

A brown tweed suit, consisting of a jacket and trousers, is hanging on a light-colored wooden hanger against a plain white background. The jacket is the primary focus, showing its textured fabric, lapels, and pockets. A blue rectangular box with a thin yellow border is superimposed over the center of the jacket, containing the title and editor information in yellow and red text.

THE LIVING THOUGHTS OF KIERKEGAARD

EDITED AND WITH AN
INTRODUCTION BY
W. H. AUDEN

THE LIVING THOUGHTS
OF
KIERKEGAARD



Edited and with an Introduction by

W. H. AUDEN

NEW YORK REVIEW BOOKS



New York

INTRODUCTION

I am not Christian severity contrasted with Christian leniency. I am . . . mere human honesty.

—KIERKEGAARD

THOUGH HIS WRITINGS are often brilliantly poetic and often deeply philosophic, Kierkegaard was neither a poet nor a philosopher, but a preacher, an expounder and defender of Christian doctrine and Christian conduct. The near contemporary with whom he may properly be compared is not someone like Dostoevsky or Hegel, but that other great preacher of the nineteenth century, John Henry, later Cardinal, Newman: both men were faced with the problem of preaching to a secularized society which was still officially Christian, and neither was a naive believer, so that in each case one is conscious when

reading their work that they are preaching to two congregations, one outside and one inside the pulpit. Both were tempted by intellectual ambition. Perhaps Newman resisted the temptation more successfully (occasionally, it must be confessed, Kierkegaard carried on like a spiritual *prima donna*), but then Newman was spared the exceptional situation in which Kierkegaard found himself, the situation of unique tribulation.

Every circumstance combined to make Kierkegaard suffer. His father was obsessed by guilt at the memory of having as a young boy cursed God; his mother was a servant girl whom his father had seduced before marriage; the frail and nervously labile constitution he inherited was further damaged by a fall from a tree. His intellectual precociousness combined with his father's intense religious instruction gave him in childhood the consciousness of an adult. Finally he was fated to live, not in the stimulating surroundings of Oxford or Paris, but in the intellectual province of Copenhagen, without competition or understanding. Like Pascal, whom in more ways than one he resembles, or like Richard III, whom he frequently thought of, he was fated to be an exception and a sufferer, whatever he did. An easy going or prudent bourgeois he could never become, any more than Pascal could have become Montaigne.

The sufferer by fate is tempted in peculiar ways; if he concentrates on himself, he is tempted to believe that

God is not good but malignantly enjoys making the innocent suffer, i.e., he is tempted into demonic defiance; if he starts from the premise that God is good, then he is tempted to believe that he is guilty without knowing what he is guilty of, i.e., he is tempted into demonic despair; if he be a Christian, he can be tempted in yet a third way, because of the paradoxical position of suffering in the Christian faith. This paradox is well expressed by the penitent shade of Forese when he says to Dante:

“And not once only, while circling this
road, is our pain renewed:
I say pain and ought to say solace.”

For, while ultimately the Christian message is the good news: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good-will towards men—” “Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden and I will refresh you”; it is proximately to man’s self-love the worst possible news—“Take up thy cross and follow me.”

Thus to be relieved of suffering in one sense is voluntarily to accept suffering in another. As Kafka says: “The joys of this life are not its own but our dread of ascending to a higher life: the torments of this life are not its own but our self-torment because of that dread.”

If the two senses of suffering are confused, then the

Christian who suffers is tempted to think this a proof that he is nearer to God than those who suffer less.

Kierkegaard's polemic, and all his writings are polemical, moves simultaneously in two directions: outwardly against the bourgeois Protestantism of the Denmark of his time, and inwardly against his suffering. To the former he says, "You imagine that you are all Christians and contented because you have forgotten that each of you is an existing individual. When you remember that, you will be forced to realize that you are pagans and in despair." To himself he says, "As long as your suffering makes you defiant or despairing, as long as you identify your suffering with yourself as an existing individual, and are defiantly or despairingly the exception, you are not a Christian."

KIERKEGAARD AND THE EXISTENTIAL

However complicated and obscure in its developments it has become, Existentialism starts out from some quite simple observations.

- a) All propositions presuppose the existence of their terms as a ground, i.e., one cannot ask, "Does X exist?" but only, "Has this existing X the character A or the character B?"

