

The Unstable Kierkegaardian Framework of Henrik Stangerup's Novel Trilogy

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ABSTRACT: Despite the success of the individual volumes of his novel trilogy (published 1981-1990), Henrik Stangerup fails overall to make the trilogy a coherent exploration of Kierkegaard's "stages on life's way." Stangerup intended the protagonist of each of the three novels to represent one of the stages: Peter Wilhelm Lund, the aesthetic; Peder Ludwig Møller, the ethical; Brother Jacob of Dacia, the religious. Though a central concern of the entire project, this scheme was jeopardized from the start by the nature of the lives explored. The portraits of the three protagonists are very vivid, and it is better to find the coherence of the trilogy in the successful exploration of exile in the lives of these almost forgotten Danish outsiders who died in Brazil, France and Mexico, respectively.

RÉSUMÉ: Malgré le succès de chacun des volumes de sa trilogie romanesque (publiée entre 1981 et 1990), Henrik Stangerup ne parvient malheureusement pas à représenter d'une façon cohérente et homogène le concept des « étapes sur le chemin de la vie » de Kierkegaard. Son intention était de créer trois protagonistes pour représenter, dans chacun des romans, une des étapes de Kierkegaard: Peter Wilhelm Lund, l'homme esthétique; Peder Ludwig Møller, l'homme éthique; Frère Jacob, l'homme religieux. L'idée centrale de la trilogie a été compromise par la nature même de ces trois personnages historiques. Les portraits de ces trois protagonistes sont, par contre, très vifs, et on retrouve dans l'ensemble de l'œuvre plus de cohérence dans l'exploration réussie de leur exil du Danemark vers l'étranger et éventuellement, vers le Brésil, la France et le Mexique où ils ont fini leurs vies.

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One of the most ambitious works of contemporary Danish literature is the novel trilogy of Henrik Stangerup (1937-1998) each volume of which is the life story of a man who is supposed to represent one of the three attitudes toward human existence described in Søren Kierkegaard's 1843 *Enten—Eller* (1962) [*Either/Or* 1971] and his 1845 *Stadier på Livets Vej* (1963b) [*Stages on Life's Way* 1940]. In each case, the protagonist is one of society's outsiders, a Dane who chose exile from his homeland, and who subsequently has been unjustly neglected in standard histories. They are Peter Wilhelm Lund, Peder Ludvig Møller, and Brother Jacob of Dacia, and they are supposed to illustrate, respectively, the ethical, aesthetic, and religious approaches to life. Stangerup wrote the three novels during a period when he was collaborating with Robert Poole on a collection of Kierkegaard's writings called *Dansemesteren* (1985) [*The Laughter Is on My Side* 1989]. The three novels, published individually in Danish in 1981, 1985, and 1991, were posthumously collected in one volume in 2000. The individual novels are as follows: *Vejen til Lagoa Santa* (1981) [*The Road to Lagoa Santa* 1984], *Det er svært at dø i Dieppe* (1985) [*The Seducer: It is Hard to Die in Dieppe* 1990], and *Broder Jacob* (1991) [*Brother Jacob* 1993]. Stangerup's prefaces to these English editions at times depart from the original Danish ones.

Given Stangerup's ambitious philosophical purpose in writing the trilogy, as well as his desire in his prefaces to point his readers toward a specifically Kierkegaardian reading of the trilogy, it is legitimate to ask if he succeeded in his purpose. No other critic seems to have asked this question in a published article, yet it is relevant not only to Stangerup but also to Kierkegaard studies. In my view, Stangerup, in his attempt to use Kierkegaard's "stages on life's way," fails overall to make a coherent trilogy, despite the success of each individual novel. My purpose is to demonstrate this proposition here, after some opening comments, through a discussion of each of the three novels.

The rationale of the trilogy is most completely expressed in Stangerup's introduction to the English language version of the third novel, *Brother Jacob*, where he comments on the impossibility of completing his project in the way he had first hoped. He had written *The Road to Lagoa Santa* in which the protagonist, Peter Wilhelm Lund (1801-1880), represents Kierkegaard's concept of the *ethical man* and *The Seducer: It is Hard to Die in Dieppe* in which the protagonist, Peder Ludvig Møller (1814-1865), stands for Kierkegaard's idea of the "aesthete." Stangerup admits that he wanted to write his third novel of the trilogy about Kierkegaard, but he could not do so since Kierkegaard had written so much on himself. Nevertheless "Kierkegaard helped me to understand his brother-in-law P. W. Lund in distant Brazil and his inveterate opponent, the demon P. L. Møller, who ended up insane in Normandy" (1993 8). In order to complete his trilogy

about Kierkegaard's three stages on life's road—ethical, aesthetic, religious—he chose to write on Broder Jacob of Dacia instead (1993 8).

Stangerup does not discuss why he chose to begin the trilogy with the exemplar of the ethical stage (Lund) rather than the aesthetic stage (Møller), which would have given the trilogy further shape as an upward progression, since the aesthetic stage is in Kierkegaard's view lower than the ethical. Nor does he explain why he refers here to Møller as a "demon," though he treats him less harshly in the novel (and in an article on Møller from 1985). Stangerup also fails to account for his own odd, and as it proved, problematic decision to leave the 19th century world of Lund and Møller, both mentioned in Kierkegaard's writings, and go back to a far different time period to investigate the admirable figure of Jacob (1484?-1566?), son of King Hans and brother of Christian II of Denmark, who became a Franciscan missionary to the Tarascan Indians and promoted racial equality within the Catholic Church.

In each case, Stangerup did the extensive research that brought all three characters to life. Lund was a naturalist who went to Brazil and was initially acclaimed. However, when he came to conclusions about evolution that were superseded by Darwinism, he lost interest in his work and remained in the interior of far-away Brazil for the remainder of his life. Møller was a promising literary critic, whose career was ruined in the literary squabble surrounding *Corsaren* [The Corsair], a weekly satirical paper in Copenhagen to which Møller secretly contributed. In December 1845 Kierkegaard, who was angry at Møller for his recent critique of *Stages on Life's Way*, exposed the scandalous fact that Møller was contributing to this supposedly disreputable periodical while simultaneously seeking a high academic post. Deeply wounded by Kierkegaard, Møller turned to a life of dissipation. In the 1877 memoirs of Meir Goldschmidt, general editor of *The Corsair*, Møller was already cast as the aesthete (Hertel 39). In contrast to these two failures, Brother Jacob labored selflessly for a quarter century to improve the lot of the Tarascan Indians in the New World.

