

tükben kevés hajlandóságot lát a *devotatio Christice*, és az általuk hirdetett szavak cselekedetek szintjén nem valósulnak meg, azaz mondandójuk nincs összhangban életükkel. A teológusok, tanítók szolgálatát is azért marasztalja el, mert a tantételekbe merevített igazság helyett elvárná, hogy az igazság megtalálásának és megélésének mikéntjére is mutassanak rá.

9. Barth dialektikus teológiai gondolkodásának kialakulásában fontos szerepe volt Kierkegaardnak. A két lángelme azonban *különböző* korban született, így az *igények* is *különböleg*, ezzel magyarázható a későbbi Barth eltávolodása a dán gondolkodótól. Az individualizmus, egzisztencializmus, pietista szubjektivizmus vádjaira Kierkegaard csak részben szolgált rá, a barthi kritika valódi címzettjei azok, akik kisajátították gondolatait saját elképzelésük megvalósításához. A törvény és evangélium/szeretet viszony tekintetében a két gondolkodó között inkább retorikai hangsúlykülönbség létezik, de valójában alapszándékuk hasonló, mert mindketten a kegyelem Istenére irányítják olvasóik figyelmét. Barth Kierkegaardtól kölcsönzi azt a gondolatot, hogy a teológus sohasem tarthat igényt a teljes igazság birtoklására, életműve csak afféle kiegészítés, *korrektívum*, *csipetnyi fahéj* lehet Isten kezében. „Óh a világ vezetése egy rémséges nagy háztartás, egy grandiózus kép. Hiszen úgy tesz a mester, az Isten az égben, mint a szakácsnő vagy a festőművész, azt mondja: ide kell még bele egy csipetnyi fahéj, egy ici pici pirosat kell még rávinni. Mi nem tudjuk felfogni miért, mi alig látjuk, fokozatosan feloldódik egy csipetnyi fahéj az egészben, de Isten tudja miért... Ezek a korrektívumok [kiigazítások]. Szerencsétlen tévedés, ha az, akit csak a kiigazítás elvégzésére használtak, türelmetlenné válik, és a *korrektívet* mások számára *normatívná* akarja tenni, ez egy minden összezavarására irányuló próbálkozás.”¹³ Életművükkel valóban fűszerebbé, színesebbé tették a világot, s ezen belül a teológiai életet.

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The focal points of Kierkegaard's theology

1. Kierkegaard's basic understanding is that human life is an existence before God, and the acceptance of it can only be realised through the subjective momentum of faith, and the realization of this is shown by an authentic life, not by pious or sublime platitudes. This is an important message for theologians of all times, that the objective view of truth as well as the abstract thinking in itself, is beyond reason, thus real value can be obtained only when the relationship between God and man is emphasised and therefore becomes truth of faith.

2. By the process of researching the complicated pseudonym-system of Kierkegaard's lifework we can also recognize his *ars poetica* in his capacity as a writer. His aesthetical, philosophical and pronounced theological writings had one central aim: to lead human beings to God. By the very existence through birth of the believer the leading part cannot belong to the writer, but since Socrates himself classified the distinct profession of *midwife*, he assumes this role with pleasure. He reminds us of our noblest service, i.e. the aid a theologian can provide to promote the process of a human being's becoming a Christian.

¹³ S. A. Kierkegaard: *Buch des Richters. Seine Tagebücher 1833–1855 im Auszug*. Übers. und hersg. von H. Gottsched. Jena/Leipzig 1905, 99. (Kiemelés tőlem.)

3. The chapter about the Golden Age of Danish spiritual development informs us about the cultural and theological leaders of Copenhagen, the Hegel-epigons, who were extremely antipathetic for Kierkegaard. It is important to recognise that his anti-Hegelian polemic did not regard the German philosopher superficially, because it predominantly referred to Danish contemporaries. "Therefore, this period can perhaps be best characterized by Kierkegaard's use of Hegel for polemical purposes. While he engages in a polemic with the Danish Hegelians, that polemic is often hidden beneath what appears at face value to be a critique of Hegel. It is Hegel's name, and not that of Heiberg, Martensen, or Adler, that appears in the text."¹⁴ The environment in which his works take their origin explains for the late reader, why some subjects are overemphasised, and others totally neglected. Kierkegaard himself gives us a hermeneutical orientation, when he says: „the times are different, and different times need different [emphases].” (In. *Selfexmination*). Kierkegardian thoughts can be interpreted also as parts of a peculiar dialogue, in which he tries to answer the provocations of his contemporaries.

4. So far many researchers have associated Kierkegaard's name with the concept of paradox, but two American co-authors illustrate his peculiar view of truth with a clear model. The name and the first interdisciplinary application of the Strange Loop model originate from Hofstadter. He uses this model in the world of fine arts, music, mathematics and philosophy in cases where two different levels meet each other in such a way, that in spite of the differences a unity will be realised, in which the levels influenced one another, and *the top level reaches back down towards the bottom level*.¹⁵ (This model can be illustrated by the Möbius-stripe, i.e. a rectangle paper stripe twisted along its length 180°, and the two end points glued together, so a *one-sided surface is established*.) The Kierkegardian epistemology is well illustrated by this model. He conceived that the thinking person is part of the knowing process, so truths do not exist independently from the knower. His concept of *subjectivity* is not a subjective partiality, but the essence of really knowing, that the knowing is related to the knower, who is the existent one within the essence. For the knower his own existence is the true reality. He/she is informed about all other truths, but these do not touch him/her and do not testify concerning him/her if the interaction illustrated by the Möbius-stripe is not realised. The series of paradoxes are continued by the analysis of certain theological subjects. His Christology is the best example of paradoxical theological thinking, for we are certainly unable to formulate the humanity and divinity of Jesus at the same time, in any other way. The paradox of faith is multiple, first referring to the fact that the human being may captivate eternity in faith. Nevertheless, the manifestation of faith is paradox, which is illustrated by Abraham's example. The general moral law in individual cases can be overwritten by the act of an individual, if it is a work of faith.

