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Hegel, Kierkegaard and the Danish Debate about Mediation

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Hegel's works on logic played an important role in the reception of his philosophy in Denmark, where the *Science of Logic* found a handful of Danish imitators in the 1830s and 1840s. Beginning in 1831, Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1791-1860) gave lectures on Hegel's speculative logic and published, as a help to his students, his *Outline of the Philosophy of Philosophy or Speculative Logic*, as a kind of handbook.[1] Despite some significant deviations from the original, this work can be fairly characterised as a copy of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, at times bordering on paraphrase. In response to criticisms of Hegel's account of the beginning of philosophy, Heiberg also presented some of this material again in the form of an article entitled 'The System of Logic'. This piece, which he published in his Hegelian journal *Perseus* (Heiberg 1838: 1-45), treats the initial categories of Hegel's logic and tries to defend the notion of philosophy beginning with the categories of being and nothing. There are also extensive critical treatments of different aspects of Hegel's logic in Frederik Christian Sibbern's (1785-1872) *Remarks and Investigations Primarily Concerning Hegel's Philosophy, with Regard to our Age*, published in the same year.[2] Another overt attempt to imitate Hegel's logic can be found in Adolph Peter Adler's (1812-69) *Popular Lectures on Hegel's Objective Logic*, which was published in 1842.[3] This work, which also started as university lectures,[4] treats in highly didactical fashion about the first two-thirds of Hegel's *Science of Logic*. The philosopher Rasmus Nielsen (1809-84) likewise lectured on speculative logic at the University of Copenhagen and published a textbook for his students, *Speculative Logic in its Essentials*, in installments as he progressed through his lectures, as well as a somewhat more independent account entitled *Propaedeutic Logic*.[5]

Given the enormous interest in Hegel's logic in Denmark during this period, it is hardly surprising that this trend attracted the critical eye of Søren Kierkegaard.[6] In various works, he carps repeatedly about different aspects of Hegelian logic. These criticisms often take the form of very brief remarks instead of well-developed analyses. This presents difficult interpretative challenges in identifying whether the target of his critique was actually Hegel himself or one of his Danish imitators, or both. Kierkegaard inveighs against ideas associated with speculative logic such as movement in logic[7] or the presuppositionless beginning.[8] All of this has led most commentators to what they regard as the obvious conclusion that Kierkegaard categorically rejected Hegel's speculative logic and everything that it stood for. One particularly influential commentator was Niels Thulstrup, whose work *Kierkegaards forhold til Hegel og til den spekulative idealisme indtil 1846* was published in Danish in 1967 with German and English translations following

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thereafter.[9] Thulstrup argues that 'Hegel and Kierkegaard have … nothing in common as thinkers', (Thulstrup 1980: 12) and this also goes for their respective dispositions towards speculative logic, which Kierkegaard is portrayed as rejecting point for point. Of special interest in this context is Kierkegaard's well-known polemic against mediation[10] and his apparent disapproval of Hegel's criticism of Aristotle's laws of contradiction and excluded middle.[11] These are also usually taken as unambiguous points on which Kierkegaard is critical of Hegel.[12]

However, the issue is complicated if we take fully into account the extensive debate in Denmark about precisely this issue, which ran from around 1839 through the 1840s.[13] This Danish discussion of Hegel's logic reflected the German and Prussian discussions, but was, in some ways, more specialised. In the German states and Prussia, Hegel had been criticised by philosophers and logicians anxious to defend Aristotle's logic; these included Friedrich Adolf Trendelenburg (1802-72),[14] Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841),[15] and the younger Fichte, i.e., Immanuel Hermann Fichte (1797-1879),[16] as well as Schelling.[17] Some of Hegel's students, such as Karl Friedrich Werder (1806-93),[18] Johann Eduard Erdmann (1805-92), Christian Hermann Weisse (1801-66), and Georg Andreas Gabler (1786-1853),[19] wrote works on speculative logic and defended Hegel against his critics. Of particular importance here is the work of Werder, whose lectures Kierkegaard attended in Berlin.[20] When these debates in Germany and Prussia were taken up in Denmark, logic was originally at issue in the works of figures such as Heiberg and Sibbern. However, very quickly the focus shifted to the issue of mediation and its relevance for key theological issues. This was one of the main bones of contention, especially in the work of religious thinkers such as the Bishop of Zealand Jakob Peter Mynster (1775-1854), the theologian and later Bishop Hans Lassen Martensen (1808-84), the pastor Andreas Ferdinand Schiødte (1816-87), and not least of all Søren Kierkegaard.[21]

In this paper, I wish to re-examine Kierkegaard's assessment of the question of mediation, calling into question the view that he utterly rejected Hegel's criticism of the law of contradiction and excluded middle. I argue that the conceptual structures that Kierkegaard uses and proposes to his reader have the form of speculative concepts in Hegel's sense. To understand what was at stake in this debate, it will be necessary to begin with a brief look at Hegel's criticism of Aristotle's formulation of the basic laws of logic.

I. Hegel's Criticism of the Laws of Classical Logic

I.a. The Law of Identity

Strictly speaking, the law of identity does not stem from Book IV of the *Metaphysics*, where Aristotle discusses the fundamental laws of thought; indeed, it does not appear in Aristotle at all. It has, however, long constituted a part of the tradition of Aristotelian logic. This law simply states that if something is P, then it is P. In other words, everything

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is what it is, or a thing is identical to itself. While this might sound perfectly absurd at first glance, the intuition behind it is that things must remain stable for us to talk about them meaningfully or to ascribe specific qualities to them. If a thing could suddenly and unpredictably become something completely different, then it would be meaningless to try to predicate specific qualities of it.

Hegel's criticism of the laws of classical logic comes in his analysis of the categories of identity and difference in both the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. The law of identity is the first law of traditional logic that Hegel critically explores. According to his way of thinking, the law of identity is tautological and does not lead thinking further in a speculative manner. In the *Science of Logic*, he claims: 'This proposition in its positive expression A = A is, in the first instance, nothing more than the expression of an empty *tautology*. It has therefore been rightly remarked that this law of thought has no content and leads no further' (*SL*: 413, *Jub* 4: 510). This law adds no new information when it simply declares that A is A. It would be absurd to imagine someone going around repeating statements of this kind with the intention of contributing something meaningful to science or thought. Hegel states that 'if thinking were no more than that abstract identity, it would have to be declared the most otiose and boring business in the world' (*EL*: § 115, *Jub* 8: 270). It is, therefore, puzzling that the law of identity has enjoyed such a celebrated status as one of the fundamental laws of all thought.

The reason why the law of identity is flawed is that the concept upon which it is based is flawed (*SL*: 413-16, *Jub* 4: 510-15). The concept is rightly criticised for being abstract; it simply imagines a notion of self-identity in abstraction from everything else. For Hegel's speculative thinking, this is problematic since by insisting only on this one side, the concept of identity fails to recognise that it is necessarily bound up with its opposite, namely, difference. Identity and difference necessarily belong together; there would not be the one if the other did not exist. It is typical of common sense that it wishes to see things separately and in isolation from one another, but this invariably leads to distortions and misunderstandings. The common understanding has thus led to the empty conception of identity without difference. Hegel argues that identity necessarily implies difference:

> It is thus the empty identity that is rigidly adhered to by those who take it, as such, to be something true and are given to saying that identity is not difference, but that identity and difference are different. They do not see that in this very assertion they are saying that *identity is different*; for they are saying that *identity is different* from difference. (*SL*: 413, *Jub* 4: 511)

Hegel points out that it is absurd to try to think of identity alone and without difference. In the very attempt to do so, he argues, one must appeal to the notion of difference.