Stangerup's intention to have each protagonist represent one of Kierkegaard's three stages, though a central concern of the entire project, was jeopardized from the start, due to the nature of the lives explored. Peter Wilhelm Lund's chronic depression and bouts of delusion are hardly the bedrock on which an ethical life can be lived. Also, when we arrive at the end of the novel and see how large a part aesthetic concerns played in Lund's life, leading to his failure and despair, it is hard to think of him as Kierkegaard's ethical man. Møller's self-loathing was at least in part derived from the fact that he did try fitfully to live a life that was ethical in a Kierkegaardian sense. The term *seducer* does not capture the complexity of Møller's character, even though the English title of the novel capitalizes on Møller's status as model for Kierkegaard's Johannes the Seducer in *Either/Or*. Indeed, Stangerup goes so far as to write in the preface to *Brother Jacob*, "I felt the nihilist P. L. Møller staring at me from morning to night, delighted to

see I was unable to take the leap into the religious sphere” (1993 8). For Stangerup as well as for Kierkegaard, Møller had become a personal threat. Furthermore, in the novel about Brother Jacob, Stangerup uses a concept of *the religious life*, which seems much more traditional than Kierkegaardian. We see a man who subscribed to a universal moral law and who thought of Lutheranism, with its emphasis on personal faith, as dangerous. Given Jacob's rejection of the Protestant Reformation, he would not be sympathetic to Kierkegaard's *religious stage* explained in *Stages on Life's Way*, which is one possible variant of a theology of interiority. Thus while all the individual novels are successes, the series as a whole fails to live up to the program Stangerup apparently understood himself to be following, namely, exploring Kierkegaard's three attitudes to human life. It is tempting to view Stangerup's trilogy from his own perspective yet we must reject his “take” on Kierkegaard, as expressed schematically in his comments on *Brother Jacob*, and offer a different view on his use of Kierkegaardian ideas.

I

In *The Way to Lagoa Santa*, Stangerup gives us a view of Lund which one would not anticipate from Kierkegaard's comments about him in his journals, where we do not sense the failure and despair that Stangerup attributes to him. Stangerup presents Lund as a person with a strong desire to remain within the Lutheran faith even if it meant changing or abandoning his research. There are two extended mentions of Lund in Kierkegaard's *Papirer* (1968-1978) [*Journals and Papers* 1978], one from 1835 and one from c. 1850. In the novel, Stangerup uses as an epigraph a small part of the first reference but he ignores the second one. In that latter journal entry from 1850, we see that Kierkegaard—unlike Stangerup—does not connect Lund's scientific project or his retreat from it with the desire to maintain a Christian view of the world:

Det faldt mig paa idag, hvilken Lighed mit Liv har med hans. Som han lever derovre i Brasilien, tabt for Verden, fortabt i at udgrave antideluvianske Forsteninger; saaledes lever jeg som undenfor Verden fortabt i at udgrave de christelige Begreber—ak, og saa er det i Christenheden jeg lever, hvor Christendommen er i fuld Flor, <staaer> i frodig Væxt med 1000 Geistlige, og hvor vi alle ere Christne. (Item A239, *Papirer* [1968-1978] Vol. X, Part 3: 183)

[The similarity between his life and mine occurred to me today. Just as he lives over there in Brazil, lost to the world, absorbed in excavating antediluvian fossils, so I live as if outside the world, absorbed in excavating Christian concepts—alas, and yet I am living in Christendom, where Christianity flourishes, stands in luxuriant growth with 1,000 clergymen, and where we are all Christians.] (Item 6652, *Journals & Papers* [1978] 6: 337)

Kierkegaard in his journal likens himself to Lund by the analogy of excavation, but in Stangerup's novel, Lund actually has the Kierkegaardian desire to live by faith.

According to Roger Poole, in his Preface to *The Laughter Is on My Side* Kierkegaard's unsent letter to Lund from the seaside resort of Gilleleje on 1 June 1835, after the deaths of his mother, two sisters, and a brother over the past three years, is one "in which, as he debated inwardly the choices which confronted him, the major categories of his existential philosophy can be clearly seen emerging" (1989 7). This selection from Kierkegaard's *Journals and Papers* used by Stangerup is the source for the first of the two epigraphs to the third section of the novel. The end of it reads:

...nu gjælder det, om Mennesket er istand til, for atter at tage et Billede fra Blomsterne, at udvikle—ved sin egen Kraft ligesom en Nereum,—en Draabe, der kan staae som Frugten af hans Liv. Dertil hører først og fremmest, at man kommer til at staae i den Jordbund, hvor man egentlig hører hjemme; men den er ikke altid saa let at finde.

(Stangerup 1981 26; cf. Kierkegaard Item A72 *Papirer* [1968-1978] Vol. X, Part 3: 46)

[Now the important question is whether the person is able once more, to borrow an image from the flowers, to develop—through his own strength, like an oleander—a drop which can form the fruit of his life. Above all it is necessary to find the soil in which one truly belongs; but this is not always easy.]

(Stangerup 1984 29)

At this point Lund's career is in its early stages and it looks as if he will be a success.

Kierkegaard in the unsent letter of 1835 refers to vocational development within a Kantian framework of categorical imperatives. Stangerup has constructed his novel to fit these early Kantian remarks by Kierkegaard better than the later idea of the three stages developed in opposition to Hegel's system. Here, six years before going to Berlin in 1841 and ten years before Lund's emotional collapse, Kierkegaard writes about two types of imperatives.

Der gives i den Henseende lykkelige Naturer, som have en saa afgjort Tilbøielighed til en vis Retning, at de troligen arbeide frem ad den engang saaledes anviste Vei, uden at nogensinde den Tanke faaer nogen Magt over dem, at det maaskee egenlig var en ganske anden Vei, de skulde betræde. Der gives Andre, som saa aldeles lade sig styre af deres Omgivelser, at det aldrig gaaer ret op for dem, hvor de egenlig stræbe hen. Ligesom den foregaaende Classe har sit indvortes categorisk Imperativ, saaledes anerkjender denne sidste et udvortes categorisk Imperativ. Men hvor Faa ere ikke de første, og til de sidstes Classe ønsker jeg ikke at høre.

(Item A72, in *Papirer* [1968-1978] Vol. I: 46)

[In this respect there are fortunate temperaments so decisively oriented in a particular direction that they go steadily along the path once assigned to them without ever entertaining the thought that perhaps they should really be taking another path. There are others who let themselves be so completely directed by their environment that they never become clear about what they are working toward. Just as the former class has its internal categorical imperative, so the latter has an external categorical imperative. But how few there are in the former class, and to the latter I do not wish to belong.]

