

“Two things at the same time”:
fordoblelse in Kierkegaard’s writings

by Carolyn J. Mackie

Supervisor: Dr. Robert Sweetman

Institute for Christian Studies

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INTRODUCTION

*"The spiritual person is different from us human beings in that he is, if I may put it this way, so solidly built that he can bear a redoubling [Fordoblelse] within himself. By comparison, we human beings are like a half-timbered structure compared with a foundation wall—so loosely and weakly built that we are unable to bear a redoubling. But the Christianity of the New Testament relates specifically to a redoubling."*¹

Existence. Faith. Despair. Subjectivity. If asked to choose a set of words that represent the distinctive voice of 19th century Danish writer Søren Kierkegaard, these are some that might spring to mind. But—redoubling? Scholars and armchair philosophers alike might be forgiven for scratching their heads at the suggestion. "Er... excuse me, what was that? Re-what?"

Redoubling—in Danish, *fordoblelse*—may not be a buzzword in Kierkegaard scholarship, but Kierkegaard himself freighted the term with enormous significance. Published less than six months before his death, the passage quoted above demonstrates the importance redoubling had gained in Kierkegaard's thought. Marking the distinctions between the Christianity of the New Testament and the Christianity that he saw exemplified in a spiritually pallid Danish Christendom had become, by this time, the focal point of his project. And, as evident from this passage, *fordoblelse* had become essential to Kierkegaard's understanding of true Christianity.

Admittedly, the term itself appears with relative infrequency in the corpus. A quick search for *fordoblelse* in the electronic version of *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* pulls up a mere

¹ TM, 183.

thirty-four entries in Kierkegaard's writings,² almost half of which are located in his journals. The earliest reference³ is that found in *Johannes Climacus or De Omnibus Dubitandum Est*, a short work begun in 1842 and perhaps completed in 1843.⁴ Kierkegaard's pseudonym Johannes Climacus⁵ continues to use the term occasionally in the works he authors, giving brief mentions in both *Philosophical Fragments* (1844)⁶ and *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments* (1846). However, it isn't until Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* (1847) and *Anti-Climacus's Practice in Christianity* (1850) that the idea begins to bear more conceptual weight in the texts. References to *fordoblelse* in the journals appear in the later years of Kierkegaard's life, dating from 1849 until 1854, the year before Kierkegaard's death.

Scholarly attention to *fordoblelse* is also remarkably slim, given the significance that Kierkegaard himself assigns to it. The term has sometimes been confused in translation with reduplication [*reduplikation*], as Andrew J. Burgess notes,⁷ a carelessness that may have contributed to the lack of attention to redoubling in English language scholarship.⁸ Another

² www.sks.dk. This number excludes related terms, such as *selvfordobelsen* and *fordobling* (see note below).

³ Strictly speaking, this is not *fordoblelse*, but a variant: *fordobling*. The only other occurrence of this form also comes from the mouth of Johannes Climacus, in his *Philosophical Fragments* (1844). As both instances of *fordobling* occur before *fordoblelse* makes an appearance in the corpus, it is likely that Kierkegaard adjusted his terminology as *fordoblelse* took shape in his mind.

⁴ "Historical Introduction," JC, ix-x.

⁵ Kierkegaard created a number of pseudonymous authors—Johannes Climacus, Johannes de Silentio, Anti-Climacus, and others—who function as literary characters, as well as the authors of many of his books. Kierkegaard should not be understood as agreeing with everything that is said by each author. Rather, the use of multiple authors is an important aspect of his dialectical method. It was Kierkegaard's desire that, instead of ascribing the various authors' words to him, the voice of each pseudonymous author would be properly acknowledged, a task to which contemporary Kierkegaardian scholarship is properly attentive. Throughout this paper, I will be referring to these various pseudonyms as the authors of their respective works.

⁶ *Fordobling*, again.

⁷ Andrew J. Burgess, "Kierkegaard's Concept of Redoubling and Luther's *Simul Justus*," in *International Kierkegaard Commentary, Vol. 16: Works of Love*, edited by Robert L. Perkins (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 40.

⁸ Perhaps it is significant that one of the few pieces of scholarship devoted specifically to redoubling is written in Danish, Gregor Malantschuk's "Begybet Fordoblelse hos Søren Kierkegaard," in *Kierkegaardiana* 2 (1957). However, Malantschuk, too, may fail to adequately delineate the distinctions between categories. Martin Andic seems to find Malantschuk's slurring of reduplication and redoubling under Kierkegaard's concept of "double reflection" in this article and elsewhere somewhat unsatisfactory. Martin Andic, "Love's Redoubling and the

contributing factor could be that the concept emerges more strongly in Kierkegaard's later works, with relatively few appearances in some of those earlier works which have traditionally garnered more scholarly attention, such as *Philosophical Fragments* and the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Indeed, *fordoblelse* is not used at all in *Fear and Trembling*, arguably Kierkegaard's most widely-read work, nor in his inaugural masterpiece *Either/Or*. Whatever the reasons, the result is that very few commentators have spent extended time with the term, and a thorough, adequate explication has yet to appear.

As I began to encounter the term in Kierkegaard's writings, I found myself intrigued by its tantalizingly brief appearances. I soon realized that teasing out a proper definition would be a challenging task. Familiarity with the English verb "to redouble"—indicating intensification and primarily used in phrases such as "he redoubled his efforts"—certainly provides little help in understanding Kierkegaard's use of the term. We are given relatively few references to redoubling throughout the corpus, and the matter is further complicated by the confusing multiplicity of contexts in which Kierkegaard drops *fordoblelse*. Johannes Climacus uses the term while expounding on the nature of the historical,⁹ in a discussion on the qualities of truth as abstractly defined,¹⁰ and as part of his description of the meeting of ideality and reality in consciousness.¹¹ Anti-Climacus warns against the "self-redoubling" that is an expression of despair,¹² yet also states quite plainly that "a self is a redoubling."¹³ Kierkegaard himself speaks of one's neighbour as a redoubling of the self,¹⁴ uses the term to describe the presence of the

Eternal Like for Like," in *International Kierkegaard Commentary, Vol. 16: Works of Love*, edited by Robert L. Perkins (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 22-25.

⁹ PF, 76 (*fordobling*).

¹⁰ CUP, 190.

¹¹ JC, 171 (*fordobling*).

¹² SUD, 68-9 (*selvfordoblelsen*).

¹³ PIC, 159.

¹⁴ WOL, 21.

eternal in temporal human existence¹⁵ and tells us that "love is always redoubled in itself."¹⁶

There may be a way to reconcile all these varied uses of *fordoblelse*, but precisely how to do so is not immediately apparent upon a casual reading.

Further knotty problems arise when one considers how redoubling might relate to other terms that Kierkegaard uses, such as reduplication [*reduplikation*], repetition [*gentagelsen*], and double-reflection [*dobbelt-reflexion*]. Is there a cross-over in meaning between these various expressions? Why does Kierkegaard use the terms he does when he does? To what extent (if any) is his use of these various terms determined by the given stages in the development of his thought in which they appear?

