Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks

Introduction to the English Language Edition

*Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks* is based on *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* (hereafter, *SKS*) [Søren Kierkegaard’s Writings] (Copenhagen: Gad, 1997–2012), which is a Danish scholarly, annotated edition of everything written by Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), and comprises fifty-five volumes. *SKS* divides the entirety of Kierkegaard’s output into four categories: 1) works published by Kierkegaard during his lifetime (e.g., such well-known titles as *Either/Or*, *Fear and Trembling*, and *The Sickness unto Death*); 2) works that lay ready—or substantially ready—for publication at the time of Kierkegaard’s death, but which he did not publish in his lifetime (e.g., titles such as *The Book on Adler*, *The Point of View for My Work as an Author*, and *Judge for Yourself!*); 3) journals, notebooks, excerpts, and loose papers, collectively titled Kierkegaard’s “journals and notebooks”; and 4) letters and biographical documents. Clearly, Kierkegaard was not only a prolific author, he was also a prolific writer, and his literary activity found expression not only in his published works but also in the mass of writings that were not published in his lifetime. It is these writings, the third category listed above, titled *Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks* (hereafter, *KJN*) that constitute the material of the present English language edition. For a detailed account of previous Danish and English language editions of Kierkegaard’s unpublished writings, see pp. vii–xii of the “Introduction to the English Language Edition” in volume 1 of *KJN*.

I. Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks

Based as it is on the new Danish edition of *SKS*, the present English language edition of *Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks* employs the *SKS* principle of organization by archival unit: journals, notebooks, and loose papers.

The materials constituting the present edition of *KJN* consist of the documents mentioned above as the third category of materials included in *SKS* as volumes 17 through 27. The eleven volumes of *KJN* contain the translated text of these eleven *SKS* volumes,
plus most of the explanatory notes contained in the eleven SKS commentary volumes that accompany SKS 17–27. Specifically, the textual materials constituting KJN consist of the following documents:

a) a set of ten journals to which Kierkegaard affixed labels designating them “AA” through “KK” (as “I” and “J” are identical in the classical Roman alphabet, there is no journal titled “II”);

b) fifteen notebooks, designated “1” through “15” by the editors of SKS, sequenced according to the dates on which Kierkegaard first made use of them; Kierkegaard himself assigned titles to four of these notebooks, and the editors retain these titles in parentheses;

c) a series of thirty-six quarto-sized, bound journal volumes to which Kierkegaard affixed labels designating them journals “NB,” “NB2,” “NB3,” through “NB36”; and

d) a great variety of materials—a large number of individual folio sheets, pages, slips, and scraps of paper—which the editors of KJN, following the editors of SKS, title “loose papers.”

There is a good deal of chronological back-and-forth in Kierkegaard’s posthumous papers. Kierkegaard often made use of several of the first twenty-four documents—the ten journals designated “AA” through “KK” and the notebooks “1” through “14”—simultaneously, and there is thus much temporal overlap among these journals and notebooks. (Indeed, it was only after they had been in use for some time, probably in mid- or late 1842, that Kierkegaard assigned the designations “AA” through “KK” to the journal volumes bearing those labels.) Nonetheless, the above-mentioned archival units do fall into several broad temporal categories, and these twenty-four journals and notebooks can be collectively assigned to the period 1833–1846. Notebook 15, however, which is entirely devoted to Kierkegaard’s relationship to Regine Olsen, his onetime fiancée, stems from 1849. The journals titled “NB” through “NB36” were assigned their numbered titles in chronological order by Kierkegaard himself and stem from the period 1846–1855, though here, too, these journals contain additions and emendations, some of which stem from later periods, disrupting the general chronological sequence of the journals. The final group of materials, the “loose papers,” spans the entire period 1833–1855.
KJN follows the editors of SKS in the choice of a two-column format, which best reflects Kierkegaard’s practice when keeping his journals and notebooks. Like many of his contemporaries, Kierkegaard’s usual custom with his journals and notebooks was to crease the pages lengthwise (vertically) so that each page had an inner column for the main text and a somewhat narrower outer column for subsequent reflections and additions. In this way, further reflections could be—and very often were—added later, sometimes much later, often on several subsequent occasions, e.g., when Kierkegaard read or thought of something that reminded him of something he had written earlier.