(Item 5092 in *Journals and Papers* [1978] 5: 20)

In the first part of *The Way to Lagoa Santa*, Lund is a person who is activated by the internal categorical imperative. Consequently, he is able to do a huge amount of research between 1833 and 1845 and to report on it in Danish and French scientific journals.

Ironically, after Lund's discovery that his cataclysmic theories probably need to be scrapped, the imperative to do research and writing becomes an external one. The internal imperative requires him not to abandon his faith in a God who has directed creation in general toward the teleological goal of the appearance of humankind. The clash of the two imperatives produces his torpor and his nightmares. Just after getting ready to go to Europe in 1845, Lund has a Boschean dream of the earth's demonic double globe and he comes to sense what has been called by Tennyson "nature red in tooth and claw." The nightmare continues with a terrifying vision of the survival of the fittest in which the universe is a place where one creature of necessity devours another.

In the same unsent letter of 1835, we see that science cannot enlighten a person about his ultimate connection to God, but theology, the other choice that Kierkegaard sees before him, can do so. Although a few scientists such as Oersted make huge contributions and end up filled with tranquility, this is not the lot of most of their colleagues. According to Kierkegaard, many naturalists never advance beyond collecting.

En stor Mængde af Enkeltheder kjende de [the average scientists], og de have opdaget mange nye; men heller ikke mere. De have blot leveret et Substrat for deres Tænkning og Bearbejdelse. Og disse Mennesker staae nu der tilfredse med deres Enkeltheder, og dog forekomme de mig at staae ligesom den rige Bonde i Evangeliet; en stor Mængde have de samlet i Laden, men Videnskaben kan sige til dem: "Imorgen vil jeg kræve Dit Liv", forsaavidt det er den, der afgjør, hvad Betydning hvert enkelt Resultat skal have i det Hele. Forsaavidt nu der var et Slags ubevidst Liv i en saadan Mands Viden, forsaavidt kan Videnskaberne siges at kræve hans Liv; forsaavidt det ikke var, er hans Virksomhed ligesom Menneskets, der ved sit døde Legemes Hensmulren bidrager til Jordens Vedligeholdelse.

(Item A72, *Papirer* [1968-1978] Vol. I: 48-49)

[(The average scientists) know a great many details and have discovered many new ones, but nothing more. They have merely provided a substratum for others to think about and work up. These men are satisfied with their details, and yet to me they are like the rich farmer in the gospel: they have collected a great deal in the barn, but science can say to them: "Tomorrow I will demand your life," insofar as that is what decides the significance each separate finding is to have in the whole picture. To the extent that there is a kind of unconscious life in such a man's knowledge, to that extent the sciences can be said to demand his life; to the extent that this is not the case, his activity is like that of the man who contributes to the upkeep of the earth by the decomposition of his dead body.]

(Item 5092 in *Journals and Papers* [1978] 5: 22)

Unless one becomes a hero of science like Oersted, the two alternatives are extremely bleak. One either loses one's self and the chance for a larger life or else one loses one's individuality and becomes an anonymous forerunner of those greater scientists to come.

In the novel Lund is a failure of the first type, for he is overcome by despair to the point of paralysis in pursuing his research. He never becomes a great scientist like Oersted. One of the reasons for Lund's breakdown is his refusal to accept the fact that his Cuvier-inspired view of world cataclysms needs to be revised in light of his later discoveries of the survival of mammals from the period he considers to antedate the last cataclysm. Lund has no innate sympathy for the doctrine of evolution whether through Darwinian natural selection or otherwise. Although he hopes to remain true to Christianity, he ultimately abandons it because of the impact of the scientific discoveries he wants to deny. (It is hard to understand why, in a brief comment in his book on the painter Joachim Patinir, Stangerup writes that nature saved Lund [1992 62].) In a generous gesture of compensation for his failure, Stangerup gives Lund's life an elegiac ending: his death in 1880 is celebrated by neighbors with fireworks made from books that had inspired his work before 1845.

Lund's sleep during the fireworks display is less an indication that he is oblivious to a vulgar crowd destroying his library than a sign that he has been confirmed in his last wish—to rest in peace after a tormented and illness-prone life. He has admitted on his deathbed, "Ja, jeg er fritænker! Men Forsynet...Forsynet tror jeg på. Det var med mig hvert minut i mit liv. Og sådan som Gud har været med mig hele mit liv, er han også med mig nu. Derfor dør jeg roligt!" [Yes, I'm a freethinker. But Providence...Providence, that I do believe in. It had been with me every moment of my life. God has been with me always and he is with me now. So can I die peacefully!] (1981 277; 1984 28). This retrospective view is wishful thinking that does not correspond to reality.

The Lund of the novel is indeed stricken by misfortune, and he is overcome by despair as well. However, he does not will this despair, and the willing of despair is a crucial concept that marks the ethical stage, as expressed in the ideas

of Judge William in the second part of *Either/Or* and analyzed in detail by Heidi Liehu in her 1990 study, Søren Kierkegaard's *Theory of Stages and Its Relation to Hegel*. Although Stangerup would like to see Lund as ethical, the naturalist is really locked into the aesthetic stage. His theory of cataclysms has an underlying aesthetic basis. The neat trajectory of progress through periods of successive cataclysms, in which the most primitive and repulsive creatures, such as the giant sloth, are gradually eliminated from the earth, has an appeal to him which parallels his delights in the aesthetic beauty of certain parts of the landscape of Minas Gerais. The assembling of skeletons of various extinct animals from the fossils has the elegant beauty of a solvable puzzle for him.

In order to get out of the aesthetic stage Lund would have to will his own despair, and the novel is structured so that he does not do so. His emotional collapse comes between the second and third sections of the novel, that is, between the end of chapter seven, as he is ready to go back to Europe in 1845, and the beginning of chapter eight, at which time he has already failed to make the journey overseas. Bandaged, he lies in bed, thinking of the chaos of the world, now that the aesthetic aspect of science has been challenged for him. He recognizes that his delirium started after his last trip to the cave and he could not fit the spiny rat into his vision of the world and fell ill from an overwhelming sense of chaos in the universe. Lund has come to believe that it is not the terrible creatures that have died out but rather the tender, delicate deer and antelope. He has to abandon his idea of a "fuldent skabelse, fra art til art, fra familie til familie" [perfected creation from species to species, from family to family] (1981 179; 1984 183). Creation has never been finished. The Creator has only done a quarter of his job, and the world has been turned over to the Evil One.

