She listens, she understands. She listens to the winged words, she understands it, she listens to another's talk, she understands it as her own; she listens to another's voice, as it echoes in her, she understands this echo as if it were her own voice, which reveals itself to her and to another. (ibid., p.359)

In a sense the two never meet. She does not, cannot, is not allowed to, enter into the relationship as a subject in her own right. She is merely the screen onto which he projects his fantasized possibilities, merely the echo-chamber into which he speaks to magnify his own voice and creates an illusion of dialogue. The diary continues:

What do I do? Do I mock her? In no way; that would not help me at all. Do I steal her heart? In no way, I prefer that the girl I love keeps her heart. Then what do I do? I make myself a heart in the likeness of hers. An artist paints his beloved, that is his pleasure, a sculptor forms his. I do this too, but in a spiritual sense. She does not know that I possess this picture, and therein consists in essence my falsehood. (SV 2, pp.359-60)

It is not the real person of the girl he wants: it is an image, which he can play with in the magic theatre of his imagination, until the image breathes out its thought, its inner meaning, and expires. His love-making is a form of voyeurism, it is a stealing of others' images, rather than of engagement with others.

Assessor Wilhelm has observed A playing a similar game in one of his café haunts:

A pretty young girl, beside whom you quite by chance ... were sitting at table was too prim to bestow a glance on you ... she sat opposite a mirror, in which you could see her. She cast a sly look at it, not foreseeing that your eye had already taken up its place there; she blushed when your eye met hers. Such things you register as accurately as a daguerrotype - and as quickly as one, which as is known needs only half-a-minute, even in the worst weather. (SV 3, p.13)

This is a perfect summary of the seducer's attitude. It is the reflection in the mirror, not the reality, he desires, something he can put into the album of his memory and develop in the light of his idealizing imagination.

Johannes says that 'Memory is not only a means of preserving, but also of enhancing, what is permeated by memory has a double-effect.' (SV 2, p.318) The term he uses here 'Erindring' means both memory and internalization. It is not just the faculty of recalling something, but the power which lifts the real up into the

ideal world. This same ambiguity was, as has been noted, used also by Hegel. (31)

The demoniac quality of the seducer (SV 2, p.15), the 'frightful' aspect which Kierkegaard expected he would present to his contemporary readers should not mislead us. This is no Miltonic Satan, this is a pitiable figure, a man incapable of love, of friendship, of contentment. He is retarded at what is essentially an adolescent phase of his development. Nor should we rush to the conclusion that this figure is a cipher for Kierkegaard himself. There is every reason to believe that he is the analyst, and not the patient. (32) For over against the aesthetic, poetic Schattenbild of the seducer, lurking in the wings of his own magic-theatre, Kierkegaard sets the demand for a life-view. He does this by means of the Assessor Wilhelm, whose letters make up the bulk of the second part of the book, the 'Or'.

The term 'demoniac' here indicates that the frontier between the phantasy-world of illusion and the real world has been reached: for the demonic is defined in the excursus on the theatre in Repetition precisely as being activated in the moment when a man continues to exist in and through the shadowy figures of the theatre after the cock has crowed, after the day has dawned and the time to act has arrived. (33) The same frontier is indicated by the quality of anxiety which the seducer arouses, both in A and in Victor Eremita, for, as we shall see, anxiety (angst) is rooted in the gap between the ideal, fantasized world of imagination and the real world of ethical responsibility. (34)

(C) (ii) The Ethical Point of View

The line of enquiry which we are pursuing here is aimed at seeking a closer definition of the boundaries of art, and the key

question with regard to the ethical point of view represented in Part Two of Either-Or is how is the relation of the ethical to the aesthetic to be construed? Does it represent an absolute limit or merely a relative limit to art? Is it presented as complementary to or as a negation of the whole realm of the aesthetic? Is the ethical seen here in terms of the life-view or of the religious?

In fact the ethical position which Assessor Wilhelm represents is substantially the same as that represented by the life-view and embodied in such figures as Poul Møller and Madame Gyllembourg. Indeed it has been argued that Poul Møller was the model for the figure of the Assessor (35), but whether this is so or not there is a considerable conceptual overlap in their positions, particularly with regard to the question we are pursuing here. This overlap is indicated in the vocabulary of the Assessor's letters: the overwhelming majority of instances in which Kierkegaard uses the expression 'life-view' (Livsanskuelse) and related terms in the specific sense which we have given to it occur in the group of writings which contain his reviews of novels (On the Concept of Irony; From the Papers of One Still Living; A Literary Review) and in this second part of Either-Or. (36)

As the correlation of this position with the idea of the novel shows, the elevation of life over art which the life-view requires does not mean the abolition of art, for it can permit a creative two-way relationship in which the work of art reflects the standard of the life-view and the life-view in turn expresses itself in and sees itself in the product of novelistic art. By setting up the standard of the life-view in the Assessor's letters Kierkegaard does not therefore introduce an idea which transcends the aesthetic form of the Bildungsroman which he is employing. The limit which aesthetics encounters here is not an absolute limit, it is not a

negation of the aesthetic as such, it is rather the demand for a quite specific ordering of the aesthetic within a wider viewpoint.

We shall now look at the Assessor's position in more detail, with constant reference to its implications for defining the scope of aesthetics.

The first letter is concerned with the aesthetic validity of marriage, and seeks to show that the idea of married love is aesthetically beautiful as against the romantic scorn of marital love. Although the Assessor is arguing against the romantic position in general it is likely that once again Schlegels Lucinde and Schleiermacher's Vertraute Briefe Ueber Schlegels Lucinde are the specific targets.

Just as Kierkegaard had condemned Lucinde not for its moral failings but because it was unpoetic, because it did not deepen itself in the life-view which was the well-spring of all genuine aesthetic (at least novelistic) creativity, so the Assessor argues against the so-called 'aesthetic' objections to marriage that marriage both preserves and enhances the aesthetic aspect of love: married love is more beautiful than unhallowed love, and, consequently, a more appropriate theme for aesthetic treatment. In this way he inverts the romantic position as that is represented by Schleiermacher:

Ich kenne gar keine Unsittlichkeit eines Kunstwerkes, als die, wenn es seine Schuldigkeit nicht tut schön und vortrefflich zu sein, oder wenn es aus seinen Grenzen hinausgeht ... (37)

Although the dualistic or nihilistic wing of romanticism presupposes the intrinsic opposition of the realms of ideality and reality the Assessor sets out to prove their coherence and the implications of this coherence for the idea of love.

What he calls 'romantic love' is based on sensuous immediacy ' ... to see her was to love her; or, though she saw him through a slit in the locked window of her maidenly bower just one time from

this moment on she nonetheless loved him, him alone in all the world.' (SV 3, p.24) The first love is the true love. It is the quality of immediacy which gives love its 'substantial content (Gehalt): (ibid.)

But the sensuous basis of this sort of love whose ideal is sensuous beauty means that it is based on something which is transient. This is seen by the reflective consciousness which draws the conclusion that there is an irresolvable conflict between love and permanence. With Lord Byron it affirms 'love is heaven, marriage is hell.' (ibid., pp. 26-7) A life in love becomes a sequence of affairs, marriage becomes merely a matter of convenience.

Such a vision of the incompatibility of first love and marriage is again expressed by Schleiermacher

Auch in der Liebe muss es vorläufige Versuche geben, aus deren nichts bleibendes entsteht, von denen aber jeder etwas beiträgt um das Gefühl bestimmter und die Aussicht auf die Liebe grösser und herrlicher zu machen ... Auch muss es der Natur der Sache nach so sein, und hier Treue fordern und ein fortdauerndes Verhältnis stiften wollen ist eine eben so schädliche als leere Einbildung. (38)

Though the Assessor sees the incompatibility of trying to build an eternity, a love 'for ever and a day,' on the basis of sensuous immediacy alone, he poses the question

whether the immediate, the first love might not be secured against such scepticism by being taken up into a higher, concentric immediacy, so that marital love would not need to bury the beautiful hopes of first love, but marital love would itself be the first love with an additional set of determinations which would not lessen but rather ennoble it. (SV 3, p.33)

In the present age people mostly get stuck in reflection and do not win through to the higher experience, the higher unity which provides unity and harmony. This higher realm 'is the religious, in which rational reflection is brought to a stop ... ' (ibid., p.34) To achieve this is to bring about the 'transfiguration of first love, not its annihilation.' (ibid., p.35) It is achieved in christian marriage, for in the marriage ceremony love receives a religious

sanction, a religious hallowing.

This is the basis for the assertion that marriage is more beautiful than extra-marital love, for marriage contains a synthesis which parallels the aesthetic synthesis:

it is freedom and yet necessity; it is in the moment, is in the highest degree 'present' and yet it has an eternity within it. All this marriage has too, it is sensuous and yet spiritual, but it is more than this ... It has inner infinitude in itself, still more than first love has; for the inner infinitude of marriage is an eternal life ... the spiritual element of marriage is higher than that of the first love, and the higher the heaven over the bridal bed so much the better, so much the more beautiful, so much the more aesthetic; and over marriage it is not the earthly heaven which is arched but the Heaven of the Spirit. (SV 3, pp.61-2)

This aesthetic quality is of course in the first instance a quality of life, not of a work of art. The Assessor's own comment on this is that

There certainly exists a misunderstanding among a great many people, which confuses what is aesthetically beautiful with what permits itself to be represented as aesthetically beautiful. This can quite easily be explained by the fact that the aesthetic satisfaction which the soul needs is sought by most people in reading, or in contemplating works of art, etc., whereas there are relatively few who themselves see the aesthetic as it is in existence, who themselves see existence in an aesthetic light, and do not merely enjoy the poetic reproduction. (ibid., p.126)

The Assessor himself is able to see beauty wherever the eternity of religious ideality is brought into creative contact with the finite conditions of existence, even where these are outwardly drab and uninviting. He knows that this extension of the concept of the aesthetic will not please his young friend A.

Or does it disturb you that I still pronounce the word: aesthetic; do you think that it is almost a type of childishness in me, to want to seek this quality among the poor and the suffering ...do you not see that the poor, inasmuch as they truly have the religious also have the aesthetic ... (ibid., p.118)

Because the poor see their sufferings in the light of a religious ideality these sufferings are transfigured for them, ^x eternal hardship is seen in the light of the inner light which continues to shine in, with and under it. But this inner light of religious

ideality is in itself too fine a thing to be captured in aesthetic media.

The Assessor, naming Schelling, rehearses the conventional idealist understanding of art developing through various stages, which move from the external to the internal, from spatial to temporal forms, culminating in poetry. 'Poetry finally is the most perfect of all arts and therefore also the art which best knows how to make the significance of time count.' (SV 3, p.129) But even poetry involves a foreshortening of the temporal movement, it concentrates in a single moment of vision that which in existence is spread out through time. Where the history which the poet relates is external, such as the sagas of knights slaying dragons, etc., this external temporality is appropriately enough concentrated in the moment of triumph, but where the history is internal, where the point is not to conquer but to possess more and more intensively what one already has, then even poetry must fail in the attempt to represent it.

Romantic love can very well be represented in the moment, marital love not, because an idealized husband is not one who is that for one moment in his life, but who is that every day ... a cross-bearer who every day takes up his cross cannot be represented in either poetry or art, because the point is that he does it every day ... long-suffering cannot be represented artistically ... (ibid., pp. 128-9)

But the transcendence of aesthetic form by the temporality of existence does not mean the abolition of the aesthetic. Indeed, since the temporalization of the forms of art from architecture to poetry means the enrichment and concretization of art, it follows that with regard to emphasis on time

... the aesthetic ideal becomes richer and fuller the more this happens. So how does the aesthetic which has become incommensurable with even poetic representation achieve representation? Answer: by being lived ... Everything which I am talking about here can surely be represented aesthetically, only not in poetic imitation, but by this, by the fact that one lives it, realizes it in life, in the real world. Thus the aesthetic transcends itself and is reconciled with life: for if in one sense poetry and art precisely are a reconciliation with life, in another sense

they are at odds with life, since they only reconcile one side of the soul.

(SV 3, p.130)

The argument is familiar. The true aesthetic transfiguration is the transparency of the self to the divine ground by which it is posited. The way in which this occurs, the way in which the individual achieves a life-view in which ideal and real permeate each other in a transfiguring harmony is developed by the Assessor in his second letter, The Balance between the Aesthetic and the Ethical in the Composition of the Personality. The category around which this extremely diffuse letter is constructed is 'choice'. It is only by choice, and in particular by choosing one's self that one comes to have a life-view in the proper sense.

Since in the aesthetic the manifold characters of the magic theatre co-exist without excluding each other as so many equally valid possibilities of the personality, since there is here no choice in the Assessor's sense, the aesthetic standpoint cannot, strictly speaking, be said to constitute a life-view. The Assessor thus tells A '... you have no view of life. You have something which resembles a view ... which must nevertheless not be confused with a secure and refreshing confidence in life.' (ibid., p.189)

A life-view is based on the act of self-choice in which the self receives and affirms itself as a truly spiritual being. A life based on anything less than this is, according to the Assessor, invariably 'aesthetic', whether it involves the pursuit of wealth, glory, power, or the cultivation of talent or pleasure such a life is based on what is transitory, even in its most sophisticated form in which it sees not its own nullity, a standpoint which the Assessor identifies with A. Such a life is implicitly or explicitly in despair.

The Assessor's way out of this situation is that the self re-

nounces the fantastic flight-from-self, faces and takes upon itself its despair, accepts itself as it is. In such an act of self-choice the personality acquires reality, it becomes what it really is, it gains content in the recognition of a substantial power beyond itself.

The concept of choice is woven into a model of personal growth of a more organic kind: the need for choice only emerges at a particular stage in the development of the self, it is the moment of transition from childhood to adult responsibility, and yet this transition does not occur spontaneously - it must be chosen. If it is not, then that which is innocent in the child or youth becomes culpable. As an example of just such a failed maturation the Assessor cites Nero. Though ageing and experienced in depravity 'he is still a child or youth. The immediacy of the Spirit is unable to break through, and yet it demands a break-through, it demands an higher form of existence.' (SV 3, p.174) Man is however objectively determined as Spirit: Spirit cannot simply be avoided. If it is not lived out in its true form it makes its presence felt negatively 'The Spirit gathers itself in him like a dark cloud, its wrath broods over his soul, and it becomes an anxiety (angst), which does not even cease in the moment of enjoyment.' (ibid., p.175)

Choice does not simply suppress the immediacy of childhood or youth, but acknowledges it as its own and becomes responsible for it. There is both identity and difference in the relation of self as Spirit and the immediate self. Both these elements are latent in the word 'guilt' (dan: Skyld) which implies both guilt in the forensic sense and in the sense of debt, of owing something to another. The self chooses itself as guilty, both by repenting of its former non-achievement of a spiritual life and by becoming responsible for itself, or answerable for itself, to God, by Whom the self is sustained in existence. This ambiguity applies also to the aesthetic.

Thus the ethical is posited by the absolute choice; but it by no means follows from that that the aesthetic is excluded. In the ethical the personality has found its centre in itself, and absolutely the aesthetic is excluded, that is, it is excluded as the absolute, but relatively it still remains. In that the personality chooses itself, it chooses itself ethically and excludes absolutely the aesthetic, but in that it nonetheless chooses itself, and by choosing itself does not become another being, the aesthetic thus returns in all its relativity. (SV3, p.167)

It is on the basis of this act of choice that the way to self-knowledge is opened for 'he who lives ethically has seen himself, knows himself, his consciousness permeates his whole concrete self-hood.' (*ibid.*, p.238) By choice a man becomes 'transparent' to himself, his life is 'transfigured.' (*ibid.*, p.234) But it is precisely the quality of a genuine work of art that in it the form, the medium becomes transparent to its idea, and that the real, the external form is transfigured by the light of ideality.

The Assessor's position consistently puts a limit to the field of aesthetics, but it does not negate the aesthetic, and indeed allows a greater validity to the aesthetic, to art, than at first sight appears.

For, firstly, his position is essentially the same as that assumed by Kierkegaard in the literary reviews, which is to say that it can be read as a statement of the grounds or principles of genuine aesthetic production as much as it can be read as a purely limiting account of the aesthetic.

Secondly, this is borne out by the Assessor's vocabulary, for he constantly speaks of the incapacity of the poet and of poetry to grasp or to portray the interiority of the religious. But bearing in mind the distinction between the poet and the author which Kierkegaard makes (39) this means that we cannot, without qualification, extend the Assessor's negative remarks to all aesthetic production. It would be quite in keeping with this limitation of his vocabulary for him to allow such works of art as reflect a life-view the quality of communicating the religious transfiguration of reality - although

although they could no more directly communicate the pure inwardness of religious ideality in its absolute separateness from the external than could 'poetry'.

Thirdly, one has to be attentive to the relation of the letters to the book as a whole. They are specifically intended to be read as letters to the young friend who has gone astray by remaining in aesthetic categories instead of choosing himself ethically. They treat the aesthetic not just as the field of the fine arts but as an existential stance, as a failed attempt at life. It would not serve the Assessor's purposes in leading his young friend from the inauthenticity of his aestheticism to give too much away concerning the positive implications of his theory for aesthetic, i.e. artistic production. The ad hominem nature of the Assessor's arguments should not be underrated if we take seriously the novelistic form of the work as a whole.

(C) (iii) The Religious Point of View

The negative moment in the Assessor's comments about art is however carried forward and developed in the final section of the book, entitled Ultimatum. This consists of a covering letter from the Assessor to A together with a sermon on the theme The Edification in the Thought that over against God we are always in the Wrong. As The Seducer's Diary both sums up and carries to an extreme the position of A, so this sermon carries forward and develops further the Assessor's position, but in particular it develops the negative moment.

Taking as its text Luke 19, vv. 41-end the sermon dwells on Christ's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, of the just and the unjust together. It asks the listener not to despair of the pursuit of righteousness on this account, for we are not in the position to make demands of God on the merit of our own righteousness, for

in relation to God we are always in the wrong.

The edifying aspect of this thought is adduced by analogy with human love. If we love another person and some division arises between us, we, if we really love, will not seek to blame the other, but will prove our love by taking and by wanting to take, the blame upon ourselves. In relation to God

This wish [to be in the wrong] is a matter of love and thus a matter of freedom, and you were in no way compelled to make the admission that you were always in the wrong. You did not become sure that you were in the wrong by thinking about it, but found certainty in this thought by the fact that you were edified by it. (SV 3, p.320)

The sermon concludes by asking whether we would have it any other way. We must ask ourselves this question again and again for

it is first in the deep inner stirrings, first in the indescribable motions of the heart, that you are convinced that what you have known belongs to you, that no power can take it from you; for only the truth which edifies is truth for you. (ibid., p.324)

Real truth is acquired in an absolute inwardness for which the totality of the external, even righteousness and, unrighteousness, insofar as they are externally manifest, is irrelevant. The moment of guilt in self-choice is now dominant, for this inwardness demands the recognition of the nullity of the external, of sensuous immediacy, without remainder. There is no question here of the integration of the ideal and the real, but the religious ideal had broken away from the anchor-hold in reality which the Assessor sought to give it.

In the Papirer Kierkegaard noted

the first diapsalma is really the task of the entire work, which is not resolved until the last words of the sermon. An enormous dissonance is assumed, and then it says: Explain it. A total break with actuality is assumed, which does not have its base in futility but in mental depression and its predominance over actuality. (IV A 216/5629)

The opening diapsalma evokes the essence of A's aesthetic attitude, and sums up the understanding of poetry as a sublimation or flight from the deep pain of existence which Kierkegaard had devel-

oped in the early Papirer. It asks

What is a poet? An unhappy man, who conceals deep agonies in his heart, but whose lips are so fashioned that when the sigh and the scream pour forth, they sound like sweet music.

(SV 2, p.23)

In what way does the sermon resolve this split, this discord?

Not by gently building a bridge back to the real, external world of bourgeois duty as the Assessor would, but by making it absolute.

The split which tears the human spirit is not just a split between two aspects of man himself, but the split in man is a reflection of the deeper split between man and God. What A presents as a problem for the poet, for the uniquely gifted man, the preacher sets as a task for everyman.

Whereas poetry seeks to resolve the dilemma by flight into, or by remaining in, the half-lit world of the imagination, by cutting out the discordant voices of the real world, the religious posits a split which poetry cannot resolve. For the way of poetry is the way of contemplation, of the free-floating, harmonious attunement to aesthetic ideality, but the way of religion is through the desperate struggles of the heart in which there is no time for contemplation, no time for rest. Nor can there even be rest in the achieved attunement of the ideal and the real such as an art basing itself on the project of the life-view might offer. The religious ideal is distinct from the aesthetic ideal in both its forms.

With this sermon from a pastor in rural Jutland we have left the lulling and alluring candlelight of the fantastic magic-theatre of the adolescent imagination, and we have passed beyond the cosy and comforting fireside glow of the Assessor's bourgeois home, with its 'Stories of Everyday Life' on the family bookshelf, and we have come to the loneliness and barrenness of the Jutland Heath, 'where the eye finds no other human soul, and the voice is raised to its full power to outdo the violence of the storm.' (SV 3, p.310) Here there can

be no aesthetic distraction from the open sky and the cold, clear light of existential truth.

