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# DIFFERENT AND IDENTICAL FEATURES OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL, SCIENTIFIC, ARTISTIC AND RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE IN THE CONTEXT OF KIERKEGAARD'S THOUGHT

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## **Abstract**

The paper comments on the contemporary situation in Philosophy (the split into analytic and existential orientation), on the analogical divides in Science and religion, as well as on the inevitable inter-connectedness of all these dimensions of human self-realization. Kierkegaard is viewed as one of the crucial figures who once significantly marked and prefigured the development of the modern and contemporary Philosophy. At the same time, Kierkegaard is indicated as one of those thinkers who exemplify ways of possible and vitally needed synthesis as well as re-articulation of seemingly irreconcilable tendencies in contemporary philosophical thought.

*Keywords:* natural science, existential, analytic, religion, society

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## **1. How to deal with complexity?**

At present, we ever more often witness the lack of understanding among religious beliefs, artistic trends, existential and analytically grounded philosophical orientations, between Natural sciences and Humanities, as well as between publicly widely spread convictions and the current state of knowledge in particular fields of knowledge. According to us, it is a complex, multi-layered problem, which is not incomprehensible or insoluble, though. Deliberate reluctance to solutions and conformity to sustain the ignorance seems to be part of the problem, regardless of whether it is being used as an alibi to cover the passivity facing the contemporary challenges or for the responsibility for our future. One could suppose the problem itself might be used for the benefit of the few and detriment of many. In addition, attempts at interdisciplinarity are often misused to inappropriately reduce, simplify the problem, and become thus an obstacle to a complex scientific interdisciplinary approach that would be willing to seek the root of the problem.

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We assume that basic misunderstanding, the lack of cooperation among the fields of knowledge, social life and culture emerges on all levels and parts of the process of knowledge acquisition as well as in the process of its social articulation, argumentation and building beliefs.

One of the levels is historical, where we can observe significant changes. In art it is the modernity and its postmodern turn. Concerning religion, one can spot them between its modernist tendencies and reaction against them, followed by times, when the rise of intolerance, radicalized into extremism and terrorism, must be inevitably reflected as the main problem. In Natural sciences, the conflict of the traditional determinist objectivist Physics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with Relativist physics – being out of reach for ordinary intuition, it embraces the classical one as its special, reduced and consistent case – and at the same time with Quantum physics, which deserves a new comprehension of verisimilitude and causality, and above that, leads to re-assessment of the meaning of human subjectivity in the role of experimenter and the bearer of culture and tradition. The classical Physics could afford to ignore subject like this, unlike Quantum physics, which accordingly seems to get closer to artistic and religious thinking. Biology, the last portion of the Natural sciences where the positivist and determinist ideal of the 19<sup>th</sup> century science still preserved its relevance, has also been replaced by quantum biochemistry and more demanding and undoubtedly more advanced reality of the statistical and probabilistic processing of the dynamics of the genetic information. The ideal paradoxically finds its place in Humanities, which as if envious about the strict methodology of Natural sciences try to use it in processing the material aspect of the research, even though in Humanities such outcomes respond to questions only indirectly and in a complicated way.

One can spot a seemingly insoluble contradiction even in Philosophy, where the existentialist orientation makes use of language close to art and literature, whereas the language of the analytically oriented philosophy is sometimes hardly different to that of formal and mathematical logic. As if the ‘existential’ orientation of Philosophy provided Humanities, literature and religion merely with methodology. Similarly, the analytic orientation seems to be no more than methodology of Natural science and Mathematics. There are, however, areas of human cultural activity, where even under a gross simplification of the relations (between art, Natural science, Mathematics, Humanities, Philosophy, religion and ideology), these areas still appear as a complex of mutually ever denser interconnections. These can and should be distinguished, though they actually cannot be separated. One such collection of simplifications and interesting time-bound assumptions, Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*, could be an example, even more so, if we consider Wittgenstein was willing to and able to substantially revise, and thus disrupt up to that point uncontested validity of logical atomism, the belief in existence of indivisible minimal atomic facts (‘states of affairs’ in Wittgenstein) correlative to atomic propositions and cognizance, forming two parallel sets: world as a set of the former and cognizance of the latter. The assumption, as