As has been noted above, a certain degree of chronological organization is present in the documents themselves, but a strictly chronological presentation of all the material is neither possible nor, perhaps, desirable. A strict and comprehensive chronological organization of the material is impossible, for while we can often detect the sequence in which Kierkegaard altered and emended an original passage in a notebook or journal, it is frequently not possible to ascertain when these alterations and emendations took place—though in his earlier entries Kierkegaard often dated his marginal additions. Furthermore, there are also cases in which the very sequence of such changes cannot be determined with certainty. Finally, even if it could be established, a rigorously chronological sequencing of all the material would not necessarily be desirable, because such a serial presentation would render it more difficult to see the manner in which Kierkegaard could return to a passage on multiple subsequent occasions, adding to, deleting, and altering what he had originally written. (It is hoped that upon completion of all eleven volumes of KJN it will be possible to produce an electronic edition of the entire series; this would make it possible for readers to organize and search through the materials in a variety of ways.)

II. The Format and Organization of the Present Edition

1. Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks (KJN) and Søren Kierkegaard’s Skrifter (SKS)

As already noted, KJN is a translation of Kierkegaard’s journals, notebooks, and loose papers, using the text as established by the editors of SKS. The great majority of the materials included in the present volumes is taken from Kierkegaard’s surviving manuscripts, but some manuscripts were lost in the production.
of the first published selection of Kierkegaard’s papers, H. P. Barfod’s nine-volume edition of *Af Søren Kierkegaards Efterladte Papirer* (hereafter, *EP*). Thus, particularly in the early volumes of *KJN*, our only source for a number of Kierkegaard’s journal entries is the version originally published in *EP*. When this is the case, *KJN* indicates that the source is the published version from *EP* by employing justified right-hand margins, while most of the text of *KJN*, taken as it is from the surviving manuscripts, employs a ragged right-hand margin. In addition, there are a number of cases, typically involving short or fragmentary entries or lines, in which the only surviving source is Barfod’s catalogue of Kierkegaard’s manuscripts, while in still other cases material in the original manuscripts deleted by Kierkegaard has been deciphered and restored by the editors of *SKS*; both these sorts of material are reproduced in *KJN* without text-critical commentary. Scholars interested in these source details are referred to the text-critical apparatus of *SKS*. In addition, there are some cases in which Kierkegaard’s original manuscript cannot be read meaningfully, and the editors of *SKS* suggest a proposed reading of the passage in question. *KJN* has adopted most such proposed readings without comment, though in a number of cases such proposed readings are discussed in the explanatory notes.

In some cases Kierkegaard’s spelling is erroneous or inconsistent or there is missing punctuation. On rare occasions the editors of *SKS* have corrected errors of this sort silently, while in other cases missing punctuation has been supplied (but placed within square brackets to indicate that this is the work of the editors of *SKS*), and in still other cases Kierkegaard’s errors of spelling or punctuation have been allowed to stand because they are indicative of the hasty and informal style that often characterizes his unpublished materials. Where they do not cause significant difficulties for English language readers, the editors of *KJN* have followed the editors of *SKS* in allowing a number of Kierkegaard’s spelling errors (e.g., of proper names) and punctuation lapses to remain. On the other hand, where the retention of Kierkegaard’s errors might cause significant difficulties for English language readers, the editors of *KJN* have absorbed without annotation the corrections made by the editors of *SKS* (both the silent and the bracketed corrections), and have occasionally corrected instances of erroneous spelling and missing punctuation that have been permitted to remain in *SKS*. Here—as in the above-mentioned cases involving materials that have their source in Barfod’s catalogue or in text deleted by Kierkegaard and restored by the editors of *SKS*—scholars who require access to the entire text-critical apparatus of *SKS* should consult that edition.
2. Two-Column Format in the Main Text

As already noted, a two-column format is employed where necessary in order to emphasize the polydimensionality of the original documentary materials; thus, for example, providing a spatial representation of a draft’s character as a draft with multiple alterations.