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The true speculative notion of identity is identity with difference. This notion must be recognised in the proper speculative law of identity. Hegel points out the absurdity of the traditional law of identity with the example 'The plant is the plant'. He argues as follows: 'We see that the beginning, 'The plant is ...' sets out to say something, to bring forward a further determination. But since only the same thing is repeated, the opposite has happened, *nothing* has emerged' (*SL*: 415, *Jub* 4: 513). The sense of expectation is disappointed when the speaker goes on to complete the statement 'The plant is the plant'. The auditor had the right to expect a meaningful or informative assertion, but the result was merely an empty statement of abstract identity. That this is empty is evidenced by the fact that one could replace the word 'plant' with any other noun, 'dog', 'tree', etc., and the meaning of the statement would be unchanged. With statements of this kind, the auditor naturally feels cheated out of a promised result since propositional statements promise something by their very nature: 'The *propositional form* itself already contradicts [the law of identity], since a proposition promises a distinction between subject and predicate as well as identity' (*EL*: § 115, *Jub* 8: 268-69).

True predication occurs when the statement is completed by saying something meaningful about the subject: 'The plant is green', or 'The plant is tropical', etc. Hegel notes that predication is dialectical in that it involves both a statement of identity and a statement of difference. The identity is found in the positive assertion that the subject is something. By saying 'is' the speaker is identifying the subject with the predicate. But Hegel insists predication also contains difference within itself since the subject and the predicate are ultimately two different things, e.g., plant and greenness. The plant, albeit perhaps green, is different from greenness as such. But this is precisely what is lacking in the tautological statements of the law of identity.

The speculative notion of identity is to assert at the same time both the identity and the difference involved in predication. This correctly recognises the dialectical relation of the concepts of identity and difference. Moreover, it is a constructive concept since the one leads to the other, and both together lead to a higher concept. Thus, this notion of identity is fruitful in a way that the traditional concept was not when it simply repeated that A is A again and again without being able to advance any further.

I.b. The Law of Contradiction

In Book IV of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle claims that the task of philosophy is to determine the fundamental axioms and basic principles of knowing in general. He then casts around for the most certain principle about which it is impossible to be mistaken. This leads him to posit what has come to be known as the law of contradiction. According to this law, nothing can be both P and not-P.[22] In other words, it would be absurd to think of the same property as both belonging and not belonging to a given subject. It would be nonsense to make claims like 'the rose is red and not red', or 'the horse is fast and not fast'. Of course, it has been pointed out that a given thing can perhaps have contradictory

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properties at different times. It is possible for a rose to be red when it is in bloom but brown when it is wilted. Thus, the qualification is often added that this law is valid when we are speaking of things *at the same time*. Similarly, it is possible for contradictory predicates to refer to different aspects of a thing. It is possible for a book to be red, for example, on its front cover, but at the same time not red, e.g., black or brown on its back cover. For this reason the further qualification has been added that this law applies when we are speaking of things *in the same respect*. Thus, when we say that the book cannot be red or not red, we mean, for example, with respect to its front cover. According to Aristotle, this is an absolutely fundamental law of all thought. He argues for it indirectly by demonstrating that any denial of it leads to absurdities. To reject the law of contradiction is to end up in uncertainty and skepticism.[23]

For Hegel, the key to understanding the law of contradiction and its shortcomings is to grasp the underlying concept of difference which informs it.[24] He gives an extended treatment of this concept, which he differentiates into three separate notions, each of which is analysed in turn. Each of these concepts of difference contains its own conception of negation, and this is the key for his analysis of the law of contradiction. He first takes up what he refers to as 'absolute difference' [*der absolute Unterschied*], which is the concept of difference that the law of contradiction is based upon. According to this concept, a given thing is negated with a simple 'not' with no further determination. In other words, a given thing A is negated by not-A. When we wish to negate the statement 'The house is red', we simply say 'The house is not red'. This form of difference or negation does not imply any determinate other. We know only that the house is not red, but we have no positive information about what color it actually is. Hegel argues that this is an abstract form of negation since it pretends to make a distinction or posit a difference, but actually it posits a mere self-relation of the first term. By saying 'not A' or 'not red', we are not positing anything new but merely repeating the first term again with a negation. But there is no relation to something else as one would have the right to expect with the concept of difference: 'Difference in itself is self-related difference; as such, it is the negativity of itself, the difference not of an other but *of itself from itself*' (*SL*: 417, *Jub* 4: 516).[25] Since this concept of difference posits only a self-relation, it displays no speculative movement. In other words, it is a dead end since it does not lead to further conceptual determinations. For this, a second determinate term would be required. Instead of saying the house is not red, one would have to say that it is some other determinate color. But absolute difference simply declares that it is not red and leaves it at that. Absolute difference is, thus, a nonstarter. According to Hegel, this is a concept of difference that is abstract since it wants to isolate difference from all forms of identity. But as a result, this concept ends up being meaningless just as was the concept of identity without difference. Here too it would be absurd to imagine someone going around simply negating every positive statement in this way. When one asserts 'the house is red', the response would be 'the house is not red'. When one asserts 'the plant is green', the response would be 'the plant is not green'. This has the look of a childish game that

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wishes merely to refute all positive views and destroy everything that it comes into contact with. But this is in effect what Aristotelian contradiction amounts to. Since this concept of difference proves to be inadequate, another must be sought—one that provides a relation to a determinate other and not merely a self-relation.

Hegel then moves onto the second conception of difference, which he designates 'diversity' [*Verschiedenheit*]. This concept simply states that a given thing is different from something else, and this difference is conceived as negation. Thus, this is the concept at work when one says things such as 'a flower is not an elephant' or 'the number three is not a mammal'. In short, there is a great diversity of things which are all different from one another. This is not merely a self-relation of the subject as with absolute difference since a second distinct thing is in fact posited. In this sense, diversity is conceptually superior to absolute difference. The problem, however, is that the second term is indeterminate, for it could be anything at all. When one says 'a flower is not an elephant', the second term, elephant, stands in no particular relation to the first. In this sense, one can distinguish an infinite number of things from a flower and still not really learn very much about either one. A flower is also not a house, a cloud, etc. These things exist independently of one another in the infinite diversity of objects. They are not conceptually related in any meaningful way. The concept of diversity is arbitrary. Since it is arbitrary, this concept of difference is also a nonstarter. It cannot lead to further concepts in a speculative fashion. What is required is a concept of difference that posits a distinction that is necessary in a way that determines the second term in some necessary way.

Hegel finally arrives at the speculative concept of difference, which he calls 'opposition' or 'contrariety' [*Gegensatz*]. This is the form of difference that is used when one claims 'north is not south', 'up is not down', 'right is not left', etc. This conception of difference works with contrary pairs. With this conception, a genuine second term is posited in contrast to absolute difference, which only had a self-relation. But this second term is not arbitrary as with the concept of diversity. With the concept of contrariety, the second term is a determinate one. It stands in a special and necessary relation to the first term. North and south are not independent of and indifferent to one another like the examples mentioned in the concept of diversity. For this reason, in contrariety a thing is not just negated by another but by its other, since every concept has its specific opposite. Accordingly, there can be only one negation of north, namely south, only one negation of up, namely down, etc.