- b) The subjective presupposition "I exist" is unique. It is certainly not a proposition to be proven true or false by experiment, yet unlike all other presuppositions it is indubitable and no rival belief is possible. It also appears compulsive to believe that other selves like mine exist: at least the contrary presupposition has never been historically made. To believe that a world of nature exists, i.e., of things which happen of themselves, is not however invariably made. Magicians do not make it. (The Christian expression for this presupposition is the dogma, "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.")
- c) The absolute certainty with which I hold the belief that I exist is not its only unique characteristic. The awareness of existing is also absolutely private and incommunicable. My feelings, desires, etc., can be objects of my knowledge and hence I can imagine what other people feel. My existence cannot become an object of knowledge; hence while, if I have the necessary histrionic imagination and talent I can act the part of another in such a way that I deceive his best friends, I can never imagine what it would be like to *be* that other person but must always remain myself pretending to be him.

d) If I take away from my sense of existence all that can become an object of my consciousness, what is left?

(1) An awareness that my existence is not self-derived. I can legitimately speak of *my* feelings. I cannot properly speak of *my* existence.

(2) An awareness that I am free to make choices. I cannot observe the act of choice objectively. If I try, I shall not choose. Doctor Johnson's refutation of determinism, to kick the stone and say, "We know we are free and there's an end of it" is correct, because the awareness of freedom is subjective, i.e., objectively undemonstrable.

(3) An awareness of being *with* time, i.e., experiencing time as an eternal present to which past and future refer, instead of my knowledge of my feelings and of the outer world as moving or changing *in* time.

(4) A state of anxiety (or dread), pride (in the theological sense), despair or faith. These are not emotions in the way that fear or lust or anger are, for I cannot know them objectively; I can

only know them when they have aroused such feelings as the above which are observable. For these states of anxiety or pride, etc., are anxiety about existing, pride in existing, etc., and I cannot stand outside them to observe them. Nor can I observe them in others. A gluttonous man may succeed when he is in my presence in concealing his gluttony, but if I could watch him all the time, I should catch him out. But I could watch a man all his life, and I should never know for certain whether or not he was proud, for the actions which we call proud or humble may have quite other causes. Pride is rightly called the root of all sin, because it is invisible to the one who is guilty of it and he can only infer it from results.

These facts of existence are expressed in the Christian doctrines of Man's creation and his fall. Man is created in the image of God; an image because his existence is not self-derived, and a divine image because like God each man is aware of his existence as unique. Man fell through pride, a wish to become God, to derive his existence from himself, and not through sensuality or any of the desires of his "nature."

KIERKEGAARD'S THREE CATEGORIES

Every man, says Kierkegaard, lives either aesthetically, ethically, or religiously. As he is concerned, for the most part, with describing the way in which these categories apply in Christian or post-Christian society, one can perhaps make his meaning clearer by approaching these categories historically, i.e., by considering the Aesthetic and the Ethical at stages when each was a religion, and then comparing them with the Christian faith in order to see the difference, first, between two rival and incompatible Natural Religions and, secondly, between them and a Revealed Religion in which neither is destroyed or ignored, but the Aesthetic is dethroned and the Ethical fulfilled.

THE AESTHETIC RELIGION (E.G., THE GREEK GODS)

The experience from which the aesthetic religion starts, the facts which it sets out to overcome, is the experience of the physical weakness of the self in the face of an overwhelmingly powerful not-self. To survive I must act strongly and decisively. What gives me the power to do so? Passion. The aesthetic religion regards the

passions not as belonging to the self, but as divine visitations, powers which it must find the means to attract or repel if the self is to survive.

So in the aesthetic cosmology, the gods are created by nature, ascend to heaven, are human in form, finite in number (like the passions) and interrelated by blood. Being images of passions, they themselves are not *in* their passion—Aphrodite is not in love; Mars is not angry—or, if they do make an appearance of passionate behavior, it is frivolous; like actors, they do not suffer or change. They bestow, withhold or withdraw power from men as and when they choose. They are not interested in the majority of men, but only in a few exceptional individuals whom they specially favor and sometimes even beget on mortal mothers. These exceptional individuals with whom the gods enter into relation are heroes. How does one know that a man is a hero? By his acts of power, by his good fortune. The hero is glorious but not responsible for his successes or his failures. When Odysseus, for instance, succeeds, he has his friend Pallas Athene to thank; when he fails, he has his enemy Poseidon to blame. The aesthetic either/or is not good or bad but strong or weak, fortunate or unfortunate. The temporal succession of events has no meaning, for what happens is simply what the gods choose arbitrarily to will. The Greeks and the Trojans must fight because “hateful Ares bids.” To the aesthetic religion all

art is ritual, acts designed to attract the divine favors which will make the self strong, and ritual is the only form of activity in which man has the freedom to act or refrain from acting and for which, therefore, he is responsible.