And yet it is hard to assess the weight to be given to this sermon in the context of Either-Or as a whole. Its position, at the very end of the book, means that it is somehow the culmination, the resolution of the 'idea' of the book. Is the 'idea' of Either-Or then the religious idea in its utter difference from the aesthetic? Or do we read the sermon more as the rumble of distant thunder on the horizon, such that the real centre of the novel is the dialogue between the doyen of the literary coffee-houses and the pater familias at the head of the family table? From the purely literary point of view, purely from an analysis of the book on its own merits, it is hard to judge. It is this question however which must decide whether we are able to read Either-Or as a novel, for if its 'idea' is revealed definitively in the sermon then we must say that it is an idea which transcends aesthetic form of any kind; if, on the other hand, the idea is the debate between A and B, then, since B's position is compatible with the form of novelistic realism, it would not be impossible to read the whole work as a novel. Or is it perhaps precisely in this ambiguity that the nerve lies, precisely in the debate between the aesthetic and the religious, reflected both in the content and in the form of the book?

If any of Kierkegaard's novels can be read as a novel it is this. As we turn to the other novels we shall find the contrast between the aesthetic and the religious more starkly drawn, drawn in such a way that a purely aesthetic reading is no longer possible.

Chapter Nine: Kierkegaard's Novels (2)

(A) Repetition

(A) (i) Story and Structure

We now turn to those novels in which the tension between the religiously orientated content and the aesthetic form is sharpened, sharpened, we might say to breaking-point.

Repetition contains two stories which may be read either as complementary to each other or as contrasting with each other. It opens with the pseudonymous author, Constantine Constantius, defining the concept of repetition (dan: Gjentagelse, lit. a re-taking). He compares it with the greek concept of recollection (dan: erindring, also = memory). Repetition, he says epitomizes the essential standpoint of modern philosophy, as recollection epitomized greek philosophy. Whereas the greek doctrine of knowledge as recollection signified the essential priority, both in a temporal and an ontological sense, of knowledge over the knowing subject, repetition signifies the priority of the subject, and in place of the classical elevation of the past, repetition is orientated towards the future. At the same time repetition is contrasted with hope.

Hope is a lovely lass who slips out of one's hands; recollection is a beautiful old woman, but yet she never serves the needs of the [present] moment; repetition is a beloved wife, one never gets tired of her, for it is only the new one gets tired of. (SV 5, p.116)

The key contrast however is that between repetition and recollection. Whereas recollection seeks to interpret reality by relating it back to a given ideality, repetition interprets ideality by taking a given ideality and trying it out in existence, giving it an existential form.

Having made these introductory announcements Constantine tells the story of a young man of his acquaintance. Remembering the

connection between youth and the 'hidden' personality which has not yet discovered its spiritual identity, its freedom, which exists in a world of imaginative shadows, it is significant that this young man is said to be 'in that seductive age, when the spirit's maturation announces itself.' (SV 5, p.117) This youth, on the verge of awakening to his spiritual freedom, now falls in love. It soon appears that his psychological make-up is slanted towards recollection, that is to say he idealizes his experiences, translating them into poetry rather than engaging with them in practical ways. Because of this very poetic disposition he is unable to find happiness with his beloved. He loves her, but he cannot express this love to her, he can only transform it into idealized, poetic dreams. Although he wants to find a happy relationship he can do so no more than can the Seducer, for this young man too is an inhabitant of another world, alongside, but outside, our own.

He realizes that such a relationship can only bring unhappiness to the girl, that it will, if it runs its course, create in her the same unhappy gap between the ideal and the real in which and by which he is trapped. It will disrupt the immediate harmony of her feminine being.

Seeking a way out of the situation he comes to Constantine who advises him to practise a pious fraud on his beloved, namely, to trick her into thinking that he is unfaithful to her. In this way the affair could be concluded in such a manner that the girl would be able to find comfort in the thought that she was in the right and that she had been deceived in a purely external way. The young man, however, lacks the nerve to carry this out and in the end simply runs off in secret to Stockholm.

Coming back from this apparent digression into what appears to be just a bad case of recollection, Constantine gives an account of

an experiment he himself made to see whether such a thing as a repetition might be possible. This experiment consists in revisiting Berlin, to find out if everything will still be the same, if he can 'repeat' his previous enjoyable experiences there. But it is a disappointment. Nothing, not his lodgings, not the climate, not the theatre, is quite the same. Everything is, in some degree, changed - and not for the better.

He returns home, convinced that a repetition is not possible. But now the young man reappears in the story. Constantine receives a series of letters from him from his voluntary exile in Stockholm. These letters in fact constitute a spiritual diary of great power in which we see the young man's struggle to achieve a repetition.

He is preoccupied with the figure of Job, in whose situation he sees certain similarities with his own. Just as Job loses everything which is dear to him through no fault of his own, so the young man feels that he has lost everything dear to him, he has lost his beloved and he has lost his honourable name - solely because of his honourable intentions towards the girl, because he only wanted what was best for her. Just as Job received back double everything which he lost, so the young man believes that his psychological make-up can be transformed and that he will be able to return and be a genuine lover, be a husband to his beloved. But as he awaits this transformation he hears that the girl has in fact married someone else.

However, he, perhaps ironically, is prepared to put a good face on things, and he proclaims that precisely through this disappointment of his hopes he has achieved a repetition, for he is now free from the need to find in himself the capacity for genuine reciprocal relationships, he can go back to the ideal world of poetry, go back to being a poet, devoted to the idea.

Constantine, in a concluding letter to the reader, expresses his

doubts about the authenticity of this repetition. '... he gets himself again, but as a poet, and the religious "geht zum Grunde", i.e. becomes an inarticulate substratum.' (SV 5, p.193) And yet the poetic, according to Constantine, is a less adequate realization of repetition than the religious would have been.

Aage Henriksen says that 'Repetition is the most difficult of SK's pseudonymous writings.' (1) There are several reasons for the peculiar difficulty attached to this text.

In the first place there is the problem of the significance and of the exact construction to be put on the double plot: the story of Constantine's failed repetition, and the story of the young man's poetic repetition. The relation of Constantine to the young man has various parallels in other kierkegaardian works. In the foreword to the Andersen review, and in the relationship between the Assessor and A we see other examples of this twinning of an older, maturer man, possessed of reflection and judgement with a younger, more wistful, more poetic figure. But the relationship here is different from that between the Assessor and his young friend. Constantine is not the proud possessor of a life-view in the technical sense of that term, he is no ethically-minded family man. The relationship is, as Henriksen points out (2), more akin to that between A and the Seducer in that the separate reality of the two figures is ultimately questionable. In his concluding letter to the reader Constantine writes:

I have introduced myself into the story; but if dear reader, you look closer, you will only see that I am a serviceable spirit, and very far from being indifferent to the young man, as he feared. This was a misunderstanding which I permitted in order to lure him out. Every step I have taken has only been for the sake of illuminating him; I have continually had him in mente, every word of mine is either ventriloquism or said in relation to him ... what I say one is to understand obscurely of him, or by what I say one is to understand him better. (SV 5, p.192)

Both in the main body of the book and in this letter to the reader

Constantine is at each moment to be understood as an illusory and as a real figure. In both he is a cipher through which we are to read the young man. (3)

It is consistent with this interpretation that Kierkegaard, still in the persona of Constantine Constantius, comments in the Papirer that the trip to Berlin was a deliberate parody of the young man's problem: whether a repetition is possible. Repetition is precisely not a problem involving external realities such as the trip to Berlin involved, but it is a problem concerning the inner reality of the individual. (IV B 117, p.283) The question of repetition is primarily the young man's question - not Constantine's.

Constantine's role is chiefly to be understood by reference to his knowledge of the categories. He knows what a poet is, he knows what repetition is, only he is not a poet, not a religious man, he does not achieve a repetition. He is merely the experimenter, as he calls himself, who sets up the framework by which these concepts are to acquire form before our eyes. He is not himself really a 'character' in the book.

What then of his young man and his repetition? What is the nature of this repetition? Can it really be called a repetition in the strict sense?

These questions are sharpened if we take into account evidence of textual amendment by Kierkegaard at a very late stage in the preparation of the draft of Repetition. (4) The evidence shows that in the original draft the young man failed to achieve the repetition he was seeking, the transition from poet to bridegroom, and, in despair, shot himself. The final letter in which he tells of the girl's engagement and of his return to the 'poetic' standpoint from which he had begun was not a part of the original draft. The reasons for this change are usually linked to Kierkegaard's discovery that his

own former fiancée, Regine Olsen, had become engaged to another. The altered ending thus becomes a wry comment on his own situation. Apart from the biographical interest which attaches to this change it is clear that the original plan would have made the parallel between Constantine and the young man far more striking, for we would then have two stories of failed repetitions, each in the context of a foreign journey, the one to Berlin, the other to Stockholm.

How are we to interpret the final position of the young man in the text as it stands? He claims to have had a repetition, to have regained his pristine identity. Constantine however notes that the religious possibility, the divine intervention and the Job-like restoration, did not occur, and by no means comes to full expression in the return to the poetic. The young man had looked for a repetition which would, externally, mean a return to the beloved, and internally, mean escape from the abstraction of poetic recollection. What he had been looking for was to move from a position such as A's to a position such as the Assessor's. He had been trying to become a husband, reconciled to reality, with the inward assurance of a life-view. But he has got neither the girl nor the life-view. He is back where he started.

Emanuel Hirsch believes that the alteration to the text has destroyed the very structure of the book:

damit hat er sich das, was nach dem ursprünglichen Plane sein schönsten Dichtwerk geworden wäre, unrettbar verdorben. Der bei aller Grausigkeit ästhetisch wundervolle Gegensatz zwischen dem ironisch-schnurrenhaften CC und dem tragisch-leidenschaftlichen Dichter, die beide nicht wiederholen können ist weg. (5)

Henriksen however believes that the alteration preserves the negativity of the original ending but by its comic focus on the absurd and ridiculous figure which the young man now cuts it improves on the rather conventional melodrama of a suicide. (6)

It does seem from our preliminary examination of the young man's

'repetition' that it is quite evidently a failure even in the text as it stands, and that the contrasting parallel with Constantine's case is preserved. Whether suicide is too melodramatic a literary ploy for Kierkegaard's purposes is another question. Certainly there is a tone of personal grievance which obtrudes itself into the present ending which rather disturbs the reading of it, but this is as much a question of execution as it is of aim. Whichever ending is preferred the underlying point, the failure to achieve repetition, remains.

What then are we to make of this book? For apart from the double-plot and the altered ending the mixture of pure philosophy, narrative and other devices makes somewhat bewildering reading. One of its reviewers complained of

this motley, confused picture, where the author mixes everything up together without a trace of order or connection, where one moment one believes that he is occupied with unveiling for us the deepest mysteries of existence, but the next one sees him entertaining himself and wearying his readers with a rambling discourse on the Berlin farce. (7)

The book does indeed make a fairly chaotic first impression. But we should not be too hasty in concluding that this is all there is. We should at least look for the reason in the madness before assuming that there is none. As Constantine says in the Papirer there is a deliberate 'dialectical ambiguity' a deliberate 'jesting' element in the book. (IV B 111, p.270) He asserts that he has not wanted to present the concept in abstract triadic formulae but

psychologically and aesthetically I wanted to portray and make manifest, in the greek sense I wanted to let the concept come into existence in individual form and in a certain situation, working its way through all sorts of misunderstandings.
(IV B 117, p.282)

It is the concept of repetition itself which gives the book its unity; this is its idea. We shall therefore now turn to the elucidation of this idea and to the question of how far it can be presented aesthetically.

(A) (ii) The Concept of Repetition

The proper meaning of the term repetition is spelt out in the book - and in the important Papirer notes connected with the book - by reference to a variety of concepts and situations. We shall look at it here with regard to five different aspects: in its relation to recollection; in its relation to movement; in relation to the dialectic of immediacy and reflection; as a specifically humanistic and individualistic category; in connection with the figure of Job. The Papirer notes referred to amount to fifty pages of notes provoked by some passing comments made on Repetition by Heiberg in an article on the astronomical year in his Urania.Aarbog for 1844. (8)

The distinction between repetition and recollection has already been touched upon in general and we shall now see how this contrast is spelt out with regard to the young man's psychological situation.

Constantine describes a scene from the early days of the young man's engagement.

While he paced up and down across the floor he repeated again and again a verse of Poul Møller's:

Then, to my easy chair, comes a dream from my youth
A heartfelt longing comes over me for you
O thou sun of women.

His eye filled with a tear, he threw himself down on a chair, and repeated the verse again and again. This scene made a shocking impression on me. Great God! thought I, never, in all my practice have I come across such a case of melancholy (Melancholi) ... He was in love, profoundly, inwardly in love, that was quite clear, and yet he was capable, straight away, on one of the first days of recollecting his love ... In making a start he had taken such a terrible step that he had leapt over the whole of life. If the girl dies tomorrow it will cause no essential change, he will again throw himself down, his eye will again fill with a tear, he will again repeat the poet's words.

(SV 5 pp. 119-120)

The poem which the young man recites is in fact called The Old Lover, and it portrays an older man, looking back on a long-lost love, on a precious but vanished youth. The poem itself is thus a recollection. The point is that instead of losing himself in the immediacy of love, instead of losing himself in the beloved the young man internalizes

(recollects) the whole relationship into his ideal consciousness, where it is no longer something present in time, but something at one step removed from time. Kierkegaard had adumbrated this scene in the Papirer:

Dreaming rises to ever higher powers; thus a dream within a dream-existence (whereby it becomes transformed into a kind of actuality) has an infinitely volatilizing effect. With what infinite ardour a youth can read the word of P. Møller's poem "The Old Lover" ... [the verse cited above follows] ... Here the dream is in the second power for the youth; he first of all dreams that he is old in order to suck in through the funnel of a whole life the most aromatic moment of his earliest youth.

(III A 95/804)

This potentiation of the dream-world, the creation of a dream within a dream, is a movement away from reality, a retreat into the inner sanctum of the misty scene behind the stage where the Seducer is also at home. It is not the girl the young man loves, it is the idea she represents; she is an ideal love-object, not a real person. She is merely the occasion for his dream of love, and we may recall the comments in the review of The First Love on the nothingness of the occasion. (9)

And yet, says Constantine, this condition is not entirely wrong, for '...he, who in his loving has not experienced this precisely at the beginning, he has never loved. (SV 5, p.120) This mood is a moment in the development of the natural immediacy of the erotic. But, admonishes Constantine, 'there is needed an ironic elasticity in order to make use of it.' (ibid.) That is to say, the ideal must be grasped ethically and related back to reality. The inwardness of recollection must be turned back towards the real world. The dream of love must be laid at the feet of the beloved. This, however, is what the young man does not, cannot, do. His dream-existence potentiates itself into a more and more profound alienation from reality. In opposition to this inward movement of recollection repetition represents the opposite movement: from the

ideal to the real, the ability to be in relationship in the real world.

Closely connected with this is the definition of repetition in terms of movement. Repetition opens with Constantine modelling his projected trip to Berlin on the example of Diogenes' proof of movement (against the philosophers of the Eleatic school), a proof which consisted in his simply walking up and down. (SV 5,-p.115) In Urania Heiberg had in fact said that Kierkegaard used the term repetition to deal with the concept of movement. Movement however, according to Heiberg, belongs in the realm of nature rather than in the realm of spirit; Repetition however is an attempt to deal with a spiritual phenomenon; therefore the author applies a naturalistic category to a spiritual reality. (10)

Kierkegaard for his part believes that he is precisely concerned to distinguish between nature and the realm of spiritual, subjective existence. In the Papirer he defends himself by a sharp counter-attack, criticizing the hegelian use of the term movement in logic under the term 'mediation.' Not only does he find this usage improper in logic, but he objects to the extension of the term mediation into the realm of freedom, with which he charges the hegelians. He has, he says, only used repetition in respect of the realm of freedom and it relates to movement only insofar as the realm of freedom, of the Spirit, presupposes in general the realm of nature.

He proceeds to distinguish between spatial and temporal concepts of movement. In logic, movement or transition does not involve the temporal becoming of the concepts or relations concerned. Strictly speaking, it is illegitimate to speak of transition, movement or becoming in logic.

In the sphere of freedom on the other hand possibility is given and reality issues forth as something transcendent. Therefore when Aristotle already has said that the transition from

possibility to actuality is *κίνησις*, then he is not talking about possibility and actuality in logic, but in freedom, and therefore he rightly posits movement.
(IV B 117, p.290) (11)

Constantine's trip to Berlin is simply a play on the idea of repetition. Such a physical, spatial, movement is by definition incapable of representing repetition in the proper sense of the movement from possibility to actuality (= reality).

The question: whether a repetition is possible? therefore means: whether the movement from the projection of ideal possibilities to their realization is possible, whether freedom is free to fulfil its projects or is merely free in imagination.

The notion of repetition is also developed in the context of the dialectic of immediacy and reflection. In hegelian logic repetition would be understood, or at any rate understandable, as the renewal of immediacy after reflection, in the sense in which Heiberg defined the 'concept', the third part of logic (after immediacy and reflection) as 'the regaining of immediacy.' (12) The third stage in a sense repeats the first.

In Repetition this dialectic is focussed on Constantine's relations with women. For Constantine, as for Kierkegaard, woman represents immediacy (13), whereas he himself is coolly reflective. As his dialectical counter-pole the young man too is assimilated to the feminine. Rapturously describing the youth's appearance, Constantine adds 'I could scarcely stop myself from stealing a glance at him, almost as if I was enamoured of him; for such a youth is almost as seductive as a young girl.' (SV 5, p.119)

However, the young girl it is who above all represents the charm of the immediate. Constantine tells of three encounters with such representatives of feminine immediacy.

The first concerns a girl who asks Constantine, taking a coach-trip into the country, for a lift back into Copenhagen. He describes

her 'modest and yet truly womanly dignified manner' (SV 5, p.130) which restrains him from abusing the situation. He contrasts such a girl with the coquette, the girl who has been spoilt by a little bit of reflection, who does not maintain her immediacy but craves the 'interesting'. But 'a girl who does not crave the interesting believes in repetition.' (ibid.) That is, she allows her essential idea, feminine immediacy, to express itself in its corresponding form in existence. Constantine, of course, as reflection incarnate, cannot participate in her immediacy except as an observer. She is thus 'a pleasant recollection.' (ibid.)

The other two encounters are both described in the context of the interlude on farce. Constantine describes how, on his first trip to Berlin, he had regularly seen a certain young girl at the theatre.

She was not wrapped in sable or marten, but wrapped in a large stole, and out of its folds her humble head was bowed, like the topmost bell of the lily-of-the-valley is bowed above the great leaves' wrapping ... She did not suspect that she was seen, still less that my eye was watching over her; for it would have been a sin against her, and the worse for me; because there is an innocence, an unconsciousness, which even the purest thought can disrupt. (ibid., pp.146-7)

The botanical analogy is also significant, for the realm of vegetable life is also taken by Kierkegaard to represent immediacy, the organic, hidden substratum of spiritual life. (14)

Constantine is bringing into play the contrast between his reflection and her immediacy. His assertion that the intrusion of this reflection into her immediacy would simply disrupt her existence reflects his own pessimism concerning the possibility of a repetition: reflection cannot win through to immediacy again, it must keep its distance. Appropriately enough on his second trip to Berlin, in search of repetition, he goes to the theatre - but he cannot see her.

Into this account of the girl in the theatre Constantine inserts

a revelatory account of one of his voyeuristic habits. From time to time, he tells us, he takes a trip out from Copenhagen in order to spy on a particular young country-girl.

So when my soul is sleepless, and the sight of my bed makes me more anxious than the sight of an instrument of torture, more than a sick person in the face of the operating-table, then I drive the whole night. Early in the morning I lie in the concealment of the thicket. Then when life begins to stir, when the sun opens its eyes ... Then the young girl comes out, then she walks wonderingly about (who wonders most, the girl or the trees!), then she squats down and plucks fruit from the bushes, then she skips lightly about, then she stands quietly thinking. Does not there lie a marvellous eloquence in all this! Then my soul at last finds rest. Happy girl! (SV 5, p.147)

Constantine's reflective consciousness is one-sided. He needs the stimulus, the fertilizing potency of such immediacy. The description of the country girl is accompanied by a superbly lyrical evocation of the morning-time which underlines the point. Reflection lacks being, it requires rejuvenation, the repeated encounter with immediacy, such as the girls and the young man provide - and yet it is an encounter which is never consummated, repetition is not achieved.

It is the same function of restoring immediacy which he extols in farce. Theatre in general is constantly equated with youth, with the budding of the youthful imagination, and farce in particular is the most immediate form of theatrical art. (15)

Yes, although this art is perhaps not sufficiently serious for the individual, he can take pleasure in turning back to this first condition and absorbing himself in its mood ... while therefore neither tragedy nor comedy will please him, precisely because of their perfection, he turns to farce. (SV 5, p.138)

Tragedy and comedy are each too reflective to allow the release from reflection and the repetition of immediacy which is required. Yet once again Constantine fails to achieve repetition, for on the second trip to Berlin not even the farce can please him.

If, by his own admission, Constantine is to be regarded as a 'serviceable spirit' whose sole function is to throw light on the young man, we can apply this model of reflection too to the young

man's situation. How then does the yearning for a return to immediacy feature in the young man's story?

The issue clearly relates to his relation to the young girl. Although the personality of the young man himself is veiled in the immediacy of youth, beneath this veil he wears the masculine determinations of ideality and of Spirit. Because Spirit is not yet manifested in its fulness in him it is present only in the dreaming ideality of recollection. Precisely by this recollection, which is a form of reflection, a form of dualism, he realizes that he threatens to disrupt the girl's immediacy, by drawing her into a relationship which is solely ideal, instead of a relationship which accomplishes the balanced integration of immediacy and reflection proper to the man-woman relationship.