In this paper, I will attempt to explicate Kierkegaard's use of *fordoblelse* across the corpus in as thorough a manner as possible, given the inevitable limits set by time, space, and resources. Chapters 1 and 2 will draw from those texts in which the term seems to have the greatest gravitational pull, *Works of Love* and *Practice in Christianity*, respectively. In Chapter 3, I will turn to an examination of a small but important class of references to *fordoblelse*, those which relate to the nature of selfhood, an important theme throughout Kierkegaard's writings. In chapters 4 and 5, I will analyze both the shared qualities and the divergences between redoubling and the related Kierkegaardian categories of reduplication and repetition, respectively.

In the course of this paper, I hope to demonstrate that, despite the paucity of references to the term and of scholarship surrounding it, *fordoblelse* holds a significant place in Kierkegaard's thought. My aim is to be able to trace some of the primary connecting threads that bring together the various references to *fordoblelse*, which at first seem rather diffuse and disparate. In so doing, however, I will intentionally leave space for the concept to show itself in its many-sided

¹⁵ WOL, 280.

¹⁶ WOL, 282.

complexity, even if this requires that some of the threads remain too tangled to be satisfactorily untied. Kierkegaard's authorship is frequently marked by puzzles, and *fordoblelse* is no exception. In wrestling with the term, I hope to give our beloved Dane the freedom to continue to seduce us toward the truth by the intricate dialectic of his thought and method.

CHAPTER 1: REDOUBLING IN *WORKS OF LOVE*

Throughout the corpus, *fordoblelse*'s appearances are limited to sporadic, even solitary references in a given work. *Works of Love* contains the highest density of references within any of Kierkegaard's writings, yet it achieves this status with the rather underwhelming number of five references. However, if the relation between the number of instances of *fordoblelse* and its importance in Kierkegaard's thought is a disproportionate one, as I suggest, this is doubly true for *Works of Love*, in which redoubling is an essential concept for the whole of the book.¹⁷ The structure of redoubling, as explained in *Works of Love*, is visible throughout Kierkegaard's descriptions of the various ways in which love is enacted. This structure is essentially the same as that of the eternal like for like,¹⁸ the concept that acts as a linchpin for this text.

Redoubling and the eternal like for like

The passage in which Kierkegaard most clearly explicates *fordoblelse* in *Works of Love* is found in the "deliberation" (Kierkegaard's term for each of the reflections in this book) entitled "Love Hides a Multitude of Sins." Kierkegaard writes:

When [...] the eternal is in a human being, this eternal redoubles in him in such a way that every moment it is in him, it is in him in a double mode: in an outward direction and in an inward direction back into itself, but in such a way that this is one and the same, since otherwise it is not redoubling.¹⁹

¹⁷ Burgess rightly notes this significance: "The preface in the first two pages of the chapter on hiding sins provides a good introduction to the concept of redoubling. The length of the preface, a mere two pages, belies its importance. In effect, these pages outline the ontological structure for *Works of Love*, connecting the discourse that follows to the book as a whole" (Burgess, 39).

¹⁸ Andic emphasizes the relationship between redoubling and the eternal like for like in his essay, "Love's Redoubling and the Eternal Like for Like." M. Jamie Ferreira, too, notes the relationship between the two, but does not spend time lingering over the term "redoubling." M. Jamie Ferreira, *Love's Grateful Striving: A Commentary on Kierkegaard's Works of Love* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 170-172.

¹⁹ WOL, 280.

He goes on to explain further:

What love does, that it is; what it is, that it does—at one and the same moment. At the same moment it goes out of itself (the outward direction), it is in itself (the inward direction); and at the same moment it is in itself, it goes out of itself in such a way that this outward going and this returning, this returning and this outward going are simultaneously one and the same.²⁰

As an example of the way that redoubling works, Kierkegaard describes the "bold confidence" that is given by the one who loves to all those she encounters. This same love is redoubled in her in such a way that she is ready to face the Day of Judgment with bold confidence.²¹ This redoubling is not merely semantic; rather, it is an essential property of love that "the one who loves is or becomes what he does."²² We might think of redoubling as a simultaneously occurring double movement, inward and outward. Even more appropriately, we can understand it as a *single* movement with two modes, for it is precisely the fact that the outward movement *is* the inward movement, and vice versa, that makes a redoubling in love.

This same kind of movement is essential to *Works of Love* as a whole. Throughout the book, Kierkegaard self-consciously focuses on the outward element of love: "In this little book we are continually dealing with the works of love; therefore we are considering love in its outward direction."²³ However, it is precisely in these outward works of love that something inward is taking place. In this way, the concept of redoubling serves to emphasize the idea of inwardness—a theme that is central to Kierkegaard's larger project—even in these deliberations about love's outward works.

Through redoubling, the outward and the inward are brought together into one seamless whole. Yet the movement of redoubling unites another pair of opposites, as well, that of

²⁰ WOL, 280.

²¹ WOL, 280-1.

²² WOL, 281.

²³ WOL, 282.

temporality and eternity. We have already glimpsed this in Kierkegaard's example of the one whose love spreads bold confidence. In a time-bound world, her love fills her neighbours with confidence, yet this same love allows her to face eternity with confidence. The redoubling of time into eternity is described by Kierkegaard as "the Christian like for like, eternity's like for like."²⁴ It is an important concept for Kierkegaard; indeed, he declares that it is "such an important and decisive Christian specification that I could wish to end, if not every book in which I develop the essentially Christian, then at least one book, with this thought."²⁵

In the eternal like for like, the movement of redoubling serves to blur distinctions along multiple planes. The outward act of love (or its absence) is redoubled inward in the individual. The temporal act of love is redoubled eternally. And that which takes place in the finitude of human existence takes on the dimensions of infinity through the individual's relationship with God. My relationship with God is, in fact, an infinite version of my relations with my neighbour, as the actions that I take toward my neighbour are redoubled infinitely in my relationship with God:

Christianity turns our attention completely away from the external, turns it inward, and makes every one of your relationships to other people into a God-relationship [...]. In the Christian sense, a person ultimately and essentially has only God to deal with in everything, although he still must remain in the world and in the earthly circumstances assigned to him.²⁶

If I ask God to bring judgment on my neighbour, I am appealing to God as judge, thereby necessitating that I also bring *myself* before God as my judge,²⁷ while any leniency I may offer to my neighbour is reflected in the infinite leniency of God to me. Kierkegaard does not mince words:

²⁴ WOL, 376, emphasis removed.

²⁵ WOL, 376.

²⁶ WOL, 376-377.

²⁷ WOL, 381.

If you cannot bear people's faults against you, how then should God be able to bear your sins against him? No, like for like. God is actually himself this pure like for like, the pure rendition of how you yourself are. If there is anger in you, then God is anger in you; if there is leniency and mercifulness in you, then God is mercifulness in you. It is infinite loving that he will have anything to do with you at all and that no one, no one, so lovingly discovers the slightest love in you as God does. God's relation to a human being is at every moment to infinitize what is in that human being at every moment.²⁸

The infinitizing, redoubling movement of the eternal like for like emphasizes the inwardness of the individual's relationship with God, while at the same time granting enormous significance to his actions outward toward his neighbour. The eternal like for like "is simultaneously the highest comfort and the greatest strenuousness, the greatest leniency and rigorousness."²⁹

Redoubling as disclosure

Kierkegaard is preoccupied throughout his career with the inwardness or heightened subjectivity that he sees as essential to the task of becoming a Christian. One of the essential characteristics of true faith is that there can never be an *outwardly visible* correlation between what is happening in an individual's God-relationship and those aspects of her life that are known to others. Kierkegaard's pseudonym Johannes de Silentio plumbs the depths of this disjunction in *Fear and Trembling*. Abraham's pain is not simply that he must sacrifice his child; Agamemnon does the same and becomes a tragic hero. The pain is that Abraham must sacrifice his son and remain silent, for there is no way in which the call of God can be communicated to others in ethical terms.³⁰ This uncommunicable aspect of faith echoes the characteristics of the *object* of faith. Rather than being directly visible or comprehensible (in which case no faith

²⁸ WOL, 384.