Although the novel allows for much of Lund's pain to be physical, Stangerup makes it clear that the experience in the cave provoked his involuntary breakdown. Lund is never able to take the ethical advice to overcome his passivity in the face of his discoveries. As Heidi Liehu, building on the earlier work of Mark C. Taylor (1980) and Stephen N. Dunning (1985) points out, to flee despair is to flee one's own self. The one who flees does not recognize that the synthesis of categories in his/her life is not working. In his 1849 *Sygdommen til døden* (1963d) [*The Sickness unto Death* 1980] Kierkegaard gives his most extensive analysis of the situation of a person in whom there is something wrong with the synthesis of the polar elements: infinitude and finitude, possibility and necessity, eternity and time, soul and body. Liehu summarizes:

Choosing despair, man chooses himself as a disproportionate synthesis and at the same time sees himself as a relation, between the two components. And seeing himself as a relation between the two components he at the same time relates himself to this relation as a relation.

(145)

In *Either/Or* Judge William also explains that in choosing oneself one is doing more than knowing oneself in the way that Socrates enjoined, for self-reflection is action as well as contemplation, and it allows one to take responsibility for oneself and obtain freedom.

Lund is presented by Stangerup as a faulty synthesis of the polar elements—in Liehu’s terms. Lund has leaned too heavily on the side of the categories which aim toward expansion rather than contraction. Infinitude, possibility, eternity, and soul have been stressed to the point that he has not recognized his limitations. He has, in effect, before his collapse tried to enter into the mind of God. Lund’s research leads him to have to contemplate the possibility of a New Creation rather than re-creation. Lund tries to justify the ways of God to humankind. He has reached out into infinity, but he never wills the despair ethically required after the collapse he suffers.

Lund is given a suitable aesthetic send-off at the end of his life when the shower of stardust in the dark tropical sky bids him farewell. Even before this finale, “Caboclo-bandaet spille mens blomsterbuketter i et antal der ikke før er set i Lagoa Santa dækker kisten til langt op over hullets kastes på” [the caboclo band plays as bouquets of flowers, more than ever seen before in Lagoa Santa, cover the coffin, filling the grave to overflowing] (1981 279; 1984 284). A humble, unadorned wooden cross is erected, despite the fact that Lund has died as a freethinker. His life is not a complete waste. After all, he has adopted and provided for a black protégé, Nereo, and his family. Although a recluse, he has entertained a few important guests. He has maintained ties to his family at a distance. Yet he has failed himself and failed to integrate himself well into the human community.

II

In *The Seducer: It is Hard to Die in Dieppe* the generosity that Stangerup extends to Lund is not granted to Peder Ludwig Møller, a figure who has fared equally ill among literary historians. As Stangerup notes, in the “Preface to the English Edition” of *The Seducer*, there is neither a biography of Møller nor a definitive anthology of his essays (1990 9).¹ In his novel Stangerup surpasses Kierkegaard himself in the negativity of his view of Møller, although in his preface to the English edition Stangerup implies that he understands this negativity, which he shares with others, to be problematic (1990 8-9). However, since working on the book on Brother Jacob, Stangerup seems himself to have turned into one of those Kierkegaardians who revile Møller. For, as we have seen, in the preface to *Brother Jacob* he echoes Kierkegaard’s antipathy to Møller the “nihilist” and the “demon.”

Just as Stangerup is too generous to the historical Lund, he is too unkind to the real Møller. From his prefaces, we realize that he wants the reader to find a starker contrast between the two men than is actually there. Stangerup wants

Lund to stand in an antithetical position to Møller for the sake of contrast. He writes in his Preface to *The Seducer* that Møller represents a “diametric antithesis” to Lund (1990 9). However, this “diametric antithesis” is illusory since Lund had aesthetic elements in his life and Møller had ethical ones in his.

When we actually analyze the four epigraphs which form a prologue to both the Danish and English editions of the novel, we do not find quotations leading us to think of Møller as this diametric antithesis to Lund. Although Stangerup suggests through his first epigraph that Møller incarnates Kierkegaard's seducer, Johannes (an idea promoted in 1929 by Frithiof Brandt in his *Den unge Søren Kierkegaard*), the next three epigraphs suggest a more sympathetic Møller, someone who could analyze his own failings in a work of fiction and who gained the admiration of men as astute as Meir Goldschmidt and Hans Christian Andersen.

The four quotations are from Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*, Meir Goldschmidt's 1877 *Livs Erindringer og Resultater* [Life's Reminiscences and Results], Møller's one novella “Janus,” and Hans Christian Andersen's Letter to Jonas Collin (Stangerup 1985 6-7 and 1990 11-12). First, the quotation from Victor Eremita, the personage whom Kierkegaard creates as editor of the two volumes of *Either/Or*, is meant to imply that Møller—rather than Kierkegaard himself—is the model for Johannes, the seducer, as Roger Poole in his notes in *The Laughter Is on My Side* (1990 146) speculates, acknowledging a suggestion about Kierkegaard as seducer already made by Henning Fenger (1980 210). Second, Meir Goldschmidt shows Møller as a suffering rather than a heartless individual. He claims that the agony of Møller's existence is best expressed in “Janus” where Møller says of himself, “Jeg vil tage imod Døden i stum Fortvivelse hellere end at kyrbe til Korset” [I wish to meet death in mute desperation rather than grovel to the Cross] (1985 6; 1990 11).² Third, the quotation from Møller's autobiographical story “Janus” which Stangerup places after Goldschmidt's reminiscence is one in which the narrator declares the Janus-figure to be “i Grunden et naivt og barnig-reent Gemyt” [at heart naive and innocent as a child] (1985 7; 1990 12) despite his many debaucheries. Finally, Andersen's letter states frankly that Møller was considered bad because he was “den eneste, de vovede at udtale en anden Mening” [the only one who dared express a different opinion] (1985 7; 1990 12). This may be a reference to the fact that in his article “Corsaren og Goldschmidt” in his journal *Arena* for June 1843, Møller defended Goldschmidt, who had been sentenced to twenty-four days in jail for violating the Danish press laws (Hong and Hong xi).