This is Hegel's doctrine of determinate negation. The first term is negated but in a determinate way by a determinate second term. This is the correct speculative concept of difference and negation since it leads to further conceptual development. Unlike the other two concepts of difference, which simply stop, contrariety allows for the positing of higher concepts. North and south negate each other and are different from each other, but at a higher conceptual level this difference disappears and they become identical; they become longitudinal direction, while up and down become vertical, etc. At the first stage,

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they are conceived as different, but then at the second as identical. Thus, this notion of difference contains identity within itself.

Hegel's speculative methodology is founded on this understanding of negation as contrariety, since it is what allows for a conceptual movement from one category to the next. This is what allows him to say that something can be negated but yet still preserved. North is negated by south, but it is still preserved at a higher conceptual level of latitudinal direction. In this way, speculative philosophy is constructive and not merely destructive. Thus, Hegel's conception of contradiction is not purely negative. Contradiction is not the childish game of positing a thesis, rejecting it, positing another, rejecting it, etc. Rather, contradiction demonstrates the deeper conceptual relations that exist among concepts. It shows the necessary relations that philosophy has as its job to explore. It is this notion of contrariety or determinate negation that makes it possible to have movement in logic—a central point in Kierkegaard's criticism. Hegel declares in the *Science of Logic*: 'Contradiction is the root of all movement and vitality' (*SL*: 439, *Jub* 4: 546).[26] This hardly makes sense if one understands 'contradiction' in the Aristotelian sense. But it is on Hegel's redefinition of the term that movement is introduced. Therefore, this concept of contradiction lies at the very heart of the definition of speculative thought: '*Speculative thinking* consists solely in the fact that thought holds fast contradiction' (*SL*: 440-41, *Jub* 4: 547-48).[27] While common sense thinking wants to see things as atomic individual units separate and distinct from one another, speculative thinking sees their necessary interrelations based on their necessary dialectical relations of identity and difference.

I.c. The Law of Excluded Middle

Alongside the law of contradiction, Aristotle places the law of excluded middle (or sometimes the law of excluded third) as one of the fundamental principles of all thinking. While the law of contradiction states that a thing cannot both have and not have a certain predicate, the law of excluded middle claims that any given subject *must* either have a given predicate or not have it, and there is no third possible intermediate state. In short, according to the law of excluded middle, a thing must be either P or not-P.[28] For example, a thing must be either red or not red, mammal or not mammal, etc. While the law of contradiction makes a negative claim about something that is not possible, the law of excluded middle makes a positive claim about what is necessarily the case. The idea here is that, when one ascribes a given property, the thing either has that property or it does not, but these two options logically exhaust all possibilities.

Hegel also treats the law of excluded middle critically in his account of identity and difference.[29] He begins his objections against this law of thought by pointing out that it implies that all predicates (or their negation) must in principle be relevant for all subjects. But one does not have to think too hard to come up with examples of things that simply do not in principle go together with certain predicates. Hegel reasons as follows in the

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Science of Logic: 'When the determinations 'sweet', 'green', 'square' are taken—and all predicates are meant to be taken—and then it is said that spirit is either sweet or not sweet, green or not green, and so on, this is a triviality leading nowhere' (*SL*: 438, *Jub* 4: 544). Here it is clear that many predicates simply do not go with many subjects in a meaningful way, but this is exactly what the law of excluded middle seems to be committed to.

Hegel's second objection to the law of excluded middle is that it does not realise the conceptual unity of opposites, which is implied in its very formulation. In his argument against the notion of absolute difference, he pointed out that A and not-A in fact represent a self-relation and not a relation to another. He appeals to this again here in order to point out that there is in fact a hidden middle term in the very formulation of the law of excluded middle. In the *Encyclopaedia* he argues:

> The law of *the excluded third* is the law of the determinate understanding, which tries to avoid contradiction and by doing so commits it. A must be either +A or -A; thus the third term, the A which is *neither* + *nor* - and which is posited *also equally* as +A and as -A, is already expressed. If +W means 6 miles in the westerly direction, but -W 6 miles in the easterly direction, and + and - sublate each other, then 6 miles of road or space remain what they were, with or without the opposition. (*EL*: § 119, *Jub* 8: 276f, translation modified)

The positing or negating of any given term leaves the actual content of that term the same. Six miles in one direction or six miles in the opposite direction are the same six miles. This conceptual unity is present in every attempt to formulate the law of excluded middle and to insist that there is no third term.

Hegel goes on to give several examples of complementary concepts like north and south. He points out that while we sometimes tend to regard one of the pair as positive and the other as negative, with regard to their actual content they are identical and such designations are ultimately arbitrary:

> In the positive and the negative we think we have an absolute distinction. Both terms, however, are implicitly the same, and therefore we could call the positive 'the negative' if we liked, and conversely we could call the negative 'the positive' as well. Consequently, assets and debts are not two particular, independently subsisting species of assets. What is negative for the debtor is something positive for the creditor. The same applies to a road to the east: it is equally a road to the west. Thus, what is positive and what is negative are essentially conditioned by one another, and are what they are only in their relation to one another. There cannot be the north

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> pole of a magnet without the south pole nor the south pole without the north pole. (*EL*: § 119 Addition 1, *Jub* 8: 278f)

Here Hegel argues for the conceptual unity of opposites. The key notion of mediation is when the move is made from seeing two opposites as negative and opposed to one another to seeing them as united in a higher conceptual unity. In other words, one concept is mediated by its opposite to reach the next conceptual level. The third term denied by the law of excluded middle is precisely this higher level, which dissolves the opposites into a unity. Latitudinal direction is the mediation of north and south.

II. The Danish Debate about the Laws of Classical Logic

In Denmark in the late 1830s and 1840s, the debate about Hegel's criticism of the Aristotelian laws of logic was a major event that served to draw a line in the sand and harden the philosophical party lines. There was one group of thinkers that criticised Hegel's logic and defended the Aristotelian principles, and another one that sought to mount a defence for Hegel and his speculative logic. When the debate first broke out in a definitive way in 1839, there was great excitement in the air surrounding Hegel's philosophy. Starting in 1837, Hans Lassen Martensen had been lecturing on the history of philosophy and speculative theology, and in the context of his lectures he frequently treated Hegel. Due to these lectures, he created an enormous following among the students at the University of Copenhagen, many of whom regarded themselves as Hegel converts. This movement was, however, viewed with some suspicion and skepticism by those who regarded Martensen as leading the impressionable young students astray with Hegel's philosophy, which had a highly debatable relation to the Christian teaching. Thus, before the debate about mediation got started, there had already been a certain tension surrounding Hegel's philosophy, with people on either side of the ideological divide anxious for an opportunity for a polemical exchange.