His attempt to lay hold of his recollection, his ideality, and relate it back to reality, his attempt to make himself serviceable as a husband and to enter into an affirmative relation to the girl's immediacy, is in fact one aspect of the repetition which he attempts to make.

To disturb the girl's immediacy without offering a basis on which that immediacy can be re-established is in his eyes a criminal act. That is the root of the dimension of guilt in his relation to her. He must, having started, see the dialectical process through to its conclusion. In less abstract terms, having fallen in love, he is obliged to see that love through to its fulfilment in marriage; the romantic attachment must be completed by an act of will.

The polemic against Heiberg, which Kierkegaard planned in the Papirer, also defined the issue of repetition as an issue concerning the individual, concerning individual freedom. This builds on the understanding that it is not, pace Heiberg, a naturalistic but an essentially humanistic category. He tells Heiberg:

Your observations are always on the grand scale, directed either to the heavens or to world-history. Let the individual have learnt from you how to observe the heavens, credit where credit is due, but as well as the heavens and world-history, there is another history which is called individual history ... What significance does repetition acquire in this realm of the Spirit, for every individual is nonetheless also as such determined as Spirit and his Spirit has a history. (IV B 111, pp. 262f.)

What concerns him is repetition as a question of individual freedom.

In the individual repetition shows itself as a task for freedom where the question is how he must save his personality from being dissipated and pawned to circumstances ... thus the problem shows itself, not as a problem for the brilliant indolence of contemplation but for the concerned passion of freedom. (IV B 117, p.296)

This is the significance of Constantine's definition of his task as psychological (SV 5, p.113): it is a matter of individual, subjective Spirit. It is not the reconciliation of ideality and reality in nature or history that matters, but how, or how far, this can be achieved in an individual life.

This brings us to the religious dimension of the young man's problem. He is displayed to us as an example of a poet. But, according to Constantine, 'a poet's life begins in a conflict with the totality of existence, what matters is to find rest or vindication.' (ibid., p.192)

How does the poet seek this reconciliation with existence? As we would expect he seeks it in the realm of the imagination 'his own consciousness raised to a higher power is for him repetition.' (ibid.) The poetic 'repetition' is self-deliverance into the conflict-free realm of phantasy. Thus the young man of the story considers that he has achieved a repetition by returning to his primal poetic condition, freed from the claims of reality by the girl's engagement to another. He returns to his pact with the idea.

But as we have seen this position is in fact a mystification of the concept of repetition. His situation pointed towards a more profound resolution. Constantine says that 'if he had had a more profoundly religious background, then he would not have become a poet.' (ibid., p.193)

The eminent sense of repetition is the translation of ideality into reality by a free act. The young man's 'being is split, and the question is thus not concerning the repetition of anything external but concerning the repetition of his freedom.' (IV B 117, p.284)

This is ultimately a religious question, for repetition is 'transcendent', a religious movement, by virtue of the absurd, when one has come to the boundary of the wonderful, eternity is the true repetition.' (IV B 117, p.285)

Repetition is now seen to be the absolute affirmation of the self in its freedom. It is akin to the concept of self-choice as that had been promulgated by the Assessor, but a greater emphasis is laid on the negative dimension, on the guilt of the self which chooses itself, on the absurdity of the choice.

The young man is guilty, firstly in respect of his beloved, for through his relationship with her he has involved another person in the split which divides his own personality, but also in respect of God, for his failure to achieve the integration of the self is a failure to answer the God-given requirement which has been placed before him. With regard to the girl he has become guilty through his own action - or rather through his failure to act - but his guilt before God is something more profound, it is revealed in his discovery of the nothingness of the world, of the nothingness which lies coiled at the heart of his own existence.

My life has been brought to the extreme limit; I am nauseated by existence, it is tasteless, without salt, without meaning. If I were hungrier than Pierrot I would not care to eat the explanation people offer. One sticks one's finger into the earth to smell what land one is in, I stick my finger into existence - it smells of nothing.

(SV 5, p.171)

His situation is not that of the aesthete A who scorns the compromise with the world involved in the Assessor's life-view. The young man seeks the synthesis of ideal and real embodied in a life-view - but he cannot bring it about. He cannot do the good he desires.

It is to this situation that the illumination of repetition by reference to the figure of Job is addressed. Job, like the young man, finds himself in the situation of a guilty man, and yet he has committed no intentional transgression. Job simply represents 'man's side in the great debate between God and man.' (SV 5, p.179)

Job cannot resolve his predicament himself. It takes the thunderstorm of divine intervention to bring about a resolution. And it is in this encounter with the divine that his predicament is resolved.

Was Job proved wrong? Yes! eternally, for he can go to no higher court than that by which he was judged. Was Job proved right? Yes! eternally, because he was proved wrong before God. (ibid., p.180)

Job learns the lesson taught by the parson from Jutland: that before God we are in the wrong, that human existence in its totality is unable to answer the requirements of divine justice, the external is completely indifferent.

Here we have another sense of repetition. It is not the movement from the ideal to the real, from recollection to future-directed action, from reflection back to immediacy. It is the affirmation of the self in its inability to bring such a movement about, the affirmation of the self in its bondage, in its lack of freedom. It is the discovery that the reality of the self is located in the complete contradiction between its life in the world and its transcendent destiny as a free creature. It is 'metaphysics' interest and also the interest on which metaphysics is wrecked.' (IV B 120, p.308) The unity of ideal and real which metaphysics presents as an accomplished fact is what repetition seeks: its discovery of the impossibility of achieving this synthesis negates the findings of metaphysics. What metaphysics says and what the individual experiences are two quite different things.

This final sense of repetition points us towards the encounter with God in the void where the world in its totality has become a

matter of indifference, and where the self cannot establish itself as the basis of its own project, to be a free being. This means that the narrow way which leads to repetition is a way on which external form is completely relativized, a way on which there is an utter separation of idea and form, corresponding to the incapability of the self to be itself. This separation of idea and form is however a complete inversion of the aesthetic idea of the correspondence of idea and form. The idea of repetition cannot therefore in its fullness be dealt with in any aesthetic form, and we must conclude that Repetition could not, on Kierkegaard's own aesthetic principles, be read as a novel: its religious concern or interest points beyond the disinterested fantasies of romanticism and beyond the harmonies of the life-view.

What then is it? Kierkegaard himself calls it an attempt to bring out a concept 'in the greek sense' (IV B 117, p.282), and it is rather as a work of philosophy which employs the tools of imagination and literary craft that it is to be read, than as a novel. Henriksen specifically relates it to Plato's Protagoras on account of the lack of a firm conclusion (16), and whether this particular correlation is accepted the general analogy with the platonic dialogue should be borne in mind.

As a work of philosophy it is particularly concerned with the elucidation of concepts and of the fields to which and within which they may be applied. The particular frontier which Kierkegaard is here setting out to discover is the absolute frontier between the aesthetic and the religious, and its argument suggests that the negation of the external world which the young man experiences, creates a barrier beyond which art cannot penetrate, since art, even in its most ideal development is related to the forms of the real world. Even when we speak of the world of art as a Schattenspiel, a world

of shadows, the real world is always obliquely signified in the shadow. The wilderness to which the young man comes is however a place without light or shade, and consequently without shadows, for before God everything is eternally the same, and in Him, as it is said in one of Kierkegaard's favourite texts, is 'no shadow of change.'⁽¹⁷⁾

The place of this encounter with God in which the aesthetic has no place is indicated by such words as anxiety, guilt, nothingness. It is to a further exploration of this frontier and of the significance of these terms that the 'novel' Guilty? - Not-Guilty? invites us.

(B) Guilty? - Not-Guilty?

(B) (i) Its Place in Stages on Life's Way

Just as The Seducer's Diary which can be treated as a novel in its own right is in fact part of a larger whole, so Guilty? - Not-Guilty? is part of the larger work Stages on Life's Way. Before turning to an examination of Guilty? - Not-Guilty? in its own right it is therefore proposed that we look first at its relation to the rest of the Stages.

The Papirer make it clear that Stages is a composite of what were originally conceived of as two separate works, Wrong and Right and Guilty? - Not-Guilty? (18) Wrong and Right itself falls into two parts, In Vino Veritas and a treatise on marriage by Assessor Wilhelm.

In Vino Veritas is an account of a banquet at which the participants deliver speeches on the themes of 'woman' and 'love'. Several of these participants are already familiar to us - Constantine Constantius, Victor Eremita and Johannes the Seducer. The theme of the banquet is taken up in the Assessor's letter. Both the continuity of theme and the continuity in the dramatis personae suggest that we are dealing with a 'repetition' of Either-Or - only this time there is no

Ultimatum. That is left for Guilty? - Not-Guilty?

There are however several points of distinction between Either-Or and Wrong and Right. In the latter the exposition of the dialectic of the aesthetic and ethical ideas has been stripped of the minimal action latent in the construction of Either-Or. Although a certain 'epic' element survives in the narration of the Banquet, and in the account of the 'discovery' of the Assessor and his manuscript which serves to link the two sections, this element is weaker, in the present writer's judgement, than the comparable elements in Either-Or. Similarly, although Kierkegaard's persons are almost invariably transparent to the ideas which they represent, rather than impressing us as 'real' people, the ideas dominate the persons to a greater degree here than they do in Either-Or.

One sign of this shift is the nature of the Assessor's contribution. In Either-Or this took an epistolary form, addressed in the second-person to the young friend, drawing on and revealing to us something of the history of their acquaintance. Although the letters were concerned with ideas the ideas appeared very much as ideas chosen by and held by the characters directly or indirectly represented. Here, however, the Assessor's observations take the form of a general, impersonal treatise.

The real world as the milieu in which the ideal dialogue takes place has here, in Wrong and Right, been put at a distance. It is noteworthy that In Vino Veritas is subtitled 'A Recollection.' That the double-meaning of memory and internalization is very much to the fore is indicated in the foreword attached to the account of the banquet. Indeed this foreword itself is called a 'Forerindring', a common enough term in Danish for preface or foreword, but not usual in Kierkegaard's usage. By using this term he gives us a further echo of recollection (erindring). The theme of the foreword is

itself recollection in its distinction from memory (hukommelse). Recollection is said to be the consciousness of the ideality of what is remembered, memory the consciousness of its external form. Recollection is in this sense the agency by which existence is gathered into an ideal unity. (SV 7, p.16) It does this by raising the epistemological subject out of the flux of immediacy and establishing a distance between subject and object. It is concerned with essence rather than appearance. It is reflective whereas memory is immediate. In accordance with this characterization the narrator of the banquet admits that he cannot 'remember' either the exact date or the year of the banquet. (ibid., p.24)

This atmosphere of recollection extends however not only throughout the banquet itself but also permeates the Assessor's manuscript. Thus although no new element is introduced into the debate between the aesthetic and ethical attitudes to love and marriage, the whole argument is transposed into the dimension of ideal recollection. This shifting of the scenery into the realm of inwardness prepares the way for the radical confrontation of the aesthetic and the religious as two modes of inward ideality.

(B) (ii) The Diary

The text of Guilty? - Not-Guilty? is also divided into two parts. The first part consists of a long, rather peculiar diary by a nameless individual, the second part a commentary on the diary by Frater Taciturnus, the Quiet Brother, who is responsible for finding and publishing the diary.

The diary recounts the story of an unhappy love-affair which contains echoes of Repetition. There are also differences. The male protagonist is no naively poetic youth, and he needs no

Constantine to advise him, for he himself has a mind as devious as a John le Carré plot. He is the young man of Repetition and Constantine Constantius rolled into one. As in Repetition the story culminated in a crisis of guilt, but there is no suggestion here of a repetition, not even the ironic repetition of a return to the poetic consciousness. The story is left at the point of impasse and we see no way out for the unhappy lover.

The Quiet Brother's letter to the reader does however indicate the direction in which a way out might lie. Although this letter has been regarded as a 'repetition' or a recollection of Fear and Trembling, in the same way that Wrong and Right is a repetition or recollection of Either-Or, (19) it might be more plausible to see the whole of Guilty? - Not-Guilty? as a repetition of Repetition, since the formal structure of the relation of Constantine to the young man is paralleled in the relation of the Quiet Brother to the diarist. (20) As we shall see the question or idea on which the novel as a whole turns is also substantially the same as the idea of Repetition, although it is presented on a much larger scale, with a greater degree of inwardness.

The Quiet Brother's preamble, in which he explains how he came across the manuscript of the diary when boating on the overgrown Sjøborg lake, sets the scene in the medium of recollection in its double sense of memory and internalization. He describes the region of the lake as evoking a sense of the past (SV 8, p.11), and later he tells us that he considers the most likely date for the diary to have been 1751. (ibid., p.14) As he describes how he fished the casket containing the manuscript up from the depths of the lake he tells us also that he discovered it to be locked on the inside. (ibid., pp.12-13) These details, and the atmosphere of the scene as a whole convey the sense of pastness and of inwardness which belong to recollection -

but the diarist's problem, like that of the young man in Repetition will be how to escape from this realm of inner ideality.

We shall look first at the diarist's predicament as it is presented in the diary itself, and then turn to the Quiet Brother's analysis of it in his letter to the reader.

The extraordinary structure of this diary was adumbrated in the preceding chapter (21), where it was shown to contain three types of entry: the morning entries, which describe the story of the love-affair up to the breaking of the engagement; the midnight entries, which tell of the events and psychological sufferings consequent upon the breaking of the engagement; the six 'insets' which in various ways evoke the underlying atmosphere of guilt.

The fact that the morning and midnight entries are interspersed makes it very difficult to get a clear picture of the story which the diary tells. What follows is an attempt to extrapolate this story element, which will then serve as a background against which to see its conceptual structure. Following the Quiet Brother we shall call the diarist Quidam, a certain one.

On January 3rd of an unspecified year Quidam becomes certain of his love for the girl. He is not sure whether his melancholy disposition suits him for marriage, although he is skilled in concealing this disposition beneath a sociable exterior. Either he will marry her or he will never marry. After continuing this inner debate for some days he screws his courage to the sticking-point and, on January 11th, he proposes. The proposal is accepted. But disaster strikes. He soon discovers that there is a gulf fixed between them. They live on quite different levels and cannot begin to understand each other.

The shadows of a religious crisis begin to gather over his head, a crisis of which she, in her blithe immediacy, has no conception. Although she had previously seen him as a scoffer, someone who pours

contempt on everything and everyone, she now discovers a different side of his personality. She sees his essential humility, but, instead of understanding this correctly as humility before God, she sees it in relation to herself - that he who scoffs at the whole world is humble to her. So she becomes proud of herself at having conquered this wild spirit.

His fundamental conception of marriage demands that the partners meet as equals, before God. Only so can their relationship be truly reciprocal. Their relationship, however, see-saws to and fro, with now the one and now the other assuming dominance. She says she only accepted him out of pity - the quarrel and he suggests breaking it off; he is slightly injured at his fencing practice - she rushes to the rescue and they are reconciled; she kneels down humbling herself before him - he is offended and the reconciliation breaks down; he writes to her to break the engagement - she plays on his religious sensibilities and persuades him to defer; she is willing to be a slave as long as she has him - but he can see that her suffering is not essentially spiritual. Finally, on July 7th, he records that he has terminated the engagement.

The following January he resumes the diary and we learn of the events which follow the ending of the engagement.

She has become physically ill - perhaps she has really gone into a decline and is really dying? Is he then her murderer? But though she suffers physically he suffers too, tortured by these questions. How can he find out more about her condition? Is his melancholy incapacity for marriage really religious - or is it a demonic obsession he should do something about?

He sees her in the street and observes her pallor. In company, however, he overhears that she is in good health. He sees her again. It soon becomes evident to him that she, knowing his habits, is con-

triving these meetings. He must repel her. So, by using the bush-telegraph of social gossip, he communicates to her a picture of himself as really a depraved person who still has a certain sympathy for her. He thinks that this will put her off him altogether. The regular street-encounter does not occur - she has heard the gossip.

Now he starts to plague himself with the thought that she might go off and bury herself in rural solitude and become (most dreadful!) - a governess. As if to confirm his suspicion he learns that her father has hired a carriage to drive fifty miles into the country - but it turns out only to have been a business trip after all. But what if she were to become insane? commit suicide?

They meet in church. She nods to him. In his eyes this shows their utter incompatibility and destroys his wish that despite everything they might somehow be reunited. This encounter is on April 14th. From this time till the conclusion of the diary in July less and less 'happens'.

She now appears to be quite well. He sees her about - with another man, chatting merrily to a friend. She is over it. He for his part however, sinks further and further into an abyss of meaninglessness, of nothingness. As he brings the diary to an end he writes, 'It contains nothing, but if, as Cicero says, the easiest letter is one which is concerned with nothing, it is sometimes the hardest life which is concerned with nothing.' (SV 8, p.198)

Such is the action of the diary. It is indeed very little when set against its great bulk. But as we might expect the real subject-matter is concealed below the narrative surface of the text. Indeed, the odd arrangement of the diary contributes to disrupting the narrative cohesion, and so to the revelation of the void over which Quidam walks on his solitary path through life.

The depiction of the collapse of his consciousness into this

void is the real, inner action of the diary. Thus the greater the extent to which Quidam is submerged in the void, the less the external action enlivens the diary and the more the text assumes a monotonous and obsessive quality. It says more and more about less and less. Quidam's situation is 'nothingness'. This is what the diary is about.

The theme of nothingness is introduced early in the story of the engagement. Quidam writes that 'Lovers should have nothing coming between them. Alas! Alas! We have been together too short a time to have anything between us - we have nothing between us ...' (SV 8 p.37)

There is no particular thing which divides them, there is only his personality, and even here there is no specific fault, no guilty secret which holds him back, only his dispositional melancholy.

At first, when Quidam undertakes the engagement, he treats the nothing as nothing, he disregards it, considers himself its master. This is his pride. But in fact it proves itself his master and humbles his pride. It becomes the total environment of his existence:

There is nothing new under the sun, says Solomon. Well, that may be so, but it is worse when nothing at all happens ... I am still continually about the exposition of this nothing, and the scene is unalterably the same. (ibid., p.154)

This consciousness of impinging nothingness which he calls his melancholy is closely connected with his religiousness, for this does not consist in adherence to any set of tenets or practices, nor is it the result of some positive experience of a religious nature, for his experience of eternity is such that he can only figure it as a void, as the annihilation of the external world.

How is eternity portrayed? As the wide horizon, where one sees nothing. That is how it is portrayed in the picture of a grave: the bereaved sits in the foreground and says 'he departed hence, into the beyond.' But in the wide horizon I see nothing at all. (ibid., p.192)

An example of how he uses the 'insets' to amplify the account given by the diary may be given in this connection. It is the entry

for June 5th, midnight, entitled Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation by the unseen, unknown power of God parallels Quidam's experience of humiliation by the power which he can only conceive of as nothingness, which has no objective place in the world. The inset is a deliberate pastiche of Biblical style.

38. For my days are soon told, and my reign is gone
like a watch in the night, and I do not know
whither I am bound.
39. Whether I shall come to the unseen place in the
distance where dwells the Mighty One, that I may
find grace before His eyes;
40. Whether it is He who takes the breath of life from
me, so that I become as a cast-off garment, like
my predecessors, that He might find pleasure in me.
(SV 8, p. 168)

Like Nebuchadnezzar, Quidam is journeying into an unknown land, into an empty horizon, but whereas Nebuchadnezzar's confession presents this mythologically, as a journey in an almost external sense, Quidam's journey is a journey within, a journey to himself.

And when the eye has gazed after nothing for a long time it sees at last itself or its own seeing: thus the emptiness around me again forces my thoughts back into myself.
(*ibid.*, p. 163)

It must be stressed that Quidam has no direct encounter with God. He is brought only to the consciousness of his own nullity over against Eternity, over against God, in the experience of his inability to shape and direct his own life in what concerns him most deeply. It is the moment of Job crushed by the voice of divine thunder, not the moment of Job receiving all things double. It is not the knowledge of God but the fear of God which Quidam acquires.

His melancholy is the rising damp of nothingness which permeates the whole realm of finite concern; but where does this melancholy come from, what is its source? The answer Quidam gives is that it is located in the imagination (*Inbildningskraft*) and nourished by possibility. (*ibid.*, p. 193)

A ceaseless preoccupation with possibility is indeed one of

Quidam's basic traits. He dissects every small event, every brief encounter, testing every possible interpretation which might be applied to it. It is precisely by means of this that the rather thin story-line is spun out to such great lengths. Thus we see him torturing himself with every possible consequence which might befall his former fiancée as a result of his conduct; similarly he considers every possible interpretation of his own position. In particular he racks himself with the question of how far he is guilty in relation to her. The centrality of this question is, of course, indicated in the title itself.

A comment on this preoccupation with possibilities is provided by the inset entitled A Possibility. It tells the story of a shy book-keeper who is led astray by some office friends, who get him drunk and take him to a brothel. He becomes obsessed with the possibility that some child somewhere whom he might not know owes its life to him. This possibility develops into an 'idée fixe' and he becomes insane. Only in death does this preoccupation end, only when 'he had to tread the dreadful bridge of Eternity in earnest,' (SV 8, p.101) for 'Eternity takes possibility away.' (ibid., p.193)

Although possibility can dissolve any and every finite situation into an infinity of possibilities it cannot itself resolve the dilemmas which it poses. Every possibility is possible. A mind nourished by possibility has no firm footing. If possibility is thus the food by which Quidam's melancholy is nourished the seat of this melancholy is the imagination. In this way we come to see the parallel not only between Quidam and the young man of Repetition but also between Quidam and the Seducer. This is anticipated by one of the Papirer entries dealing with Either-Or. He says that the only thing he omitted from Either-Or was a story called Unhappy Love.