The opening quotation from Kierkegaard makes it is clear that Stangerup wants Møller to be understood as an aesthete. This position is made even more explicit first when Goldschmidt calls him an aesthete without ethics and later, during his Paris years, when Stangerup has Møller state “...den første og vigtigste betingelse er at have naturlig forstand på det skønne: være en æstetisk personlighed” [...the first and most important condition is to have a natural understanding of beauty: to be yourself an aesthetic personality] (1985 248-249; 1990

300). Møller condemns himself to the lowest of life's three stages, but the suggestion that there is an antithetical relationship between the aesthetic and ethical is only partially true, as Kierkegaard sees the ethical as an intermediate stage between the major either/or opposition of aesthetic/religious (Liehu 188). The ethical person must keep on choosing again and again the ethical life, so he/she is always poised between falling back into the aesthetic or making the leap of faith into the religious sphere (Liehu 187-188).

Stangerup is not able to make Møller into an aesthete despite the words he places in Møller's mouth about the necessity of turning oneself into an aesthetic personality. On the one hand, we see several of the better aspects of Møller. He is still motivated by love, friendship, and duty—and by opposition to crass Hegelianism and the homogenization of life in the bourgeois capital. Møller, despite his degeneracy, at times tries to have meaningful relationships with women, such as Pauline. Although he abandons her emotionally when he goes to Hamburg as a newspaper reporter for the Schleswig-Holstein War, and hears only by mail of the death of their illegitimate child, he still has real involvement with her. Similarly, in his relationship with Meir Goldschmidt there is the potential for friendship, based on their common literary and reform interests, though he lets their relationship fall apart.

On the other hand, Møller abuses drugs and alcohol because he wants to keep at bay his guilt, some of which stems from his abuse of women. A major cause of Møller's first breakdown is his failure to assume his guilt over his callous treatment of his sometime girlfriend, Jenny, dead of tuberculosis, or to accept the possibility that his actions led to her being used as a cadaver by medical students. The narrative technique of eliding the episode of disintegration (between chapters 6 and 7) and showing the breakdown as it has already progressed for several days (the same technique used for Lund's breakdown) parallels Møller's attempt to skip over the moral failure that brought him to this troubled state. Although he is upset by the effects that hashish has on him, the absence of a stated cause for the substance abuse makes clear that we are witnessing Møller's attempt to keep the repressed guilt from returning.

In addition, Møller uses some drugs as an aid for writing when his inspiration flags. In the opening scene when he is near his death amid the horrors of provincial Dieppe he has been propping himself up on ether and opium in order to write. In this seedy world, most of Møller's female relationships are with "fallen women" such as prostitutes, with whom he is portrayed as capable of sharing his ideas.³

In Stangerup's novel, Møller himself had been seduced as a young man. Once, while his family is waiting for him, Møller is picked up by a woman who sticks her hand in his trousers pocket and leads him to her home for a quick sexual encounter. He is subconsciously responding to this event when as an adult he seduces women. He is not like Kierkegaard's Johannes, who loses interest in a relationship once sexual activity is finished. In contrast, Møller's interactions

with women, such as those at the Copenhagen dive, The Elephant's Graveyard, tend to be longstanding, although cemented by the mutual inability to overcome squalor.

On the level of vocation, Møller tries to remain true to his attempt to shake up the bourgeois establishment of Denmark, though unfortunately by the ineffectual means of drug and alcohol abuse. Møller even serves Denmark as a reporter, and the major goal of his life is to take over Oehlschläger's position as professor of literature at the University of Copenhagen. His aspirations are so rooted in the work ethic that part of his life is destroyed when the *Corsair* affair keeps him from getting this lecturing position. Yet he still hopes that by introducing Danish literature to Germany and France he can revitalize his academic hopes. Thus although Møller fails at his attempt to lead an ethical life, he has not been so overwhelmed by the aesthetic view of life as to want to transform everything into pleasure.

Like Kierkegaard, Møller in the early 1840s attempts to free Denmark from the hold of Hegelianism, a project which appears in the novel without reference to Hegel but as an attack on Johan Ludvig Heiberg's triads. Møller scorns the intellectual scaffolding constructed by the political conservative Heiberg to order hierarchically the lyrical, epic, dramatic, and other genres. In Heiberg's self-serving world of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, the ultimate honour goes to the category of vaudeville, the type of writing in which he specializes.

The association of Heiberg with political conservatism as well as Hegelian aesthetics is significant for Stangerup, who shares Kierkegaard's opposition to Hegel's politics. He and Roger Poole devoted a large section of their Kierkegaard anthology, *The Laughter Is on My Side*, to Kierkegaard's denunciations of contemporary bourgeois society, and Poole in his preface to the volume reveals his and Stangerup's sympathy for the attack on the "mass man" (1989 15). Kierkegaard feared the submergence of the individual in the Hegelian ethical community, which he saw as a philistine crowd. Both Møller and Lund are individuals who escape from this crowd. Stangerup's interest in Møller comes from the fact that like Kierkegaard he fears that the loss of individualism will make the ethical life seem ordinary, since what responsibilities there are, are known to everyone.

Møller's resistance to the bourgeoisie is displayed in his essays. Romanticism is evident in his poetry, which receives little attention from Stangerup. In actuality, in his essay on Adam Oehlschläger, Møller praises the great Romantic as one who pursued beauty and truth (1876 69-70). And in the essay, "Moralens Forhold til Theater og Kunst" [The Moral State of Things in Theatre and Art] from *Det nyere Lystspil* (1858) [Modern Comedy], Møller criticizes Eugène Scribe for his petty morality and failure to understand nature: "Denne Forfatter synes aldrig at have kjendt Naturen eller havt Følelse for dens evige Sandhed" [This author

seems never to have known nature nor to have had any feeling for its eternal truth] (106). Here the eternal quality of truth points to the ethical realm.

Heidi Liehu summarizes Kierkegaard's view of the ethical life with respect to universals, thus pointing us to Stangerup's fear that ordinary civic commitment will swallow up individuality.

Ethical life should reflect the general and the universal-human, for the "ethical as such is the universal", and the task of the ethical man is "to abrogate his particularity so as to become the universal"...The task of the ethical person lies in accomplishing the "universal-human" and the general in life, and in developing the "exception" with the help of the ethical categories of marriage, work, vocation, and friendship into an ethical synthesis of particularity and universality. "The task which the ethical individual sets himself," the Judge stresses, "is to transform himself into the universal man."

(Liehu 167)

Stangerup is actually more fearful of the loss of individuality than of the loss of morality; we can tell that this is so because he does not present in his novels ethical foils for his heroes. No one in Møller's world has maintained the particular in the universal through marriage, friendship, vocation, and duty. There is no one who has not been co-opted by bourgeois culture to point him on the right track, except perhaps the minor character Meir Goldschmidt, who as a Jew is already an outsider.