5. Whilst analyzing the origin of sin Kierkegaard himself used the sophisticated argumentation of nineteenth-century philosophy, yet this also serves the theological aim, which determined his entire oeuvre. He reminded his readers about his one responsibility, demonstrated that the origin of sin is an existential matter, and cannot be indifferent to anyone. The human being, existing beyond good and evil before the Fall, was anxious because he could choose; in the dizziness of freedom facing existence he does

¹⁴ Jon Stewart: *Kierkegaard's relations to Hegel reconsidered*, University Press, Cambridge 2003, 610.

¹⁵ James E. Loder – Jim. W. Neidhardt: *The Knight's Move, The Relational Logic of the Spirit in Theology and Science*, Colorado Springs, USA, 1992, 40.

not think about danger. This reminds us that with the first sin only the innocence of man ceased, but the anxiety remained, moreover, the most proper characteristic of human existence is the anxiety which is derived from the possibility of non-existence. At the same time his reasoning by which he leads from anxiety to faith is encouraging, and he calls the school of anxiety the path which guides us towards faith.

6. From the series of Kierkegaardian questions, the analysis of the characteristics of sin stands out. He distances himself from the erroneous concept, which sets virtue against sin, because biblically he considers faith being the contrast of sin, whilst the virtues and faults are only of secondary importance. The real terminal illness ('sickness unto death') is damnation, i.e. an incorrect self-definition, the case when one is unable to correct his/her relationship with God. The suitable concept for terminal illness ('sickness unto death') in classical theological language is *unbelief*. The Christ-paradox can be answered in two ways: one either accepts it in faith, or is *outraged* by it. The nature of the latter attitude is relatively easier to comprehend, because only this can follow from a limited mind. But within the realisation of faith something happens, which surpasses the limits of human reason: a bridge arises from the transcendence over the abyss between God and man. Kierkegaard expresses this with the concept of the *loop of faith*.

7. The posterity refers to Kierkegaard's view of time with pleasure. He provides us with two time-expressions with special meanings: *moment* and *contemporaneity* (i.e. *simultaneousness*). Although he never fully explains his concept about time coherently, his fragmentary remarks are all the more significant. The *moment* is a special time-atom, which is neither empty, nor equivalent with nothing, yet it is the meeting-point of eternity and human time. He considers past and future being insignificant for the essence of human existence. Moreover, the historical, earthly time of Christ's life is also unessential. The real followers of Christ are not only his disciples, who had walked together with him in the Land of Judah, but all those, who recognise the essence of the *moment*, and are able to become '*contemporaries*' of Christ (i.e. act, as it were, 'simultaneously' or even 'synchronously' with him).

8. The Danish theologian tried to remind his contemporary Christian sisters and brothers, that they had made faith into a *mental delusion*. His remarks remain valid and relevant throughout the existence of Christ's church. Beyond and above external enemies, this church must also overcome its own mistakes and deficiencies. In the focus of one circle of questions within Kierkegaard's criticism we can find the concept of the church. The interweaving of secular and ecclesiastical power in spite of many infrastructural advantages is dangerous, because the seemingly organised relations divert the attention from forming of a correct God-man relationship. The situation is always deteriorated if the Church proclaims cheap grace for the sake of comfort or popularity, and makes compromises regarding its manners in order to comply with secular expectations. He often scourges ministers and priests, because in their lives he does not see any inclination towards a true *devotio Christi*, and their words are not put in practice on the level of works, namely their message is not in harmony with their life. He condemns also the service of professors and theologians, because instead of rigorous doctrines about the truth, he expects advice concerning how we can find out and live within the truth.

9. Kierkegaard has a significant role in the forming of Barth's dialectical theological thinking. The two genial thinkers, however, were born at and lived in different times.

The needs were also different: this may explain why the latter withdrew from the Danish thinker. The accusation of individualism, existentialism and pietistic subjectivism has to do with Kierkegaard only partially. Barth's critique refers rather to those who monopolise his thoughts in order to accomplish their own ideas. Regarding the relation between law and love, the two theologians differ from each other rather in rhetorical accent, yet their fundamental intention is similar, because both of them turn the attention of their readers towards a God of grace. Barth borrows from Kierkegaard the thought that the theologian should never claim to possess the whole truth, his life-work can be only a correction, 'correctivity', the '*pinch of cinnamon*' in the hands of God.¹⁶ Their oeuvres spiced and coloured both the world and the realm of theology.

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¹⁶ Kierkegaard, S. A.: *Buch des Richters. Seine Tagebücher 1833–1855 im Auszug*. Übers. und hersg. von H. Gottsched, Jena/Leipzig 1905, 99: „O, die Weltleitung ist eine ungeheuerere Haushaltung, ein grandioses Gemälde. Doch machts der Meister, Gott in den Himmeln, wie die Köchin und der Künstler, er sagt: Da muß noch ein kleines bißchen Zimt hinein, ein kleines bißchen Rot angebracht werden. Wir begreifen nicht, warum, wir sehen es kaum, in dem Grade verschwindet ein kleines bißchen Zimt im Ganzen, aber Gott weiß, warum... Das sind die Korrektive. Ein unseliger Irrtum ist es, wenn nur der, welcher zum Anbringen des Korrektivs gebraucht wird, ungeduldig wird und das Korrektiv zum Normativ für die anderen machen will, das ist ein Versuch, alles zu verwirren.“