3. Typographical Conventions in the Main Text

   a) In Kierkegaard’s time, both “gothic” and “latin” handwriting were in common use among educated people. Generally, when writing Danish and German (which of course accounts for the bulk of his journals and notebooks) Kierkegaard used a gothic hand, while when writing Latin or French (which he did much less frequently than Danish or German) Kierkegaard used a latin hand. Following the editors of SKS, the editors of KJN have sought to preserve this feature by using ordinary roman type to represent Kierkegaard’s gothic hand, and a sans serif typeface to represent Kierkegaard’s latin hand. Greek and Hebrew appear in their respective alphabets.

   b) As in SKS, italic and boldface are used to indicate Kierkegaard’s degrees of emphasis. **Italic** indicates underlining by Kierkegaard. **Boldface** indicates double underlining by Kierkegaard. **Boldface italic** indicates double underlining plus a third, wavy underlining by Kierkegaard.

4. Margins and Reference Format in the Main Text

   a) The SKS pagination of the journals appears in roman type in the margins of the present edition. This permits the reader to refer to SKS, which contains the entire apparatus of text-critical markers and notes concerning the manuscripts, including indications of Kierkegaard’s own pagination of his journals and notebooks.

   b) Two separate italic line counters are included in the inner and outer margins in order to facilitate specific line references to each of the two columns.

   c) The boldface entry numbers in the margins are not Kierkegaard’s own but have been added by the editors of SKS in order to facilitate reference to specific entries. Each journal or notebook has its own entry numbering in arabic numerals, e.g., “AA:1,” “DD:8,” “Not3:2,” “NB34:6” etc., which refer to the first entry in Journal AA, the eighth entry in Journal DD, the second entry in Notebook 3, “the sixth entry in Journal NB34,” etc.
Kierkegaard’s marginal additions to journal or notebook entries are indicated with lowercase alphabet letters, e.g., “AA:23.b,” which refers to Kierkegaard’s second marginal addition to the twenty-third entry in Journal AA. If a marginal addition itself has a marginal addition, this is also indicated by another layer of lowercase alphabet letters, e.g., “DD:11.a.a,” which refers to the first marginal note to the first marginal note to the eleventh entry in Journal DD. When Kierkegaard left a reference mark in his main text referring to a marginal note, the marginal note referred to is preceded by a lowercase alphabet letter, set in roman, with no enclosing brackets, e.g., “a.” When Kierkegaard did not leave a reference mark in his main text for a marginal note, but the editors of SKS are not in doubt about the point in Kierkegaard’s main text to which the marginal note refers, the reference symbol (a lowercase alphabet letter) preceding that marginal note is set in roman and is enclosed within roman square brackets, e.g., “[a].” When Kierkegaard did not leave a reference mark in his main text for a marginal note, and the editors of SKS could not determine with certainty the point in Kierkegaard’s main text to which the marginal note refers, the reference symbol (a lowercase alphabet letter) preceding that marginal note is set in italic and is enclosed within italic square brackets, e.g., “[a].” In these cases, the editors of KJN, following the usage of the editors of SKS, have situated Kierkegaard’s marginal additions approximately where they are found on the pages of Kierkegaard’s own journal manuscripts, which, as noted, employed a two-column format.