It was to form a contrast to the Seducer. The hero in the story acted in exactly the same way as the Seducer, but behind it was

melancholy. He was not unhappy because he could not get the girl he loved ... He won her ... he was loved with all the enthusiasm a young girl has - then he became unhappy, went into a depression, pulled back; he could struggle with the whole world but not with himself ...

(IV A 215/ 5628)

Such a hero is Quidam. Like Johannes he is poised at the dividing line between the realms of external reality and of inner fantasy. As Johannes needs the occasional contact with the external immediacy of young maidens to provide material for his fantastic seductions, so Quidam is tied to the occasions which serve as jumping-off points for his fantastic elaboration of possibilities.

Whereas the Seducer was (at least apparently) in control of his imaginings, Quidam is out of control. His phantasy projects him into a more and more meaningless world, and he is unable to do anything about it. Unlike Johannes he wants to live ethically, wants to build bridges to the external world - but he cannot. Like Constantine, only more determinedly, he sought a cure in the psychic and physical immediacy of feminine youthfulness, and in the brief heyday of the engagement he thought that he had found such healing

The first kiss - what bliss! A girl joyous in spirit, happy in youth! And she is mine. What are all dark thoughts and imaginings but cobwebs, and what is melancholy but a fog which is dispelled by this reality, a sickness which is healed and is being healed by the sight of this health ...

(SV 8, p.33)

But in fact his imagination is too strong, it is the upsurge of a nothingness within which is beyond his power and which forces on him a complete break with immediacy. He comforts himself that these pulls issuing from his melancholy are anticipations of a route which will lead him to the Eternal (ibid., p.181), but we do not see him reaching this unknown land. He bewails his lot: 'my existence is nothing but useless effort; I cannot return to myself.' (ibid., p.190) For ultimately he is divided not only from the world but from himself. He cannot be himself.

This is Quidam's situation as it is portrayed in the diary. We now turn to the analysis of the situation by the Quiet Brother in his concluding letter to the reader.

(B) (iii) The Quiet Brother's Letter to the Reader

(B) (iii) (a) The Dialectic of the Stages

In this letter the Quiet Brother analyzes Quidam's situation in terms of a number of dialectical patterns. These are: the dialectic of the stages; the dialectic of immediacy and reflection; the dialectic of possibility and actuality; the dialectic of comedy and tragedy. It is to the first of these that we now turn.

The dialectic of the stages refers to Kierkegaard's formulation of the three stages of existence: the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious. These are defined by the Quiet Brother in opposition to metaphysical categories.

There are three existence-spheres: the aesthetic, the ethical, the religious. The metaphysical is the abstract, and there is no human being who exists metaphysically. The metaphysical, the ontological is but does not exist, for if it exists it exists in the aesthetic, the ethical or the religious sphere, and if it is present it is the abstraction of, or the prius for the aesthetic, the ethical or the religious. The ethical sphere is only a transitional sphere, and therefore its highest expression is repentance as a negative action.

(SV 8, p.266)

Where on this scale of existence-spheres does Quidam exist? The answer to this question concerns the interpretation not only of Quidam's diary, but of the whole of Stages on Life's Way. For if Quidam is understood to be a religious personality then the book as a whole will represent the three stages, since In Vino Veritas and the Assessor's treatise correspond fairly neatly to the aesthetic and the ethical. But is Quidam a religious individual?

N. H. S \ddot{o} e argues with great cogency that this is not the case.

(22) Referring to the analysis of the existence-spheres in the

Concluding Unscientific Postscript he notes that here the religious is subdivided into religiousness A and religiousness B (= Christianity). The former is characterized by its consciousness of guilt, the latter by its consciousness of sin. The former can achieve resignation to the will of God, only the latter grasps the paradox of the Incarnation. The former is an existential version of natural religion, the latter an existential version of revealed religion.

Søe observes that Quidam's situation is always defined with reference to religion, not to Christianity; to guilt, not to sin. It is a fairly straightforward conclusion that Quidam certainly cannot represent religiousness B or Christianity. But Søe questions whether he can even be taken as a representative of religiousness A. Kierkegaard's ethics, Søe observes, demand categorical and instantaneous judgements, demand choice: either-or. Quidam however remains caught in possibility, in 'perhaps'. He does not decisively choose himself in repentance, which would represent the fulfilment of the ethical stage. Can we then say that Quidam even represents religiousness A, which is more or less to be identified with the ethical position in general.

To answer this question we need to look more closely at the Quiet Brother's concepts of ethics and of repentance.

Ethics is defined as only a transitional sphere which finds expression in repentance. But although it is only transitional 'one nevertheless does not go through it once and for all.' (SV 8, p.267) For it is actual only in the moment of choice, of repentance. Repentance is never a finished act but has constantly to be made, an ever to be renewed movement from outer to inner, from the aesthetic to the religious. But although such repentance annihilates the external it is, in its movement from externality to inwardness, 'sympathetically dialectical.'

The Quiet Brother illustrates this last point with a story which spells out what he means, namely, that the repentant person does not turn away from the external world out of egoistic contempt for the world, but, even as he turns away from the world, he retains an understanding of his solidarity with his fellow human-beings. In repentance the relationship of inner and outer is both negative and affirmative. It exists only in the actuality of the movement, it is not on one side or the other, and as such it is 'the most dialectical' moment. (SV 8, p.267)

This illuminates Quidam's situation. The emphasis on the sympathetic nature of repentance points to his concern for the girl. He is not egoistically casting her aside for the sake of winning his own soul, at least Kierkegaard does not want us to see it like this. This sympathetic quality also serves to distinguish Quidam from the Seducer. For despite the parallels we have drawn Quidam has a quality of sympathy which Johannes, in his cold egoism, lacks. Quidam's situation is therefore that much the more finely balanced on the dividing line between inner and outer than is Johannes, who represents a merely one-sided rejection of the outer.

Just as repentance is said to be the most dialectical thing so Quidam is described by the Quiet Brother as standing on a 'dialectical razor's edge'. (ibid., p.199)

There is thus a correlation between Quidam and the characterization of repentance which the Quiet Brother makes. However we can qualify the situation still further, because repentance itself is not a simple fact in Quidam's case since, owing to the uncertainty concerning the actual effect of his actions on the girl, 'he must wait on reality to clarify what it is he is guilty of.' (ibid., p.244). Repentance itself has become dialectical for him.

The dialectical form of repentance here is this: he cannot come to repentance because it is as if it is still not decided what he

is to repent of; and he cannot find repose in repentance, because it is as if he should all the time be seeking to act, to undo everything, if it were possible.

(SV 8, p.245)

He is thus described as 'dialectically treading water.' (ibid., p.246) His position is repentance and yet he cannot actually complete the movement, he cannot actually repent, since to do this, as the Quiet Brother observes, he would have to let go of the repentance and accept forgiveness. (ibid., p.245) He stops half-way.

(ibid., p.261)

Half-way between what? Between a life lived in the immediacy of the external world and the absolute inwardness of the religious, between losing the world and gaining his soul. But the movement in which he is stuck - although properly speaking it is only a transitional stage, not itself a permanent stage of existence - is, as it is defined in relation to repentance, the stage of the ethical. Although he does not achieve religiousness B (Christianity) he is not below the ethical stage. He stands at the midpoint of the ethical, at the midpoint between the aesthetic and the religious, between the ethics of the life-view which affirms the world in its externality and the religious intensification of the ethical which breaks with the external. Quidam stands on the border of the aesthetic and the religious.

The Quiet Brother - incidentally revealing himself as the creator of Quidam and not just the discoverer of the manuscript - notes that what he wanted to portray was 'an approximation to a religious personality,' and he summarizes the stages through which Quidam goes on his progress towards this 'approximate' position:

an aesthetic-ethical life-view in illusion with the dawning possibility of the religious; an ethical life-view, which judges him; he sinks back into himself, and he is where I want to have him.

(ibid., p.232)

Quidam stands at the point where he finds that the project of the ethical life-view cannot be carried through and sustained, yet

he moves neither to the illusory inwardness^d of the aesthetic, nor to the radical inwardness of the religious. The fact that he does not decisively break with the aesthetic in the face of the religious demand again suggests his proximity to the Seducer, for this inability to act in the moment of action, in the proper time, means that he too becomes something of a demonic figure, although he is 'a demonic figure in the direction of the religious.' (SV 8, p.273)

(B) (iii) (b) The Dialectic of Immediacy and Reflection

By means of this dialectic the Quiet Brother is able to throw further light on Quidam's psychological situation, and also on his relation to the socio-cultural milieu. Both love and faith are in his view conditioned by the working out of this dialectic in the age.

...Love, like all passion has become dialectical for the existing generation. One cannot grasp such an immediate passion, and in our age even a grocer's boy could tell Romeo and Juliet astonishing truths.

(ibid., p.207)

But what has been put in the place of such passion? Instead of Romeo and Juliet we have only the 'grocer's boy, a jejune philosopher, an official of the government pawnbroker's or ... another representative of common-sense.' (ibid., p.208) In place of inspiration, enthusiasm, passion, we have only shrewdness and cleverness.

It is the same in politics. Instead of the enthusiasm which is prepared to sacrifice itself for a cause the Quiet Brother imagines a typical contemporary politician arguing thus:

I will offer my life, let no one say that I lack a hero's courage, but this blind courage is not the highest, therefore I control myself - and continue to live; therefore I control myself - and let another, someone less important fall in my place.

(ibid., p.210)

The task of love however is precisely to break away from this debilitating finite reflection. No more than Kierkegaard himself in A Literary Review does the Quiet Brother imagine that a return to

some golden age of immediacy is possible. The task is not to give up reflection but to infinitize it and so to break through to a new immediacy.

This 'infinite reflection is nothing alien, but is immediacy's transparency to itself.' If love is able to pass through this then it attains the religious.

In relation to every finite reflection immediacy is essentially higher... But an infinite reflection is infinitely higher than immediacy, and in it immediacy relates itself to itself in the idea. But this expression "in the idea" indicates a God-relationship in the widest sense. (SV 8, p.213)

If love gets stranded on this infinite reflection; if, that is, it reaches a limit which transcends it, then that on which it is stranded is the religious, which under the category of forgiveness is conceived of as a new immediacy. (*ibid.*) In the context of this text the religious is hinted at only as a problematic but unknown dimension.

It is only the negative aspect of religion which is grasped. 'That which is the difficult thing about the forgiveness of sins ... is to become so transparent to oneself that one knows that one at no point exists by virtue of immediacy ...' (*ibid.*, pp. 271f.) The Quiet Brother however forswears both on his own behalf, and implicitly on behalf of his subject, any knowledge of what this might mean, and he poses it only as a difficult question 'how an immediacy comes again ... how such an immediacy is different from an earlier one, what is lost, what is gained ...' (*ibid.*, p.272) There is nothing here of the Assessor's confidence concerning the way in which immediacy is integrated into the higher immediacy of the life-view.

Under five different headings the Quiet Brother sets out the basic characteristics of Quidam and the girl in such a way that we are each time led to see that their relationship is an embodiment of the dialectic of immediacy and reflection: she representing the immediacy, he reflection. (*ibid.*, pp. 224 ff.) The story itself can

thus be seen as the outworking of this dialectic.

But there is a further qualification to be made, since, even without taking the girl into account, we can see that Quidam has this dialectic within himself.

Quidam is described as an 'anachronism in the nineteenth century' (SV 8, p.201) because in this age of reflection he is an enthusiast. But his enthusiasm is not that of immediate passion, for he too is imbued with the spirit of the age, and can only express his enthusiasm 'in the form of deceit.' (ibid., p. 204) Although his enthusiastic personality protests against the low conception of love entertained by the age he too is crippled by reflection. He is unable to give external form to the ideal of loyalty with which he endows his love. This is his deceit. His reflectiveness thus draws him into conflict not only with the girl, but into conflict with the enthusiasm in his own breast.

Is Quidam able to complete the dialectical movement, to win an infinite reflection and regain his immediacy? Let us look again at the infinite reflection. Here, says the Quiet Brother,

freedom is won, whether it be affirmative or negative. In my experiment I have chosen the protestation, so that the double movements show themselves most clearly. At one and the same time he is holding fast to his love, there is no external hindrance, on the contrary everything smiles favourably ... and yet despite all he nonetheless will not, cannot, realize it. The situation is so dialectical that one must not hurry oneself, or only confusion will come out of it. But if it is true that the time of immediacy is past, then all that matters is to gain the religious, no interim measures will do.

(ibid., pp.213-4)

This would seem to suggest that Quidam has in fact won the freedom of the infinite reflection and had freely chosen the negative path, not to marry, to renounce the world for the religious. But we must take the Quiet Brother's advice and not hurry ourselves.

For does the infinite reflection itself automatically lead to the new immediacy of faith, of forgiveness? Surely we cannot say this, because although the Quiet Brother is able to spell out the negative

consequences of the infinite reflection in terms of the total annihilation of the first immediacy he is self-confessedly unable to say what the new immediacy might be. It is an unknown land.

Moreover any such automatic transition would contradict the whole general approach of the Quiet Brother, who is wont to mock the 'necessity' of the transitions of hegelian logic on 'the systematic slide.' (SV 8, p.241 cf. pp. 269ff.)

What in any case does he mean by positive and negative freedom? Has Quidam in fact freely chosen not to marry? Does such an assertion not contradict the whole situation as it is depicted in the diary? For it is the root-cause of the whole problem that he finds himself unable to marry, unable to overcome his melancholy.

The only sense in which he might be said to attain an infinite reflection is in his reflection on the totality of the affair as a past event. Such freedom as he wins in this reflection, such transcendence over the situation as he achieves, he uses negatively in the sense that he does not use it to break away from the situation into the positive freedom of the religious, of forgiveness, but he chooses himself in the unfreedom of his boundness to the past, to the girl, to the nothingness of his original project. He does not win the futurity of freedom.

Once again we see Quidam balanced on the dialectical razor's edge, at the point of transition in which the dialectic of immediacy and reflection fulfils itself. But he does not ~~actu~~ally make the transition, as is most obviously figured in his failure to keep the girl. The balance of the dialectical elements only serves their mutual negation and not their resolution. The age of immediacy is past - but he does not win the religious; he remains in the meaningless void by which they are divided.

(B) (iii) (c) The Dialectic of Possibility and Actuality

Referring to the inset in the diary entitles 'A Possibility!' the Quiet Brother says that this represents Quidam's 'decisive category'. (SV 8, p.226) We have already seen how Quidam is shown in the diary itself to be under the spell of possibility, and we now see how the Quiet Brother spells out the significance of this. In so doing he links the dialectic of possibility - actuality (reality) to the dialectic of ideality and historicity.

But does it help one to believe in a great event if one knows it is a historical fact? No, not at all ... I know ideality in myself [i.e. in the ideal nature of my own consciousness], and if I do not know it in myself, then I do not know it at all, no historical knowledge helps.

Spelling out the significance of this distinction he argues that

That which can be passed on to me [as historical knowledge] is a manifold of data which is not ideality, and in this way the historical is always raw material which he who appropriates knows how to resolve into a posse and assimilate as an esse.

(ibid., p.235)

Although this mention of historicity links what the Quiet Brother is saying to themes with which the theological reader will be familiar from the Philosophical Fragments and The Concluding Unscientific Postscript, the discussion here is not related in any way to the question of the significance of the historical evidence for the Incarnation. (23) The Quiet Brother's concern is with the religious in a more general sense.

There is therefore nothing more stupid in the realm of the religious than to hear the perpetual question which is asked whenever something is taught: "Did it actually happen like that? If so, then we will believe it."

Nothing is more stupid because the point of the religious is to acquire ideality, but not however in order to remain in ideality.

For Spirit asks these two things: (1) Is that which is said possible? (2) Can I do it? But it shows lack of Spirit to ask these two things: (1) Is it real? (2) Has my neighbour, Christopherson, done it, has he actually done it?

(ibid.)

The questions which Spirit (= freedom, free-selfhood) asks show that the appropriation of the requisite ideality or idea is only half of the equation. The other half is to put the idea into practice. Only when these two moments are put together can we say that Spirit is present. This is the standpoint of religious faith, for 'faith is the ideality which resolves an esse into its posse and now passionately draws the conclusion in reverse order.' (SV 8, p.235) Faith has the ideality which penetrates an event or a statement and sees its meaning, its idea. It does not do so in order to acquire material for contemplation but in order to discover its own, the subject's, existential possibilities. It finds in what is given a possibility for its own existence. Drawing the conclusion in reverse order means actualizing this possibility by action.

The Quiet Brother also throws out a hint concerning what the Concluding Unscientific Postscript will call Religiousness B.

If the object of faith is the absurd, then it is still not the historical which is believed, but faith is [now] the ideality which resolves an esse into a non posse and now will believe it. (ibid.)

It is not clear however whether this absurd possibility, belief in that which is (apparently) impossible, refers specifically to the Incarnation, or the experience of forgiveness conceived of as the second immediacy. The emphasis throughout Guilty?-Not-Guilty? however, is for the most part on the subject rather than on the object of faith.

The non posse, the impossible, comes under the general heading of possibility of which it is the negative form rather than the opposite. And for Quidam the transcendence of the sphere of possibility must involve the completion of the movement of faith, the grasping of the impossible possibility of forgiveness. But we do not see him completing this movement.

He is 'above' the stage of merely taking an external interest in what happens. His interest in the girl is not just curiosity concerning what she is doing, etc. He is concerned to discover the meaning of what he observes, to discover the idea which governs her situation. It is the ideality, the possibilities which the situation reveals that preoccupy him. But here he remains. Possibility is his decisive category.

Part of his difficulty in discovering the ideality in his situation lies in the very character of the girl. She belongs to reality, to actuality, he to ideality. This is part of their misrelationship.

In the moment ... when he shall see her a second time, not in reality but illuminated by his own ideality, she is transformed into a gigantic figure ... In the very moment when she is about to forget him because she does not see him ... and he has ceased to be important to her ... in that same moment she has become more important than ever to him, precisely because he does not see her.

(SV 8, pp. 221-2)

He is caught in the web of the possible, of the ideal: he is unable to work these possibilities back into existence so that they acquire form and significance in the real world. He is unable to bring his ideality into harmony with the girl's sensuous reality.

The same dialectical pattern is, according to the Quiet Brother, reflected in the unusual structure of the diary.

In the morning he reflects actuality [what actually happened], at night he deals with the same history, but permeated by his own ideality. This ideality is thus not an illusory anticipation, which has not yet encountered reality, but an act of freedom after reality.

(ibid., p.220)

In this way, Quidam's situation is distinguished from that of the aesthete whose fantastic world is the world of the shadow figures of the hidden personality, the personality which has not yet encountered the world. He has engaged with the world as the ethicist, the Assessor, has, only he has been unable to bring himself into harmony with it. The world of art is closed to him, whether

it takes the form of the exuberance of the romantic imagination or the warm confidentiality of the bourgeois novel.

The ideality or possibility which he produces out of his encounter with reality is said to be religious but it can scarcely be the fulness of the religious, since this involves, according to the Quiet Brother's own definitions, a double movement: from reality to ideality or possibility - and back. But Quidam does not realize the religious possibility which is in him. He remains possibility, and again we must leave him in the dialectical no-man's land.

(B) (iii) (d) The Dialectic of Tragedy and Comedy.

The Quiet Brother pays a great deal of attention to the question of whether his Quidam is to be construed as a tragic or a comic figure. In accordance with Kierkegaard's own aesthetic principles the Quiet Brother assigns to tragedy a greater involvement with the historical, with external reality than to comedy. He assumes 'the fact, that tragedy seeks support in the historical.' (SV 8, p.234) Implicitly this is taken to imply that tragedy is less perfect than comedy, a point which is explicit in the draft notes. (IV B 148, 17)

Nevertheless he is able to concede to Aristotle, with 'significant reservation,' that the poet as such, and therefore, the tragic poet too, is more philosophical than the mere historian, 'because he shows us how a thing ought to be, not how it is.' (SV 8, p.233)

Although he is aware that it might be used against him he appeals to Lessing's discussion of tragedy in the Hamburgische Dramaturgie in order to support his view. (24) Musing on the possible basis for this distinction he casts a wry aspersion on human nature's propensity to believe in the laughable side of human life without the evidence it requires if it is to believe in the noble side of man. Whatever the cause, comedy has 'a metaphysical lack of concern ...

tragedy is interested in the actual, comedy has the disinterestedness of metaphysics.' (SV 8, p.240)

Both tragedy and comedy rely on contradiction. If, as an example of such contradiction, we take a misunderstanding between lovers, then tragedy would assume that the misunderstanding lay in some external hindrance, (ibid., p.216) such as occurs in Romeo and Juliet (although the Quiet Brother does not in fact, mention this eminently suitable example). Comedy, on the other hand, would treat the love itself as a misunderstanding, as Kierkegaard had argued in his review of The First Love, and, revealing the emptiness of the (supposed) lovers' position, calls down upon their heads the judgement of laughter.

If however there is a misunderstanding in the love concerned such that love both exist and does not exist, such that the lovers are truly in love, but cannot relate to each other in their love, then the situation is both tragic and comic.