reasonable as it intuitively seems to be, is loosely related to traditional idea of the conceptual bond between ideas and facts, which remotely resemble essences and qualitative and quantitative expressions, well-established since antiquity. The apriority, primacy of these facts and atomic concepts to the world and language, which, accordingly, are merely aggregations and arrangements of these, as well as the presupposed ontological correlation itself, are at least as problematic as the previous articulations of the problem, that despite its new rewording had remained. However, the correction has not been accepted as done by those of existential orientation (Unamuno, Heidegger and others), but by those who openly adhered to analytical tradition, respecting its language and criteria, like Rorty, Dewey, Quine, Davidson. To compare, Heidegger's fresh insight into understanding 'logos' has been influential with authors more or less inspired by hermeneutically processed philosophy, although it has not been accepted by those who more or less took the problem in its epistemological structuration inherited from philosophers of the early modern philosophy.

It is sometimes too easily pronounced that Philosophy once emerged when myth, embodied in image and narration no longer worked as an emotional satisfaction of our cognitive need. It demands no verification, though, once we cross the threshold of explanation, the myth keeps its poetic, but much less its practical and definitely almost no theoretical value. Unlike myth-tellers and interpreters of the old age, Ancient Greek philosopher knows that the surrounding world – be that the world of people, nature, numbers, geometric shapes and bodies, or words and concepts of language – does not depend on his wish or his beliefs. He realizes instead that myth belongs to art or religion. The delusive reality of myth is abandoned for the absence of knowledge, accepted as a point of departure for active pursuit of knowledge. Philosophical assumption, like scientific hypothesis, does not represent final solution, but a starting point of critical analysis. Science grows out of Philosophy, first from observation, verification of the assumptions, repeatable experiment and verification of its interpretation. Art reflects philosophical, scientific and religious knowledge - no matter how different these types of knowledge are to each other or to art itself. The ways to distinguish between what otherwise remains connected have been amply reflected since antiquity. Isidore of Seville offered the following remark regarding the Middle Ages: "Plato and Aristotle would speak of this distinction between an art and a discipline: an art consists of matters that can turn out in different ways, while a discipline is concerned with things that have only one possible outcome' [1].

Math assignment or experiment in classical Physics can have only one solution, which always represents what is valid generally as a result of an analytical operation, like the relation among time, speed, trajectory in case of continuous motion. The need to create art may have multiple results, even the recipient may experience different reactions when facing the same artwork multiple times, depending on the context and affective subjective factors. The procedures in Science may vary, but the solution is the same, unless one makes an error. Artistic creativity legitimately produces different results, while canons,

techniques, philosophical, religious and scientific contexts are common, although individual attitude and approach to the process of making art are subjective and different.

Humanities used to hold special position as they described generally valid and, in this sense, scientific dimension of the processes which exemplified general cultural, artistic and historical features. Kierkegaard enters the scene when this generally accepted role of Humanities was getting somewhat complicated. The modern era still followed the Aristotelian claim on generally valid knowledge, although connected with experiment in Science, and re-articulated into the subject-object scheme in Philosophy. Kierkegaard opened the question of subject-subject relationship, the one between individual human being and God. The one to be known no longer appears as a thing, object, and, therefore, cannot be recognized in quantitative measures or as manipulated, controlled or exploited one. This does not mean that people would no longer be subjected to this type of treatment, on the contrary, Kierkegaard focuses on the criticism of those who ever more widely and easily practice what he considered fundamentally evil.

## **2. Kierkegaard and the analytic-existential split - Science and morality**

It was not by chance that Kierkegaard turned to Socrates' irony. Like Socrates before him, Kierkegaard was known for disrupting the all too easily and superficially acquired assumptions and beliefs. Together with Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Marx, he opened the way to contemporary philosophy, literature and art. Unlike them, he did not refuse religious dimension of individual human being although he problematized its social impact. In society, religion becomes the source of the rule over others, and by manipulating them, it offers a false safety which shields them from the claim on their individual responsibility for others. He says: "We are what is called a 'Christian' nation — but in such a sense that not a single one of us is in the character of the Christianity of the New Testament, any more than I am, who again and again have repeated, and do now repeat, that I am only a poet. The illusion of a Christian nation is due doubtless to the power which number exercises over the imagination." [2] Worst of all, however, it became a source of legitimation for authority based on status, not on knowledge and honesty.