The immediate occasion for the debate was a book review of Martensen's dissertation *On the Autonomy of Human Self-Consciousness*, which had appeared in Latin in 1837.[30] The review was written by one of Martensen's friends, the theologian Johan Alfred Bornemann (1813-90), and appeared at the beginning of 1839.[31] The tone of the review is wholly positive, and there can be little doubt that its goal was merely to promote Martensen's work and, where possible, Hegel. In the key passage that caused consternation, Bornemann uses Hegelian language and regards as uncontroversial Hegel's conception of the sublation or mediation of opposites. He argues that 'in both science and life the abstract opposition of content and form, of spirit and letter are for the most part overcome; it is recognised that the words of truth are spirit and life. In theology both rationalism and supernaturalism are antiquated standpoints which belong to an age which has disappeared' (Bornemann 1839: 3, Stewart 2009: 61). Bornemann tries to make a case for the topicality of Martensen's views by claiming that the traditional positions of

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rationalism and supernaturalism have been dialectically sublated and are thus passé in the theology of the day.

This claim was regarded as a provocation by Bishop Jakob Peter Mynster, who by that time had been an opponent of Hegelianism for many years. He wrote an article in response to Bornemann entitled simply 'Rationalism, Supernaturalism' (Mynster 1839: 249-68, Stewart 2009: 95-125). In this article, Mynster spends most of his time outlining different positions current then in theological debates, which can be regarded as falling under the headings of either 'rationalism' or 'supernaturalism'. Thus, he hopes to refute Bornemann's claim that they are antiquated views. He appeals to the law of excluded middle to support his argument. Since rationalism and supernaturalism can be regarded as contradictory standpoints, it would be impossible for both of them to be antiquated, for, if the one were truly antiquated, then *ipso facto* the other would not (Mynster 1839: 266, Stewart 2009: 109). But then Mynster addresses the key question of Hegel's logic:

> We do actually find this law treated with apparent disapproval in Hegel's *Logik* (*Werke*, IV, 66). His discussions of it elsewhere need not concern us here. We note simply that when he explains the law in the sense in which it is usually understood, he declares it to be so trivial as to be unworthy of discussion. He uses examples which make it clear that, for him, the law is laughable: 'When the determinations sweet, green, square are taken and then it is said that spirit is either sweet or not sweet, green or not green, and so on, then this is a triviality leading nowhere. (Mynster 1839: 266f, Stewart 2009: 109)

Mynster quotes from Hegel's critical analysis of the law of excluded middle in the *Science of Logic* treated above.[32] He then goes on to make a case for Aristotelian logic. In an interesting move, he shifts the debate over from the formal issue in logic to one of Christian theology, namely, the revelation. He writes:

> But doubtless when developing the laws for the activity of the soul, as thinking is called, it is presumably worth the trouble to clarify the first principles, upon which all thought rests and without which thought is impossible. There is no doubt that examples could be chosen to make it obvious that the law is not fruitless. When we say 'the revelation which Christianity rests upon either is supernatural or is not supernatural', it presumably is immediately clear that mediation is impossible here and that all attempts towards it can only lead to a halfway point, to a teetering and oscillation back and forth between rationalist supernaturalism and supernatural rationalism. (Mynster 1839: 267, Stewart 2009: 109f)

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Mynster here in effect argues that Aristotle's law of excluded middle is a necessary presupposition for this key Christian dogma. For the revelation to make sense, the law of excluded middle must hold true. In the case of the revelation of Christ, there can be no mediation. In his closing remarks, Mynster appeals to the Latin shorthand formulation of the law of excluded middle: '*Aut/aut*; one can mediate between opposites but not between contradictions. Every basic scientific theory must decide for one or the other of mutually contradictory viewpoints' (Mynster 1839: 267, Stewart 2009: 110). Mynster explicitly contrasts Hegel's notion of dialectical opposites with Aristotle's notion of contradiction. Here, one can see the formulation 'either/or' used in a polemical manner. In other words, every respectable scholar must accept the either/or that the law of excluded middle dictates.

There were two Hegelian responses to Mynster's article, one by Heiberg and one by Martensen.[33] The slogan 'either/or' (either in its Latin or Danish version) seems to have become something of a call to arms.[34] While Mynster used it in a conventional way as an abbreviated version of the law of excluded middle, in Hegelian circles it soon came to be used in a critical and indeed pejorative manner.[35] For the Hegelians, anyone who advocated an 'either/or' was regarded as old fashioned, dogmatic and simply wrong. To insist on an 'either/or' was to make oneself guilty of failing to see the necessary conceptual relations of the concepts and to treat one's subject matter in an isolated and thereby mistaken fashion. In his article in response to Mynster, Martensen pleads, for example: 'But can one stop with the opposition..., with an *aut/aut*? Is it not precisely the task of our age to sublate this disastrous *aut/aut*...?' (Martensen 1839: 467, Stewart 2009: 138). It was precisely this discussion about mediation and this use of the slogan 'either/or' that inspired the young Kierkegaard when he was working on his first major book that would come to bear just this formulation as its title.

III. Kierkegaard and the Criticism of Speculative Mediation

The debate about Hegelian mediation was taking place at exactly the same time when Kierkegaard was writing *Either/Or*. Thus, it is hardly surprising that the slogan so often repeated in the debate caught his eye. Indeed, it made such an impression on him that he decided to use its Danish form, *Enten-Eller*, for the title of his famous book that was published in 1843. By doing so, Kierkegaard seems to want to indicate his affiliation with the Aristotelians and his apparently critical disposition towards the Hegelians.

Evidence for this can be found in passages where Kierkegaard seems to state directly that the title itself contains a criticism of speculative philosophy.[36] But perhaps the most persuasive evidence is the very organisation and content of the book itself. The main idea of the text is clearly the juxtaposition of two opposing views. Kierkegaard opposes the views of the esthete and Judge William, both of whom make their best case to the reader. The title 'either/or' is intended to reflect this fundamental opposition in the work. The reader is enjoined to make a choice either for the life-view of the esthete or for

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the life-view of Judge William. By appealing to this formulation from the Danish discussion of Hegel's logic, Kierkegaard is implying that this is an absolute dichotomy, so there is no possibility of compromise or mediation. Kierkegaard has the work's editor, Victor Eremita, write the following about the title of the work: 'A's papers contain a multiplicity of approaches to an esthetic view of life .... B's papers contain an ethical view of life. As I allowed my soul to be influenced by this thought, it became clear to me that I could let it guide me in determining the title. The title I have chosen expresses precisely this'.[37] An important aspect of Kierkegaard's repeated objection to mediation is that there exist absolute dichotomies within the religious sphere which can never be mediated. Instead, they remain forever opposed alternatives, and any attempt to mediate them only leads to distortions and confusions. While he develops this view in more detail in later works, it is already reflected here in the very conception of the work, when he says of the two parts that 'these papers come to no conclusion' (*SKS* 2: 21, *EO1*: 14).[38] Thus, with the formula 'either/or' he understands stubborn and static oppositions which resist mediation.