The facts on which the aesthetic religion is shattered and despairs, producing in its death agony Tragic Drama, are two: man's knowledge of good and evil, and his certainty that death comes to all men, i.e., that ultimately there is no either/or of strength or weakness, but even for the exceptional individual the doom of absolute weakness. Both facts it tries to explain in its own terms and fails. It tries to relate good and evil to fortune and misfortune, strength and weakness, and concludes that if a man is unfortunate, he must be guilty. Oedipus' parricide and incest are not really his sins but his punishment for his sin of *hubris*. The Homeric hero cannot sin, the tragic hero must sin, but neither is tempted. Presently the observation that some evil men are fortunate and some good men unfortunate brings forth a doubt as to whether the gods are really good, till in the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus it is openly stated that power and goodness are not identical. Again, the aesthetic religion tries to express the consciousness of universal death aesthetically, that is, individually, as the Fates to which even the gods must bow, and betrays its failure to imagine the universal by having to have three of them.

THE ETHICAL RELIGION (THE GOD OF
GREEK PHILOSOPHY)

To solve the problem of human death and weakness, the ethical religion begins by asking, "Is there anything man knows which does not come and go like his passions?" Yes, the concepts of his reason which are both certain and independent of time or space or individual, for the certainty is the same whether a man be sick or well, a king or a slave.

In place of the magnified passions of the aesthetic religion, the ethical sets up as God, the Ideas, the First Cause, the Universal. While to the former, the world begot the gods who then ruled over it because they were stronger than any other creature, in the latter God and the world are coeternal. God did not create the world of matter; he is only the cause of the order in it, and this not by any act of his—the neuter gender would be more fitting to him—for to be divine means to be self-sufficient, "to have no need of friends." Rather it is matter which, wishing to escape from the innate disorder of its temporal flux, "falls in love" with God and imitates his unchangeableness in such ways as it can, namely by adopting regular movements. (Plato's introduction of a mysterious third party, the Demiurge who loves the Ideas and then imposes them on matter, complicates but does not essentially alter

the cosmology.) Man, however, being endowed with reason, can apprehend God directly as Idea and Law, transcend his finite bodily passions, and become like God.

For the aesthetic either/or of strength or weakness, fortune or misfortune, the ethical religion substitutes the either/or of Knowledge of the Good or Ignorance of the Good. To the aesthetic, evil was lack of power over the finite world, for all finiteness, all passion is weakness, as goodness is gained by transcending the finite world, by a knowledge of the eternal and universal truths of reason which cannot be known without being obeyed. To the aesthetic, time was unmeaning and overwhelming; to the ethical, it is an appearance which can be seen through. The aesthetic worshipper was dependent on his gods who entered into relationship with him if and when he chose; the ethical worshipper enters into relationship with his god through his own efforts and, once he has done so, the relationship is eternal, neither can break it. The ethical hero is not the man of power, the man who does, but the philosopher, the man who knows.

Like his predecessor, however, he is not tempted and does not choose, for so long as he is ignorant he is at the mercy of his passions, i.e., he *must* yield to the passion of the moment, but so soon as he knows the good, he must

will it; he can no more refuse assent to the good than he can to the truths of geometry.

As in the case of the aesthetic religion, there are facts with which the ethical religion cannot deal and on which it founders. Its premise "Sin is ignorance; to know the good is to will it" is faced with the fact that all men are born ignorant and hence each individual requires a will to know the universal good in order to will it. This will cannot be explained ethically, first because it is not a rational idea so that the ethical has to fall back on the aesthetic idea of a heavenly Eros to account for it. Secondly, it is not a universal; it is present or appeals to some individuals and not to others, so that the ethical has to call in the aesthetic hero whom it instructs in the good, and who then imposes justice by force. Art to the elect is no longer a religious ritual, but an immoral sham, useful only as a fraudulent but pragmatically effective method of making the ignorant masses conform to the law of virtue which they do not understand.

Lastly, there comes the discovery that knowledge of the good does not automatically cause the knower to will it. He may know the law and yet not only be tempted to disobey but yield to the temptation. He may even disobey deliberately out of spite, just to show that he is free.