In this respect, Kierkegaard further cultivated the orientation of modern thinking, although it seems he insisted on subjectivity, which was not supposed to be merely a support, but precisely an end of active, ethically autochthonous and responsible action. That objective knowledge, purely rational, devoid of all emotional and voluntary, subjective elements, suffices in dealing with all problems in the present or in the future - attitude so typical for modern era and popular ever since - was strictly and polemically opposed by Kierkegaard. His resistance, however, often slips into the misconception of refusing all of modernity at once, including the advancement of Science, technology, social structure, mass media, rise of the living standards and generally the possibilities

one has at his disposal. Kierkegaard warned about the threats of modern life, he even attempted to figure out solutions which he himself would not attach to.

Kierkegaard is often reproached on account of his responsibility for the split of Philosophy into its analytical and existential orientation. The divergence is, however, deeper and earlier and it can be viewed as development of the difference between continental and insular philosophy. It will suffice to remind ourselves of the differences between Thomas Aquinas and Roger Bacon, later also William of Ockham. Paradoxically, as is precisely the case of the author of the proverbial *philosophia ancilla theologiae*, it is not a logical error in sequence of the proof of the existence of God, but a misconception about the role of assumptions, as far as he wanted to prove what he had considered given. He made a mistake in presuppositions and ends, not in his methodology.

At the same time, we are convinced that there is more to analytically oriented philosophy than just methodology of Natural sciences, Mathematics and formal logic. And the same holds for existentially oriented thought, which thematizes more than the irreversible, scientifically unattainable, subjective and intersubjective dimension of individual existence that represents subjectivity exclusively. The difference between these two points of departure, between their methods and aims shows that they are not mutually exclusive, although this does not make the pursuit of their possible compatibility and synergy any easier. To successfully deal with the contemporary global problems and further develop our knowledge, we probably cannot do without accepting the task of their possible convergence. To understand the difference of discriminative criteria on both sides would be the inevitable step towards the synthesis as long as both represent the results of discriminative analytics of the process of cognizance.

One of the problems of a globalized civilization rests in the fact that the utilization of technology, resulting from the application of modern science, deserves no comprehension or emotional interiorization. Palitefka notes that "Western culture is thus only one of many, even though globalization may evoke an image that human affairs are evolving towards some kind of a generally true model. If there are, e.g. the same computers, gas stations, fast-food chains worldwide, why not have equal rights, values or political institutions? Since modernization is to a great extent spreading from the West, it may evoke an image whose values are universal and should be generally held at all times and for all." [3] In Kierkegaardian understanding, secularization can lead to revitalization of the original individual dimension of Christianity, although it does not match so easily with other cultures, which, possessing no institutional authority or secular power, almost inevitably resist and oppose any claims to individual exposure to Other and other sources of personal religiosity and authentic community.

Kondrla and Pavlíková, attempting at insight into the basic motives of differentiation between the formal and existential ethics claim: „Some authors identify the foundation of formalism in Kant’s division of reason into a ‘theoretical’ and ‘practical’ reason. The goal of theoretical reason is to produce knowledge that refers to experience; whereas the goal of practical reason is to

determine the direction of our choices and actions in the sphere of Ethics. Metaphysics was discarded from the realm of theoretical reason and was offered as a potentially useful tool to practical reason in its mission to make the correct moral choices.” [4] It is harder, in fact, to agree with the following statement: “In order to do good, law and moral duty stem solely from the practical reason. The practical reason is autonomous and determines itself. It sets duties to itself, formulates law, and enables the postulates of practical reason. This also means, among other things, that theoretical reason gains nothing from practical reason. The experience of the practical reason, as well as its own postulates, does not develop knowledge in the realm of theoretical reason. Faith, as a matter of the practical reason, enriches in no way our knowledge. The spheres of practical and theoretical reasons are thus radically separated.” [4, p. 102] First of all, with Kant one may speak about analytical, not about radical separation in practical sense. Similar distinctions, between theoretical, practical and poetic activity, were made already in Ancient Greece, although with different intention: not to separate them, but to see them as distinct and, therefore, interconnected. The comparison thus shows different methodologies and criteria, yet no denial of the analytic bond between theoretical and practical reason, which, after all, constitutes reason as reason in its analytical exposure. The object of faith, according to Kierkegaard, can never become an object of the natural science. Faith, therefore, never comes either from of the exploration of nature, or from a logical analysis of propositions, which could be scientifically verified or denied.