At the basis of the misunderstanding ... there lies an understanding. If it is impossible there is no misunderstanding [there is not sufficient common ground for them to have a relationship intimate enough for a misunderstanding to be spoken of]. With the possibility on the other hand comes the misunderstanding, and dialectically seen it is both comic and tragic. (ibid., p.215)

Such cases, where both tragic and comic elements are present, are divided by the Quiet Brother into the tragi-comic and the comi-tragic. The former case involves no essential passion and neither the tragic nor the comic are essentially present. He illustrates this point with the following example:

A deaf man enters a meeting-hall during a meeting; he does not want to disturb it and therefore opens the big folding-doors very slowly. Unluckily the doors have the property of creaking. He cannot hear this, he believes he is doing so well, but a protracted creak is being produced by the lengthy opening. The people become impatient; one turns round and hisses at him, he believes that he has possibly moved the door too suddenly, and the creaking continues. (ibid., p.218)

In the comi-tragic however both the tragic and the comic are essentially present 'and the dialectically infinitized Spirit sees both elements in the same thing at the same time.' Such a situation would occur where there was both understanding and misunderstanding between lovers.

This is seen to be the situation of Quidam and his fiancée for 'both of them love, and love each other, but nevertheless it is a misunderstanding.' (SV 8, p.219) This is of course only apparent to Quidam, since only he has sufficient reflection to grasp the essential nature of the situation. 'The experiment's male figure thus sees the comic ... and is thereby strengthened in the tragic.' (*ibid.*, p.220) that is, he becomes convinced more deeply of the impossibility of their union.

The perception of this comi-tragic unity is said to be the culmination of heathendom - that is of life outside religious categories. 'Religiousness begins in the higher passion which out of this unity chooses the tragic.' (cf. *ibid.*)

Quidam perceives the unity - but he does not decisively choose himself out of it, although his tendency is towards the tragic, he does not really become a tragic hero, for, as the Quiet Brother laments, 'my knight's misfortune is that although he should collect himself in religiousness, he becomes dialectical at the uttermost point.' (*ibid.*) And so the saga of Quidam ends with 'no result.' (*ibid.*, p.236)

(B) (iv) The Interpretation of 'Guilty? - Not-Guilty?'

We are now in a position to tackle the question whether Guilty?-Not-Guilty? is an aesthetic work, whether it is in any sense a novel, and if not, what sort of work is it?

The answers depend on the analysis of Quidam's psychological

predicament and the discovery of Quidam's idea, the idea which he represents, which both in the diary, and in the commentary on it, emerges as also the idea of the book. The question is therefore sharpened: what is Quidam's idea, and is it commensurable with aesthetic form?

The Quiet Brother's analysis consistently points to the definition of Quidam's idea in terms of its place on the absolute dialectical boundary between the aesthetic and the religious: Quidam is moving towards the religious, he does not attain it. He is, so to speak, scrambling over the wire as the book closes, and we never learn whether he gets shot in the act or whether he makes his escape into the religious.

At this point the components of the dialectical structure in terms of which Quidam is conceived are perfectly balanced, but not in the sense of a creative interaction. They are balanced in reciprocal negation. Each reduces the other to impotence.

The Quiet Brother says that 'poetry lies in the commensurability of the external and the internal, and it therefore shows the result as something visible.' (SV 8, p.236) But the experiment has no result. It ends in nothing.

The question whether the idea of the experiment can be portrayed aesthetically is taken up by the Quiet Brother. Noting that unhappy love has 'from time out of mind' been a theme for poetry he also observes that 'poetry (Poesien) has to do with immediacy, and cannot therefore think a duplicity.' Above all poetry has to do with the immediacy of passion, for 'without passion, no poetry.' (ibid., p.206) As we have seen however he also believes that love has itself become dialectical, although this phenomenon can manifest itself in ways as diverse as those of the grocer's boy and the anonymous diarist. In either case it follows that 'in that love itself has now become

dialectical, poetry must give it up.' (SV 8, p.209)

The only contradictions which poetry can deal with are those that come from without. The immediacy of poetry is not totally without reflection, 'it has a relative reflection by having its opposition outside itself.' (ibid., p.212) Nor is poetic immediacy lacking in ideal content, but the idea is not actual, does not become real in the poetic form. 'The poet sees it, it is true, but it does not exist for his hero.' (ibid., p.213) The poet - and the reader - see the idea which moves in and which makes the work into a unified, harmonious work of art, but the characters of the work are not themselves living, conscious subjects, they do not see the idea in whose service they stand. The realization of the idea in art is therefore limited, it does not achieve a form which perfectly corresponds to the Idea in its absolute existence as free subjectivity. That is, we see 'ideas' but not 'the Idea' mirrored in art.

Quidam's problem however is how to give form to his ideality, how to achieve absolute transparency to the ideal inwardness of his passion, which is essentially the passion to achieve and exist in the freedom of essential selfhood. The poetic hero represents an idea to which a corresponding external form can be matched so that 'the aesthetic result is in the external and can be shown ... It can be shown, and seen, even (with the help of opera glasses) by short-sighted people, that the hero triumphs ...' (ibid., p.237)

But Quidam achieves no result which can be shown. Not even the utmost potentiation of the aesthetic categories of comedy and tragedy can capture his situation.

Tragedy has the interest of actuality, comedy the disinterestedness of metaphysics, but the experiment lives in the invisible unity of jest and seriousness. The dialectical tension between form and content and content and form prevents any immediate relationship to it, and in this tension the experiment evades the honest handshake of seriousness and likewise the fellowship of jolly brothers which goes with jest.

(ibid., p.240)

The Quiet Brother has already ruled out the claims of speculative comedy.' (SV 8, p.211) No such extension of aesthetic categories can get to grips with the utterly individual, subjectivity of Quidam's 'idea'.

The stress which Kierkegaard's writings on aesthetics constantly make is that an aesthetic work is to be judged in the light of the coherence of content and form. But here the possibility of any such coherence is denied. Here the tension of content and form is a tension of contrast which disrupts the attunement of aesthetic experience and which makes an aesthetic reading impossible.

This is particularly important with regard to the way in which the issue of suffering is dealt with in Guilty? - Not-Guilty? Art in general is, as Kierkegaard had already stated in the early Papirer, a sublimation or masking of suffering. (25) This does not mean that it does not deal with suffering, but that it is restricted in its portrayal of suffering by its inherent externality.

When an aesthetic hero suffers, as in tragedy, his suffering is related to externality, and he is shown as achieving a certain greatness in his suffering. Had Quidam been such an aesthetic hero he would have had to have been shown taking some sort of revenge on the girl, or on the world, to have become a Richard III - a role by which 'he is indeed tempted.' (SV 8, p.159)

On the other hand the Quiet Brother does not think that physical suffering purely as such has any aesthetic interest. (26) He agrees with Schlegel that in aesthetics 'nur die Gesundheit ist lebenswürdig.' (SV 8, p.251) What poetry and art achieve is the resolution of the jarring discords of existence in an ideal harmony. It is a reconciliation in which the external and the ideal are integrated in a balanced totality.

This reconciliation, though justified in art, is 'despicable' with regard to life. (SV 8, p.252) It leaves out of account the force of suffering in experience, and it can deal neither with that suffering which is rooted in physical vulnerability and contingency, nor with that suffering which has a solely spiritual character, the sufferings of the conscience alone 'before God.'

But though 'the aesthetic hero is great by virtue of his conquests, the religious hero is great by virtue of his suffering.' (ibid., p.248) In the religious the two dimensions of suffering which art must leave out of account are united. Any and every suffering can be reconciled in the ideality of religious inwardness, although this reconciliation does not express itself in any external form or any external alteration. (ibid., p.251)

This distinction between the aesthetic and the religious is also made in respect of the difference in effect which aesthetic and religious works have on their recipients. Referring to Aristotle's definition of tragedy as achieving the purification of fear and pity (27) the Quiet Brother concurs that when the spectator understands the idea in a tragedy 'he sees the poetic, and his fear and pity are purified from all basely egoistic ingredients.' (SV 8, p.253) But this purification is achieved by his losing himself in the action as it is externally portrayed.

The aesthetic healing consists in the individual gazing at the dizzy sight provided by the aesthetic and by so doing he loses himself, like an atom, like a particle of dust, which is thrown in with the common lot of everyman, of humanity; he loses himself like an infinitely small element of sound in the spherical harmony of existence.

(ibid., pp. 254-5)

Religious healing takes the reverse direction and turns the 'fear' which is aroused by the religious narration back upon the addressee: he is to fear for himself, not for the hero; he is to take his existence into the inner sanctuary of a God-relationship. Thus

he does not lose himself in the suffering of others, but he is not egoistic, for he loses his egoistic denial of suffering by accepting his suffering before God in the light of the question of his own guilt and responsibility.

In an aesthetic perspective self-induced suffering must always be comic, the Quiet Brother argues, because radical inwardness lies outside its scope, and it can only interpret such inwardness as nullity, as a desertion from the external, as something laughable.

(SV 8. p.258) (28) But religiously the whole point is to discover that one is always in danger, to realize, even when life seems secure and happy, that he is suspended over seventy thousand fathoms of water. (SV 8, p.261)

The centrality of the question of suffering for the idea of the diary is indicated by its subtitle: A Passion Narrative. (*ibid.*, p.9) We do not see Quidam religiously healed, we see him agonizing over the open laceration of his suffering.

The diary is not then an aesthetic work. Its idea negates the idea of the aesthetic. Instead of the transparency of form to idea, we have the tension of idea and form. What sort of work is it then?

It is described on the title page as 'A Psychological Experiment.' Commenting on the diary Pierre Mesnard says that it 'bears an astonishing resemblance to the confessions which a psycho-analyst obtains from his clients.' (29) It is meant to. It is a psychological case-study, a pioneering work of existential psychology. (30) It is the concrete application of the psychological categories developed more formally in such works as The Concept of Angst; The Concluding Unscientific Postscript; The Sickness Unto Death.

It is not therefore intended as either pleasant or comforting reading. We are to approach it analytically. If this point is fully appreciated then it will be seen many (though perhaps not all)

of the criticism made of this book are misplaced. It is not meant to be aesthetically pleasing. Nor on the other hand, is it primarily an oblique self-revelation by Kierkegaard himself. (31) It is an exposition of a particular psychological stage, an idea, which we can indicate with the terms 'guilt' and 'nothingness.' The province of psychology is described as 'the last confinium between the aesthetic and the religious.' (SV 8, p.241) This is where Quidam stands, and this is how he must be approached.

From its psychological vantage point on the absolute frontier between the aesthetic and the religious Guilty? - Not Guilty? provides a retrospective view of the territory of the aesthetic. Only from this standpoint can the final definition of the aesthetic be made. Emanuel Hirsch has written that 'Das Fertigwerden des endgiltigen Begriffs vom Ästhetischen bezeichnet mithin den erinnernden Abschluss mit dem Dichterischen als einem Stück der Vergangenheit.' (32) This completion of the concept does not so much mean that Kierkegaard has introduced any new content into the concept. It is more a question of defining the boundary between the aesthetic and the religious more precisely, more painstakingly and, yes, more painfully than he had done before. It focusses on and enlarges the negative moment of the ethical act of self-choice, a moment which we had encountered in the sermon with which Either-Or ended, as well as in the crisis portrayed in Repetition. This moment is Quidam's whole life; it is the idea with which Kierkegaard concludes his aesthetic authorship.

If Kierkegaard's theory of art can be found in his critical writings, his critique of art is to be found in his so-called novels. Together they constitute his philosophy of art. We shall now turn to see the connections between this philosophy of art and other aspects of his authorship, and to discuss the questions of its theological structure and its contemporary relevance.

Chapter Ten: Conclusion

(A) Aesthetics and the Aesthetic

We now turn to an examination of the links between the 'novels' and wider issues arising from Kierkegaard's authorship.

Kierkegaard treated the question of the limits of the aesthetic in the light of his characteristic interest in the psychological, in what the hegelians called the realm of 'Subjective Spirit.' (1) The categories which he built into the framework of the novels are given a more theoretical treatment in such works as The Concept of Angst, The Concluding Unscientific Postscript and The Sickness Unto Death.

This psychological perspective can be seen in the ambiguity of the term aesthetic in Kierkegaard's work. On the one hand it is used to refer to the realm of art and to a particular quality of imagination, both creative and receptive. On the other hand it is used to refer to an existential stance equivalent to the 'inauthenticity' or 'bad faith' of modern existentialism. (2) The aim of the present section is to point to the connection between these two uses of the term.

Both Kierkegaard and Hegel argue for the ultimate inadequacy of art as a means of expressing Spirit in an absolute sense. For both of them the inadequacy of the aesthetic lies in its entanglement in immediacy, in externality, in sensuousness, an entanglement which prevents it from reflecting the essential inwardness of spiritual existence. But whereas Hegel traced the process of internalization to the absolute inwardness of pure thought, Kierkegaard followed another path, which led to the encounter of the individual with an absolutely transcendent God, an encounter between polarities so radically 'other' that no external expression could be given to it, nor any human agency resolve the dualism revealed in it. Such a

resolution or 'new immediacy' presupposes a complete break with the totality of the human subject's existence outside this relationship, and can only be achieved by the action of the divinity. The description of this divine action is the content of Kierkegaard's Christology, his doctrine of the Paradox, such as it is expressed in Philosophical Fragments, The Concluding Unscientific Postscript and Training in Christianity. (3)

The track followed by this enquiry leads only to the near side of this abyss, to the point where the aesthetic breaks down, where the existential subject is left on the brink, poised between the aesthetic and the religious. From this point we can at the most share something of the experience of that dizzy vertigo which results from the vision of the void. In this experience the external world is reduced to indifference and that fear of the Lord is aroused which, if not itself salvation, is at least the beginning of wisdom.

The Assessor offered us a preliminary account of this experience in the figure of Nero. He described Nero as a man in whom the Spirit could not come to birth, could not achieve the breakthrough it required. Not allowed to manifest itself creatively it manifested itself negatively as 'a dark cloud, its wrath broods over his soul, and it becomes an anxiety (angst) ...' (SV 3, p.175)

The experience of the abyss separating the aesthetic and the religious is the experience of angst. This is the characterization of the gap separating Spirit (= freedom) from all that is not Spirit as it makes itself felt in the subject. It is the determination of the subject as essentially free yet lacking content in its freedom.

In The Concept of Angst angst is seen to be rooted in the universal structure of human selfhood, for it is traced back to man's condition before the Fall.

In this condition there is peace and repose; but at the same

time there is something else which is not dissension and strife, for indeed there is nothing to strive with. What is there then? Nothing. But what effect has nothing? It begets angst. It is the deep secret of innocence that it is at the same time: angst. In its dream-state Spirit projects its own actuality, but this actuality is Nothing, but innocence constantly sees this Nothing outside it.

(SV 6, p.136)

Angst is rooted in nothingness, for 'angst and nothing correspond at all times to one another.' (ibid., p.183)

Angst can be likened to dizziness. He whose eye comes to gaze down into the yawning abyss becomes dizzy. But what is the basis (Grund) of this dizziness? It is as much in his eye as it is in the abyss (Afgrund), for what if he had not stared down? Thus angst is the vertigo of freedom, which occurs when Spirit would posit the synthesis, and freedom now stares down into its own potentiality, and then grasps finitude to hold on to. In this vertigo freedom sinks down. Psychology can go no further than this - nor does it want to. In the same moment everything is altered and when freedom stands up again it sees that it is guilty. Between these two moments lies the leap, which no science either has clarified or can clarify. He who becomes guilty in angst becomes as ambiguously guilty as possible. (ibid. pp. 152-3)

In angst both guilt and freedom are present as possibilities while neither is able to manifest itself as such - until the leap has been taken into faith or into sin. (cf. ibid.; p.194)

Psychology cannot deal with such concepts as faith and sin which Kierkegaard assigns to Dogmatics. Psychology can deal only with the predisposition to sin, the state out of which sin arises, the 'real possibility' of sin. This is angst. (ibid., pp.119ff.)

The condition of angst, as its relation to nothingness, to guilt and to freedom, as well as its correlation with psychology, all tend to show, is the condition we have seen exemplified in Quidam. Quidam, more than any other of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous 'heroes' is angst incarnate.

The theme of nothingness is also taken up more or less explicitly in various of Kierkegaard's Edifying Discourses. In one Discourse it is stated that for a man 'to know himself in his own nothingness is the condition of knowing God.' (SV 4, p.289) A description is

offered of how God uses angst to drive self-confidence out of a man when the time comes for the man to learn his own nothingness - and thus to learn to know God. (SV 4, p.272)

The fullest - although because of its diffuseness not necessarily the best - account of the whole scheme of psychological categories which the novels presuppose is in the Concluding Unscientific Postscript where it is said that

The totality of guilt-consciousness is the most edifying aspect of religiousness A. Within the sphere of religiousness A this edifying aspect still belongs to immanence and is the annihilation in which the individual puts himself out of the way in order to find God, since it is precisely the individual himself who is the hindrance. (SV 10, p.229)

Since 'every human life is constructed religiously' (SV 6, p.191) the totalization of the guilt-consciousness, involving the annihilation of the external and the anxious experience of the nothingness, as the moment in which freedom announces its presence, are not just matters for eccentrics such as Quidam. They are tasks incumbent on any human being who is to attain the spiritual freedom which human existence is destined to be.

Art can only represent this guilt-consciousness in external images such as the Furies (SV 10, p.213), but its true expression is in the absolute inwardness of subjectivity: in the void, before God, the self comes face to face only with itself. It is the moment of truth which defies figuration.

If the religious is not grasped in its true inwardness, then it is that a man is said to exist aesthetically in the sense of inauthentically. As the aesthetic experience was given a particular significance in the life of the youth as an anticipation of the full development of personality, we could also call such aesthetic existence immaturity. It is a failure to grow up, the failure to achieve our proper freedom.

It is in this sense that the Assessor castigates his young

friend for having an aesthetic view of life, but whereas A manifests his aesthetic personality in a corresponding preoccupation with aesthetic themes, i.e. themes taken from poetry and the arts, the term 'aesthetic' also comes to be used for all those who fail to achieve christian faith in its fulness.

In The Point of View 'the aesthetic' thus becomes the decisive category in Kierkegaard's characterization of established Christianity.

So now, if on this assumption, most people in Christendom only imagine themselves to be christian, in what categories do they then live? They live in aesthetic or aesthetic-ethical categories.

(SV 18, p.95)

Even if such people have no interest at all in the arts, they are 'aesthetic' because they do not live with sufficient inwardness, with the purely subjective freedom of the Christian man. Instead of living 'in' themselves they are 'out' of themselves, alienated, at a distance from themselves, a distance which can only be overcome in the synthesis of the new immediacy of faith, grounded and sustained by Grace.

This extension of the sense of the aesthetic is connected by Kierkegaard with the way in which he has used aesthetic forms in his work. Because most people most of the time live aesthetically the place to meet them - working on the principle that christian communication starts where people are - is in the aesthetic, to accept the aesthetic as a starting-point, and then, once a bridge has been built, to show the hollowness of the aesthetic, to show the illusion involved in it. Kierkegaard sees this both as a socratic discipline of laying bare the illusions in which men are snared and also as a way of tricking men into the truth. (4)

Although some commentators doubt whether Kierkegaard's authorship was as genuinely religious from the start as he claims it to

have been in The Point of View (5) our analysis of the novels supports his argument that the authorship did in fact point to the illusory element in the aesthetic, in that Kierkegaard, as a writer, breaks the basic rules which, in his view, governed the realm of aesthetics. In place of the harmony of content and form he produced a literature in which form and content stood in essential contrast. The aesthetic form of the novels is just a 'form' and no more.

However by correlating the aesthetic form of the pseudonymous authorship with the aesthetic (= inauthentic) situation of his contemporaries, Kierkegaard is, at the very least, implying that the analogy by which the term aesthetic was extended from its use in relation to art is more than an analogy, that art is somehow tied up with the aestheticism of an existential flight from freedom. Is art then always a guilty evasion of guilt? Is art ever innocent? These questions lead to an assessment of the overall structure of Kierkegaard's philosophy of art, and of its significance in relation to the religious premisses from which and to which he is working.

(B) The Theological Structure of Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Art

It is an implication of Kierkegaard's philosophy of art as it has been presented in this thesis that art does in fact have a legitimate place in the overall ordering of human life, and this in a number of ways.

Firstly, there is a level at which the work of art can and should be assessed in the light of purely aesthetic considerations. This is the level of pure aesthetic criticism: the work of art is judged solely in terms of its conformity to the canons of taste, namely, whether or not it answers to its idea. These canons are not a matter of arbitrary individual feeling but are governed by the dialectic of aesthetic ideas. At this level the intrusion of ethical or religious categories

is irrelevant. (6)

Secondly there is a level at which art can reflect a genuine ethical interest which, even if it does involve a degree of distortion does not involve the absolute falsification of the ethical interest concerned. (7)

Thirdly, there is a level at which art itself obscurely testifies to the freedom of religious faith.

The first two points have already been developed at length in previous chapters. The third point has been adumbrated with regard to Kierkegaard's discussion of such aesthetic border-concepts as the idea of the Wandering Jew (8) and the comi-tragic (9), border-concepts in which the aesthetic itself testifies to its own emptiness, to the nothingness lurking beneath its surface, in which freedom is to be found. Here however we are concerned with seeing how this may be so with regard to art simply as such.

It is noteworthy that several Roman Catholic scholars who have given serious attention to Kierkegaard have found in him a genuinely Thomist appreciation of the relation of Nature and Grace. (10) Can something of the structure of traditional Natural Theology be read into his philosophy of art? Is art presented as a relatively independent sphere of human existence which cannot arbitrarily be subjected to heteronomous control and which nonetheless also witnesses to the religious?