²⁹ WOL, 377.

³⁰ FT, 58-60.

would be required), the object of faith is marked by paradox and, therefore, by the choice between believing or taking offence. The "God-man" is the ultimate exemplar of this paradox.³¹

We are given the tip-off early on in *Works of Love* that love is marked by this same lack of transparency. The first deliberation is titled "Love's Hidden Life and Its Recognizability by Its Fruits." In this deliberation, Kierkegaard writes, "There is no work, not one single one, not even the best, about which we unconditionally dare to say: The one who does this unconditionally demonstrates love by it."³² This statement may seem confusing in light of the fact that Kierkegaard is expounding on the truth that love is recognizable by its fruits. Yet it is important that we, along with Kierkegaard, hold these two ideas in tension. M. Jamie Ferreira comments:

[Kierkegaard] admitted that there is some kind of relation between inner and outer in which the inner must (necessarily) be manifested, but he warned against certain kinds of attempts to determine the relation. Most of the deliberations that [follow] the first one can be understood as performing some variation on this theme (hidden/manifest, inward/outward, unseen/seen, or invisible/visible).³³

She writes elsewhere:

[The] reminder that there is something about love that one cannot see goes hand in hand [...] with the equally important claim, running throughout the whole book, that love must express itself outwardly or die. [...] In this way a necessary connection between inner and outer is ultimately affirmed, with the proviso that outer will not always be either externally visible or easily determinable by us.³⁴

Love is known by its fruits, but discerning these fruits is not always straightforward. Like faith, true love is given no direct manifestation that makes itself universally known. Whether or not a work of love is truly motivated by love is perhaps completely unknown by the observer, known imperfectly by the one who loves, and known fully to God alone.

³¹ PIC, 81-82.

³² WOL, 13.

³³ Ferreira, 170.

³⁴ Ferreira, 253.

Running like a thread throughout *Works of Love* is the conviction that what is called love by temporal standards may be very different from eternity's judgment. While a time-bound perspective may be incapable of properly measuring love, eternity is unflinchingly honest in its assessment. As we have seen, the individual's choices to love or to refrain from loving are redoubled—and infinitized—in her through the "infinitely accurate"³⁵ eternal like for like. What is hidden in time is therefore revealed in eternity through redoubling's disclosure.

Love's redoubling power

Kierkegaard tells us plainly that "love is always redoubled in itself."³⁶ In contrast to this, he asserts that "a temporal object never has redoubling [*Fordoblelse*] in itself."³⁷ We have already seen the ways in which love (or the lack thereof) is redoubled in a human being through the eternal like for like. What does Kierkegaard mean when he speaks of something having a redoubling *in itself*?

To answer this question, we will begin by turning once again to the passage at the beginning of "Love Hides a Multitude of Sins." The opening paragraph is arguably the most technical of all the references to *fordoblelse*:

The temporal has three periods and therefore does not ever actually exist completely or exist completely in any of them; the eternal *is*. A temporal object can have many various characteristics, in a certain sense can be said to have them simultaneously insofar as it is what it is in these specific characteristics. But a temporal object never has redoubling [*Fordoblelse*] in itself; just as the temporal vanishes in time, so also it is only in its characteristics. When, however, the eternal is in a human being, this eternal redoubles in him in such a way that every moment it is in him, it is in him in a double mode: in an outward direction and in an inward direction back into itself, but in such a way that this is one and the same, since otherwise it is not redoubling. The eternal is not only in its

³⁵ WOL, 255.

³⁶ WOL, 282.

³⁷ WOL, 280.

characteristics but is in itself in its characteristics. It not only has characteristics but is in itself in having the characteristics.³⁸

The distinction Kierkegaard makes here between the temporal and the eternal is echoed elsewhere. Kierkegaard's ideas about time surface throughout the corpus, but perhaps one of the more detailed explications is found in *The Concept of Anxiety*, written by the pseudonymous author Vigilius Haufniensis. For Haufniensis, it is only through contact with the eternal that time itself can exist. He speaks of the "infinitely contentless present" which is "the parody of the eternal,"³⁹ an abstracted, never-ending version of the present that is suspended, frozen, without true historicity or the possibility of forward movement. Without the depth of the eternal or the differentiation of past and future, even the present is not really a present moment, but an empty nothing. When the eternal becomes involved with time, however, the present moment is given content and presence, the past becomes a concrete reality, and the future (the true home of the eternal) is rife with possibility:

The moment is that ambiguity in which time and eternity touch each other, and with this the concept of *temporality* is posited, whereby time constantly intersects eternity and eternity constantly pervades time. As a result, the [...] division acquires its significance: the present time, the past time, the future time.⁴⁰

Whereas the temporal is ultimately dependent on the eternal for its very existence, the eternal is, in a certain sense, as Kierkegaard tells us in *Works of Love*, self-sustaining—it is "in itself in its characteristics."

It seems that it is this self-sustaining quality which allows for a redoubling within itself, and this quality is reserved for the eternal, the infinite. Kierkegaard intimates that love's redoubling power stems from the fact that God himself is love,⁴¹ and we may safely assume that

³⁸ WOL, 280.

³⁹ CA, 86.

⁴⁰ CA, 89, *emphasis his*.

⁴¹ WOL, 281.

all redoubling power turns ultimately to God as its source.⁴² In the deliberation "Our Duty to Remain in Love's Debt to One Another," Kierkegaard considers love's infinitude, remarking again that "love is a redoubling in itself."⁴³ He warns against the dangers of love stopping to look at itself, particularly in the act of comparison, for "an *object* is always a dangerous matter when one is supposed to move forward."⁴⁴ However, he also notes that "*infinitely* to dwell on itself is indeed to move."⁴⁵ He compares the difference between a finite and an infinite dwelling on itself to the difference between "the particularity of natural life" and "the redoubling of the spirit."⁴⁶ The purely natural life is limited in its particularity, whereas the redoubling of the spirit partakes in the infinite. These are somewhat difficult passages to interpret, but we can conclude that redoubling has a close relationship with the infinite, and that it is associated with the category of spirit in a different way from that of natural life.

Conclusion

Although the terminology differs, the eternal like for like [*Lige for Lige*] and *fordoblelse* function in much the same way in *Works of Love*.⁴⁷ Both redoubling and the like for like describe the simultaneity between an individual's outward choices and actions and a movement within the individual, specifically her relationship with God. This relationship is marked by hidden inwardness, as authentic faith and love cannot be absolutely identified by outward distinctions.

⁴² Although they should not be considered identical or interchangeable, "the eternal" can often be seen as a kind of placeholder or near-synonym for God throughout Kierkegaard's writings and particularly in *Works of Love*.