Stangerup's defensiveness toward the temperate Kierkegaard leads him to hostility toward the profligate Møller. Kierkegaard imagined Møller as a quintessential seducer, feared him personally, and wrecked Møller's career in the *Corsair* affair. In *Either/Or* Johannes reveals the long process by which he seduced one woman and the intellectual thrill that he received from it. In contrast, Møller does not often have the patience for such a long undertaking. Also, his delight in physical pleasures, such as oral sex, described several times in the novel, is inconsistent with the cerebral quality of Johannes's endeavour. For example, after Møller seduces Fru von L., he reaches an agreement with her, and he enjoys sex with her until society forces her away. Still in a rage against the Kierkegaard he has not seen in years, he wonders where his own experiences leave off and those of the Seducer in *Either/Or* begin. However, Møller is also capable of a long correspondence with Matilda Leiner and in France he loves the modiste Jeanne Balaresque, although he does not want to admit it. It is to her that he writes that it is hard to die in Dieppe.

Given the imperfect similarities between Møller and Johannes, what is the relevance of the passage from *The Diary of a Seducer* that serves as the first epigraph to the novel?

Han forløftede sig ikke paa Virkeligheden, han var ikke for svag til at bære den, nei han var for stærk; men denne Styrke var en Sygdom. Saasnart Virkeligheden havde tabt sin Betydning som Incitament, var han afvæbnet, deri laae det Onde hos ham. Dette var han sig bevidst selv i Incitamentets Øieblik, og i denne Bevidsthed laae det Onde.

(*Enten—Eller*, Kierkegaard 1962 Vol. 2 284)

[He did not overexert himself in facing up to reality. He was not too weak to endure it. No, he was too strong; but that strength was a disease. As soon as reality had lost its importance as a stimulus, he was disarmed; that was the essence of the evil in him. He was aware of this himself at the moment of stimulation, and in this awareness lay the evil.]

(Kierkegaard quoted in Stangerup 1990 11)

Significantly, the quotation from *Either/Or* has nothing to do with seduction *per se* but rather with the connection between reality and evil. In the novel it relates to Møller's alcohol and drug abuse. Both liquor and hashish provide stimulation in the world of drab bourgeois provincialism.

Kierkegaard was hostile to Møller because Møller was a personal threat to him. He understood too much about Søren and Regine Olsen. Whereas Howard V. and Edna H. Hong are content to state that Kierkegaard felt that Møller had invaded the privacy of his relationship with Regine Olsen in "Et Besog i Sorö" [A Visit in Sorö] (1982), the article Møller wrote for the literary annual *Gæa* for the coming calendar year of 1846 (Hong and Hong xiii), Roger Poole claims that Kierkegaard could not endure the suggestion that he himself had tortured Regine in his published pseudonymous writing, and so had penned a cold response to Møller in just a few days (144-145). If Poole is right, then Stangerup has—perhaps intentionally—down-played Kierkegaard's agency in Møller's sordid decline.

Poole writes of Møller as one who represented "the road not taken" for Kierkegaard and finds the two men alter egos bound by homoeroticism:

And as for the obviousness of Møller's case about [Kierkegaard's] *Stages [on Life's Way]* that it is sick—Kierkegaard must have known well enough to what buried layers of suffering Møller was referring, but *sick* was a radical downgrading of the problem, and anyway Møller was the last person that Kierkegaard could afford to hear it from. I think we have to keep in mind what an ideal status Møller had enjoyed in Kierkegaard's mind for so long. He was certainly an ideal, the ideal of the "other" kind of life from which Kierkegaard knew he was forever cut off. He admired that ideal, in hopelessness...

(153-154)

Poole goes so far as to say that Møller played the role similar to that of the blonde Ingeborg, loved and admired from a distance by Thomas Mann's Tonio Kröger.

Poole accepts Kierkegaard's self-evaluation, that he was a man who never had a body, a perception (or reality) which may explain why Møller's intense sexual life fascinated him (154).

Turning to the *Corsair* affair, we see that Stangerup minimizes Kierkegaard's role in Møller's failure to rise to a university position and his subsequent decision to exile himself for a decade in Germany and France. Roger Poole notes that Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, translators of the materials from the *Corsair* affair, did not reach the conclusion that he finds obvious: Kierkegaard acted with unusual brutality and swiftness in attacking Møller in print, and in so doing ruined the man. Kierkegaard's 27 December 1845 essay in *Fæderlandet* [The Fatherland], "En omreisende Æstetikers Virksomhed, og hvorledes han dog kom til at betale Gjæstebudet" [The Activity of a Traveling Esthetician and How He Still Happened to Pay for the Dinner], was a response to Møller's article "A Visit in Sorø" published a few days before, which ended with a critique of *Stages on Life's Way*. The *Corsair* affair is handled in the sixth chapter of Stangerup's novel, where it is not presented as the key determinant in Møller's later abuse of alcohol, ether, laudanum, and other drugs. *The Corsair*, as described by Stangerup (and in contrast to what we actually see in Elias Bredsdorff's edition of this newspaper) is simply a ruthless publication driven by personal grievances.⁴

Møller, who sees through the complacency of the literary establishment, is presented as going to Sorø and sharing a gluttonous meal with Carsten Hauch and other literati. At their banquet Møller says unkind words about Kierkegaard and Regine that he (as in real-life) will use a few weeks later in the section of "A Visit in Sorø" which summarizes what Møller feels to be Kierkegaard's callous attitude to his former (1840-1841) fiancée. Møller felt that he treated Regine as someone too philosophically unsophisticated to understand that the engagement was to be considered dialectically to represent both love and lack of it (Hong and Hong 101; cf. Stangerup 1985 70-71 and 1990 90).⁵ In an 1846 essay on the *Afsluttende uvidenskabelig Efterskrift* (1963c) [*Concluding Unscientific Postscript* 1974] Møller claims that Kierkegaard's philosophical use of dialectics conceals from himself his own callousness and the need for repentance on the ethical level (Møller 1971 242).⁶

Stangerup tempers our disapproval of Kierkegaard by presenting much of the controversy through Møller's own aggrandized thoughts about how much he has hurt this former fellow theology student of his. Møller has such visions of grandeur that he imagines that his own tearing through the sheet of wrapping paper of Kierkegaard's multiple pseudonyms had as much consequence as Kierkegaard's identifying him as an editor of the socially unacceptable *Corsair*. The lack of balance in the depiction of the *Corsair* affair does not damage the novel, but it does help explain Stangerup's excessive hostility to Møller, for in the Preface to *Brother Jacob*, Kierkegaard himself is said to represent the true "religious" being (1993 8).

