

KIERKEGAARD RESEARCH: SOURCES, RECEPTION AND RESOURCES.  
A NEW TOOL IN KIERKEGAARD STUDIES

The interdisciplinary field of Kierkegaard studies is at present flourishing and expanding as never before. With every passing year there are more and more Masters theses and Ph.D. dissertations written and more and more conferences and seminars held on some aspect of his thought or writings. Further, there is an increasing number of specialized publications dedicated to Kierkegaard, including articles, monographs, and entire series, such as the *Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook* (launched in 1996), *NotaBene. Quaderni di studi kierkegaardiani* (launched in 2000) and *Acta Kierkegaardiana* (launched in 2007).

Clearly the most important single event in Kierkegaard studies over the past several years is the creation of the new Danish critical edition of Kierkegaard's writings, *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* (hereafter *SKS*),<sup>22</sup> which is being produced by the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre at the University of Copenhagen. It began publication in 1997 and is scheduled for completion sometime around 2010. This remarkable edition presents a vast amount of new information in its elaborate commentary apparatus and with its new text-critical presentation of the original works. This edition has demonstrated that Kierkegaard was a voracious reader and a profoundly eclectic thinker, who constantly incorporated material from his reading into his own writing. An appreciation of these sources is absolutely pivotal for understanding his works. These influences, although briefly identified in the commentary apparatus of this edition, have yet to be adequately explored and understood in the research.

At present there is a vast potential in Kierkegaard research that has yet to be realized. This potential lies in the largely untapped resource of this critical edition. Unfortunately, the impact of this new edition has been limited in the international research community. The problem is that there are very few models in international research today for how to use the information presented by *SKS*. The individual explanatory notes or critical accounts of the text in *SKS* are outstanding on their own and in the context of this edition, but more is required if this information is to be put to productive use in the context of specific research projects. Today a large gulf exists between, on the one hand, the highly detailed and often rather technical information provided by *SKS*, and, on the other, the international research community, which too often pursues its work uninformed by this new information.

Thus, for international Kierkegaard research to begin to genuinely exploit the vast potential of the groundbreaking research in *SKS* it would be useful to have some mechanism for bridging this gap. The new publication series, *Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Resources*, performs just this function. The guiding idea behind this project is to create a publication series, which will serve as both a reference work for Kierkegaard students and scholars and as a forum for new research based in part on that presented in *SKS*. This new series is designed ultimately to contain eighteen volumes, most of which are comprised of two or more individual tomes. The project is a publication of the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre.

The volumes consist of individual articles written by the best-qualified international Kierkegaard scholars working on the given area treated by the article. These articles are strategically planned to fit together thematically with the other articles in the individual volumes, and the volumes themselves are planned to complement one another such that all of the main areas of Kierkegaard studies are represented and covered in an appropriate manner. The articles present Kierkegaard's thought on a clearly defined issue by identifying his sources, cataloguing the relevant passages in his primary texts and/or discussing discrete aspects of his reception on a given issue. This is done in a way that makes the individual articles the natural point of departure for any future investigation into the issue in question. All of these articles represent new and original research. Most of the volumes are interdisciplinary in nature, combining articles on, for example, philosophy, theology, literature, psychology, and history. Each volume contains a brief introduction, written by the editors, which traces the history of the given research tradition in Kierkegaard studies. All of the articles contain a systematic and exhaustive bibliography covering their specific topic.

<sup>22</sup> *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*, vols 1–28 and K1–28, edited by N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Knudsen, J. Kondrup, F. H. Mortensen, and A. McKinnon (Copenhagen: Gad 1997).

The volumes are divided into three separate categories. The first is entitled 'Kierkegaard's Sources'. This category includes articles that perform source-work research in order to discover and document the numerous sources of Kierkegaard's thought. These are divided into individual volumes according to the historical period of the sources in question. The articles in this category build squarely on the research set forth in *SKS*.

#### Section I: Kierkegaard's Sources

##### Volume 1. Kierkegaard and the Bible

Tome I: The Old Testament

Tome II: The New Testament

Tome III: Overview Articles

##### Volume 2. Kierkegaard and the Greek World

Tome I: Socrates and Plato

Tome II: Aristotle and Other Authors

##### Volume 3. Kierkegaard and the Roman World

##### Volume 4. Kierkegaard and the Patristic and Medieval Traditions

##### Volume 5. Kierkegaard and the Modern Tradition

Tome I: Philosophy

Tome II: Theology

Tome III: Literature, Drama and Aesthetics

##### Volume 6. Kierkegaard and His German Contemporaries

Tome I: Philosophy

Tome II: Theology

Tome III: Literature, Drama and Aesthetics

##### Volume 7. Kierkegaard and His Danish Contemporaries

Tome I: Philosophy, Politics and Social Theory

Tome II: Theology

Tome III: Literature, Drama and Aesthetics

The articles in the individual volumes treat Kierkegaard's use of specific figures; for example, in *Kierkegaard and His German Contemporaries*, there are detailed individual essays on his appropriation of, respectively, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Schleiermacher, and others.