⁴³ WOL, 182.

⁴⁴ WOL, 182, emphasis his.

⁴⁵ WOL, 182, emphasis his.

⁴⁶ WOL, 182. This is my best guess to the comparison that Kierkegaard is making, given the context of the paragraph as a whole. The structure of the sentence (not only in the English translation, but in the original Danish) makes it difficult to ascertain precisely what comparison he intends by the phrase "as different as the particularity of natural life is from the redoubling of the spirit."

⁴⁷ *Fordoblelse* is given several uses or meanings in *Works of Love*. The eternal like for like emphasizes or reiterates the primary use.

Through the movement of redoubling, however, a certain disclosure takes place, as the eternal redoubles in the individual and the actions undertaken by an individual in finitude are infinitized in her relationship with God.

Not only is Kierkegaard's most focused explication of redoubling found within the pages of *Works of Love*, but the intimacy between redoubling and the eternal like for like, and the ways in which these two ideas structurally frame the book, contribute to make *Works of Love* arguably the most important writing for a study of *fordoblelse*. In the following chapter, I will move to a discussion of *fordoblelse* as it appears in another of Kierkegaard's important religious writings, *Practice in Christianity*. Once again, *fordoblelse* makes only a few appearances, yet has an important role to play in Kierkegaard's intentions for the text.

CHAPTER 2: REDOUBLING IN *PRACTICE IN CHRISTIANITY*

Published just three years after *Works of Love*, in 1850, *Practice in Christianity* was penned under the pseudonym Anti-Climacus, Kierkegaard's author of choice for those works which presented Christianity in such an ideal form that he felt unable to sign his own name to them.⁴⁸ Redoubling is associated in this work with two themes that are central to Kierkegaard's authorship: *paradox* and *indirect communication*. Closely tied to these themes is Kierkegaard's understanding of the nature of faith. In this chapter, we will explore redoubling as it relates to indirect communication and the choice of faith, including a look at how the use of redoubling in *Works of Love* might connect with these themes.

Paradox and indirect communication

Practice in Christianity presents Jesus Christ as the ultimate paradox, and as such, as the occasion for a choice between believing and taking offence. A lengthy portion of the book focuses on explicating a single verse, Jesus' words in John 12:32: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all to myself." Anti-Climacus draws our attention to the shocking truth that it is the "abased" Jesus who makes this bold statement, the Jesus who is seemingly in no position to draw all people to himself. Anti-Climacus insists that comfortably situating ourselves chronologically after the resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Christ and approaching Christ only as the glorified one is to completely miss the truth of who Jesus is:

No, a human being can certainly become a little forgetful over the years and in the good days of prosperity forget the experiences and the truth of poverty; but for him, the uplifted one, for him everything is eternally present—the eighteen hundred years are the same as one day. Loftiness has not changed him; he is himself so very present that even today in the words he spoke he is the same—so vividly does he recollect that he was the

⁴⁸ "Historical Introduction," PIC, xi-xiii

abased one. He is the abased one who says to the *present generation*: From on high I will draw all to myself.

But has he then not said that he from on high will draw all to himself? Yes, indeed—he the abased one has said it. He does not allow himself to be deceived—you are not going to escape the abasement, for if these words remind you of the loftiness, the speaker reminds you of the abasement. You cannot choose one of the two without becoming guilty of an untruth, whereby you only deceive yourself, not him, and you defraud yourself out of the truth, which he is.⁴⁹

The only way to approach Jesus Christ truthfully is as the paradox, the God-man, the one who is both abased and lifted up. These are not chronologically successive states of being but essential characteristics of who he is.

As the ultimate paradox, there is nothing direct and straightforward about Jesus Christ. If it were self-evident that he, the abased one, was also the one who would draw all people to himself, there would be no need for faith. Instead, the paradox presents the individual with a choice: to believe or to take offence.⁵⁰ This inherent lack of "direct recognizability"⁵¹—similar to Abraham's inability to communicate his call from God or the impossibility of finding a sign by which we might infallibly know a work of love when we see it—calls for a kind of communication that takes into account the special nature of the case. An object of faith can only be communicated indirectly.

Double-reflection

In the section of the book titled, "The Categories of *Offense*, That Is, of Essential Offense," Anti-Climacus presents two instances of redoubling in communication, which I will discuss separately. The first form of redoubling in communication is referred to elsewhere in the

⁴⁹ PIC, 166, emphasis his.

⁵⁰ PIC, 81-82.

⁵¹ PIC, 144.

corpus as "double-reflection,"⁵² and can be accomplished through the effort of the communicator to create a "dialectical knot" for the hearer by "placing the qualitative opposites in a unity."⁵³ Instead of being swayed by polemical statements made by the communicator, the hearer is left on his own to untangle the knot of contradiction and determine subjectively the judgment he will make. Rather than standing outside the communication in objective judgment, the hearer himself is exposed by the way in which he chooses to encounter the communication. Anti-Climacus describes a situation in which this "double-reflection" could be employed:

One presents faith in the eminent sense and represents it in such a way that the most orthodox sees it as a defense of the faith and the atheist sees it as an attack, while the communicator is a zero, a nonperson, an objective something—yet he perhaps is an ingenious secret agent who with the aid of this communication finds out which is which, who is the believer, who the atheist; because this is disclosed when they form a judgment about what is presented, which is neither attack nor defense.⁵⁴

Anti-Climacus is being self-descriptive here; Kierkegaard intended for *Practice in Christianity* to be a defence of the established Danish church, but was well aware that some would likely misinterpret it as a polemic against the church.⁵⁵ In this kind of dialectical knot, the way in which the hearer chooses to untangle the threads and interpret the communication is a revealing act. It is not the speaker who is revealed, but the hearer.

Anti-Climacus takes us on another thought-experiment of doubly-reflected communication. He describes a lover who not only offers protestations of love to his beloved,

⁵² PIC, 133: "Indirect communication can be an art of communication in redoubling the communication [...]. This is what some pseudonymous writers are accustomed to calling the double-reflection of the communication." As indicated in the Hongs' notes, Johannes Climacus uses this term in *Postscript* (PIC, 389).

⁵³ PIC, 133.

⁵⁴ PIC, 133-134.

⁵⁵ "Historical Introduction," PIC, xv. The editors quote from Kierkegaard's *On My Work as an Author*: "It cannot be said *directly* that the book [...] is a defense of the established order, since the communication is doubly reflected; it can also be just the opposite or be understood as such. [...] [A]ll doubly reflected communication makes contrary understandings equally possible; thus the one who passes judgment is disclosed by the way he judges" (as quoted in PIC, xv, emphasis Kierkegaard's).

but whose every interaction with the beloved seems to confirm these avowals. However, the lover decides to test the strength of the beloved's faith in him: "He cuts off all direct communication, changes himself into a duplexity; as a possibility it looks deceptive, as if he possibly could be just as much a deceiver as the faithful lover."⁵⁶ The emphasis now falls on the beloved. In the ambiguity of her lover's faithfulness, she is left with a genuine choice: whether or not to believe in his love. On the surface, it may seem that he is the one who is being judged—will the beloved find him to be a faithful lover or a deceiver? But Anti-Climacus tells us that it is the not the lover but the beloved who is being disclosed in the choice: "He is a duplexity, and now the question is what she judges about him, but he understands it differently, for he sees that it is not he who is being judged but it is she who is disclosed in how she judges."⁵⁷ The redoubling of the communication—the placing of opposites in a dialectical knot—has brought the beloved to the point in which she must make a choice.

