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PRESS RELEASE – NEW BOOK



From A to Spirit: An Alphabet That Opens Søren Kierkegaard's World

There are books one reads in order to get answers. And then there are books one reads in order to sharpen one's questions. Søren Kierkegaard–ABC. An Alphabetical Journey Through His Life and Thinking by mag.art. Jens Staubrand belongs to the latter kind – and for precisely that reason the form fits so exactly: an ABC, not as a schoolbook, but as an existential compass.

Here, the ABC form becomes an invitation to step into Kierkegaard's world without having to know the access codes in advance. One can begin with A as Abraham and end with Å as Spirit, but one can also open the book at random and let a single entry become the day's reflection. It is a form that respects something deeply Kierkegaardian: that the truth about life cannot be given as a complete map, but must be appropriated personally, and often only when one is oneself affected.

Staubrand allows each letter to become the occasion for a short essay on a word, a figure, or a work that carries something essential. The reader encounters both the central titles – Either/Or, Fear and Trembling, The Concept of Anxiety, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Works of Love, The Sickness unto Death – and the decisive flashpoints in Kierkegaard's life: the break with Regine Olsen, the conflict with Martensen, the experience of The Corsair, the intimacy of the journals, and the masks of the pseudonyms.

The biographical track, the textual track, and the existential track are woven together like three strands of the same rope: Who was Kierkegaard? What did he write? And why does it concern me – now? The ambition is not to replace the original texts, but to awaken the desire for them. The book functions as a reading guide: a place where one can gain overview and nuance before or after plunging into Kierkegaard's own pages. And it is precisely here that the book strikes its modern nerve: in a time when we are constantly served opinions and quick explanations, Kierkegaard insists on something more demanding – that the individual must take a stand.

Take Abraham, with whom the book begins. In Fear and Trembling, Abraham becomes the knight of faith, not because he is a moral role model, but because he stands in a relationship to God in which ethics is no longer the highest measure. It is not a comfortable story, but it shows Kierkegaard's point: faith is not tradition or security; faith is movement – resignation and hope at one and the same time. Or

take anxiety: not fear of something specific, but the dizziness of freedom. Anxiety as a sign that life cannot be lived on autopilot, because the human being is placed before choice – and thus before responsibility.

And then there is *The Corsair*. The satirical paper that turns Kierkegaard into a caricature, and that pushes him toward a sharper critique of “the public” and “the crowd.” Here he becomes strikingly relevant: What happens to a person when they are reduced to an image others can laugh at? When one is no longer encountered as an I, but as a type?

The book also shows that Kierkegaard is not only “difficult philosophy,” but an authorship that wills life. That is why words such as Neighbour, Humility, the Lie, Choice, the Paradox, the Moment, and Spirit are given their own place – and their own sharpening. Concepts that are easily diluted in pious phrases or everyday usage, but which in Kierkegaard become a demand. Not: “It might be good.” But: “What will you do about it?”

This may be the most fruitful unease that *Søren Kierkegaard–ABC* leaves behind: that one does not merely become wiser, but more awake. Staubrand puts it simply: if one has both become wiser about Kierkegaard and more uneasy on one’s own behalf, then the purpose has been achieved. For Kierkegaard did not want followers, but people who take their own existence seriously.

“He discovers an alphabet that has just as many letters as the one in common use, so that he can express everything.” The quotation from *Repetition* stands as a key: this ABC will not make Kierkegaard smaller. It will make him accessible – without making him tame. And that is a rare art.

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Søren Kierkegaard–ABC is aimed at everyone who is curious about Kierkegaard’s life and world of ideas – from culture and literature enthusiasts to students, educators, reading groups, and gift buyers who seek a vivid and accessible alphabetical entry into his thinking.

Kind regards, Stauer Publishing / Jens Staubrand