Kierkegaard’s analytics of the aesthetic, ethical and religious stages elevated the religious stage as the highest and considered the ethical the lowest. According to Pavlíková, this is precisely consistent with what is happening today: “When feelings of absurdity, despair and boredom with everything come to their culmination, man gets a strong desire for a meaningful life, and if it is not found he seeks new experience and once again lives through disappointment and despair” [5]. It becomes obvious, that individual experience must be insufficient. Kierkegaard says: “If, however, he (the individual) realizes that if he does not begin concretely he will never make a beginning, and that if he never makes a beginning he will never finish, he will then be simultaneously in continuity with the past and the future. He transfers himself from personal life to civic life, from this to personal life. Personal life as such was an isolation and therefore imperfect, but when he turns back into his personality through the civic life, the personal life appears in a higher form.” [6] Man as a social being is in need of social experience, interaction and communication, mediated and mediating knowledge occurring in social environment and processed by abstract concepts of language.

Students often complain about a too abstract subject matter to be learned. Having no idea of its particular, concrete application, they miss an emotional, or even any enthusiastic bias which often occurs in religious context. However, the problem is that they often believe that the content to be learned is ‘a theory’. Theoretical activity, nevertheless, comes out of the need to understand the world without any immediate practical application. Theory is thus, according to

Aristotle, the highest stage of human life. This, however, is the source of the disapproval of the modern man towards science, mathematics and foremost towards philosophy. The dimension of mediation of knowledge done via abstract concepts, social prejudice and beliefs based on tradition and social fashion is, even if perhaps slightly inappropriately, signified by Kierkegaard as 'ethical dimension', or 'stage' of life. The critique of the abstract and impersonal dimension of mediation does not deny ethics in general or the social dimension of man. It rather sharply criticizes their averted side, the contempt for the individual and the subjective. indeed, the word 'mores' originally signified social manners, customs, ways of understanding, which are handed over by social communication and pressure. It originally comes from Latin, and later had differentiated into several meanings to a degree, that nowadays we can speak about autochthonous morality which does not surrender to social pressure, but stems from the personal, perhaps even enthusiastic decisions for socially responsible action, precisely in the sense these were revealed by Kierkegaard's pseudonym Judge William in the second part of his *Either/ Or: Fragment of Life*.

### **3. Kierkegaard on the social role of religion**

Kierkegaard was the one who balanced modernity focused on the objective dimension of the process of cognizance which tended to ignore individual motivation, emotion and will. All these together with traditional knowledge, personal experience, social condition influenced assumptions, methods, interpretation and, most of all, utilization of the results of the process in the informed, morally autochthonous and responsible action. He particularly reflected on the change in the position of the Church, formerly an untouchable authority as far as the role of religion in society was concerned. As Králik and Török remark about one of Kierkegaard's works: "'The Moment' charges that Church is no longer an authority for the contemporary society. Possible explanations might begin in its failure to respond appropriately to the turning points of modern times. Initially, Church's authority lay in its values, which were always in line with the New Testament. As this entity weakened, people became more critical of the Church and no longer turned to it as a guide for their lives. It was a response to Church's becoming an institution more interested in its own welfare and prosperity than its members' well-being. The Church and its clergy were no longer related to the message of Jesus Christ, who preached poverty and sacrifice. The Church is no longer viewed in a positive way for a contemporary individual seeking a spiritual path." [7] This is valid for the role of religion in secularized society in general, not only for the Danish Protestant Church and its forms.

For many, the most problematic thing about Kierkegaard is the fact, that he considers religious stage the highest. It is related to the fact that it is often coupled with the ethical without making distinction between specific meanings of the terms, which are basically opposites. The narrower interpretation of the

religious stage exemplifies the discipleship of Abraham and even more so, Christ, in the spirit of the New Testament. In the broader sense, it represents an authentic and unique experiencing of the Event, based on direct sensual experience, although mediated by textual language. The idea of God is not grounded in direct experience, but comes out of abstract symbolic procedure, while the religious experience transcends the verbal mediation of the individual situation.