Redoubling and the communicator

Anti-Climacus identifies two methods of indirect communication, and redoubling has a role to play in each. Although they can be conceptually treated as two distinct forms of indirect communication, they tend to overlap in Anti-Climacus' discussion, as they will in ours. Indeed, while the example of the lover given in the previous section can helpfully explicate the kind of scenario enacted in double reflection, which is the first genre of indirect communication Anti-Climacus describes, it is perhaps more accurately an example of the second kind of indirect communication: communication that is indirect by virtue of the communicator herself. Anti-

⁵⁶ PIC, 141.

⁵⁷ PIC, 142.

Climacus tells us that the lover has turned "himself into a duplexity," the equivalent of "making oneself into a riddle."⁵⁸ The dialectical knot is located not in the content of the communication *per se*, but in the communicator himself. Anti-Climacus cautions that "no one has the right to make himself into an object of faith for the other person," and is unsure whether such redoubling is an advisable course of action even for maieutic purposes.⁵⁹

However, in the case of the God-man, the divine-human, this redoubling is not only advisable in order to guard the possibility for true faith, but is indeed necessary; he "cannot do otherwise and, as qualitatively different from man, must insist upon being the object of faith."⁶⁰ The God-man, whose very nature is a contradiction in terms, cannot communicate himself directly. Anti-Climacus explains:

If someone says directly: I am God; the Father and I are one, this is direct communication. But if the person who says it, the communicator, is this individual human being, an individual human being just like others, then this communication is not quite entirely direct, because it is not entirely direct that an individual human being should be God—whereas what he says is entirely direct. Because of the communicator the communication contains a contradiction, it becomes indirect communication; it confronts you with a choice: whether you will believe him or not.⁶¹

Anti-Climacus is eager to guard the possibility of offence, for it is only when this is present that faith can take its proper place as a subjective choice made by the individual. Modern philosophy has confused matters, he argues. It would have us understand that faith is something "immediate," something that can be directly communicated and received. But this is a misunderstanding not only of the nature of faith, but also of the nature of Christianity itself: "All of this would be entirely proper if Christianity were a teaching, but since it is not, all this is totally wrong. Faith in a significant sense is related to the God-man. But the God-man, the sign

⁵⁸ PIC, 141.

⁵⁹ PIC, 143.

⁶⁰ PIC, 143.

⁶¹ PIC, 134.

of contradiction, denies direct communication—and calls for faith.”⁶² Christianity is not a set of doctrines but an encounter with the God-man himself.

Connections to Works of Love

Indirect communication calls forth a disclosure on the part of the hearer: “Faith is a choice, certainly not direct reception—and the recipient is the one who is disclosed, whether he will believe or be offended.”⁶³ This element of disclosure is echoed throughout *Works of Love* and particularly in the eternal like for like. In the deliberation entitled “Love Believes All Things—and Yet Is Never Deceived,” Kierkegaard enters the realm of the epistemological in a rather extensive discussion on the interplay between knowledge and belief. “Knowledge,” he asserts, “is the infinite art of equivocation, or infinite equivocation; at most it is simply a placing of opposite possibilities in equilibrium.”⁶⁴ The *ergo* that we choose on the basis of knowledge is not a given, but a choice of belief.⁶⁵ In this context of a deliberation on love believing all things, Kierkegaard presents two paths of belief open to the individual on the basis of knowledge—mistrust, with its “preference for evil,”⁶⁶ or love, the decision to believe the good. He writes:

To communicate decision in knowledge or knowledge in decision is an upside-downness, as it certainly has become in these times [...]. Knowledge is not mistrust, since knowledge is infinitely equal [*ligelig*], is the infinite indifference [*Ligegyldighed*] in equilibrium [*Ligevægt*]. Nor is knowledge love, since knowledge is infinitely equal, is the infinite indifference in equilibrium. [...] The mistrustful person and the loving person have knowledge in common, and neither is the mistrustful person mistrustful through this knowledge nor is the loving person one who loves through this knowledge. But when knowledge in a person has placed the opposite possibilities in equilibrium and he is

⁶² PIC, 141.

⁶³ PIC, 141.

⁶⁴ WOL, 231.

⁶⁵ WOL, 227.

⁶⁶ WOL, 233.

obliged or wills to judge, then who he is, whether he is mistrustful or loving, becomes apparent in what he believes about it.⁶⁷

Just as in Anti-Climacus's thought-experiment it was not the lover but the beloved who was disclosed in her choice to mistrust or to believe her lover, here the emphasis falls not on the object of knowledge but on the subject:

Just because existence [*Tilværelse*] has to test *you*, test *your* love, or whether there is love in you, for this very reason and with the help of the understanding existence confronts you with the truth and the deception in the equilibrium of the opposite possibilities so that as *you* now judge, that is, as you now in judging *choose*, what dwells in you must become disclosed.⁶⁸

In the decision to believe all things in love, the subject is disclosed as one who loves. We could also say that the decision to choose mistrust or to choose love is redoubled in the one who chooses.

It is through redoubling that the one who lovingly believes all things is protected from deception. Kierkegaard takes pains to explain that believing all things in love is not a choice based on naiveté or lack of awareness regarding the possibility of evil. The one who loves realizes that truth and deception hang equally in the balance; yet it is not in spite of this uncertainty but *because* of it that the one who loves chooses to believe the good, lest eternity should prove that he had misjudged.⁶⁹ But how is he then protected from deception? Can there be a guarantee that is not dependent on the actions of the other? Kierkegaard's answer to that is simple, and lies at the very heart of *Works of Love*: Love is the highest, and in choosing love, he already has the highest, regardless of what happens externally: "If to love is the highest good and the greatest blessedness, if the one who loves, just by believing all things, remains in the blessedness of love—how then would he be deceived in time or in eternity! No, no, in

⁶⁷ WOL, 231.

⁶⁸ WOL, 227, emphasis his.

⁶⁹ WOL, 232.

connection with true love, there is only one deception possible in time and in eternity—self-deception, or giving up love.”⁷⁰ The one who loves chooses love, and this love is redoubled in him in the eternal like for like, thereby protecting him from the greatest deception—being deceived out of the highest, love itself.

As we have seen, this redoubling is a disclosure; in the choice between love and mistrust, the truth is revealed—not about the object of knowledge, but about the one choosing. The love or mistrust that she chooses redoubles back in her and is revealed—and magnified—in the eternal like for like. But even though this redoubling is a disclosure, it is not necessarily an external and visible disclosure. The disclosure inherent in the redoubling of the eternal like for like is an *eternal* disclosure and is, for that reason, equivocal in time. As she relates herself to God in inwardness, the one who loves is “not directly manifest”⁷¹ to the world, but rather opens herself to misunderstanding and offence. It is only through the choice—the offence—posited by indirect communication that the pathway to faith is opened for the individual. Similarly, it is only in the inexplicability of the inward God-relationship that true Christian love is possible.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to trace *fordoblelse*'s relationship with paradox, indirect communication, and faith. Redoubling can be at work both in the complication of the communication itself (double-reflection) and in the communicator who is himself a duplexity. Through both of these methods of indirect communication, the person receiving the communication is called upon to make a choice as to how she will react. Will she choose trust or

⁷⁰ WOL, 244.