III

In *Brother Jacob* the protagonist is a religious man in the usual sense of the word. He believes in God and in a universal moral law and is suspicious of Lutheranism with its emphasis on personal faith. He is also opposed to the casuistry of the Catholic Church, which seeks to abuse or patronize the Tarascan Indians and deny them the status of ethical human beings identical to their European conquerors. Given his suspicion of Lutheranism, Jacob would not be sympathetic to Kierkegaard's religious stage, which is one extreme development of a Lutheran stress on a completely interiorized relationship to God.

Unable to write about Kierkegaard, Stangerup found a substitute for this "religious" being in Brother Jacob the Dane. Yet, oddly enough, Brother Jacob is religious in the conventional sense rather than in the Kierkegaardian one. His life is not characterized by the leap of faith and teleological suspension of the ethical, and he does not set himself up against social norms but against hypocrisy and inhumanity. His compassionate attitude toward the Tarascan Indians, fostered by his meeting with Bartolomé de Las Casas in Valladolid even before his trip to Mexico, comes not from an inner message from God but rather from his interpretation of the Franciscan ideal of humanity.

Indeed, it is hard to see how Jacob, a follower of the reform tradition of Erasmus, could serve as a representative of the knight of faith. Jacob has done everything he can to keep the Franciscan order in operation in Denmark, but he must confront the fact that in 1537 Christian III imposed Lutheranism on the country. For Jacob, Luther's views represent a threat because faith is made supreme and good works are not adequate for salvation. Ironically, Spanish-born Mexican Franciscans later accuse him, because of his Danish origins, of having Lutheran sympathies.

The extreme Protestant tenor of Kierkegaard's idea of the knight of faith—so alien to Brother Jacob's way of thinking—is expressed in *Frygt og Bæven* (1963a) [*Fear and Trembling* 1983]. Here Johannes de Silentio claims that in everyday speech a man expresses the universal moral demands, and that once he expresses himself in the particular above the universal, no one can understand him. If he were to speak, he would end up falling into temptation. He must abandon the openness of everyday ethics. The intermediate terms available to tragic heroes are not available to Abraham, since he is plunged into the paradox of faith. According to Kierkegaard, Abraham accepts the fact that God's injunction to kill his son Isaac must have a purpose invisible from the standpoint of the universal moral law. The leap of faith here is not only deliberate, but by its nature beyond normal reasoning (Kierkegaard 1963a 67 and 1983 66).

In the novel Jacob is never divinely commanded to disobey the moral law. When he ignores his superiors it is not because of any personal revelation. Instead,

his ideal is universal brotherhood. At the end of the novel in the early 1560s Jacob ardently denies Lutheranism when Bishop Don Vasco opposes those liberal Franciscans who upheld the right of the Mexican natives to take Holy Eucharist and the right of the male natives to take instruction with the goal of becoming priests themselves.

The Spanish religious hierarchy maintained that to impose apostolic responsibility on the Indians would rob them of their divine innocence, but Jacob opposed this patronizing attitude that held the Indians incapable of an ethical life. Then in 1551-1552 the Council of Lima prohibited ordination of Indians, mestizos, and mulattos, and the Council of Mexico City followed suit in 1557. For opposing such policies by his superiors Jacob was sentenced to bread, water, and silence for an indefinite period.

Bishop Don Vasco sees Jacob as a threat to the entire Spanish-ruled social system in Mexico. He has his men drag Jacob out of his church. Jacob defends himself, claiming that the Emperor would support his actions. Jacob had once met with the Emperor Charles V and had encouraged him to implement the “new laws” to improve the situation of the North American natives. Jacob took part in the millennial hopes of the Franciscans in the New World, and he had been inspired by Thomas More’s *Utopia* ever since its first publication when he was about thirty years old.

Stangerup is more sympathetic to reformers like Thomas More and Erasmus than to Luther, and he is not sympathetic toward considering the Protestant Reformation as a religious movement of increasing individualism, the way one might expect a Kierkegaardian admirer to view it. Instead, Lutheranism unleashes civil war, destroys beautiful religious artworks, extends contempt toward the poor, and jeopardizes the monastic ideal.

The novel chronicles the dates when the Franciscans were forced from their friaries in Sweden and Denmark: 1527, Viborg; 1527, Malmø; 1532, Aalborg, etc. For Jacob, it is the Lutherans who have abrogated the moral and civil law. The Lutherans do not hesitate “at overtræde nogen lov, naturlig, guddommeligt, eller menneskeligt” [to usurp any law, natural, divine, or human] (1991 42; 1993 55) in order to dispossess and kill the Franciscans. As a response to these outrages, in 1532 Jacob had written part of a *Gråbrødrenes Uddrivelseskrønike* [Chronicle of the Expulsion of the Grey Brothers], based on his experiences in Malmø. Such events in the novel follow closely the outlines of Jacob’s life as established by Jørgen Nybo Rasmussen in his 1984 biography of this figure long lost to history, a debt Stangerup acknowledges in his preface to the novel.

Against his opponents Jacob denounces the self-torture that Franciscans imagine St. Francis wanted them to endure, as these are another example of a misunderstood personal relationship to God. He remembers the importance of Francis’s pre-conversion worldly life in mitigating his asceticism. Sadly, the Reformation, more than the waning Catholic Middle Ages, has unleashed a sense

of horror at existence. For example, early in the novel Jacob rescues a boy from some deranged, suicidal Lutheran-inspired soldiers who claim the revelation that “mørket hersker, og lyset er fjenden fordi det ‘skærer’ i mørkets kød. Derfor er enhver modstand mod mørket en synd, er drab på den evige søvn” [darkness reigns, and light is the enemy because it “cuts” into the flesh of darkness. Therefore any resistance to darkness is a sin, murder of eternal sleep] (1991 73; 1993 93). In this new religious world, the normative stages of a man’s life have been forgotten. Yet Jacob remembers a meditation on the seven steps to purification of Saint Bonaventure which divides life into periods of seven years. If Jacob has kept his origins hidden, it is not because he feels superior about his royal birth. Rather he is seeking to ensure his own safety.

There is only one point in the novel where Stangerup leads the theological discussion toward an area in which the idea of the knight of faith might be important. In confrontation with his philosophical enemy, Juan de Gaona, Jacob admits that conscience may be suppressed, but he backs away from the full weight of claiming that setting aside conscience can abolish the universal moral law in specific circumstances. The conversation, which also indicates the anti-Semitism of Jacob’s enemies, reads as follows:

Erklæring fra Gaona: “Vor serafiske fader kunne heller ikke forudse de jødekristnes undergravende virksomhed i Spanien. Jeg taler om *limpieza de sangre*, det certifikat der skal attestere renhed i vort blod fire generationer tilbage før vi kan aflægge vort hellige løfte.”