REVEALED RELIGION
(JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY)

A revealed religion is one in which God is not present as an object of consciousness, either as a feeling or a proposition. He is not begotten by the world, nor does he impose order on its coeternal flux but creates it out of nothing, so that while God and the world are at every moment related, God is not knowable as an object. While in the aesthetic religion the feelings, and in the ethical religion, the ideas were the presence of God, they are now only my feelings, my ideas and if I believe that what I feel (e.g., God is present) or think (e.g., God is righteous) is caused by my relation to God, this belief is a revelation, for the cause is outside my consciousness. As one term of a relation, the other term of which is God, I cannot overlook the whole relation objectively and can only describe it analogically in terms of the human relation most like it, e.g., if the feeling of which I have immediate certainty is one which I would approximately describe as sonship, I may speak of God as Father.

There is no longer a question of establishing a relation between God and myself for as my creator he is necessarily related to his creature and the relation is presupposed by my existence; there is only a question of the right relation. The uniqueness of the relation is that it is a relation

to an Other yet at the same time as continuous and inescapable as my relation to myself. The relation of the aesthetic worshipper to his gods is intermittent and depends on their pleasure—they do not have to get in touch with him at all. The relation of the ethical worshipper to the Ideas is intermittent or not depending on his pleasure. They are always there to be contemplated if he choose, as a river is always there to be drunk from if one is thirsty, but if he doesn't choose to contemplate them, there is no relation. But the relation to the creator God of revealed religion is unbreakable: I, his creature, can forget it as I can forget my relation to myself when I am thinking of other things, but it is permanently there, and, if I try to banish it permanently from consciousness, I shall not get rid of it, but experience it negatively as guilt and despair. The wrath of God is not a description of God in a certain state of feeling, but of the way in which I experience God if I distort or deny my relation to him. So Dante inscribed on the portals of Hell: "Divine Power made me, Wisdom supreme and Primal Love"—and Landor justly remarked about the Inferno that its inhabitants do not want to get out. To both the aesthetic and the ethical religion, evil was a lack of relation to God, due in the one case to the God's will, in the other to man's ignorance; to the revealed religion, evil is sin, that is to say, the rebellion of man's will against the relation.

The aesthetic commands cannot be codified because they are arbitrary commands of the gods and always novel. The ethical commands ought to be able to be completely codified as a set of universal moral laws. Revealed religion shows why this is impossible. A law is either a law *of* or a law *for*. Laws *of*, like the laws of science, are patterns of regular behavior as observed by a disinterested observer. Conformity is necessary for the law to exist, for if an exception is found, the law has to be rewritten in such a way that the exception becomes part of the pattern, for it is a presupposition of science that events in nature conform to law, i.e., a physical event is always related to some law, even if it be one of which scientists are at present ignorant. Laws *for*, like human legislation, are patterns of behavior imposed on behavior which was previously lacking in pattern. In order for the laws to come into existence, there must be at least some people who do not conform to them. Unlike laws *of* which must completely explain how events occur, laws *for* are only concerned with commanding or prohibiting the class of actions to which they refer, and a man is only related to the law when it is a question of doing or not doing one act of such a class; when his actions are covered by no law, e.g., when he is sitting alone in his room, he is related to no law at all.

If the commands of God were laws *of* man, then dis-

obedience would be impossible; if they were laws *for* man, then his relation to God would not be permanent but intermittent. The commands of God are neither the aesthetic fiat, "Do what you must" nor the ethical instruction, "These are the things which you may or must not do," but the call of duty, "Choose to do what at this moment in this context I am telling you to do."

CHRIST THE OFFENSE

To one who believes that Jesus was what he claimed to be, the incarnation as an existing individual of the Son of God begotten of his Father before all worlds, by whom all things were made, his birth, life and death are, first, a simultaneous revelation of the infinite love of God—to be righteous means to love—and of the almost infinite sinfulness of man—without the gift of the Holy Spirit it is impossible for him to accept the truth; secondly, a revelation that God is related to all men, but to each of them uniquely as an existing individual, i.e., God is the father of all men, not of a chosen people alone, and all men are exceptions, not aesthetically, but as existing individuals—it is their existence not their natures which makes each of them unique; thirdly, a revelation that the Life is not an object for aesthetic admiration nor the Truth an object

for ethical appropriation, but a Way to be followed, an inclination of the heart, a spirit in which all actions are done. In so far as collectively they considered their relation to God to be aesthetically unique, and individually an ethical relation to his Law, this revelation is an offense to the Jews; in so far as it proclaims that God the Father is not a God but the God, that Christ is not a teacher of truths but the Truth, it is an offense to the Gentiles.