⁷¹ WOL, 244.

mistrust? Will she have faith or take offence? She is thus disclosed through the choice that she makes.

I have not yet exhausted Anti-Climacus's treatment of redoubling in *Practice in Christianity*, and I will continue to look to this book throughout my investigation. It will prove an especially important text in Chapter 4, as I consider the relationship between redoubling and reduplication. *Practice in Christianity* also contains Anti-Climacus's provocative statement that "a self is a redoubling,"⁷² a claim that I will discuss in the following chapter, as I move to an analysis of the ways in which redoubling relates to the idea of selfhood throughout the corpus.

⁷² PIC, 159.

CHAPTER 3: REDOUBLING AND SELFHOOD

Selfhood is a central theme throughout Kierkegaard's authorship, and in some ways, Kierkegaard's whole authorship can be understood as an attempt to move his reader to make the existential choices that allow for authentic selfhood, which for Kierkegaard will always mean selfhood-before-God. Amongst the various instances of *fordoblelse* throughout the corpus, there are several that relate specifically to the self. These references are not plentiful, yet they are striking, perhaps in part because of their somewhat isolated nature. The claims Kierkegaard makes with these references are compelling, yet they require an attentive reader. Given their arresting nature, as well as the importance of the theme of selfhood in Kierkegaard's corpus, these unique references to *fordoblelse* demand a closer look.

The self as a redoubling

As we have already noted, the idea of duplexity is essential to Anti-Climacus's understanding of the God-man. The God-man is a living paradox, indirect communication personified. His duplexity calls for faith, for a decision on the part of those who encounter him. Anti-Climacus's discussion of the self as a redoubling in *Practice in Christianity* continues to emphasize this theme:

And what, then, is it to be a self? It is to be a redoubling [*Fordoblelse*]. Therefore in this relation it means truly to draw a duplexity [*Dobbelthed*] to itself. The magnet draws the iron to itself, but the iron is no self; in this relation, therefore, to draw to itself is a singleness. But a self is a redoubling, is freedom; therefore in this relation truly to draw to itself means to posit a choice. With regard to the iron when it is drawn, there is no question and can be none of any choice. But a self can truly draw another self to itself only through a choice—thus truly to draw to itself is a composite.

So, then, what truly can be said to draw to itself must be something in itself or something that is in itself. So it is when truth draws to itself, for truth is in itself, is in and for itself—and Christ is the truth. It must be the higher that draws the lower to itself—just as when

Christ, the infinitely highest one, true God and true man, from on high will draw all to himself. But the human being of whom this discourse speaks is in himself a self. Therefore Christ also first and foremost wants to help every human being to become a self, requires this of him first and foremost, requires that he, by repenting, become a self, in order then to draw him to himself. He wants to draw the human being to himself, but in order truly to draw him to himself he wants to draw him only as a free being to himself, that is, through a choice.

[...] If he could truly draw to himself without a choice, he would have to be unitary, either the lofty one or the abased one, but he is both. Thus nothing, no natural force, nothing on earth draws to itself in this way, through a duplexity; only spirit can do that, and in turn only in this way can spirit draw spirit to itself.⁷³

Here, Anti-Climacus tells us that not only the God-man, but also the human self is decisively marked by duplexity. Indeed, this duplexity is a sign of a deep kinship between the God-man and the human self that he draws to himself. Each is a duplexity; each is spirit. To be a self is to be somehow profoundly two in one—or, as Anti-Climacus puts it, it is to be a redoubling.

Just exactly what this duplexity might look like is fleshed out more fully in Anti-Climacus's analysis of selfhood in his earlier work, *The Sickness Unto Death* (1849). His formulation of the self is framed around sets of relations between several pairs of opposites that are held in tension. The infinite and the finite, the temporal and the eternal, and freedom and necessity⁷⁴ act as coordinates for the self, which is therefore marked by duplexity on not just one, but several axes. Proper balance for the self is ultimately found when it "rests transparently in the power that established it"⁷⁵—in other words, in a relationship with God. It is only in this relationship with God that the self can be free from the despair, which, for Anti-Climacus, is the decisive qualifying mark of a human being, directly correlative to its nature as spirit.⁷⁶ Indeed, awareness of one's own despair is the first step of consciousness on the way to authentic

⁷³ PIC, 159-160.

⁷⁴ SUD, 13.

⁷⁵ SUD, 14.

⁷⁶ SUD, 15.

selfhood.⁷⁷ Despair can take many forms, and Anti-Climacus uses his three pairs of opposites as the starting point for his analysis. Imbalance along any of the three continuums breeds new varieties of despair.

Self-redoubling

Martin Andic and Andrew J. Burgess both point to the formulation of the self found in *The Sickness Unto Death* in their discussions of redoubling.⁷⁸ While Anti-Climacus does not use *fordoblelse* in his notoriously difficult passage about the "relation that relates itself to itself or is the relation's relating itself to itself in the relation,"⁷⁹ Burgess notes that "it would not be hard to translate [this] famous formula into those terms."⁸⁰ Indeed, it is rather surprising that Anti-Climacus does not make more use of the term throughout the book, given that much of his discussion is framed around the three pairs of opposing qualities—or duplexities—that are inherent to the human condition. The one instance in which *fordoblelse* does appear in the book is a slightly modified form, *selvfordoblelsen*—self-redoubling. Yet it occurs, somewhat unexpectedly, not in a description of a healthy self, but rather that of a despairing self. Anti-Climacus is outlining a particular form of despair, that of the self who is in the despair of "defiance,"⁸¹ one who defiantly pursues the establishment of his own vision of his self rather than "see[ing] his given self as his task,"⁸² thereby "severing the self from any relation to a

⁷⁷ See SUD, 43-46.

⁷⁸ Andic, 20-21; Burgess, 44.

⁷⁹ SUD, 13.

⁸⁰ Burgess, 44.

⁸¹ SUD, 67.

⁸² SUD, 68.

power that has established it, or severing it from the idea that there is such a power."⁸³ Anti-Climacus explains:

Like Prometheus stealing fire from the gods, this is stealing from God the thought—which is earnestness—that God pays attention to one; instead, the self in despair is satisfied with paying attention to itself, which is supposed to bestow infinite interest and significance upon his enterprises, but it is precisely this that makes them imaginary constructions. For even if this self does not go so far into despair that it becomes an imaginatively constructed god—no derived self can give itself more than it is in itself by paying attention to itself—it remains itself from first to last; in its self-redoubling it becomes neither more nor less than itself. In so far as the self in its despairing striving to be itself works itself into the very opposite, it really becomes no self. In the whole dialectic within which it acts there is nothing steadfast; at no moment is the self steadfast, that is, eternally steadfast.⁸⁴

This self-redoubling is an empty movement, a doubling action that produces nothing new, that brings no actual change in the state of the self. Anti-Climacus uses the term "abstract" to describe the kind of self that is being defiantly pursued here: "This infinite self, however, is really only the most abstract form, the most abstract possibility of the self."⁸⁵ The *form* of the movement is a redoubling, but it lacks content and meaning. This abstract self-redoubling is pursued because the defiant self refuses to undertake a true existential redoubling; instead of seeking "the courage to lose itself in order to win itself," the defiant self "is unwilling to begin with losing itself but wills to be itself."⁸⁶ As we will discuss further below, Kierkegaard refers elsewhere to *fordoblelse* as being "first of all its opposite."⁸⁷ Instead of undertaking a true existential redoubling through a movement of opposites, the self here merely redoubles itself in an abstract, meaningless doubling movement. Ironically, this self ultimately will become the

⁸³ SUD, 68.