Loose papers are numbered sequentially, “Paper 1,” “Paper 2,” “Paper 3,” etc. Some of these papers constitute a single unit (e.g., Paper 134), but many consist of more than one item and are subdivided using colons as separators, as, e.g., “Paper 3:2,” or in the striking instance of Paper 365, which is subdivided into twenty-four items: “Paper 365:1,” “Paper 365:2,” . . . “Paper 365:24.” If an item has a marginal note associated with it, the designation of such notes is in the same format as that used for marginal notes in the notebooks and the NB journals, e.g., “Paper 371:2.c.” Because of the great mass of material included KJN 11, the volume is divided into two tomes, Volume 11 (Part 1) and Volume 11 (Part 2). Page references to the papers in these volumes are in the format: “Paper 45:1, KJN 11.1, 88,” “Paper 583, KJN 11.2, 297,” etc.

If more specific reference than this is necessary, the system of KJN volume number, page number, and line number on the appropriate line counter is employed, e.g., “KJN 1, 56:11,” referring to a passage in the first volume of KJN, page 56, line 11 on the line counter for the inner column. If a marginal note (thus, a note
in the outer column of the page) is referred to in this manner, the reference is in the format “KJN 9, 56m3,” referring to a marginal note found in volume 9 of KJN, page 56, line 3 on the marginal or outer column line counter.

5. Footnotes in the Main Text

a) Kierkegaard’s own footnotes are indicated by superscript arabic numerals, both in the main text and at the beginning of the footnote itself, and are numbered consecutively within a journal entry, with the numbering beginning at “1” for each new journal entry. Kierkegaard’s footnotes appear at the bottom of the text column or at the end of the entry to which they pertain, whichever comes first, but always above the solid horizontal line at the foot of the page. When the source for a footnote by Kierkegaard is Barfod’s EP rather than an original manuscript, the placement in the main text of the superscript reference number for that footnote is of course not known from Kierkegaard, but only from EP; in such cases, Kierkegaard’s footnote will appear at the bottom of the page (though above the solid line) as with all other footnotes by Kierkegaard, but the superscript reference number preceding the footnote will be followed by a close-parenthesis, e.g., “1).”

b) Translator’s footnotes appear below the solid horizontal line at the foot of the page.

6. Foreign Language in the Main Text

Foreign (non-Danish) words, expressions, and quotations that appear in Kierkegaard’s text are left in the original language. English translations of foreign language text are provided in translator’s footnotes at the foot of the page, below the solid horizontal line. In the event that extreme length or some other technical difficulty makes it impossible to accommodate a translation of a foreign language passage at the foot of the page, it will appear in the explanatory notes at the back of the volume. English translations of the titles of foreign language books, articles, poems, etc. are always in the explanatory notes, not in the translator’s footnotes.

7. Photographs of Original Manuscripts

Selected photographs of original manuscript material are included in the main text.
8. Orthography of Classical Names

The orthographical standard for all ancient Greek and Roman names and place names is *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

9. Material Included at the Back of Each Volume

a) A brief “Critical Account of the Text” gives a description of the physical appearance, provenance, and whatever chronological information is known concerning a document. If the document is related to others—for example, in the cases where Kierkegaard is known to have used one of the journals in the *AA–KK* group in tandem with one or more of the notebooks numbered 1–14, which stem from the same period—this is also indicated.