Daciano: “*Conscientia deponi potest*. Samvittigheden kan sættes til side, som Aquin sagde. Men han mente også at dens grundlag *synteresis* er uovervindeligt og uforglemmeligt.”

Gaona: “Mange former for uvidenhed er ifølge Thomas villet uvidenhed, *ignorantia voluntaria*—some når viljen holder intellektet tilbage fra at erkende noget som det kan. I så tilfælde, Daciano, opstår der et modsigelsesfuldt menneske, en *homo perplexus* der ikke vil vide hvad han ved. Han kan ikke siges at være uskyldt af uvidenhed. Du er ikke uskyldt, Daciano. Du kender vores statutter.” (1991 227)

[Declaration from Gaona: “Our seraphic father was not in a position to foresee the undermining activity of the Jewish Christians in Spain. I allude to *limpieza de sangre*, that certificate that testifies to the purity of our blood for four generations back which we must produce before we can take our holy vows.”

Daciano [the Dane]: “*Conscientia deponi potest*: Conscience can be set aside, as Aquinas said. But he also believed that its basis in *synteresis* [preservation] is unsurpassable and unforgettable.”

Gaona: “According to Thomas, many forms of ignorance are willed ignorance, *ignorantia voluntaria*—as when the will restrains the intellect from apprehending something it is capable of. In such a case Daciano, we get a man full of contradictions, an *homo perplexus* who does not wish to acknowledge what he

knows. He cannot be said to be excused from ignorance. You are not excused, Daciano. You know our statutes.”]
(1993 271)

Although the conversation is somewhat opaque, it is most likely that Jacob is taking the position that conscience is the equivalent of the universal moral law. This law, Gaona believes (presumably on the basis of personal revelation) can be suspended by God. Jacob uses the Greek word for *preservation* to indicate that what the universal moral law preserves cannot ultimately be transgressed. If this is so, the suspension of conscience requires a higher principle above the suspended principle. This is not the situation for the knight of faith, but rather for Kierkegaard’s Agamemnon, who gave up Iphigenia to find rest in the universal, that is, patriotic duty.

Gaona is not impressed by Jacob’s refusal to do away with the moral law, and so—unwilling to make the extreme claim of a knight of faith—he sidesteps the larger implications of the issue by declaring that Jacob is willfully ignorant of the necessity of preserving religious/racial prejudice. At the end of the scene might makes right, and Jacob is punished by his superior.

In our final view of Brother Jacob we see that he is saintly because of his good deeds not because of his inner relationship with God. After he dies, the Tarascans fear that if anything happens to his corpse they will suffer incredible travails, so they have some of their chiefs remove his body, carry it away to the mountains and hide it in a crypt in a deep cave, where three elders watch over it to show that he is still alive. Appropriately, in a trilogy in which all three novels conclude with the death of the protagonist, Jacob is given the most beatific ending. We are reminded of Peter Wilhelm Lund sleeping peacefully with the stardust of fireworks over his head. Even Møller reached out in death for the Greek nymph of a marble bench, and found a state of bliss he never before experienced. These three endings underline the similarities of the three protagonists as men with ideals.

In the prefaces to his novels Stangerup has been very schematic in his references to the aesthetic, ethical, and religious stages of life. Presumably he was trying to help the reader to see a philosophical dimension of his work that would not show up if his trilogy were regarded simply as a series of historical novels. Furthermore, the decision to move from the nineteenth back to the sixteenth century for Jacob’s story would have seemed very odd without some explanation. Yet in Stangerup’s novels, we find that it is very difficult for him to escape from a conventional moral framework no matter how Kierkegaardian he may wish to be. We see this problem in his sympathy for Lund, his antipathy to Møller, and his adulation of Jacob. Lund is good because he never deliberately caused anyone any harm. Møller is bad because he abused substances, annoyed everyone, and had a tawdry sex life. Jacob

is best because he worked consistently for the good of others. We make these kinds of judgments all the time. There is nothing wrong with them *per se*, but they are not very Kierkegaardian. Perhaps Stangerup had some realization of his problem, for he had not initially planned to write the story of Brother Jacob. Once he changed his plan, it did not fit properly with his earlier conception of Kierkegaard's conception of the three stages on life's way. If Stangerup had chosen another figure from 19th century Denmark, perhaps he could at least have avoided casting his exploration of religious values in a period that intractably raises other issues. In any case, it is easy to find a more general coherence in the trilogy if we look at it as an exploration of Danish outsiders who chose exile from their native land.

NOTES

1. Henning Fenger in his paragraph on Møller in "Kierkegaard: A Literary Approach" declares that it is not important whether two events in Møller's life (used by Stangerup) are true or not: first, his luring of Kierkegaard to a brothel, and, second, his selling of his dead girlfriend's body to a hospital for experimental use (1964 11). Fenger's chapter on Møller in *Kierkegaard-Myter og Kierkegaard-Kilder* (1976) is omitted in the partial translation, *Kierkegaard: The Myths and Their Origins* (1980).
2. Some of the literary works mentioned by Møller in the novel, such as *Sakuntala*, are probably drawn from Goldschmidt's memoirs (Goldschmidt 173).
3. For a discussion of Møller's relationship with Matilda Leiner and the poetry that he wrote prompted by her, see Brandt (250). In the absence of a Møller biography, Brandt's essay of over a hundred pages is a chief source of information about his life.
4. For other brief, even-toned accounts of the *Corsair* affair see Bredsdorff (86-88). Goldschmidt reflected on it often, not only in his memoirs but also in letters and unpublished materials. For other materials on Møller, see K. Bruun Andersen, Robert Perkins, Børge Andersen, Robert Perkins, and Niels Egeback.
5. In "Den 'udanske' Georg Brandes" in *I Flugtens tegn* Stangerup writes that Brandes thought of Kierkegaard as one who had stage-directed his whole life to such a degree that even his death was "aesthetic" (1993b 293).
6. Hans Hertel finds Møller's criticism of Kierkegaard's dialectic to be a misunderstanding of their shared antipathy to Hegel. Hertel downplays the personal antipathy between the two men and believes that it was less the *Corsair* feud that drove Møller from Denmark than a government scholarship for further education abroad (37).

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