⁸⁴ SUD, 68-69.

⁸⁵ SUD, 68.

⁸⁶ SUD, 67.

⁸⁷ JFY, 98.

opposite of itself, but only in the sense that instead of becoming truly itself, it becomes a non-entity.

The redoubling of a self

Selfhood is not as obvious a theme in *Works of Love* as it is in *The Sickness Unto Death*; whereas Anti-Climacus is attempting a "psychological exposition,"⁸⁸ Kierkegaard is specifically focusing on love in its outward direction, its works toward others. Yet while he remains attentive throughout *Works of Love* to studying the ways in which one may best love others, by ending the book with an elaboration on the idea of the eternal like for like and its redoubling of outward actions on the inward self, he affirms the importance of the self and its relationship with God.

Redoubling is therefore essentially and profoundly related to selfhood in *Works of Love*. However, Kierkegaard also uses *fordoblelse* to talk about the self in a more specific way in this book. In the second deliberation, "You *Shall* Love," Kierkegaard writes:

Who, then, is one's neighbor [Næste]? The word is obviously derived from "nearest [Nærmeste]"; thus the neighbor is the person who is nearer to you than anyone else, yet not in the sense of preferential love, since to love someone who in the sense of preferential love is nearer than anyone else is self-love—"do not the pagans also do the same?" The neighbor, then, is nearer to you than anyone else. But is he also nearer to you than you are to yourself? No, that he is not, but he is just as near, or he ought to be just as near to you. The concept "neighbor" is actually the redoubling of your own self; "the neighbor" is what thinkers call "the other," that by which the selfishness in self-love is to be tested. As far as thought is concerned, the neighbor does not even need to exist. If someone living on a desert island mentally conformed to this commandment, by renouncing self-love he could be said to love the neighbor. To be sure, "neighbor" in itself is a multiplicity, since "the neighbor" means "all people," and yet in another sense one person is enough in order for you to be able to practice the Law. In the selfish sense, in being a self it is impossible consciously to be two; self-love must be by itself. Nor does it take three, because if there are two, that is, if there is one other person whom you in the

⁸⁸ The subtitle of *The Sickness Unto Death* is "A Christian Psychological Exposition for Upbuilding and Awakening."

Christian sense love *as yourself* or in whom you love *the neighbor*, then you love all people. But what self-love unconditionally cannot endure is redoubling, and the commandment's *as yourself* is a redoubling. The person aflame with erotic love, by reason or by virtue of this ardor, can by no means bear redoubling, which here would mean to give up the erotic love if the beloved required it. The lover therefore does not love the beloved *as himself* because he is imposing requirements, but this *as yourself* expressly contains a requirement on him—alas, and yet the lover thinks that he loves the other person even more than himself.⁸⁹

The commandment to love the neighbour serves to establish the self by first displacing self-love and then properly situating it in its relationships with God, itself, and others. The redoubling that takes place here is the furthest thing possible from an abstract redoubling, for the neighbour is a real-life person, a concrete individual standing in front of one. In the unlikely case that an individual is stranded on a deserted island, it may not be a concrete neighbour who acts as a challenge to her self-love, but the actions required of her in giving up her self-love remain very concrete nevertheless.

We find duplexity at work here, too, in neighbour-love's dethronement of self-love. Two is the perfect number for love, Kierkegaard says. However, this is not the twosome of two lovers. Erotic love latches onto the beloved and binds her to the lover in a kind of desperate love that is actually self-love. Self-love is always only about one—itsself. Yet three is not required for love either, for with the second—the neighbour—the oneness of self-love is broken.

While it is not referenced in this passage, central to Kierkegaard's understanding of love is the idea that God acts as the "middle term" in the relationship between two people.⁹⁰ The oneness of self-love is broken open by the commandment to love the neighbour, and this twoness is grounded in a third—the God who commanded love in the first place. The idea that a relationship of love is not just between two people but is also a relationship with God resonates

⁸⁹ WOL, 21, emphasizes his.

⁹⁰ WOL, 107.

with the major theme of redoubling and the eternal like for like in *Works of Love*, in which my action toward my neighbour becomes simultaneously an action toward God and toward myself. The neighbour is certainly not a mere reiteration of myself; to treat her thus would be an expression of self-love. However, the way in which I orient myself to her becomes the way in which I orient myself as a self, and she is thus part of the formation of my self.

In a journal entry from 1850, Kierkegaard emphasizes the need for a "constraining factor" in the establishment of the self:

Real self-redoubling [*Selvfordoblelse*] without a constraining third factor outside oneself is an impossibility and makes any such existing [*Existeren*] into an illusion or imaginary constructing.

Kant was of the opinion that a human being is his own law (autonomy)—that is, he binds himself under the law that he himself gave himself. Actually, in a profounder sense, this is how lawlessness or imaginary constructing is posited. This is not being rigorously earnest any more than Sancho Panza's self-administered blows to his own bottom were vigorous. It is impossible for me to be really any more rigorous in A than I am or wish to be in B. Constraint there must be if it is going to be in earnest. If I am bound by nothing higher than myself and I am to bind myself, where would I get the rigorousness as A, the binder, that I do not have as B, who is supposed to be bound, when A and B are the same self?

This appears particularly in all religious areas. The transition—which really is from immediacy to spirit—this dying-away-from does not get to be in earnest, becomes an illusion, imaginary constructing, if there is no third factor, the constraining factor that is not the individual himself.⁹¹

Written only a year after the publication of *The Sickness Unto Death*, Kierkegaard himself may be thinking here of Anti-Climacus's passage on the defiant self who wills to incarnate his own vision of himself without any reference to any outside "constraining factor." Self-redoubling of the kind that Kant envisions—that of Self A constraining Self B or vice versa—is, once again, a mere abstract reiteration of the first term, with no real possibilities for the development of the

⁹¹ As quoted in "Supplement," BOA, 331-332.

self. Self A and Self B cannot offer any *actual* constraint to each other; this is possible only in the face of a real life other, whether that be the neighbour whom one is commanded to love or the God who does the commanding.

In *The Book on Adler*, Kierkegaard describes a self-redoubling that is a kind of thought-experiment—perhaps similar in some ways to the Self A and Self B described in the journal entry above:

Not only every religiously awakened person but everyone who to a significant degree has inwardness also has a propensity and a proficiency for making his monologue into dialogue—that is, to speak with oneself in such a manner that this self becomes a second being who has a consistency outside oneself—that is, to redouble oneself.⁹²

This is a “wealth” often born of necessity, for one “who has predominant inwardness seldom finds anyone with whom he can really speak,” resulting in “this need [...] to redouble himself.”⁹³ Kierkegaard is undoubtedly reflecting on his own experiences here, and indeed, his pseudonymous authors can probably be seen as redoublings of himself in this sense. This kind of self-redoubling has value, Kierkegaard affirms, yet it must be maintained within its proper limits.