Králík compares the situation today, when Kierkegaard is respected as a significant philosopher, with that of the period since his death till he was discovered as a philosopher of global importance: “The situation at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was however different. Kierkegaard was almost unknown out of Denmark and there was no indication that it could be otherwise. The historical situation changed and society had to respond to the horrors of the 1st World War. Kierkegaard’s emphasis on suffering, human failure and sin was confirmed. Humanity had to admit that despite scientific-technical development, it was in spiritual crisis.” [8] It is a fact, that Kierkegaard became widely acclaimed in many respects thanks to G.M.C. Brandes, the distinguished biographer, who also propagated Nietzsche and published Kierkegaard’s biography as early as 1879. Thanks to this biography, even Miguel de Unamuno found Kierkegaard to be a close thinker, whom he later introduced to the Hispanic and Anglophone world.

Králík emphasizes Kierkegaard’s influence on Tillich, even if the interpretation of both struggles with the common problem: “Like Tillich, Kierkegaard allows a wide range of various interpretations or misinterpretations as a result of his complexity and non-systematic approach. Tillich found Kierkegaard inspiring in many respects: in his emphasis on the existential experience of reality, passion, his quest for truth, work, and in his moving on the very border of Philosophy and Theology.” [9] The difference rests perhaps in the fact, that outside the Protestant world we tend to recognize Kierkegaard as a religious thinker, while Tillich has always been considered a Protestant theologian.

Kierkegaard’s critique of the social role of religion is in certain respect related to the fact of suppressing the individual dimension of faith. An extended interpretation of the state in harmony with its immanent dynamism, though in sharp contradiction to its original function, is shown by Jurová: “State, unlike society, is a sphere where coordination takes place through coercion and sanctions, and it must operate under the rule of law and also apply the least coercive measures and coercion against its citizens” [10]. If the cooperation within the state depended solely on coercion and sanctions, not on the need of protection and development of personal freedom, property and common interests, the state would be a rogue one. It would be established and kept functioning only with the help of extreme violence. In fact, even the most severe of the autocratic regimes keep their power because they eventually end up being, at least to a certain degree, acceptable to the majority, appearing as the lesser evil when compared to chaos. It was not as much the apparent coercion and

sanction, but self-complacency and certainty of those who live at the expense of others, the manipulated and despised ones, therefore, of professors and pastors, which outraged Kierkegaard. Freedom is, according to Kierkegaard, connected with anxiety in face of duty to decide responsibly in extreme situations, as Pavlíková notices: “Awareness of the fact that a man has the opportunity and free will to choose, even here the most terrifying possibility, rises to an unforeseen sense of fear” [11]. The fear, according to Kierkegaard, is to be accepted as an impulse to responsible activity: “Let us consider in somewhat more detail the distress and anxiety in the paradox of faith. The tragic hero relinquishes himself in order to express the universal; the knight of faith relinquishes the universal in order to become the single individual.” [12]

Jurová recognizes the model of community, coming close to Kierkegaard’s own idea, as based on a communitarian model: “I agree that a group can be understood as community provided that it embraces a wide range of interests and activities that take into account the person as a whole, not only scope, benefits and roles of that person, and that there exist certain common responsibilities and common culture within it. I believe that in this sense the definition of community is sufficiently meaningful and flexible at the same time to contain all kinds of communities. Common life and shared values are what people have in common in the community. They also have obligations to each other, which are based on the interdependence and the consciousness of common identity.” [13] She is, however, quite optimistic in characterizing contemporary communities: “Compared with the past, today’s communities are typical for a number of elements of heterogeneity; they not only experience changes, but they often even seek them. They are more diverse, adaptable and promote individual freedom and responsibility in the context of obligations to the group. They are in continual active contacts with the outside world and their values are accessible to all. Current communities lost the advantage of continuity that traditional communities had, so they at least try to constantly present and emphasize the common culture, and consciously promote the values and standards that maintain their integrity.” [13, p. 72] It is undoubtedly true that these values are highly praised and even explicitly declared in the western culture. Yet, the question remains to what extent these are actually incorporated into the real dynamics of contemporary communities.

#### **4. Existentiality inscribed into Natural science?**

The rupture between analytically and existentially oriented philosophies is connected to the advancement of science and technology. Traditional natural science of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, convinced about an absolute validity of determinism, continuity, objectivity and univocal explicability of natural phenomena evidently left an ever diminishing space to subjectivity, imagination, religion and creativity. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the restriction gradually disappeared and natural sciences led by physics became more complex and

unattainable to the unschooled mind captured by common-sense truths. In fact, the particular disciplines grow faster than their representatives are able to follow.