In the second part of the work, Kierkegaard has Judge William dedicate a few pages to the issue of Hegelian mediation (*SKS* 3: 166-72, *EO2*: 170-76). Specifically, in the chapter 'The Balance Between the Esthetic and the Ethical', Judge William criticises the life of the esthete that is dominated by indifference, relativism and apathy. In this context, he compares the esthete's position to that of the Hegelians: 'You mediate opposites in a higher madness, philosophy mediates them in a higher unity .... you say, "I can either do this or that, but whichever of the two I do is equally mad, ergo I don't do anything at all"' (*SKS* 3: 166f, *EO2*: 170, translation modified). Here the Judge makes reference to several oppositions that the esthete sets up in the 'Diapsalmata' as characteristic of his indifferent world-view: 'Marry, and you will regret it. Do not marry and you will also regret it. Marry or do not marry, you will regret it either way'.[39] The Judge refers to this resignation and indifference towards life as a kind of madness. The parallel that he wishes to draw is that the Hegelians are likewise led to a position of passivity in life since they are so concerned with mediating everything. In so doing, they become blind to the real decisions and commitments of life.

The Judge then goes on to make explicit what is only implied here. He claims that there are two spheres that need to be distinguished and respected: 'the sphere of thought' and 'the sphere of freedom'. The former, which can be regarded as a forerunner of the notion of 'objective knowing' in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, is concerned with the realms of science, scholarship, logic and abstract thinking. The latter is clearly a forerunner of 'subjective knowing'; it concerns the lived life of the individual, which involves concrete decisions and action in the realm of actuality. It is the sphere of ethical and religious commitment. This distinction then allows the Judge to propose a solution to the debate about mediation. In short, he claims that Hegelian mediation is valid in the sphere of thought, but it has no place in the sphere of freedom. The laws of Aristotelian logic are valid in this latter realm. In life we are constantly confronted with oppositions

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and conflicting alternatives from which we must choose. Indeed, our reactions to these define who we are as individuals. The criticism is that Hegelian mediation claims to be absolute and thus encroaches on the sphere of freedom. When it does so, then people, like the esthete, become ethically irresponsible. They become observers of life and deny their own freedom and responsibility. From this short account, one can see immediately that Kierkegaard takes the issue in a direction entirely different from its origin in logic. The question of mediation is not just or even primarily one of logic, but rather it deeply concerns questions of freedom, ethics and religious commitment.

While Kierkegaard refers to the notion of mediation in several other works,[40] his only other sustained discussion of the topic comes three years later in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Here, he has his pseudonymous author Johannes Climacus announce this issue with reference to the previous Danish debate:

> As is well known, Hegelian philosophy sublates the law of contradiction, and Hegel more than once passed judgment on those thinkers who remained in the sphere of the understanding and reflection and thus claimed there was an either/or. Since that time, it has become a favorite game that as soon as someone even suggests an *aut/aut*, then a Hegelian comes, clop, clop, clopping along on a horse and … wins a victory and rides home again. Our local Hegelians have often felt called upon, particularly against Bishop Mynster, in order to win brilliant victories for speculation. (*SKS* 7: 277, *CUP1*: 304f, translation modified)

Here he refers to the articles by Heiberg and Martensen, who criticised Mynster's attempt to defend Aristotelian logic with its insistence on the either/or. It is interesting that three years after the publication of *Either/Or*, the slogans 'either/or' and '*aut/aut*' still seem as topical as ever.

In the analysis of the issue given in the *Postscript*, the same solution is given to the problem that was proposed by a different pseudonymous character in *Either/Or*. In short, mediation and the law of excluded middle can both be valid, but only in different spheres. Johannes Climacus reasons as follows:

> Hegel is completely and absolutely correct in the claim that, seen eternally, *sub specie aeterni*, in the language of abstraction, in pure thought and in pure being, there is no *aut/aut*; where in the hell would it be since abstraction precisely takes away contradiction? Thus, Hegel and the Hegelians should rather take the trouble of explaining what is meant by the shadowboxing of bringing contradiction, movement, transition, etc. into logic. The defenders of the *aut/aut* are wrong, if they push their way into the realm of pure thought and want to battle for their cause there .... On the other hand, Hegel is just as wrong, when he, forgetting the abstraction, crashes down

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> from it into existence with violence and force in order to sublate the double *aut*. This is to do something that is an impossibility in existence, for he then also sublates existence. (*SKS* 7: 277f, *CUP1*: 305, translation modified)

Once again a compromise is proposed that allows both principles a degree of truth. The key is to distinguish where they each have their proper place and not to confuse the two. Both Judge William and Johannes Climacus are clearly worried about what they perceive as the confusions that arise when one tries to make use of mediation outside the realm of pure thought or logic. The results are disastrous when one attempts to import it into real questions of life and existence.

Based on his many critical and satirical treatments of the Hegelian doctrine of mediation, it is not easy to give an unambiguous assessment of Kierkegaard's view of the matter as a whole. On the one hand, in the two accounts discussed here, he seems in a certain sense to have a degree of appreciation and understanding for Hegelian mediation. It is a principle that is valid within its own province, and when that is respected, then there is no problem. On the other hand, he seems highly critical of what he takes to be the pernicious results of mediation when people try to make use of it in their daily lives. His main objection seems to be a moral one: mediation is dangerously misleading since it can induce people to forget the ethical and religious obligations of their lives. Given this latter critical disposition, Kierkegaard has generally been cast as an unambiguous critic of mediation and as a supporter of Aristotelian logic and specifically of the laws of contradiction and excluded middle.

IV. Kierkegaard's Speculative Use of Concepts

Upon closer examination, however, there is an oddity in Kierkegaard's use of these logical terms. While he seems ostensibly to be in a grand polemic against Hegelian mediation and stubbornly to reassert the Aristotelian law of excluded middle with both the title and the plan of *Either/Or*, in fact the conceptual structure that he uses is not Aristotelian. As we have seen, the Aristotelian law concerns A and not-A, that is, the simple indeterminate negation of the first term. By contrast, Kierkegaard's work features A, that is the esthete's life-view, and B, the ethical life-view; in short, the second term is not a negation of the first in the Aristotelian sense. The position of B is not that of not-A, that is, an indeterminate other, but rather, a quite determinate and indeed well-articulated alternative. The views of the esthete and the Judge are conceived in a way that more closely resembles Hegelian opposites: the esthete is a relativist, while the Judge an absolutist; the esthete is carefree and indifferent, while the Judge is serious and engaged in life; the esthete is oblivious to duties, while the Judge is rigidly bound to them. There are many other such contrastive points that could be pointed out. Thus, despite the ostensible criticism of

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Hegel's logic that Kierkegaard seems to intend, *Either/Or* is, in fact, in its very concept based more on a Hegelian conception of opposites than on Aristotelian contradiction.