The second category is 'Kierkegaard Reception'. This section represents, as it were, the mirror image of the section on source-work research. Instead of tracing the influence of earlier authors on Kierkegaard, this section features articles that explore Kierkegaard's influence on later philosophers, theologians, and writers.

#### Section II: Kierkegaard Reception

##### Volume 8. Kierkegaard's International Reception

Tome I: Northern and Western Europe

Tome II: Southern, Central and Eastern Europe

Tome III: The Near East, Asia, Australia and the Americas

##### Volume 9. Kierkegaard's Influence on Existentialism

##### Volume 10. Kierkegaard's Influence on Theology

##### Volume 11. Kierkegaard's Influence on Philosophy

Tome I: French Philosophy

Tome II: German Philosophy

Tome III: Anglophone Philosophy

##### Volume 12. Kierkegaard's Influence on Literature and Criticism

Tome I: Scandinavia

Tome II: The Germanophone World

Tome III: Other Traditions

##### Volume 13. Kierkegaard's Influence on the Social Sciences

##### Volume 14. Kierkegaard's Influence on Social-Political Thought

Volume 8 contains articles on the specific traditions of reception in the individual countries and language groups; for example, there are articles on the Kierkegaard reception in, respectively, the USA, Great Britain, Germany, France, Japan, Korea, etc. The other volumes in this part of the series feature articles on individual writers, philosophers, theologians, psychologists, etc., who have appropriated Kierkegaard's thinking in some way. Thus, volume 9, for example, contains individual articles of the use of Kierkegaard by Sartre, Camus, Heidegger, and other figures.

The third section will be comprised of reference works. It will include a series of research tools such as a dictionary of Kierkegaard's concepts, an extensive bibliography of works on Kierkegaard and a volume containing a list of the books Kierkegaard owned as they appear in the auction catalogue of his library.

### Section III: Kierkegaard Resources

Volume 15. Kierkegaard Bibliography

Volume 16. Index to *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*

Volume 17. Kierkegaard Dictionary

Tome I: Philosophy

Tome II: Theology

Tome III: Aesthetics

Volume 18. The Auction Catalogue of Kierkegaard's Library

With this organization, all of the main aspects of current Kierkegaard research will be treated. Further, the volumes are conceived in such a way that they serve to complement one another without any significant duplication or overlap.

The first part of the series, i.e. volumes 1–7, 'Kierkegaard's Sources', will appear from 2007 to 2010. The series was officially launched when Tomes I and II of *Kierkegaard and His German Contemporaries* appeared in August of 2007. The second part of this series, i.e. the section on Kierkegaard's reception will appear from 2010 to 2012. The third part of the series, 'Kierkegaard Resources' is planned for 2012 to 2015. The series is published by Ashgate in the UK.

To be sure, this project represents a colossal editorial task. The first seven volumes alone feature more than 200 articles, presenting the work of more than a hundred different authors from eighteen different countries. The extent of the project's ambition is, however, dictated by the material itself. To amend the publication plan by eliminating one or more volumes would result in an obvious gap in the series. The broad scope of the project is necessary for it adequately to represent all of the major research areas relevant for Kierkegaard studies today. The systematic organization of the series has made it possible for authors to explore little-recognized fields in Kierkegaard studies. Several of the articles in the series represent pioneering research and have thus already made significant advances in the field. The goal, however, is not to create an authoritative or definitive statement of Kierkegaard's views but, on the contrary, to encourage the maximal amount of diversity and interdisciplinarity that current international Kierkegaard research allows, and to do so at the highest possible scholarly level.

While there might exist analogues to individual volumes of this series in other fields of study, the strength of *KRSRR* is that it systematically brings together numerous strands and topics into a unified framework. By uniting a plethora of research that would otherwise remain fragmented, this series will be assured an enduring impact on future research. The hope is that several years from now when Kierkegaard scholars wish to embark on a research project, regardless of its specific topic, they will feel compelled to consult the relevant articles in *KRSRR* as the natural point of departure.

Jon Stewart

Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre at Copenhagen University