The Jews would have welcomed a Messiah for them alone, but not one who demanded that they give up their claim to be the unique people of God or their belief that the Law covers the whole duty of the individual; the Gentile imagination could have accepted another culture-hero to add to its old ones, the Gentile reason, another teacher to add new stores to its knowledge, but could not accept one who was a passive sufferer, put faith before reason, and claimed exclusive attention. The Jews crucified Jesus on the serious charge that he was a blasphemer, the Gentiles, on the frivolous charge that he was a public nuisance.

PREACHING TO THE NON-BELIEVER

"It is," Newman observed, "as absurd to argue men, as to torture them, into believing." However convincing the

argument, however holy the arguer, the act of faith remains an act of choice which no one can do for another. Pascal's "wager" and Kierkegaard's "leap" are neither of them quite adequate descriptions, for the one suggests prudent calculation and the other perverse arbitrariness. Both, however, have some value: the first calls men's attention to the fact that in all other spheres of life they are constantly acting on faith and quite willingly, so that they have no right to expect religion to be an exception; the second reminds them that they cannot live without faith in something, and that when the faith which they have breaks down, when the ground crumbles under their feet, they have to leap even into uncertainty if they are to avoid certain destruction.

There are only two Christian propositions about which it is therefore possible to argue with a non-believer:

(1) That Jesus existed; (2) That a man who does not believe that Jesus is the Christ is in despair.

It is probably true that nobody was ever genuinely converted to Christianity who had not lost his "nerve," either because he was aesthetically unfortunate or because he was ethically powerless, i.e., unable to do what he knew to be his duty. A great deal of Kierkegaard's work is addressed to the man who has already become uneasy about himself, and by encouraging him to look more closely at himself, shows him that his condition is more serious

than he thought. The points that Kierkegaard stresses most are, firstly, that no one, believer or not, who has once been exposed to Christianity can return to either the aesthetic or the ethical religion as if nothing had happened. Return he will, if he lose his Christian faith, for he cannot exist without some faith, but he will no longer be a naive believer, but a *rusé* one compelled to excess by the need to hide from himself the fact that he does not really believe in the idols he sets up.

Thus the aesthetic individual is no longer content with the passive moderation of paganism; he will no longer simply obey the passions of his nature, but will have by will power to arouse his passions constantly in order to have something to obey. The fickle lover of paganism who fell in and out of love turns into Don Giovanni, the seducer who keeps a list so as not to forget. Similarly, the ethical philosopher will no longer be content to remain a simple scientist content to understand as much and no more than he can discover; he must turn into the systematic philosopher who has an explanation for everything in existence except, of course, his own existence which defeats him. Nothing must occur except what he can explain. The multitude of ordinary men and women cannot return to the contented community of the Greek chorus for they cannot lose the sense that they are individuals; they can only try to drown that sense by merging themselves into an ab-

straction, the crowd, the public ruled by fashion. As Rudolf Kassner says in his fascinating book, *Zahl und Gesicht*:

The pre-christian man with his Mean (*Mitte*) bore a charmed life against mediocrity. The Christian stands in greater danger of becoming mediocre. If we bear in mind the idea, the absolute to which the Christian claims to be related, a mediocre Christian becomes comic. The pre-christian man could still be mediocre without becoming comic because for him his mediocrity was the Mean. The Christian cannot.

To show the non-believer that he is in despair because he cannot believe in *his* gods and then show him that Christ cannot be a man-made God because in every respect he is offensive to the natural man is for Kierkegaard the only true kind of Christian apologetics. The false kind of apologetics of which he accuses his contemporary Christians is the attempt to soft-pedal the distinction between Christianity and the Natural Religions, either by trying to show that what Christians believe is really just what everybody believes, or by suggesting that Christianity pays in a worldly sense, that it makes men healthy, wealthy, and wise, keeps society stable, and the young in order, etc. Apart from its falsehood, Kierkegaard says,

this method will not work because those who are satisfied with this world will not be interested and those who are not satisfied are looking for a faith whose values are not those of this world.

PREACHING TO BELIEVERS

The danger for the Christian in an officially Christian society is that he may think he is a Christian. But nobody except Christ and, at the end of their lives perhaps, the saints are Christian. To say "I am a Christian" really means "I who am a sinner am required to become like Christ." He may think he believes as an individual when all he is doing is believing what his parents said, so that he would be a Mohammedan if they had been. The task of the Christian preacher is therefore first to affirm the Christian commands and arouse the consciousness of sin, and secondly to make the individual's relationship with Christ real, that is, contemporary.