Either/Or represents by no means an isolated case. Throughout Kierkegaard's authorship, there are numerous examples of the use of Hegelian opposites in his attempt to articulate any number of positions that he clearly wants to defend. More importantly, it is clear from these examples that he understands contradiction in a Hegelian and not an Aristotelian manner. For example, in his unfinished work *Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est*, Kierkegaard follows Hegel's account of 'Sense-Certainty' from the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and speaks of the contradiction that arises when one attempts to capture empirical particulars with universal concepts of language. He writes: 'Immediacy is reality; language is ideality; consciousness is contradiction. The moment I make a statement about reality, contradiction is present, for what I say is ideality' (*Pap* IV B 1: 146, *JC*: 168). The idea is clear to Hegel readers: one sees or empirically perceives a particular in the world, and one intends to indicate it or point it out as a particular, but this proves impossible. As soon as one attempts to describe it with language, the intended object is immediately lost since any linguistic description turns it into a universal. Kierkegaard fleshes this out further a few pages later, where he again refers to the 'contradiction' in consciousness, by which he means the ability of consciousness to bring together the universal and the particular or, as he says, ideality and reality. He writes:

> When ideality and reality touch each other, then repetition occurs. When, for example, I see something in the moment, ideality enters in and will explain that it is a repetition. Here is the contradiction, for that which is, is also in another mode. That the external is, that I see, but in the same instant I bring it into relation with something that also is, something that is the same and that also will explain that the other is the same. Here is a redoubling; here it is a matter of repetition. Ideality and reality therefore collide—in what medium? In time? That is indeed an impossibility. In eternity? That is indeed an impossibility. In what, then? In consciousness—there is the contradiction. (*Pap* IV B 1: 150, *JC*: 171)

Clearly, this 'contradiction' is not conceived of in an Aristotelian manner since it involves opposite concepts. What Kierkegaard calls the 'contradiction' of consciousness refers to the bringing together of ideality and reality, the ability to perceive specific individual things and to order them under universal concepts. These are indeed exactly the kind of opposite pairs that Hegel so frequently uses. This is not a chance formulation since he repeatedly uses specifically the word 'contradiction' in this passage. Of further importance in this passage is that one finds other key concepts from the Kierkegaardian repertoire: repetition, the moment, and redoubling.[41] It is clear that these concepts also rely on a tense juxtaposition of dialectical opposites: ideality and reality, eternity and temporality,

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universal and particular, etc. Thus, somewhat surprisingly, these famous Kierkegaardian terms are grounded not in Aristotelian logic but, rather, in speculative logic.

At first glance, the conception of the divine as the absolutely different, which is presented in the *Philosophical Fragments*, is intended to be a concept that resists mediation (*SKS* 4: 249, *PF*: 44-45). Kierkegaard has his pseudonymous author begin by characterising the divine simply as the unknown other of man, and this does indeed have the look of a kind of contradiction in Aristotle's sense. But then he goes on to characterise this distinction in terms of the temporal and the eternal, which are Hegelian opposites. Specifically, the incarnation is described as a paradox that involves the 'contradiction' of these categories in the person of Christ, i.e., the contradictory idea of the eternal God becoming temporal. Clearly, this would be an example of Hegel's speculative understanding of contradiction and not Aristotle's. That Kierkegaard does not use the term 'contradiction' explicitly here as in the example cited above is in a sense a secondary concern. What is important is that the conceptual structure is one of Hegelian contrariety and not of Aristotelian contradiction.

In the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, he has the same pseudonymous writer outline in some detail the contradiction between the *subjective* and the *objective thinker*. The subjective thinker is one who always relates himself to the object of his inquiry, whereas the objective thinker is focused solely on the latter and forgets himself. The subjective thinker has an infinite personal interest in eternal happiness and, therefore, has passion; the objective thinker is forgetful of his salvation and has no passion but is characterised by cool reflection and aloof indifference. The subjective thinker is known for his inwardness, whereas the objective thinker is fixed on the outward sphere. These two fundamental positions that run throughout the work are clearly examples of dialectical contraries in Hegel's sense and not contradictions in Aristotle's sense. They are opposite positions that mutually depend upon and determine each other.

In the same text, Kierkegaard's pseudonymous author introduces the distinction between *direct* and *indirect communication*, which also has the look of a Hegelian dialectical pair. Direct communication is appropriate for conveying factual information and matters of science and scholarship. But indirect communication is necessary when one wants to convey ineffable inward truths such as one's personal relation to Christianity. Kierkegaard has Johannes Climacus spend a fair amount of time promoting the idea that indirect communication is the only proper form in which to express one's own inward beliefs or the Christian message in general. This distinction recalls that of objective and subjective thinking, but has also similarities with his view of the ineffability of the particular presented in *Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est*. Once again, a key Kierkegaardian doctrine is based on a reciprocally related conceptual pair in Hegel's sense.

In *A Literary Review of Two Ages*, Kierkegaard characterises the conflict or contradiction of the age of revolution and the age of restoration as one between *passion* and *reflection*. Passion and reflection have more the look of Hegelian opposites than an Aristotelian contradiction. Kierkegaard polemicises against Heiberg's pleas for meeting

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the demands of the time with Hegel's philosophy. He points out that 'for decisive religious categories to become the demand of the times is *eo ipso* a contradiction' (*SKS* 8: 24, *TA*: 21). As he goes on to explain, the 'contradiction' lies in the fact that the categories of religion concern individuals and not the crowd or the group. Religious belief can only take hold in one individual at a time. Thus, the contradiction in the social sphere is between the individual and the group, the crowd, the mass or the generation. Again this is much closer to Hegelian opposition than to Aristotelian contradiction. In another passage, he praises the age of revolution for being un-Hegelian: 'The age of revolution is essentially passionate; therefore it has *not sublated the law of contradiction* and can become either good or evil' (*SKS* 8:64, *TA*: 66, translation modified). He then goes on to explain this by appealing to the 'either/or' of personal decision. Here the confusion is obvious: the law of contradiction should be concerned with Aristotelian negation and not with Hegelian opposites such as good and evil. Likewise, such opposites are not what is intended with the slogan 'either/or' of Aristotelian logic.

At the beginning of *The Sickness unto Death* (*SKS* 11: 129, *SUD*: 13), Kierkegaard, as is well known, describes the human being as a synthesis of the *eternal* and the *temporal*, the *finite* and the *infinite*, *freedom* and *necessity*—again examples not of Aristotelian negation but of Hegelian opposition. Kierkegaard's philosophical anthropology, as presented in that work, seems to be based on Hegelian mediation. He further describes the concept featured in the title of the work in terms of opposites: 'Christianly understood, death itself is a passing into life. Thus, from a Christian point of view, no earthly, physical sickness is the sickness unto death, for death is not the end' (*SKS* 11: 133, *SUD*: 17). He continues with this juxtaposition of life and death: 'It is in this last sense that despair is the sickness unto death, this tormenting contradiction, this sickness of the self, perhaps to be dying, to die and yet not to die, to die death' (*SKS* 11: 134, *SUD*: 18). Here, he has his pseudonymous author use the word 'contradiction' in a Hegelian usage to describe what he regards as the paradoxical relation of life and death found in Christianity. In yet another passage, he uses an example to illustrate his understanding of contradiction and the power of faith to overcome it: 'Good health generally means the ability to resolve contradiction. For example, in the realm of the bodily or physical, a draft is a contradiction, for a draft is disparately or undialectically cold and warm, but a good healthy body resolves this contradiction and does not notice the draft' (*SKS* 11: 155, *SUD*: 40). By emphasising this as undialectical, Kierkegaard seems again to want to underscore this as a criticism of speculative thinking. However, he seems not to realise that the relation of hot and cold, like that of life and death, is in fact an example of Hegelian contradiction, indeed, a well-known one.