It follows from what has been said at the start of this section that the answer to the first part of this last question has to be affirmative. Art cannot be subjected to the arbitrary intrusions of whatever it is which lies outside the aesthetic. Does art also witness to religion? If this is so, then just as the works of nature in traditional natural theology come to be interpreted from a double-perspective, according to whether it is their natural laws or their

ultimate ends which are subjected to scrutiny then we must look for a similar double-perspective in Kierkegaard's aesthetics.

An application of such Thomist principles to art is made by Jacques Maritain in Art and Scholasticism. Maritain distinguishes between art as an activity independent of the requirements of speculation and of ethical action, an activity which belongs to 'making' in which

Art ...remains outside the line of human conduct, with an end, rules and values, which are not those of man but of the work to be produced. That work is everything for art - one law only governs it - the exigencies and good of the work. (11)

On the other hand

If art is not human in the end it pursues, it is human, essentially human in its method of working. It involves the making of a man's work, stamped with the character of a man: animal rationale ... the work to be done is merely a matter of art, the form of it is undeviating reason

which thus, by means of the presence of beauty in art, as the appropriate form of this reason, sets art in the order of transcendentals, providing a middle term between the created material order and pure (contemplative) Spirit. Although such a dual-perspective can be seen in Kierkegaard's writing on art, Kierkegaard's position is not unqualifiedly Thomist. There are certain emphases which distinguish him as typically 'modern' rather than as 'neo-medieval'!

The path from art to divinity is not for Kierkegaard simply a continuous line which, if we follow it far enough, will lead us to the goal. Just as in Hegel's re-working of the proofs for divine existence the finite witnesses to the infinite indirectly, by the revelation of its own inadequacy, so that it can serve only for a negative knowledge of God (13), so the testimony of art to the religious is, for Kierkegaard, essentially negative. This testimony is not therefore by virtue of the fulness which is in art; it is not by its Beauty that art points to the religious, but by virtue of its lack, by virtue of its inability to resolve the dialectic of existence which

thus comes to be seen as requiring a religious resolution. The clue by which the religious dimension is indicated is not to be found in the apparent wholeness of aesthetic experience, but by seeking out the need which such wholeness attempts to satisfy.

The opening Diapsalma in Either-Or, an aphorism which, according to Kierkegaard, contained the problematic of the whole work (cf. IV A 216/5629), runs

What is a poet? An unhappy man, who conceals deep pains in his heart, but whose lips are so fashioned that when the sigh and the cry pass out of them, they sound like beautiful music. His situation is like that of the unfortunate person who was slowly tortured by a soft flame in the Ox of Phalaris, whose screams could not reach that tyrant and so affright him because they sounded to him like a sweet music. (SV 2., p.23)

The human situation is that idea and form are separated: we do not exist according to our idea, we are not what we should and shall be. In the aesthetic work there is a relative attunement of idea and form, yet not at such a level as to resolve the more fundamental discord. Beneath the aesthetic synthesis, this sweet music, the scream of agony continues unabated.

In this vision of art Kierkegaard shares some of the central insights of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Freud, insights most poignantly expressed by Nietzsche: '... we may see the artist's buoyancy and creative joy as a luminous cloud shape reflected upon the dark surface of a lake of sorrow.' (14)

Art is an answer, albeit an inadequate answer, to the question of suffering. However he who has eyes to see can read the question in the answer, can hear the cry of pain behind the sweet music, can see the dark lake of sorrow beneath the image of the luminous cloud. Art does not witness to religion by its beauty, its joy, but by the fact that we can read in art the same unexpressed question which lies at the heart of the religious dilemma. Poetic ideality is, as Kierkegaard so often says, a dream-world, but the power of a dream

lies as much in what it represses as in what it reveals.

Kierkegaard's stripping away of the illusion of the aesthetic thus leads us from the brilliant fireworks of young A, who has learnt to play the aesthetic illusion for all it is worth, to the relentless monotony of Quidam's 'passion narrative'. It is the revelation of the suffering which art conceals - because it cannot cure it - and which religion reveals - because it has the cure, it can win through to freedom and it can hear the note of joy in the strife of suffering. (15)

This is not to say that the artist or the recipient of his work is deliberately two-faced, that he deliberately suppresses the knowledge of the unhealed wound at the back of his images of beauty. He is, in an expression from the early Papirer, an 'unconscious sacrifice'. Though the poetic consciousness can achieve a certain degree of self-awareness and, in comic irony or in such figures as the Wandering Jew, can to a certain extent acknowledge its ultimate inadequacy, it does not know, it is by its very structure prevented from knowing the absoluteness of the split which determines human existence as a suffering existence.

This is seen by the Assessor, who writes

... a poet-existence as such lies in the darkness which is a consequence of the fact that despair is not worked through, that the soul perpetually trembles in despair and the Spirit cannot win its true transfiguration (= explanation). The poetic ideal is always an untrue ideal, for the true ideal is always the actual. So when the Spirit is not allowed to rise up into the eternal world of Spirit, it stops half-way and rejoices in the images which mirror themselves in the clouds, and he weeps at their transitoriness. A poet-existence is therefore as such an unhappy existence, which is higher than finitude and yet is not infinite. The poet sees the ideals, but he has to flee the world in order to enjoy them, he is unable to carry about these divine images within him in the midst of life's confusion ...

(SV 3, p.196)

Art occupies a thoroughly dialectical position: higher than the merely physical, lower than the angels. As with Maritain it is 'a middle term.' At the most profound level art is an attempt to over-

come the agonized consciousness of mortality which we carry within us, agonized both because life is short and because it is so painful while it lasts. Life is no more than the passage from the birth-cry to the death-cry, (XI ii A 199/729) but art seeks to build a lasting kingdom on this absolute flux.

Art seeks to transfigure life, to see it as beauty, to see it in the light of its own aesthetic ideals, but it must fail because the only answer to suffering mortality is the blessedness of eternity, a gift which is beyond any man's power. Kierkegaard thus joins hands with one of his arch-adversaries, N. F. S. Grundtvig, who in his poem De Levendes Land expressed a similar insight:

O, deceitful dream!
You shimmering bubble on the stream of time,
In vain does the bard, with mouth and with pen,
Seek, with brilliant shadows, to create you again;
When the shadow is most like, then those few sigh
who look upon it

Enchanting dream
Of the pearl of eternity in the stream of time,
You trick the poor wretches who in vain seek
What the heart desires in images and in art,
So that they call "abiding" what certainly passes
away
like hours and years!

(16)

Or, as the american critic Harold Bloom puts it, 'Following Nietzsche, I have suggested that the poetic will is an argument against time, revengefully seeking to substitute "It is" for "It was." ' (17)

It may be argued that Kierkegaard's expression of this understanding of art was conditioned by a perception of the incompatibility of human mortality and divine eternity which was nothing short of in-human, that his vista is one of uninterrupted bleakness. In this case the Thomist structure of his philosophy of art can only temporarily distract us from the thoroughly unthomist rejection of the world and its reduction to a mere vale of tears. To answer this charge we proceed, perhaps indirectly, by turning to the question of the relation

of Kierkegaard's philosophy of art to the phenomenon of nihilism.

(C) Art and Nihilism

When we seek to place Kierkegaard's philosophy of art in relation to modern developments in art and aesthetics we are confronted by many problems. The more formalistic aspects of his theory of art seem to be simply outdated. His critique of art on the other hand seems to have misfired in that precisely those themes which Kierkegaard regarded as setting a limit to aesthetic presentation have been taken up by art in the twentieth century. The irony is that, at least in literature, some of the writers most responsible for this development have been strongly influenced by Kierkegaard.

The themes of guilt, anxiety and nothingness have been taken up by a number of writers who are generally acknowledged to have owed a great deal to Kierkegaard, writers such as Ibsen, Strindberg, Kafka, Dürrenmatt and Sartre. (18) Are we then simply to assume that Kierkegaard was blinded to the literary possibilities of such themes by the restrictedness of his formalistic principles of literary criticism?

Stanley Cavell has said that

both his and our concepts of aesthetics are historically conditioned; that the concepts of beauty and sublimity which he had in mind (in deploring the confusion between art and religion) are ones which our art either repudiates or is determined to win in new ways; that, in particular, our serious art is produced under conditions which Kierkegaard announces as those of apostleship, not those of genius. I do not insist that for us art has become religion ... but that the activity of modern art, both in production and reception, is to be understood in categories which are, or were, religious. (19)

It certainly cannot be denied that some artists, such as Brecht, have deliberately sought to flout and to reverse precisely those aspects of aesthetic experience which Kierkegaard regarded as intrinsic to it. (20)

We must, however, question whether 'serious art' in the twentieth

century can be said to have reached a consensus as to what it is meant to be about, and we may well suspect that this failure to achieve consensus is not merely a sign of pluralism in aesthetics, but reflects a deeply-felt doubt concerning the ultimate office and destiny of art.

The 'serious artist' of today is likely to know what Kierkegaard was talking about in his bleaker moments, and he is likely to have shared Kierkegaard's doubts concerning the power of art to reflect or in any way cope with this vision of the void. Just as theologians have expressed the twentieth-century 'loss of nerve' by raising the issue of the 'death of God', so artists and art-critics have mooted the 'death of art'. (21) As Hans Küng has put it, art today is seen 'against a nihilistic background.' (22)

The reverberations of romanticism can still be heard in this situation, and betray themselves in the conscious concern to re-animate the vision of the first-generation of romantics and to entrust the future to the shaping spirit of imagination. Thus, although his existentialist philosophy of art has many points in common with Kierkegaard's aesthetics, Arturo Fallico is able to say that it is only in art that we are able to find the 'will to resist the nihilism which stealthily destroys the very soul of modern man ... the aesthetic attitude is the arch-enemy of the impersonal, the levelling, the non-purposive.' (23)

The theologian - without necessarily subscribing to the theological hubris which would see in faith or in theology the 'answer' to every problematic detail of human existence - must pause at such a statement. There is at this point, in all comradeship, a parting of the ways.

This dilemma is expressed by Charles Glicksberg as the choice between Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. For Nietzsche it is art, the

world of illusion, which will redeem us from the void of nihilism, it is the courageous and this-worldly affirmation of human creativity.

The poet who has reached this point of division will recognize Kierkegaard as

a fellow sufferer, a companion in adversity, a wanderer in darkness who keeps open the wound of the negative, a singer of doubt, a dancer over the void, a pilgrim of the absolute. Yet the poet cannot afford to follow his example or his recommendations. As a man he may decide to make the leap perilous and land on the other shore of faith, but if he does so ... he must perforce renounce forever his interest in the creative life. There is no further need to write ... Hence the modern poet has no other recourse but to follow the Nietzschean way, even if it leads to the ultimate of nihilism. Though he reaches the outposts of nothingness, he at least retains his tragic dignity and creative freedom. (24)

This is powerful rhetoric, but is the conclusion as obvious as all that? The choice between Kierkegaard and Nietzsche is also expressed in the following poem Balance by R. S. Thomas, and here we find the outcome less clear-cut:

No piracy, but there is a plank
to walk over seventy thousand fathoms,
as Kierkegaard would say, and far out
from the land. I have abandoned
my theories, the easier certainties
of belief. There are no handrails to
grasp. I stand and on either side
there is the haggard gallery
of the dead, those who in their day
walked here and fell. Above and
beyond there is the galaxies'
violence, the meaningless wastage
of force, the chaos the blond
hero's leap over my head
brings him nearer to.

Is there a place
here for the spirit? Is there time
on this brief platform for anything
other than the mind's failure to explain itself?

(25)

Does it follow that the kierkegaardian living of the tension of existence 'over seventy thousand fathoms' leads to a drying-up of the poetic will, or is the poetic will any better served by the 'blond hero's leap'? May it not be that it is the courage of faith which makes a breathing-space in which the poetic word can take shape? And

is it a derogation of art to say that its roots sink down into the silence of acceptance and adoration in which the tension of the void is resolved into faith?

The bleakness of Kierkegaard's more sombre utterances concerning the inescapability of suffering in life on earth does not mean the denial of the humble office of art to achieve some small transfiguration - incomplete, broken and provisional - of the surrounding gloom. These traces of order and of light, which we find in art, make very specific, very coherent demands on our emotions and on our understanding. It follows that, for Kierkegaard, life on earth is more than the utter darkness of unstructured chaos: in the dangerous frailty of his own creative gift the creature bears testimony - albeit against himself - to his high origin and destiny.

* * *

NOTES

Chapter One: Kierkegaard and the Quest for Imagination

- 1 A full bibliography of the literature in this field cannot be attempted here. The question is not itself new, and its significance for a previous generation can be indicated by reference to such names as C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, T. S. Eliot and Austin Farrer, all of whom took up this issue in various of their works. The following references aim merely to indicate something of the range of contemporary writing on the topic. From the pedagogical point of view, Robert E. C. Browne's The Ministry of the Word (1976) is something of a minor classic, especially chapter 2: 'Preacher and Poet'. From a devotional angle Alan Ecclestone's Yes to God (1975) may be mentioned. The theology of 'story' is discussed by John D. Davies, 'Faith as Story' in John J. Vincent (ed.), Stirrings: Essays Christian and Radical (1976). The category of story also receives attention in Anthony E. Harvey (ed.), God Incarnate: Story and Belief (1981) and indeed in The Doctrine Commission of the Church of England, Believing in the Church, where it is stated that the distinction between christian stories and christian doctrine is frequently overstretched for 'The stories themselves, and above all, the master story of our redemption, carry a great load of doctrinal significance.' (*ibid.*, p.300) The importance of story is also testified to by Black Theology, cf. James H. Cone, God of the Oppressed (1975), pp. 102-107. The question of 'imagination' was particularly emphasized in Mary Warnock, Imagination (1976) and in her article 'Imagination - Aesthetic and Religious', Theology (LXXXIII) (1980), 403-409. The same point was taken up in John Coulson, Religion and Imagination (1981). An historical approach to the quest for imagination is to be found in James Engell, The Creative Imagination, Enlightenment to Romanticism (1981). The frontier of aesthetics and religion has also been discussed by Roman Catholic scholars, e.g. William F. Lynch, Christ and Apollo (1975), and it is from a Roman Catholic theologian that perhaps the most majestic fusion of theology and aesthetics has come, namely Hans Urs von Balthasar, Herrlichkeit: eine theologische Aesthetik, Bd. 1 - 2, 3i, 3ii (1967-75); cf. Jeffrey A. Kay, Theological Aesthetics (1975). The same concern can be seen in studies of particular representatives of the tradition which emphasize the aesthetic aspect of their work, e.g. Robert J. O'Connell, Art and the Christian Intelligence in St. Augustine (1978).
- 2 Coulson, op.cit., p.v.
- 3 cf. Warnock, Imagination, pp. 72-130; Coulson, op.cit., pp. 6-15. Notable discussions of Coleridge's doctrine of imagination are to be found in J. Robert Barth, The Symbolic Imagination (1977), and Ivor A. Richards, Coleridge on Imagination (1934).
- 4 Such a view finds expression in Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man (1941), pp. 34-45. It is grounded in such analyses of the romantic movement as those given by Heinrich

- Heine and Georg Brandes, cf. Heinrich Heine, Die Romantische Schule; Georg Brandes, Den Romantiske Skole i Tyskland in Samlede Skrifter, Bd. 4 (1900), pp. 195-482.
- 5 Quoted in Hans Kung, Art and the Question of Meaning (1981), p. 28.
- 6 ibid.
- 7 Herbert Read, The True Voice of Feeling (1968), p.183.
- 8 cf. Martin Heidegger, Being and Time (1962), pp. 68f. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness (1958), pp. 47-70.
- 9 cf. ch. 5, esp. pp. 114ff below.
- 10 E. J. Raymond Cook, 'Kierkegaard's Literary Art' in The Listener (72) 1964, 713.
- 11 Examples of such an approach are F. J. Billeskov Jansen, Søren Kierkegaards Litterære Kunst and Aage Henriksen, Kierkegaards Romaner.
- 12 Martin Thust, Soeren Kierkegaard, Der Dichter des Religiösen (1931), p.24.
- 13 ibid., pp. 17f.
- 14 cf. chs. 7 and 8 below.
- 15 Louis Mackey - Kierkegaard - a Kind of Poet (1971), p.259.
- 16 ibid., pp. 267ff.
- 17 Jean-Paul Sartre, Qu'est-ce que la Littérature? (1948)pp.11-44.
- 18 Mackey, op.cit., p.267.
- 19 ibid., p.285.
- 20 ibid., p.267.
- 21 Nelly Viallaneix, Écoute, Kierkegaard (1979).
- 22 ibid., p.10.
- 23 ibid., p.21.
- 24 ibid., p.38.
- 25 ibid., p.59.
- 26 John Hick, Evil and the God of Love (1968), pp. 197ff.
- 27 Theodor Adorno, Kierkegaard (1962), p.9.
- 28 The inescapability of the God-relationship in Kierkegaard's vision of man is one of the central themes of Valter Lindström, Stadiernas Teologi .

- 29 cf. ch. 10 (A) pp. 304ff. below.
- 30 For a useful summary of the discussion of Kierkegaard's relation to Møller cf. W.. Glyn Jones, 'Søren Kierkegaard and Poul Martin Møller', Modern Languages Review (60) (1965), pp.73-82.

Chapter Two: Romanticism

- 1 cf. ch. 1, n.4.
- 2 A good summary of Fichte's life and thought can be found in Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy, Vol. 7, part 1, pp.50-120.
- 3 ibid., p.64
- 4 Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Science of Knowledge (E. tr. 1970), p.6.
- 5 idem., The Vocation of Man (E. tr. 1956), pp.35-51.
- 6 ibid., p.64.
- 7 ibid., p.65
- 8 idem., Science of Knowledge, p.188
- 9 idem., Vocation of Man, p.80.
- 10 ibid., pp. 98-9.
- 11 ibid., p.123.
- 12 idem., Science of Knowledge, p.107.
- 13 idem., Vocation of Man, p.91.
- 14 idem., Science of Knowledge, p. 38.
- 15 ibid., p.41.
- 16 ibid., p.40.
- 17 ibid., p.41.
- 18 Friedrich Schlegel, Kritische Schriften, p.46.
- 19 Walter Benjamin, Der Begriff der Kunstkritik in der Deutschen Romantik in Gesammelte Schriften, 1;1 (1974), p.26.
- 20 Quoted in Benjamin, op.cit., p.37.
- 21 cf. p.23 above.
- 22 Frederick Hiebel, Novalis, (E. tr. 1954), p.50.
- 23 Frederick J. W. Schelling, System of Transcendental Idealism (E. tr. 1978), p.7.

- 24 Frederick J. W. Schelling, System of Transcendental Idealism (E. tr. 1978), p.13.
- 25 ibid., pp. 13-14.
- 26 ibid., p.219.
- 27 ibid., p.230.
- 28 Jean Paul, Vorschule der Aesthetik in Sämtliche Werke, 1te. Abt., 11te. Bd. (1935), pp. 37-8.
- 29 ibid., p.47.
- 30 ibid., p.34.
- 31 Quoted in Benjamin, op.cit., p.63.
- 32 Schelling, System of Transcendental Idealism, p.232
- 33 cf. Otto Pöggeler, Hegels Kritik der Romantik (1955), pp.56ff., 61ff.
- 34 W. H. Wackenroder, Werke und Briefe (1967), p.119.
- 35 Jean Paul, op.cit., pp. 49-50.
- 36 ibid., p.50.
- 37 Novalis, Dichtungen (1963), p.200.
- 38 René Wellek, History of Modern Criticism: 1750 - 1950. The Romantic Age (1955), pp.11ff.
- 39 ibid., p.12.
- 40 Schlegel, op.cit., p.107.
- 41 Schelling, 'Philosophie der Kunst' in Werke III (1965).
- 42 ibid., pp.375ff.
- 43 Wellek, op.cit., p.14
- 44 ibid., p.15
- 45 ibid., p.300.
- 46 Ernst T. A. Hoffmann, The Novel: Kater Murr (E. tr. 1969), P.100.
- 47 cf. ch. 6 (D) pp. 157ff. below.
- 48 Benjamin, op.cit., p.75.
- 49 Schlegel, op.cit., p.38.
- 50 Klaus Peter, Friedrich Schlegel (1978), p.38.
- 51 cf. ch. 8 (B), pp. 228ff. below.