The world has changed greatly since Kierkegaard's time and all too many of his prophetic insights have come to pass. The smug bourgeois Christendom he denounced has crumbled and what is left is an amorphous, despairing mass of displaced persons and paralyzed Hamlets. The ubiquitous violence of the present age is not truly

passionate, but a desperate attempt to regress from reflection into passion instead of leaping forward into faith. The worst feature, for example, of the massacre of the Jews by the Nazis is not its cruelty but its frivolity; they did not seriously believe that the Jews were a menace as the Inquisition believed about heretics; no, it was rather a matter of "We must do something. Why not kill all the Jews?"

It is almost bound to be the fate of Kierkegaard, as of so many polemical writers, to be read in the wrong way or by the wrong people. The contented will not read him or read him only scientifically as an interesting case history. The unhappy and, for the most part, agnostic intellectuals who will read him, will confine themselves to his psychological analyses like *The Sickness unto Death* or his philosophical polemics like *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, which they will read poetically as sympathetic and stimulating reflections of their feelings and thoughts, but they will fight shy of books like *Training in Christianity* or *The Works of Love*, either because they are not as unhappy as they pretend or because they really despair of comfort and cling in defiance to their suffering.

Kierkegaard is particularly vulnerable to such misunderstanding because the only force which can compel us to read an author as he intends is some action of his which becomes inexplicable if we read him any other way, e.g.,

Newman's conversion to Roman Catholicism. In Kierkegaard's case there is indeed such an action, but the action is another book, *The Attack upon "Christendom."* The whole of his writings up to this one, written in the last year of his life, even the sermons, are really "poetical," i.e., Kierkegaard speaks in them as a genius not as an apostle, so that they all might have been published, as many of them were, anonymously. *The Attack upon "Christendom,"* on the other hand, is that contradiction in terms, an "existential" book. What for the author was the most important book of his life is for us, as readers, the least, for to us the important point is not what it contains, but the fact that Kierkegaard wrote it. For this reason, no selection from it appears here.

—W. H. AUDEN

THIS IS A NEW YORK REVIEW BOOK
PUBLISHED BY THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS

THE LIVING THOUGHTS OF KIERKEGAARD

Introduction by W. H. Auden from *The Living Thoughts of Kierkegaard* by Søren Kierkegaard, Copyright © 1952 by David McKay Co. Reprinted by permission of David McKay Co., a division of Random House, Inc.

Grateful acknowledgement is made for permission to reprint excerpts from the following copyrighted works of Kierkegaard:

Material from *The Journals*, trans. by Alexander Dru, Copyright © 1938; *Fear and Trembling*, trans. by Robert Payne, Copyright © 1939. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press. Material from *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. by D. F. Swenson, Copyright © 1936; *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, trans. by D. F. Swenson and W. Lowrie, Copyright © 1941; *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. by W. Lowrie, Copyright © 1944; *The Concept of Dread*, trans. by W. Lowrie, Copyright © 1944; *The Works of Love*, trans. by D. F. and L. M. Swenson, Copyright © 1946.

Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press.

Material from *The Present Age*, translated by A. Dru and W. Lowrie, Copyright © 1940 (including *Two Minor Ethico-Religious Treatises*, trans. by A. Dru, Copyright © 1940). Reprinted by permission of Alexander Dru.

Material from *Training in Christianity*, trans. by W. Lowrie, Copyright © 1941; *The Present Age*, trans. by A. Dru and W. Lowrie, Copyright © 1940. Reprinted by permission of the Reverend Canon Howard A. Johnson.

All rights reserved.

First published by David McKay Co. 1952

This edition published in 1999
in the United States of America by
The New York Review of Books
1755 Broadway, New York, NY 10019
www.nybooks.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Kierkegaard, Søren, 1813–1855.

The living thoughts of Kierkegaard / Søren Kierkegaard; selected
and with an introduction by W. H. Auden.

p. cm.

Originally published: New York: D. McKay Co., 1952, in series:
The living thoughts library.

ISBN 0-940322-13-7 (alk. paper)

I. Philosophy. I. Auden, W. H. (Wystan Hugh), 1907–1973

II. Title.

B4372.E5A8 1999

198'.9—dc21

99-14567

ISBN 0-940322-13-7

Cover image: Joseph Beuys, *Felt Suit*, 1970. Tate Gallery, London
© 2001 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn
Cover design: Katy Homans

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper.
September 1999