In *Practice in Christianity*, Kierkegaard describes Christ as 'the sign of contradiction', (*SKS* 12: 129-32, *PC*: 124-27), thus directly invoking the disputed term, but again he understands this not in an Aristotelian manner but in a Hegelian one. He explains that 'a *sign of contradiction* is a sign that intrinsically contains a contradiction in itself' (*SKS* 12: 129, *PC*: 124f). With this definition alone, it is not clear what he means by contradiction, but

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this becomes obvious as soon as he starts to explicate the concept. He begins with a brief account of direct and indirect communication, and writes that 'a communication that is the unity of jest and earnestness is thus a sign of contradiction' (*SKS* 12: 130, *PC*: 125). It is clear that jest and earnestness are dialectical opposites and not the terms of an Aristotelian contradiction, even though this is designated as a sign of contradiction. In fact, he even argues in a Hegelian fashion that if either jest or earnestness on its own dominates, then the result is direct communication.[42] The desired indirect communication is only possible when the two dialectical opposites are held together. When he comes to the heart of the matter, he defines Christ as the sign of contradiction since he is a unity of God and man. He writes: 'In Scripture the God-man is called a sign of contradiction—but what contradiction, if any, could there be at all in the speculative unity of God and man? No, there is no contradiction in that, but the contradiction—and it is as great as possible, is the qualitative contradiction—is between being God and being an individual human being' (*SKS* 12: 130, *PC*: 125).[43] Here he seems not to realise that the dialectical opposites of God and man are precisely an example of contradiction according to Hegel's speculative logic. For this to be a case of Aristotelian contradiction, it would have to be God and not God or man and not man, but instead it is God and man, a Hegelian pair of contraries. While it is clear that he objects to Hegel's dialectical mediation of concepts,[44] Kierkegaard nonetheless clearly operates with a Hegelian concept of contradiction.

In this light, one can say that in the context of the contemporary debate about Hegelian mediation, Kierkegaard seized on the famous slogan 'either/or' for rhetorical reasons. Since it had been used to represent the position of the Aristotelians in the debate, he presumably thought that he could simply employ it in his own context, and his readers would immediately identify him with this anti-Hegelian camp. However, while he is captivated by the rhetorical force of this formulation, he is not particularly careful about its actual conceptual content. He, therefore, comes to employ this expression mistakenly, which was used for the Aristotelian law of excluded middle, in a way that it could well be understood as a slogan for Hegelian logic. In Kierkegaard's hands, 'either/or' means not either A or not-A but, rather, either the aesthetic or the ethical, either finite or infinite, either eternal or temporal, either passionate or reflective, etc. To use Hegel's language, he employs not absolute negation as in Aristotle but, rather, dialectical opposites. By using opposites in this way, he apparently unknowingly shifts over to a speculative understanding of the concepts.

Kierkegaard readers will recognise a certain irony in this conclusion given his unforgiving criticism of the contemporary conceptual confusion. He laments in his *Journal*: 'What monstrous confusion in concepts in our time!' (*SKS* 18: 207, *KJN* 2: 191). It is precisely the goal of his so-called *Book on Adler* to clear up this confusion, as is indicated in the full title of this unpublished work: *The Religious Confusion of the Present Age Illustrated by Magister Adler as a Phenomenon*. Indeed, in the context of Adler, he specifically takes Hegel's philosophy to be largely responsible for some of these conceptual confusions. In a late journal entry, he describes the way in which confused concepts are passed from

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generation to generation and from person to person like counterfeit money (*SKS* 26: 204-6, *JP* 6: 6921). Although it is a thankless task, he seems clearly to appoint himself to the role of auditor to check these false coins and bring them to the attention of his fellow Danes. It is thus striking that he prides himself on a high degree of conceptual clarity that is not shared by his contemporaries, but employs a phrase that was well known at the time in a manner that demonstrates a fundamental confusion. Indeed, he gives examples under the slogan 'either/or' that could fit under all three definitions of difference meticulously articulated by Hegel.[45]

To be sure, there is presumably still some kind of criticism that he wants to make against Hegelian logic, and this needs to be explored in more detail on another occasion. But despite what appears to be a lot of polemical rhetoric against Hegelian logic, Kierkegaard, apparently unwittingly, makes use of it. This can be seen as an indication that there is more Hegel in Kierkegaard's thought than has been generally recognised. Indeed, absolutely key concepts and analyses from Kierkegaard's authorship seem to rely on Hegel's notion of mediation and to assume his criticism of the laws of Aristotelian logic. This would then indicate that the purported radical break between Hegel and Kierkegaard is in large part a myth.

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Notes

Abbreviations (where appropriate, volume number precedes page number):
B&A: Kierkegaard (1953–54)
CA: Kierkegaard (1980a)
CUP1: Kierkegaard (1992)
EL: Hegel (1991)
EO1: Kierkegaard (1987a)
EO2: Kierkegaard (1987b)
JC: Kierkegaard (1985a)
JP: Kierkegaard (1967-78)
Jub.: Hegel (1927-40)
KJN: Kierkegaard (2007-)
LD: Kierkegaard (1978a)
Pap.: Kierkegaard (1909-48)
PC: Kierkegaard (1991)
PF: Kierkegaard (1985b)
R: Kierkegaard (1983)
SBL: Kierkegaard (1989)
SKS: Kierkegaard (1997-)
SL: Hegel (1989)
SUD: Kierkegaard (1980b)

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TA: Kierkegaard (1978b)
WL: Kierkegaard (1995)

[1] Heiberg (1832); Stewart (2006): 37-213.

[2] Sibbern (1838). This work is a reprint of Articles I-III of Sibbern's *Perseus, Journal for den speculative Idee.* Udgiven af Johan Ludvig Heiberg. Nr. 1, Juni 1837. Kjøbenhavn. Reitzels Forlag. XIV og 264 S. 8°. Priis 1 Rbd. 84 Skill. (Med stadigt Hensyn til Dr. Rothes: *Læren om Treenighed og Forsoning. Et speculativt Forsøg i Anledning af Reformationsfesten.*)', *Maanedsskrift for Litteratur* 19 (1838): for articles I-III: Article I: 283-360; Article II: 424-60; Article III: 546-82; and 20 (1838): for articles IV-VIII: Article IV: 20-60; Article V: 103-36; Article VI: 193-244; Article VII: 293-308; Article VIII: 405-49.

[3] Adler (1842). Reviewed by Hans Friedrich Helweg, in Helweg (1843): 267-78.

[4] For an account of this work, see Koch (1990): 86-108.

[5] See respectively, Nielsen (1841-1844), in particular: (1841): 1-64; (1842): 65-96; (1843): 97-144; (1844): 145-96, and Nielsen (1845). Nielsen (1841-1844) was reviewed by Adolph Peter Adler, in Adler (1842). See also Stilling (1842). Stilling's work was in turn reviewed by Johan Frederik Hagen (1842): 6925-29.

[6] See Ritschl (1955), reprinted in Schrey (1971): 240-72. See Hartnack (1986): 30-39 and Holmer (1957).

[7] See *SKS*4: 320-22, *CA*: 12-14; *SKS* 4: 384-88, *CA*: 81-85; *SKS* 7: 106f, *CUP1*: 109f; *SKS* 7: 109f., *CUP1*: 113; *SKS* 7: 281, *CUP1*: 308f; and *SKS* 4: 56-57, R 186.

[8] See *SKS* 9: 220f, *WL:* 218; *Pap.* III A 11, *JP* 3: 3281; *SKS* 18: 217, JJ: 239, *KJN* 2: 199; *SKS* 7: 103-20, *CUP1*: 106-25.

[9] Thulstrup 1980 and Thulstrup 1972.