In quantum mechanics Heisenberg questioned the very separability of object, subject and language of examination, which seemed to be absolute in 19<sup>th</sup> century Physics: “Natural science does not simply describe and explain nature; it is a part of the interplay between nature and ourselves; it describes nature as exposed to our method of questioning. This was a possibility of which Descartes could not have thought, but it makes the sharp separation between the world and the subject impossible.” [14] Subject and attitude of the researcher, traditionality and universality of language, scientific tradition and need, which seemed to be irrelevant with respect to the object of exploration, suddenly cannot be ignored. Heisenberg commented on the attempts to separate metaphysics of language from Science by building up a ‘non-metaphysical’ language this way: “Any kind of understanding, scientific or not, depends on our language, on the communication of ideas. Every description of phenomena, of experiments and their results, rests upon language as the only means of communication. The words of this language represent the concepts of daily life, which in the scientific language of Physics may be refined to the concepts of classical physics. These concepts are the only tools for an unambiguous communication about events, about the setting up of experiments and about their results. If therefore the atomic physicist is asked to give a description of what really happens in his experiments, the words ‘description’ and ‘really’ and ‘happens’ can only refer to the concepts of daily life or of classical Physics. As soon as the physicist gave up this basis he would lose the means of unambiguous communication and could not continue in his science.” [14, p. 144] If Heisenberg means ‘thoughts’ in the modern sense of the word, his statement is valid for all means of communication of thoughts, including the artistic or any other, the function of which still more or less depends on the common use, context and personal attitude. Graphs, diagrams and schemes, and even images, so functional in scientific discourse, are in their way also based on common use. This holds even for the more traditional comprehension of ideas as the concepts of words in a given language in its narrow sense. If, in Kierkegaardian fashion, the traditional scientist passionately decides to suppress all individual, emotional and voluntary elements as well as particular circumstance in order to gain a generally valid standardized expression of his scientific knowledge, the quantum physicist needs to re-establish the position of experimenter and observer with all its motivation and situatedness that form the inevitable part of cognitive situation. This meaning, despite traditional physics, cannot be ignored, as it becomes cardinal to scientific knowledge.

The urge for a certainty of knowledge is always stronger than the actual possibilities scientists have at their disposal. Even the scientists often prefer to take assumptions over without ever mastering them by critically testing the analysis of other authors on their own. “We cannot close our eyes to the fact that the great majority of the people can scarcely have any well-founded judgment concerning the correctness of certain important general ideas or doctrines.

Therefore, the word ‘belief’ can for this majority not mean ‘perceiving the truth of something’ but can only be understood as ‘taking this as the basis for life.’ One can easily understand that this second kind of belief is much firmer, is much more fixed than the first one that it can persist even against immediate contradicting experience and can therefore not be shaken by added scientific knowledge. The history of the past two decades has shown by many examples that this second kind of belief can sometimes be upheld to a point where it seems completely absurd, and that it then ends only with the death of the believer...” [14, p. 204] The comprehension of the difference between ‘perceiving the truth of something’ and ‘taking this as the basis for life’ can be interpreted as a parallel to the Kierkegaardian distinction between ‘Christianity’ and ‘Christendom’.

The reception of Kierkegaard in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was confronted with the idea of modern Science and Philosophy with its objectivistic orientation (positivism, neopositivism, logical atomism). However, at the same time it used to be close to the emerging interest in individual reflection of the modern era and society, Science and technology, in art and literature, e. g. in Dostoyevsky. When, after all, Natural sciences transcended their immanent constraints, the controversies of Kierkegaardian days became obvious and common, and, therefore, it became harder than before to realize the historical novelty of his thought.

The development of the Slovak philosophy in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century happened under the influence of the Czech and Vienna positivism and after 1948 in connection with Marxism that had not supported any intensive reflection of Kierkegaard’s impact on the world-philosophical thinking. Even after the fall of communism it has advanced only slowly. “Thanks to translations, publishing and international activities, the number of master and PhD. works dedicated to Kierkegaardian research, presented in Slovak Universities in Bratislava, Nitra, Banská Bystrica and Prešov, grows.” [15] We could only ask, to what extent the required quantity of the works can be followed by their quality and actually true grasp of Kierkegaard’s thought and the work of his successors.

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