- 52 Benjamin, op.cit., p.71.
- 53 ibid., p.78
- 54 ibid., p.79
- 55⁵ ibid., p.104; Wellek, op.cit., p.9.
- 56 For the link between Steffens and Øhlenslaeger cf. Gustav Albeck, in Gustav Albeck, Oluf Friis, Peter Rohde, Dansk Litteratur Historie, Bind 2: Fra Oehlenschläger til Kierkegaard (1965), pp.11-38, esp. pp. 25-9. Also Philip M Mitchell A History of Danish Literature (1957), pp. 105-125.
- 57 Henrik Steffens, Inledning til Philosophiske Forelasninger i København (1803) new ed. (1905), p.121.
- 58 This concept of philosophy is set out in the first lecture, cf. Steffens, Inledning, ch.1.
- 59 ibid., p.21.
- 60 ibid., pp.21-2.
- 61 ibid., p.22.
- 62 ibid., p.117.
- 63 ibid., p.120.
- 64 Adam Øhlenslaeger, Digte, 1803 (1966), p.74
- 65 It is a point of difference between romanticism in Germany and in Denmark that whereas the Germans looked back to the christian Middle Ages the Danes looked to the pre-christian era of nordic culture. Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, Steffens' cousin, attempted a fusion of elements of norse mythology with Christianity, cf. Edgar L. Allen, Bishop Grundtvig: Prophet of the North (1950), pp. 39-53.
- 66 Richard M. Summers, 'A Study of Kierkegaard's Philosophical Development up to Om Begrebet Ironi.' (London Univ. Ph.D. thesis, 1980), p.55.
- 67 cf. Niels Thulstrup, Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel (E. Tr. 1980), pp. 150-154.
- 68 Jens Himmelstrup, Sibbern (1934) pp. 258ff.
- 69 Summers, op.cit., p.48.
- 70 Henning Fenger, Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins (E. tr. 1980), p.113.
- 71 ibid., p.84
- 72 Frederik C. Sibbern, Om Poesie og Konst, Bd. 1 (1834), pp. 4f.
- 73 ibid., p.11

- 74 Frederick C. Sibbern, Om Poesie og Konst, Bd. 1 (1834), p.18.
- 75 ibid., p.29.
- 76 ibid., p.33.
- 77 ibid., p.30.
- 78 ibid., p.46.
- 79 ibid., p.52.
- 80 ibid., p.86.
- 81 ibid., p.218.
- 82 ibid., p.220.
- 83 ibid., pp. 255ff.
- 84 idem., Efterladte Breve af Gabrielis (1968), p.111.
- 85 Eggert C. Tryde, 'Om Poesie og Konst' ... F. C. Sibbern (rec.)
Maanedskrift for Literatur (13) (1835), pp. 191ff.

Chapter Three: Hegelianism

- 1 cf. entries no. 2234 - 2313 under the heading 'Hegel' in François H. Lapointe, Søren Kierkegaard and His Critics: An International Bibliography(1980), pp. 232ff. A 'classic' presentation of the relationship of the two thinkers is in a broad historical/philosophical perspective in Karl Löwith, From Hegel to Nietzsche (1964), especially ch. III. Of particular relevance to the present enquiry is the debate between Niels Thulstrup and Henning Fenger, cf. Thulstrup, Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel and Fenger, Kierkegaard, The Myths and their Origins.
- 2 George W. F. Hegel, Phenomenology of the Spirit (E. tr. pb. 1979). p.7.
- 3 ibid., p.49
- 4 This is the task set by the Phenomenology and is set out in the 'Preface: On Scientific Cognition.'
- 5 This pattern is established in the first chapter of the Phenomenology. Hegel, Phenomenology, pp. 58-66; cf. Quentin Lauer, A Reading of Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit (1976), pp. 41-52; Richard Norman, Hegel's Phenomenology: A Philosophical Introduction (1976), pp. 29-45; Wolfgang Wieland, 'Hegels Dialektik der sinnlichen Gewissheit' in Hans Friedrich Fulda and Dieter Henrich (eds.), Materialien zu Hegels "Phänomenologie des Geistes" (1973), pp. 67-82.
- 6 Hegel, Philosophy of Right (E. tr. pb. 1967), p.13.
- 7 cf. p. 49 below

- 8 cf. p. 274 below.
- 9 Hegel, Phenomenology, p.6.
- 10 For Hegel's conception of Logic cf. Hegel, Science of Logic (E. tr. 1969), pp. 43-59); Hegel, Logic (E. tr. 1975) pp. 25-46. These are actually distinct works, the latter being part of Hegel's Encyclopädie der Philosophischen Wissenschaften (cf. n. 36) and sometimes known as the 'Lesser Logic.'
- 11 Hegel, Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Art (E. tr. 1975), pp. 30-31.
- 12 ibid., p.29.
- 13 ibid., p.38.
- 14 ibid., p.55. This is a modification of Hegel's earlier polemical position that art 'is only an intended infinity ... not true representation ... Beauty is the veil that conceals the truth, rather than what presents it.' Quoted by George Lukacs, The Young Hegel (E. tr. 1975) p.430.
- 15 Hegel, Aesthetics, p.304.
- 16 Carl J. Friedrich (ed.) The Philosophy of Hegel (1953-4), p. 337.
- 17 Hegel, Aesthetics, p.361.
- 18 ibid., p.433.
- 19 ibid., p.157.
- 20 Friedrich Schiller, quoted in Hegel, Aesthetics, p.508.
- 21 Friedrich (ed.), The Philosophy of Hegel, p.356.
- 22 Hegel, Phenomenology, p.439.
- 23 ibid., pp. 440-1 (adapted).
- 24 ibid., p.444.
- 25 ibid., p.450.
- 26 ibid., pp. 453ff.
- 27 Hegel, Aesthetics, p.527.
- 28 ibid., p.525.
- 29 ibid., p.89.
- 30 ibid., p.101.
- 31 ibid., p.103.
- 32 ibid., p.11.

- 33 Hegel, Aesthetics, pp. 9-10.
- 34 ibid., p.11.
- 35 ibid., p.976
- 36 For Hegel's understanding of language and imagination cf. Hegel, Encyclopädie der Philosophischen Wissenschaften, 5th ed.(1949), pp. 377-400. Also Daniel J. Cook, Language in the Philosophy of Hegel (1973), pp. 101-121.
- 37 Hegel, Aesthetics, p.1037.
- 38 ibid., p.1038.
- 39 ibid., p.1113.
- 40 ibid., p.1203.
- 41 Hegel, Philosophy of Right, p.10.
- 42 Hegel, Aesthetics, p.1123.
- 43 Thulstrup, Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel, p.16.
- 44 ibid., p.18, n.7. Also Uffe Andreasen, Poul Møller og Romantismen (1973), pp. 15f.
- 45 Johann Ludvig Heiberg, Om Menneskelige Frihed (1824), p.25.
- 46 ibid.
- 47 ibid., pp. 26f.
- 48 ibid., p.33.
- 49 ibid., p.4.
- 50 J. L. Heiberg, Om Philosophiens Betydning for den nuvaerende Tid (1833).
- 51 ibid., p.20.
- 52 ibid., p.29
- 53 J. L. Heiberg, Grundtraek til Philosophiens Philosophie eller den Speculative Logik (1832).
- 54 The 'Lesser Logic' is the name given to the section on Logic in the Encyclopädie,(cf. n.36) rather than the separately published Science of Logic, cf. n.10 above.
- 55 Heiberg, Philosophiens Philosophie, p.3.
- 56 ibid., p.4.
- 57 ibid., p.6.
- 58 ibid.

- 59 Heiberg, Philosophiens Philosophie, p.7.
- 60 ibid., p.84.
- 61 Re-published, together with other aesthetic pieces, in J. L. Heiberg Om Vaudeville (1968).
- 62 ibid., pp. 25-6.
- 63 ibid., pp. 28-9.
- 64 ibid., p.35.
- 65 ibid., p.36.
- 66 ibid.
- 67 ibid., p.41.
- 68 ibid., p.43.
- 69 cf. George Pattison, 'Søren Kierkegaard: A Theatre Critic of the Heiberg School', British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol. 23, no. 1, Winter, 1983, 25-33. cf. also ch. 7 (A), p.187 below.
- 70 Heiberg, Om Vaudeville, p.32.
- 71 ibid., pp. 13-14.
- 72 Dan. Vaeringerne i Miklagaard.
- 73 Heiberg, Om Vaudeville, p.115.
- 74 ibid., p.118.
- 75 cf. Paul V. Rubow, Heiberg, og hans Skole i Kritiken (1953), p.46.
- 76 Heiberg, Om Vaudeville, p.130.
- 77 ibid., p.131.
- 78 ibid., p.141.
- 79 ibid., p.142.
- 80 ibid., p.165.
- 81 ibid.
- 82 ibid., p.134.
- 83 P. M. Mitchell, op.cit., p.135.
- 84 Kierkegaard, Letters and Documents (E. tr. 1978), p.193.
- 85 cf. ch. 5 (D), pp. 121ff. below.
- 86 Paul V. Rubow, Heiberg, p.42.

- 87 Albeck, Friis, Rohde, Dansk Litteratur Historie, p.467.
- 88 Heiberg, Poetiske Skrifter, Bd. 2 (1862), pp. 93-226.
Further references to this play are by act and scene numbers in the text.
- 89 cf. n.41 above.
- 90 References are to Heiberg, En Sjael Efter Døden, 6th ed. (1963).
- 91 ibid., p.18.
- 92 ibid.
- 93 ibid., p.19.
- 94 ibid., p., 36.
- 95 ibid., p.38.
- 96 Heiberg, Om Philosophiens Betydning, p.41.
- 97 Heiberg, En Sjael, p.48.
- 98 ibid., pp. 49-50.
- 99 ibid., p.61.
- 100 ibid., p.63.
- 101 ibid., p.56.
- 102 ibid., p.71.
- 103 Hegel, Aesthetics, p.18.
- 104 cf. pp. 47 above; pp. 52-4 above.
- 105 Heiberg, Om Vaudeville, p.134.
- 106 For the relation of Brandes and Heiberg, cf. Hakon Stangerup in Hakon Stangerup and F. J. Billeskov Jansen, Dansk Litteratur Historie, Bd. 3 (1966), pp. 19-20.
- 107 Hans Lassen Martensen, 'Betragtninger over Ideen af Faust' in Perseus, Journal for den Speculative Idee, June 1837, 92-164.
- 108 ibid., p.96.
- 109 ibid., p.97.
- 110 ibid., p.98.
- 111 ibid., p.101.
- 112 ibid.
- 113 ibid., p.102.

- 114 Hans Lassen Martensen, 'Betragtninger over Ideen af Faust' in Perseus, Journal for den Speculative Idee, June 1837, p,103.
- 115 ibid., p.107.
- 116 ibid., p.108.
- 117 ibid., p.109.
- 118 ibid., p.111..
- 119 ibid.
- 120 ibid., p.112.
- 121 ibid., pp. 116ff.
- 122 ibid., p.124.
- 123 ibid., pp. 163-4.
- 124 H. L. Martensen, 'Fata Morgana af J. L. Heiberg' (rec.) in Maanedskrift for Literatur, (19) 1838, p.362.
- 125 ibid., p.361.
- 126 ibid., p.367.
- 127 ibid., pp. 367-8.
- 128 ibid., p.372.
- 129 ibid., pp. 372-3.
- 130 ibid., pp. 374f.
- 131 ibid., pp .. 375f.
- 132 ibid., p.386.
- 133 ibid., p.381.
- 134 ibid., p.385.
- 135 ibid., p.388.
- 136 ibid., p.395.
- 137 H. L. Martensen 'Nye Digte af J. L. Heiberg' (rec.) in Faedrelandet, 10.1, 11.1, 1841. The following references are all taken from the issue of 10.1.
- 138 Martensen, Faedrelandet, 11.1. 1841.
- 139 E. Tryde 'Nye Digte af J. L. Heiberg' (rec.) in Tidskrift for Literatur og Kritik, 1841.
- 140 ibid., p.192.

- 141 E. Tryde 'Nye Digte af J. L. Heiberg' (rec.) in Tidskrift for Literatur og Kritik, 1841, pp. 186-7.

Chapter Four: Beyond Idealism

- 1 Summers, op.cit., p.56
- 2 Uffe Andreasen, Poul Møller og Romantismen, p.9.
- 3 idem., Romantismen 1824-40 (1974). p.18
- 4 George Gordon, Lord Byron, Poetical Works (1970), pp. 635ff.
- 5 cf. Heinrich Heine, Die Romantische Schule.
- 6 cf. Werner Kohlschmidt, Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur IV (1975), pp. 13f.
- 7 cf. pp. 29-33 above.
- 8 cf. Ch. 2, n.33.
- 9 cf. Andreasen, Poul Møller og Romantismen.
- 10 Poul Møller, 'Om Muligheden af Beviser for Menneskets Udødelighed' in Efterladte Skrifter, 3rd ed., Vol.5, pp. 99ff.
- 11 idem., 'Recension af Sibberns Aesthetik', Efterladte Skrifter, Vol. 5, p.213.
- 12 ibid., pp. 204-5
- 13 cf. n. 10. It was originally published in Maanedskrift for Literatur (17) 1837, 1-72; 422-53.
- 14 Møller, Efterladte Skrifter, 5, pp. 55ff. cf. Kierkegaard Papirer II A 17/5201.
- 15 Møller, Efterladte Skrifter 5, pp. 43ff.
- 16 ibid., pp. 60ff.
- 17 ibid., p.66.
- 18 ibid.
- 19 ibid., p.67
- 20 ibid., p.69
- 21 The christian tradition by itself constitutes only one of the three parts of the world-view: the synthesis of these parts in the 'higher experience' is a decisive moment.

- 22 cf. Vilhelm Andersen, Poul Møller (1944). p.374.
- 23 Møller, 'Recension af "Nye Fortaেলinger af Forfatteren til en Hverdagshistorie,"' in Efterladte Skrifter 6, pp. 46-75.
- 24 Thomasine Gyllembourg-Ehrensward, Extremerne in Samlede Skrifter, 3rd ed., Bd. 5 (1884), p.192.
- 25 ibid., pp. 195-6.
- 26 ibid., pp. 278-9.
- 27 Møller, Efterladte Skrifter 5, pp. 69-70.
- 28 ibid., pp. 87f.
- 29 ibid., pp. 88f.
- 30 ibid., pp. 94f.
- 31 ibid., pp. 97f.
- 32 ibid., pp. 90-1.
- 33 idem., 'Recension af "Nye Fortaেলinger."' Efterladte Skrifter, 6, pp. 67-8.
- 34 ibid., p.58.
- 35 Møller, Efterladte Skrifter 5, p.41.
- 36 cf. Ernst Jünger, Ueber die Linie Werke 5, pp. 245-289; Martin Heidegger, The Question of Being (E. tr. 1958) This is a 'reply' to Jünger.
- 37 Møller, 'Om Begrebet Ironie' in Efterladte Skrifter 3, p.152.
- 38 A summary of the main arguments is found in W. Glyn Jones, 'Søren Kierkegaard and Poul Martin Møller' Modern Language Review (60) 1965, pp. 80-1.
- 39 Møller, 'Ahasverus' in Efterladte Skrifter 3, p.160.
- 40 ibid.
- 41 idem., 'Digte' in Efterladte Skrifter 1, p.122.
- 42 ibid., p.134

Chapter Five: Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Art in Context.

- 1 Gerhard Niedermeyer, Søren Kierkegaard und die Romantik, (1909), p.28.
- 2 For the 'fascinating' quality of Kierkegaard's work and its dangers, cf. Adorno, Kierkegaard, pp. 22ff.; Nelly Viallaneix,

- Écoute, Kierkegaard, p.7.
- 3 cf. ch. 2 (A) (i) pp. 23f.; ch. 3 (A) pp. 43ff. above.
- 4 In his notes to Kierkegaard, Gesammelte Werke Bd. II, p.437.
- 5 cf. Papirer I A 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 19, 20, 21, 22. Also entries under 'Predestination' in Hong and Hong (eds.) Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers, vol.3.
- 6 cf. Papirer VIII i A 465/2463.
- 7 Sartre, Being and Nothingness, pp. 626ff.
- 8 This aspect of Kierkegaard's thought is the central theme of Knud Hansen, Søren Kierkegaard, Ideens Digter (1954)
- 9 Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol. II (1968) p.69.
- 10 cf. Kierkegaard's Edifying Discourse 'The Thorn in the Flesh,' SV 4 pp. 290-306.
- 11 e.g. in The Sickness Unto Death 'This namely is the formula, which describes the condition of the self, when despair is quite uprooted: that it relates itself to itself and in willing to be itself, the self is grounded transparently in the power that posits it.' SV 15, p.174 cf. ibid., pp. 88, 105, 136,152, 180.
- 12 cf. Ch. 2, n.7 above.
- 13 For the phenomenological concept of intentionality cf. Maurice Natanson, Edmund Husserl (1973), pp. 84-104.
- 14 J. Fr. Hagen in Faedrelandet 21.5 1843, p.9958
- 15 cf. W. Glyn Jones, op.cit. pp. 73ff.
- 16 cf. Ch. 7 (C) pp. 202ff. below, esp. p. 203, pp. 220-221 below.
- 17 cf. Hagen, op.cit. pp. 9846ff.; H. P. Koefod-Hansen in For Literatur og Kritik 1843, pp. 377-405; Kts. (=Bishop J. P. Mynster) 'Kirkelig Polemik' in J. L. Heiberg (ed.), Intelligensblade 41-42, 1844, pp. 105ff.
- 18 Thulstrup, Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel, p.12.
- 19 Stephen Crites 'Introduction' to Kierkegaard (tr. Crites) The Crisis and A Crisis in the Life of an Actress (1967), p.19.
- 20 ibid.
- 21 Fenger, Kierkegaard: The Myths and their Origins, p.42.
- 22 These articles are not printed in the 3rd ed. of Kierkegaard's Samlede Vaerker, but may be found in the 2nd ed. XIII pp. 11-44 cf. n.23 below.
- 23 Teddy Pettersen, Kierkegaards Polemiske Debut (1977), p.112.

- 24 cf. Kierkegaard, Papirer I B 7.
- 25 cf. Pettersen, op.cit. p. 134; Kierkegaard, Papirer I B 6.
- 26 These are namely Krisen og en Krise i en Skuespillerindes Liv and En Literaer Anmeldelse, both in SV 14. cf. Kierkegaard, Letters and Documents, pp. 191ff., 389f. and 435.
- 27 Frithiof Brandt, Den Unge Søren Kierkegaard, p.126.
- 28 cf. p. 60 above.
- 29 This was entitled 'Striden mellem den gamle og den nye Saebek-ielder', cf. Papirer II B 1-12.
- 30 F. C. Sibbern, 'Heiberg's Perseus' in Maanedskrift for Literatur (19) 1838, p.290.
- 31 ibid., p.293.
- 32 J. L. Heiberg 'Litteraer Vintersaed' in Heiberg (ed.) Intelligensblade (24) 1.3.1843.
- 33 idem., 'Det Astronomiske Aar' in Heiberg (ed.) "Urania" Aarbog for 1844, pp. 96ff.
- 34 cf. pp. 59-60 above.
- 35 August Vetter, Frommigkeit als Leidenschaft, 2nd ed. (1963), p.102.
- 36 Walther Rehm, Kierkegaard und der Verführer (1949), p.10.
- 37 cf. pp. 14-15 above.
- 38 Jean Wahl, Études Kierkegaardienes (1949), p.92.
- 39 For the pietistic influence on Kierkegaard cf. Maria M. Thulstrup, Kierkegaard og Pietismen (1967).

Chapter Six: The Theory and Critique of Art in the Early Papirer

- 1 cf. pp. 11ff. above.
- 2 Nelly Viallaneix, 'Kierkegaard Romantique', Romantisme (8) 1974, p.64.
- 3 Søren Holm, 'The Nineteenth Century' in N. and M. M. Thulstrup (eds.), Kierkegaard and Human Values: Biblioteca Kierkegaardiana 7 (1980), p.15.
- 4 ibid., p.16.
- 5 Gerhard vom Hofe, Die Romantikkritik Søren Kierkegaards (1972), p.2.
- 6 cf. pp. 121-122 above.

- 7 R. M. Summers, op.cit., p.149.
- 8 vom Hofe, op.cit., p.3.
- 9 ibid., p.86.
- 10 cf. Hong and Hong (eds.), Søren Kierkegaards Journals and Papers Vol 2, entries 1539-1560; also section (D) (iv) pp.168ff. below.
- 11 Emanuel Hirsch in Kierkegaard, Gesammelte Werke, Bd. 30 (1960) pp.XVIff., p. 113.
- 12 Brandt, Den Unge Soren Kierkegaard, pp. 431ff. Walter Lowrie Kierkegaard, Vol 1 (1962), pp. 147f.
- 13 cf. the discussion by R. M. Summers of the Gilleleie-Journal, another paradigmatic case, Summers op.cit., pp. 114ff.
- 14 Fenger, op.cit., pp. 110ff., 123ff., 173ff. The last two references draw attention to the influence of St. St. Blicher on Kierkegaard's style.
- 15 ibid., pp. 47ff. though in a sense this is the theme of the whole book - that nothing can be taken for granted when dealing with the Papirer. For a statement of Brandes' principles, cf. Mitchell, op.cit., pp. 173-8, also Hakon Stangerup in Hakon Stangerup and F. J. Billeskov Jansen, Dansk Litteratur Historie Bd. 3 (1966), pp. 11-57.
- 16 P. A. Heiberg and V. Kuhr, 'Fortale', Søren Kierkegaards Papirer I, pp. xv-xvi.
- 17 Lowrie, op.cit., pp. 77-8.
- 18 Summers, op.cit., p.157.
- 19 cf. section (D) (iii), pp. 166 below.
- 20 vom Hofe, op.cit., pp. 5-6.
- 21 cf. p.73 above.
- 22 T. M. Knox, 'Introduction' Hegel, Aesthetics, p.5 v.
- 23 cf. ch 7 below.
- 24 cf. pp. 48-49 above, and ch. 3, n.23.
- 25 cf. Papirer I A 2/1302; I A 7/1231.
- 26 cf. Steffen's concept of Premonition, ch. 2 (B) (i), pp. 35-36 above.
- 27- cf. p.44 above
- 28 Hong and Hong, Journals and Papers give only a small extract from this entry.