[10] See *SKS* 3: 166-72 , *EO2* 170-76. See *SKS* 7: 173-81, *CUP1*: 189-98; *SKS* 4: 25, R 148; *Pap.* IV B 117, 288-89, R, Supplement, 308; *SKS* 19: 211, Not7: 22, *JP* 3: 3072; *SKS* 19: 390, Not13: 23, *JP* 3: 3073; *SKS* 18: 125, HH: 2, *KJN* 2: 117; *SKS* 4: 305-6, *PF* 109-10; *SKS* 4: 243, *PF* 37; and *SKS* 4: 497f, *P* 35f.

[11] See *SKS* 4: 285n, *PF* 86n., *SKS* 7: 277-82, *CUP1*: 304-10, and *SKS* 7: 363-84, *UP1*: 399-422.

[12] For a dissenting voice, see Løkke and Waaler (2010): 3-23.

[13] The main texts from this debate are now available in English in Stewart 2009.

[14] Trendelenburg 1840 and Trendelenburg 1843. See Schmidt 1977.

[15] Herbart 1833; Stewart 2009: 241-63.

[16] Fichte 1840 and Stewart 2009: 265-87 (English translation). See also Fichte 1841 (originally 1829).

[17] See Schelling's 'Preface' to Victor Cousin's *Über französische und deutsche Philosophie*, in Cousin 1834: iii-xxviii, reprinted as 'Vorrede zu einer philosophischen Schrift des Herrn Victor Cousin', in Schelling 1985:4: 617-40. See too the section 'Hegel' in 'Zur Geschichte der neueren Philosophie. Münchener Vorlesungen', in Schelling 1985:4: 542-80; Schelling 1994: 134-63 (English translation). See too 'Fünfte Vorlesung' in 'Einleitung in die Philosophie der Offenbarung oder Begründung der positiven Philosophie. Berliner Vorlesungen', in Schelling (1985) 5: 676-95, and 'Sechste Vorlesung', Schelling 1985:5: 696-716. See too Kierkegaard's lecture notes: *SKS* 19: 312-22, Not11: 9-15 , *SBL:* 345-57.

[18] See Werder 1841 and Weder 1842 (Danish translation).

[19] See Gabler's review of Trendelenburg's in Gabler 1841-2. See too Gabler 1843.

[20] See Stewart, 2007a: 335-71. See Kierkegaard's notes: *SKS* 19: 245, Not8: 50; *SKS* 19: 246, Not8: 52; *SKS* 19: 278-82, Not9: 2-9; *SKS* 19: 415, Not13:50; *Pap.* V C 4. See the note 'Werders forelæsninger over 'Logik und Metaphysik', in *SKS* K19: 382-83.

[21] See Kuhr 1915, Hügli 1980: 272-80, Arildsen 1932: 142-50, Waage 1867: 123-52, Stewart 2007b: 289-342 and Stewart 2009: 1-45.

[22] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book IV, Chapters 3-6; Book XI, Chapters 5-6.

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[23] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book IV, Chapters 5-6.
[24] See *SL* : 439-43, *Jub* 4: 545-51.
[25] See too: 'Difference as thus unity of itself and identity, is *in its own self* determinate difference. It is not transition into an other, not relation to an other outside it' (*SL*: 418, *Jub* 4: 517).
[26] See too: 'It is contradiction that moves the world' (*EL*: § 119, Addition 2; *Jub* 8: 280).
[27] See too *EL*: § 119 Addition 2; *Jub* 8: 280.
[28] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book IV, Chapter 7; Book XI, Chapter 6.
[29] See *SL*: 438-39, *Jub* 4: 544-45.
[30] See Martensen 1837, Martensen 1841 (Danish translation), and Martensen 1997 (English translation).
[31] Bornemann 1839: 1-40; Stewart 2009: 59-91 (English translation).
[32] Mynster cites Leopold von Henning's edition of this text, which appeared in 1834 as part of Hegel's collected works; see Hegel 1834: 66-67. See *SL*: 438-39; *Jub* 4: 544-45.
[33] Heiberg 1839: 441-56 and Stewart 2009: 113-25 (English translation). See too Martensen 1839: 456-73 and Stewart 2009: 129-43 (English translation).
[34] It should be noted that Hegel himself made use of the formula 'either/or' in a polemical way. See Stewart 2003: 185-88.
[35] See, for example, Heiberg 1839: 44, Stewart 2009: 115.
[36] See Letter 68, February 6, 1842: 'Either/Or is indeed an excellent title. It is piquant and at the same time also has a speculative meaning' (*B&A* 1: 107, *LD*138). See too: '*Either/Or*, the title of which is in itself indicative, has the existence-relation between the esthetic and the ethical materialise into existence in the existing individuality. This to me is the book's indirect polemic against speculative thought which is indifferent to existence' (*SKS* 7: 229, *CUP1*: 252).
[37] *SKS* 2: 21, *EO1*: 13. See too: 'What matters most to me about the whole of *Either/Or* is that it become really evident that the metaphysical meaning that underlies it all leads everything everywhere to the dilemma. The same also underlies the little philosophical essay: tautology as the highest law of thought, namely, if the law of contradiction is true (and it is expressed by either/or) it is … the scientific expression for it, and it is the only unity into which it can be taken up and by which the system becomes possible' (*Pap.* III B 177: 189f, *EO1*: Suppl., 526, translation slightly modified).
[38] See: 'When the book is read, A and B are forgotten; only the points of view confront each other and expect no final decision in the particular personalities' (*SKS* 2: 21, *EO1*: 14), and: 'That there is no conclusion and no final decision is an indirect expression for truth as inwardness and in this way perhaps a polemic against truth as knowledge' (*SKS* 7: 229, *CUP1*: 252).
[39] *SKS* 2: 47, *EO1*: 38. See too *SKS* 3: 156f, *EO2*: 158f.
[40] Most notably *Prefaces*; see *SKS* 4: 497-507, *P*: 35-46.
[41] See further *Pap.* IV B 117: 288-89, R Suppl., 308; *SKS* 4: 25, *R*: 148-49.
[42] See: 'If jest or earnestness completely dominates, it is direct communication' (*SKS* 12: 130, *PC*: 125).
[43] See too: 'The contradiction between being God and being an individual human being is the greatest possible, the infinitely qualitative contradiction' (*SKS* 12: 135, *PC*: 131).
[44] 'Does all the modern thought about the speculative unity of God and man, all this that regards Christianity only as a teaching, does this have the remotest resemblance to the essentially Christian?' (*SKS* 12: 131, *PC*: 126).
[45] For example, Hegel's notion of absolute difference, that is, Aristotelian contradiction is found in the statement: 'Marry or do not marry, you will regret it either way' (*SKS* 2: 47, *EO1*: 38). What Hegel designates as 'diversity' can be seen in the relation between the esthete and Judge William. These are two world-views but there are many others, such as the religious. While their world-views are in some ways set up as opposed on specific points, they are not opposites in the strict sense. Finally, we have seen several examples of Hegel's notion of contrariety or opposites

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in the work of Kierkegaard: eternal and temporal, universal and particular, finite and infinite, freedom and necessity, etc. While Hegel distinguishes these forms of difference and negation, Kierkegaard refers to them all in an un-nuanced manner as forms of contradiction.

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