b) Each journal or notebook is accompanied by “Explanatory Notes.” In some cases, notes included in *SKS* have been shortened or omitted in *KJN*. In a number of cases, notes that do not appear in *SKS* have been added to *KJN*; typically, these serve to explain geographical or historical references that are obvious to Danes but are not likely to be known by non-Danes. Notes are keyed by page and entry number to specific lemmata; that is, to key words or phrases from the main text that appear in boldface at the beginning of each note. The running heads on each page of notes indicate the journal or notebook and entry number(s) to which the notes on that page refer, while the numbers in the margins of each column of notes indicate the page and line number in the main text where the lemma under discussion is found. When the text of a note mentions a lemma explained in another note for the same journal or notebook, an arrow (→) accompanied by a large and a small number—e.g., →110,22—serves as a cross-reference, indicating the page and line number (in this case, page 110, line 22) where that lemma occurs in the main text. Each journal or notebook is treated as a separate unit with respect to explanatory notes; thus the notes for a given journal or notebook contain no cross-references to notes for other journals or notebooks. (The explanatory notes for *Notebooks 9 and 10* constitute an exception to this rule because those two notebooks are so closely connected that they should perhaps be considered a single document.) The notes are usually confined to clarifying historical, biographical, geographical, and similar information not readily available in a standard English language desk reference volume. Notes do not engage in critical interpretation or in discussions of the scholarly literature. As noted under 6 above, on some occasions—which presumably will be very infrequent, if they occur at all—it may not be possible to translate foreign language passages in translator’s
footnotes at the foot of the main text page, and in such cases the translated passage will appear in an explanatory note at the end of the volume. There are no markers in the main text denoting the existence of an explanatory note pertaining to a particular word or passage.

c) Maps of nineteenth-century Copenhagen, Denmark, etc., are provided where appropriate.

d) Calendars of the years covered in the volume, indicating days of the week, holidays, etc., are provided.

e) Illustrations referred to in Kierkegaard’s text are reproduced.

f) A concordance to the Heiberg edition of the Papirer is provided in order to facilitate using the present edition in conjunction with works, including previous translations of Kierkegaard’s posthumous papers, that refer to the Papirer.

10. Abbreviations

a) Abbreviations used in the main text

In the main text an attempt has been made to preserve something of the feel of the original documents, in which Kierkegaard made liberal use of a great many abbreviations, shortening words in accordance with the common usage of his times. Naturally, many of these abbreviations cannot be duplicated in English, but where it has seemed appropriate a number of commonly used (or easily decipherable) English abbreviations have been employed in order to provide a sense of Kierkegaard’s “journal style.”

b) Abbreviations used in “Critical Accounts of the Texts” and in “Explanatory Notes”

ASKB The Auctioneer’s Sales Record of the Library of Søren Kierkegaard, ed. H. P. Rohde (Copenhagen: The Royal Library, 1967)


B-cat. H. P. Barfod, “Fortegnelse over de efter Søren Aabye Kierkegaard forefundne Papirer” [Catalogue of the Papers Found after the Death of Søren Aabye Kierkegaard]

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Bl.art.  S. Kierkegaard’s Bladartikler, med Bilag samlede efter Forfatterens Død, udgåede som Supplement til hans øvrige Skrifter [S. Kierkegaard’s Newspaper Articles, with an Appendix Collected after the Author’s Death, Published as a Supplement to His Other Works], ed. Rasmus Nielsen (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel, 1857)

d.  Died in the year


KA  The Kierkegaard Archive at the Royal Library in Copenhagen


Occasionally, the explanatory notes will employ different English translations of the titles of Kierkegaard’s works than those used in KW. For example, Kierkegaard’s En literair Anmeldelse, which is translated Two Ages in KW, may appear in the explanatory notes as A Literary Review. All such departures from the English titles as they appear in KW will be explained in the explanatory notes in which they appear. Generally, however, the English titles used in KW will be used; these titles have been assigned standard abbreviations as follows:

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu
AN  “Armed Neutrality” in KW 22
BA  The Book on Adler in KW 24
C  The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress
   in KW 17
CA  The Concept of Anxiety in KW 8
CD  Christian Discourses in KW 17
CI  The Concept of Irony in KW 2
COR  The “Corsair” Affair; Articles Related to the
     Writings in KW 13
CUP  Concluding Unscientific Postscript in KW 12
EO 1  Either/Or, part 1 in KW 3
EO 2  Either/Or, part 2 in KW 4
EPW  Early Polemical Writings: From the Papers of
     One Still Living: Articles from Student Days;
     The Battle Between the Old and the New Soap-
     Cellars in KW 1
EUID  Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses in KW 15
FPOSL  From the Papers of One Still Living in KW 1
FSE  For Self-Examination in KW 21
FT  Fear and Trembling in KW 6
JC  “Johannes Climacus or De omnibus dubitandum est” in KW 7
JFY  Judge for Yourself! in KW 21
LD  Letters and Documents in KW 25
M  “The Moment” and Late Writings: Articles
   from Fædrelandet; The Moment, nos. 1–10;
   This Must Be Said, So Let It Be Said; What
   Christ Judges of Official Christianity; The
   Changelessness of God in KW 23
NA  “Newspaper Articles, 1854–1855” in KW 23
NSBL  “Notes on Schelling’s Berlin Lectures” in
      KW 2
OMWA  On My Work as an Author in KW 22
P  Prefaces in KW 9
PC  Practice in Christianity in KW 20
PF  Philosophical Fragments in KW 7
PV  The Point of View for My Work as an Author
   in KW 22
R  Repetition in KW 6
SLW  Stages on Life’s Way in KW 11
SUD  The Sickness unto Death in KW 19
TA  Two Ages: The Age of Revolution and the
     Present Age, A Literary Review in KW 14
TDIO  Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions in KW 10
UDVS  Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits in KW 15
WA    Without Authority: The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air; Two Ethical-Religious Essays; Three Discourses at the Communion on Fridays; An Upbuilding Discourse; Two Discourses at the Communion on Fridays in KW 18
WL    Works of Love in KW 16
WS    “Writing Sampler” in KW 9

NKS   Ny Kongelige Samling [New Royal Collection], a special collection at the Royal Library in Copenhagen

NRSV  Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha (see part c below)

NT    New Testament
OT    Old Testament


The 28 text volumes of SKS are referred to as SKS 1 through SKS 28. The 27 commentary volumes that accompany the text volumes are referred to as SKS K1 through SKS K28. (The reason there are 27 rather than 28 commentary volumes is that a single commentary volume, SKS K2–3, accompanies the two text volumes SKS 2 and SKS 3, which together comprise the massive two-volume work Enten—Eller [Either/Or].)
c) The Bible. All biblical quotations are from the following English translations:


_The Bible: Authorized King James Version with Apocrypha_ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) (Often used for references to the authorized Danish translation of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha from 1740 and occasionally used for other biblical references.)

Occasionally, in order to help the reader understand the text of a journal entry, the translators of _KJN_ may make minor modifications to one of the above Bible translations.

Books of the Bible are abbreviated in accordance with the abbreviations used in the _NRSV_:

### Old Testament

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11. Variants

While *KJN* does not include the full text-critical apparatus of *SKS*, a number of textual variants, deemed by the editors of *KJN* to be of particular interest, are included in the explanatory notes for each journal or notebook. The notation used to indicate different types of variants is explained below. (A list of selected variants for *KJN* 1 is included in volume 2, immediately following the explanatory notes for *Journal KK*.)

*first written:* changes determined by the editors of *SKS* to have been made in the manuscript at the time of original writing, including: (a) replacement variants placed in the line, immediately following deleted text; (b) replacement variants written directly on top of the original text; and (c) deletions

*changed from:* changes determined by the editors of *SKS* to have been made in the manuscript subsequent to the time of original writing, including: (a) deletions with replacement variants written in the margin or on top of the original text, and (b) deletions without replacement text

*added:* additions determined by the editors of *SKS* to have been made to the manuscript subsequent to the time of original writing

12. Symbols

[] enclose the *KJN* editors’ supplements to the *SKS* text; also enclose reference symbols, added by the editors of *SKS*, to marginal annotations or footnotes for which Kierkegaard did not leave a symbol, but whose placement is beyond doubt

[] enclose reference symbols, added by the editors of *SKS*, to marginal annotations for which Kierkegaard did not clearly assign to a specific locus in a specific main entry