- 29 cf. pp. 79-80 above.
- 30 cf. II A 679/5288.
- 31 cf. p. 52 above.
- 32 cf. Friedrich Schlegel, Lucinde (1963), pp. 31ff.
- 33 cf. n.2 above.
- 34 cf. n. 16 above.
- 35 cf. pp. 145-146 above.
- 36 The 'idea' of the Jew, if not the name, is present in Byron's poems 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' 'Manfred', and 'Cain', cf. Charles Maturin, Melmoth the Wanderer (1820).
- 37 I A 11- 18/5061-2, 5072-6, 5081.
- 38 cf. 'De uniddelbare erotiske Stadier eller det Musicalsk-Erotiske' in SV 2, esp. pp. 72ff.
- 39 cf. Hegel, Phenomenology, pp. 119-138.
- 40 cf. p.79 above.
- 41 cf. p. 51 above.
- 42 cf. I A 200/3805; I A 239/3813; II A 661/765. Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844) was an outstanding danish sculptor, who after many years' sojourn in Rome, returned to Copenhagen in 1838, where he made a great impact with his neo-classical sculptures. These included a series of biblical figures for Vor Frue Kirke, where Kierkegaard both worshipped and preached.
- 43 cf. Vincent McCarthy The Phenomenology of Moods in Kierkegaard (1978), pp. 55ff.
- 44 cf. ch. 4, n.39.
- 45 Ecclesiastes I,2; I,8.
- 46 J. G. Hamann, quoted by Ronald Gregor Smith, 'Hamann and Kierkegaard' in Zeit und Geschichte. Dankesgabe an Rudolf Bultmann zum 80e Geburtstag (1964), p.675.
- 47 ibid., p.679.
- 48 cf. T. M. Knox, 'Translator's Foreword,' Hegel, Philosophy of Right, pp. ix-x, also 'Glossary' to Karl Marx, Early Writings (1975), p.432
- 49 For Aristotle cf. IV C, esp. IV C 47, 48, 80; V C 10, 11, 12. For Lessing, cf. V C 1, 7.
- 50 cf. pp. 39-40 above.
- 51 For Aristotle's original definition cf. Aristotle (ed. Moxon)

Poetics (1943), p.14. For Lessing's commentary, cf. Gott-
hold Ephraim Lessing, 'Briefe von Lessing', Sämtliche Werke
Bd. 10 (1874), pp. 246-279; 'Hamburgische Dramaturgie',
Sämtliche Werke, Bd. 6, esp. pp. 335ff.

- 52 cf. sect. (B), pp. 150f. above.
- 53 IV C 117/4833. Kierkegaard cites Boethius in Latin. The
english tr. here is from Boethius (tr. Watts), The Consolat-
ation of Philosophy (1969), p.36.
- 54 cf. III C 31, 33, 34.
- 55 cf. p.175 above.

Chapter Seven: Kierkegaard as Critic

- 1 cf. SV 18, p.85.
- 2 This is the general theme of Synpunktet for min Forfatter-
Virksomhed, SV 18, pp. 79-145.
- 3 ibid., p.85.
- 4 ibid., p.95.
- 5 SV 5, pp. 75ff. This passage has been reflectively neglect-
ed in favour of the discussion of the teleological suspens-
ion of the ethical in the same work.
- 6 cf. pp. 246-247 below.
- 7 cf. SV 18, pp. 85ff.
- 8 cf. X i A 377/6410; X iii A 678/6709.
- 9 Paul V. Rubow, Dansk Litteraturkritik i den nittende Aarhund-
rede, 2nd ed. (1970), p.193.
- 10 Merete Jørgensen, Kierkegaard som Kritiker (1978)
- 11 ibid., pp. 11; 168ff. cf. Kierkegaard SV 7, pp. 118-9.
- 12 Jørgensen, op.cit., pp. 209ff.
- 13 ibid., p.210.
- 14 ibid., p.26.
- 15 ibid., p.133.
- 16 cf. sec. (C) (i), pp. 202-203 below.
- 17 Papirer I B 2/5116, p. 53 in Hong and Hong, Journals and
Papers, Vol.5. It is perhaps worth noting that this heiberg-
ian statement stands in the context of a speech on political

journalism which is closely connected with Kierkegaard's pro-Heiberg, anti-liberal journalistic debut.

- 18 cf. ch. 6 (C) pp. 152ff. above.
- 19 cf. p.160 above.
- 20 Billeskov Jansen, Søren Kierkegaards Literære Kunst, p.33.
- 21 Kierkegaard 'En flygtig Bemaerkning betraeffende en Enkelthed i Don Juan' in Fædrelandets Feuilleton 19.-20. May 1845, Nr. 1890-1. cf. idem., SV 18, pp. 51-8
- 22 Heiberg, 'Litterær Vintersæd' Intelligensblade 1.3.1843, p.290.
- 23 cf. SV 9, pp. 154ff. Papirer I A 63/5094.
- 24 cf. pp. 49-50 above.
- 25 cf. Sibbern, Om Poesie og Kunst, pp. 27ff.
- 26 John Hospers in Sidney Hook (ed.) Art and Philosophy (1966), p.129.
- 27 cf. p. 144 above.
- 28 cf. Schlegel's pronouncement on the French Revolution, Fichte's Science of Knowledge and Goethe's Meister, p.25 above.
- 29 cf. p. 97 above.
- 30 Billeskov Jansen, op.cit., p.11.
- 31 cf. pp 93ff. above.
- 32 cf. Anna Paulsen 'Kierkegaard in seinem Verhältnis zur deutschen Romantik' Kierkegaardiana (3)(1959) p.39.
- 33 Kierkegaard SV11, p.293 referring to Joseph von Eichendorff's novel Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts.
- 34 Schlegel, Lucinde, p.7.
- 35 ibid., p.8.
- 36 cf. pp. 157ff. above.
- 37 Kierkegaard, (tr. Dru and Lowrie) The Present Age (1940).
- 38 Jørgensen, op.cit., pp. 131ff.
- 39 cf. ch. 10, pp. 305ff. below.
- 40 cf. pp. 47ff. above.
- 41 cf. p. 100 above.
- 42 cf. p. 158 above.

Chapter Eight: Kierkegaard's Novels (1)

- 1 Billeskov Jansen, op.cit., p.22f.
- 2 Mackey, Kierkegaard - a Kind of Poet, p.274.
- 3 Carl Roos, Kierkegaard og Goethe (1955), p.55.
- 4 Henriksen, Kierkegaard's Romaner, p.8.
- 5 ibid.
- 6 ibid., pp. 181ff.
- 7 ibid., p.9.
- 8 cf. ch. 2, n. 70 above.
- 9 Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy (E. tr. 1956), p.88.
- 10 Henriksen, op.cit. pp.125-6.
- 11 e.g. Thust, op.cit. pp. 194ff.
- 12 Henriksen, op.cit., p.8.
- 13 cf. SV 18, pp. 104ff.
- 14 Brandes, Den Romantiske Skole, pp. 331ff.
- 15 Billeskov Jansen, op.cit., p.23.
- 16 cf. Lars Bejerholm, 'Anonymity and Pseudonymity' in N. and M. M. Thulstrup (ed.), Biblioteca Kierkegaardiana 9:Kierkegaard: A Literary Miscellany (1982), pp. 18-23
- 17 SV 18, p.90.
- 18 SV 2, pp. 14f.
- 19 cf. Papirer V B 155-192
- 20 Johann W. von Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship (E. tr. 1888) pp. 69-123.
- 21 Hoffmann, The Novel, p.6.
- 22 Brandes, Den Romantiske Skole, p.331.
- 23 Schlegel, Kritische Schriften, p.325.
- 24 cf. p.27 above.
- 25 Pierre Mesnard, Le Vrai Visage de Kierkegaard (1948), p.264.
- 26 cf. pp. 12-13 above.

- 27 Kierkegaard (tr. F. et O. Prior et M.-H. Giugol) Le Journal du Séducteur (1969); Myfanwy Piper, The Seducer (1958).
- 28 J. Fr. Hagen, Fædrelandet 7.5.1843, p.9846.
- 29 anon. Forposten (11) 12.3.43, pp. 42-3.
- 30 cf. pp. 200-201 above.
- 31 cf. pp. 44-45 above.
- 32 Against such an interpretation as that offered in Josiah Thompson, The Lonely Labyrinth (1967), p.13. cf. Mesnard, op.cit., p.265.
- 33 cf. pp. 200-201 above.
- 34 cf. pp. 305 below.
- 35 W. Glyn Jones, op.cit., pp. 79-80 for a resumé of the discussion.
- 36 cf. Alastair Mackinnon, Konkordans til Kierkegaards Samlede Vaerker (1971) and idem., Index Verborum til Kierkegaards Samlede Vaerker (1973) being The Kierkegaard Indices, Vols 2 and 3 cf. entries for Anskuelse, Livsanskuelse/r.
- 37 Friedrich Schelermacher, Vertraute Briefe über Friedrich Schlegels Lucinde in Sämmtliche Werke (1846) 3/i, p.477.
- 38 ibid., p.473.
- 39 cf. p. 215 above cf. Jørgensen, op.cit., pp. 131ff.

Chapter Nine: Kierkegaard's Novels (2)

- 1 Henriksen, op.cit., p.87.
- 2 ibid., p.124.
- 3 ibid.
- 4 cf. ibid., pp. 126ff. for a full review of the evidence.
- 5 Quoted by Henriksen, op.cit., p.130.
- 6 ibid., pp. 130-1.
- 7 -v. (anon.) in For Literatur og Kritik, 1844 Bd. II, pp. 382-383.
- 8 J. L. Heiberg, 'Det Astronomiske Aar' in Heiberg (ed.) Urania Aarbog for 1844. The relevant passage is to be found on pp. 96ff.
- 9 cf. pp. 196-7 above.

- 10 Heiberg, Urania, pp. 96-8.
- 11 cf. Papirer IV C 47/258; IV C 80/260.
- 12 cf. p. 57 above.
- 13 It is interesting to compare Kierkegaard's attitude to that of P. M. Møller; cf. Møller, 'Qvindelighed' in Efterladte Skrifter 5, pp. 5-13. Møller's comment on Gabriele, the heroine of Madame Gyllembourg, Extremerne, is significant in its assumptions; 'Uagtet hun besidder Talenter og Dannelse, har hun dog bevaret en reflexionsfri Uskyldighed.' Efterladte Skrifter 6, p. 72. Kierkegaard's understanding of woman is testified to at many points in the authorship, but perhaps most notably in In Vino Veritas, where the theme of most of the talks at the banquet are 'woman', and in the Assessor's 'Observations on Marriage' which follows, and which is as much about 'woman' as it is about marriage. cf. SV 7. There are also various entries in the Papirer which contain much of interest on the same topic, cf. Entries for 'Woman/Man' in Hong and Hong, Journals and Papers, 4, pp. 572-585.
- 14 cf. SV 2, p. 396, Papirer II A 154/5248. cf. Viallaneix, Ecoute, Kierkegaard, pp. 65-87.
- 15 cf. I C 124/5192.
- 16 Henriksen, op.cit. pp. 125f.
- 17 cf. James I, 17-21; Kierkegaard's use of this text is reflected in various discourses, e.g. SV 4, pp. 35-40; SV 19, pp. 249-266.
- 18 cf. Papirer V B 97-192, also the editorial introduction, Papirer V, pp. IX-X.
- 19 cf. Hirsch, Kierkegaard-Studien, 154/282ff.
- 20 Henriksen, op.cit., pp. 173ff.
- 21 cf. pp. 230-231 above.
- 22 N. H. Sjøe, 'Der Quidam des Experiments als religiöser Typus' Orbis Litterarum (20) 1955, 259-267.
- 23 The question of the historicity of faith is central to both the Fragments and the Postscript, however the nub of the argument can be found expressed in, e.g. SV 6, pp. 79-80; SV 9, pp. 80-91.
- 24 Kierkegaard's use of Lessing at this point is really rather remarkable, since the whole thrust of Lessing's argument seems to be in the opposite direction, i.e. towards a separation of the tragic and the historical. Against Voltaire's criticism of Corneille's play Essex, a criticism directed against the play's gross historical inaccuracies, Lessing replied '... die Geschichte ist für die Tragödie nichts, als ein Repertorium von Namen, mit denen wir gewisse Charaktere zu verbinden gewohnt sind.' Lessing, Sämtliche Werke 6,

- p.112. Indeed he stresses that Aristotle makes no distinction between tragedy and comedy as regards universality, that is, in Kierkegaard's terms, their ideal character, Lessing says '... alle Personen der poetischen Nachahmung ohne Unterschied sollen sprechen und handeln, nicht wie es ihnen einzig und allein zukommen könnte, sondern so wie ein jeder von ihrer Beschaffenheit in den nämlichen Umständen sprechen oder handeln würde und müsste. In diesem *καθολου*, in dieser Allgemeinheit liegt allein der Grund, warum die Poesie philosophischer und folglich lehrreicher ist als die Geschichte.' ibid., p.400. The only distinction is that the association of name and idea in comedy is provided by the etymological associations of the name, whereas in tragedy the link is established by playing on the association of the historical personality with a distinct idea or situation.
- 25 cf. p. 150 above, also pp. 312-313 below.
- 26 cf. p.248ff. The principle is enunciated by Ludwig Börne, whom Kierkegaard cites in this context, as '... es dürfe kein tragisches Geschick in einer Krankheit des Leidensheldens seine Quelle haben.' Börne, Werke II, p.424. Börne's discussion of the question is not as inhuman as Kierkegaard makes it appear by his reference (SV 8, p.253) to Börne's question '... Was kümmert uns ein Jammer, der durch Blindheit veranlasst wird! Wir haben unsere guten Augen, wir sehen umher, uns kann so etwas nicht erreichen.' Börne, op. cit., p.409. The point Börne is making is that a dramatist should not use merely physical suffering to arouse an interest in the audience which the dramatic structure itself does not justify. His comments are specifically directed against the play, Freiherr v. Houwald, Das Bild.
- 27 cf. pp. 176-177 above.
- 28 The discussion of self-inflicted suffering is related by Kierkegaard to Terence's play Heautontimorumenos, but given the overall relation of the section as a whole to Lessing, Hamburgische Dramaturgie it is likely that the use of this example was inspired by Lessing's discussion of the question (Sämtliche Werke 6, pp. 391ff.) rather than by a direct reading of Terence's original, though this is not to **say** that Kierkegaard did not otherwise know that.
29. Mesnard, op.cit., p.265.
- 30 cf. Sartre Being and Nothingness, pp. 557ff.
- 31 The reading of the book in the light of Kierkegaard's private life is exemplified in Walter Lowrie, who writes that 'Quidam's Diary is in every detail the story of S.K.'s unhappy love,' in the introduction to his translation of Stages on Life's Way, p.13. This perspective undoubtedly contributes to his dissatisfaction with it '... I heartily wish S.K. had never written this Diary ...' (ibid.) Similarly Knud Hansen's comment that 'Despite Quidam's willingness to talk about himself and about his personal feelings and aspirations, his speech is merely a perpetual monologue ... It is as if he found himself in a locked room from which

basically he does not want to get out,' (Hansen, Søren Kierkegaard, Ideens Digter, p. 227) is not necessarily a criticism, though it is intended as such by him, for if the interpretation of the Diary offered here is correct, then we should not expect to be able to feel aesthetic sympathy for the hero. If we do expect to experience such sympathy we will be disappointed, for as one of the first reviewers observed, 'Here one meets a masculine individual who has lost everything that constitutes personality. Feeling, understanding, will, resolution, action, backbone, nerve, and muscle power - all are dissolved in a dialectic, a barren dialectic.' (P. L. Møller, 'A Visit in Sorø' in Kierkegaard, The Corsair Affair (E. tr. 1982), p.101) Nonetheless it must be acknowledged that the Diary is far from being easy reading, even when one has once put aside both the aesthetic and the biographically-curious attitudes.

32 Hirsch, Kierkegaard-Studien, p. 226-98.

Chapter Ten: Conclusions

- 1 cf. Hegel, Encyclopædie; Karl Rosenkranz Psychologie (1st ed. 1838, 2nd altered ed. 1843).
- 2 cf. ch. 1, n. 8. Also cf. Adorno, Kierkegaard, p. 28 for the distinction between these two senses of 'aesthetic'. Adorno however sees relatively little connection between them. ibid., pp. 28ff.
- 3 cf. SV 6, 9, 10, 16.
- 4 cf. SV 18, pp. 93ff.
- 5 ibid., p. 90, cf. Mesnard, op.cit., p. 418: 'Il est donc tout à fait incroyable que la production esthétique ait déjà eu un but apologétique conscient ...'
- 6 cf., e.g. p. 201 above.
- 7 cf. ch. 7 (C), pp. 202ff. above.
- 9 cf. p. 297 above.
- 10 cf. James Collins, The Mind of Kierkegaard (1953), especially the closing pages; Louis Dupré, Kierkegaard as Theologian (1963), esp. pp. 142ff.; Cornelio Fabro, 'Faith and Reason in Kierkegaard's Dialectic' in Howard Johnson and Niels Thulstrup (eds.), A Kierkegaard Critique (1962), and 'Aristotle and Aristotelianism' in Biblioteca Kierkegaardiana 6: Kierkegaard and Great Traditions (1981). A more guarded position is set out in George L. Stengren 'Thomism' also in Biblioteca Kierkegaardiana 6. A negative view is presented by Johannes Sløk in 'En Studie i Kierkegaards Erkendelsesteori' Dansk

- Teologisk Tideskrift (4) 1941, pp. 53ff. Perhaps the most significant Catholic work is Erich Przywara, Das Geheimnis Kierkegaards (1929), being the book that led Karl Barth to the conclusion that if he followed Kierkegaard to the end he would have 'to go over there.'
- 11 Jacques Maritain, Art and Scholasticism (1946), p. 6.
- 12 ibid., p.7.
- 13 cf. Wolfhart Pannenberg, 'Anthropology and The Question of God,' Basic Questions in Theology, Vol. 3 (1973), pp. 84-6, esp. p. 85.
- 14 Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 63. For Schopenhauer cf. Frederick Copleston, Arthur Schopenhauer (1946), pp. 104ff. For Freud's view of art, cf. Max Milner, Freud et l'Interprétation de la Littérature (1980) and n. 17 below.
- 15 The last phrase refers to the title of the second section of Kierkegaard's Christian Discourses, cf. SV 13, pp. 95-152.
- 16 Nikolai F. S. Gruntvig (ed. George Christensen and Hal Koch), Vaerker: Udvalg Bd. 8 (1942), pp. 1 - 3.
- 17 Harold Bloom 'Freud's Concept of Defense and the Poetic Will' in Joseph Smith (ed.), The Literary Freud. Mechanisms of Defense and the Poetic Will (1980), p. 6.
- 18 For Kierkegaard and Ibsen cf. Angelo S. Rappoport, 'Ibsen, Nietzsche, and Kierkegaard' in The New Age 19.9 and 26.9 1908, 408-9; 428-9; Mabel A. Stobart 'New Light on Ibsen's Brand' in Fortnightly Review Vol. 6, 1899, pp. 227-239; Paulus Svendsen, 'Norwegian Literature' in N. and M. M. Thulstrup (eds.) Biblioteca Kierkegaardiana 8: the Legacy and Interpretation of Kierkegaard (1981), pp. 47f. For Kierkegaard and Strindberg cf. Nils Åke Sjøstedt, 'Swedish Literature' in ibid., pp. 9-39. Also cf. references to Kierkegaard in Eric O. Johannesson, The Novels of August Strindberg (1968). For Kierkegaard and Kafka cf. Wolfdietrich von Kloeden, 'Einfluss und Bedeutung im deutsch-sprachigen Denken' in Biblioteca Kierkegaardiana 8, pp. 90-3. For Kierkegaard and Dürrenmatt, ibid., pp. 96f. I do not know of any discussion specifically of the similarity between, e.g. Kierkegaard's and Sartre's 'novels' but there are striking parallels. These however are likely to owe as much to common philosophical presuppositions as to literary dependence in a narrower sense.
- 19 Stanley Cavell, 'Kierkegaard On Authority and Revelation' in Josiah Thompson (ed.), Kierkegaard: A Collection of Critical Essays, p. 383.
- 20 cf. Erik Nielsen, Glo Ikke Så Romantisk (1982) esp. pp. 14ff.
- 21 Hans Kung, Art and the Question of Meaning, p. 12.
- 22 ibid., p. 29.

- 23 Arturo Fallico, Art and Existentialism (1962), p. 83.
- 24 Charles I. Glicksberg 'The Aesthetics of Nihilism' in University of Kansas City Review (27) 1960, p.130.
- 25 R. S. Thomas, 'Balance' in Frequencies (1978), p.49.

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Bibliographical Note

The following Bibliography is divided into nine parts. The main headings are: Kierkegaard, Primary Sources; Kierkegaard, Bibliographical; Contemporary Reviews of Some of Kierkegaard's Works; Kierkegaard, Books; Kierkegaard, Articles; Kierkegaard, Unpublished Theses; Romanticism and the Literary Background; Hegelianism; General.

These are for the most part self-explanatory. It should be noted however that a division between primary and secondary sources is only made in the case of works by, or relating to, Kierkegaard himself. The list of English translations of Kierkegaard's works contains only those works referred to in the text. The order of the list follows the order in which they were written, and largely conforms to the order of the volume numbers in the Danish edition of the Samlede Vaerker. The material under the heading: 'Romanticism and the literary background' includes references to works relevant to Chapter 4 as well as to Chapter 2; that is to say it covers the 'Young Germany' movement and Poul Møller, as well as early romanticism.

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