The context surrounding this reference to self-redoubling is a discussion on the nature of revelation, a relevant theme as *The Book on Adler* came about through Kierkegaard’s interest in a Danish cleric named Adolph Peter Adler who was forced into an early retirement on the basis of his claims to have received divine revelation.⁹⁴ Kierkegaard is concerned lest the kind of self-redoubling that he describes here be confused with something that it is not. Kierkegaard sees

⁹² BOA, 118.

⁹³ BOA, 119.

⁹⁴ “Historical Introduction,” BOA, xi.

Adler, as a Hegelian, as having muddled his subject-object distinctions⁹⁵ and confused the presentation of his own subjective experience:

So Magister Adler was deeply moved. That in the first moment of being deeply moved one easily runs the risk of a mistake, that of mistaking one's own change for a change outside oneself, that of mistaking the perception of everything as changed for the coming into existence of something new—that is familiar enough. [...] The question is only about expressing oneself in this state. Once one is ensnared in the mistake, it is all too easy to support the mistake with a composed fiction and dramatically to obtain an event, an episode, an account of how it occurred.⁹⁶

Self-redoubling thought experiments may offer valuable insight, but need to be kept in their rightful place. Such an "apparent self"⁹⁷ is not an existential redoubling—no actual movement of the self has occurred. Whether it is oneself that is confused, or whether, as in the case of Magister Adler, one perhaps confuses others as well, this kind of self-redoubling cannot break open the oneness of the self. That fissure can only take place when one is confronted with the neighbour—an actual redoubling of the self rather than an apparent one.⁹⁸

Conclusion

Fordoblelse intersects with the theme of selfhood in several different ways throughout the corpus. Anti-Climacus tells us that the self is itself a redoubling, marked by duplexity on several different axes. While the God-man poses the ultimate contradiction, this paradox is echoed in the dual realities that are brought together in the human individual.

While the self is a redoubling, attempting to establish oneself through self-redoubling is an action indicative of despair. It is an empty movement that merely reiterates oneself, resulting

⁹⁵ BOA, 119.

⁹⁶ BOA, 118.

⁹⁷ BOA, 119.

⁹⁸ The thought of the neighbour, as in Kierkegaard's desert island scenario, is still *other* to the self in a way that the imaginary second self that Kierkegaard describes here is not.

in a non-self. Unlike this abstract self-redoubling, the neighbour acts as a very concrete redoubling of the self, challenging the individual's self-love and thereby helping to realign the self in a proper relationship with itself and others. For Kierkegaard, such a proper relationship will always be grounded in a relationship with God, the constraining factor who acts as middle term in the self's relationship with others and itself.

Another kind of self-redoubling that Kierkegaard explores is that of creating another self with whom one has inner dialogue. Although this is not a true existential redoubling of the self, it can be a valuable method for developing ideas. We can see this kind of redoubling at work in Kierkegaard's own creative process. This process is a subject I will continue to explore in my consideration of the relationship between redoubling and reduplication. Determining how—and if—these two terms are distinct will be my task in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: REDOUBLING AND REDUPLICATION

Attempting to sort out what Kierkegaard means by redoubling is a difficult enough task in itself, but it is made even stickier by its close relationship with another Kierkegaardian term: reduplication [*redup(p)likation*]. As noted in the introduction, English language translation and scholarship have at times been particularly imprecise in their treatment of the two terms. Arnold B. Come, translating the passage we have already considered in which Anti-Climacus states that "a self is a redoubling, is freedom,"⁹⁹ intentionally translates *fordoblelse* in this instance as "reduplication," explaining in a footnote that he "cannot discern any difference in [Kierkegaard's] meanings. [...] *Fordoblelse* can mean to redouble but also to reduplicate."¹⁰⁰ Come is to be commended for his frankness, but he is unconvincing in his translation choice. *Fordoblelse* and *reduplikation* are two different words, used by a highly self-aware and intentional author. It seems that there must be some kind of distinction between the two terms. But precisely how do they differ?

Martin Andic grapples extensively with this issue in his essay "Love's Redoubling and the Eternal Like for Like." He understands the potential for confusion, but wants to maintain the distinction between the two categories:

[I]t is natural to identify reduplication with redoubling, as so many translators and scholars have done, because the one is a part of the other. The person redoubled in and by the truth will reduplicate it; existing in it, one will exist in it for other people, or communicate it so that they may exist in it too.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ PIC, 159.

¹⁰⁰ Arnold B. Come, "Kierkegaard's Ontology of Love" in *International Kierkegaard Commentary, Vol. 16: Works of Love*, edited by Robert L. Perkins (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999), 86.

¹⁰¹ Andic, 19-20.

Andic ultimately decides that there is a fundamental difference between the subjects of each respective verb. While redoubling may belong on some level to both God and human beings,¹⁰² reduplication is always a human action.¹⁰³ He concludes:

We are redoubled in God by reduplicating what we thereby receive. In other words, God redoubles us and we reduplicate. *We are redoubled by allowing God to make us nothing and to create us anew. But the Divine redoubles itself, in boundlessly communicating itself or what it itself is, and so for ever and continuously acquires what it gives; our highest perfection is to become nothing but an instrument of divine redoubling.*¹⁰⁴

Andic's distinction seems plausible at first glance, and I commend his insistence that the two terms be distinguished. However, it is doubtful whether Andic's method of parsing the relationship can be maintained in light of Kierkegaard's own use of the terms. Once again, our canny Dane refuses to let us sort our concepts into boxes too quickly.

Reduplication, redoubling, and dialectical method

As we have seen, *Practice in Christianity* presents the God-man as the true exemplar of a communicator who is "dialectically defined,"¹⁰⁵ making communication necessarily indirect. Anti-Climacus seems to indicate that this kind of duplexity within an individual is a form of redoubling.¹⁰⁶ Yet there is another level at which redoubling can occur in relation to the communicator. Anti-Climacus tells us that where communication about existence is concerned (indeed, it is hard to imagine him being particularly interested in any other kind of

¹⁰² A section of Andic's essay is titled "Human Redoubling" (p.28ff), but although he sees human beings as involved at some level in the process of redoubling, he ultimately sees redoubling as an active verb for the divine and a passive verb for human beings (12).

¹⁰³ Andic considers that perhaps some aspects of reduplication could be said to apply to Christ, but concludes that "Kierkegaard never calls this God's *reduplication*, but only God's like for like, or *redoubling*" (Andic, 37, emphases his).

¹⁰⁴ Andic, 37-38, emphases his.

¹⁰⁵ PIC, 134.

¹⁰⁶ See PIC, 143.

communication), there are special requirements for the communicator: "Any communication concerning existing requires a communicator; in other words, the communicator is the reduplication of the communication; to exist in what one understands is to reduplicate."¹⁰⁷ In common parlance, to reduplicate the communication is to practice what you preach.

This idea of reduplicating the communication is not a difficult concept to grasp, but it may not be the only way in which reduplication is related to communication. One of Kierkegaard's footnotes in his 1851 publication entitled *On My Work as an Author* may serve to complicate rather than to simplify matters:

This again is the dialectical movement (like that in which a religious author *begins* with [a]esthetic writing, and like that in which, instead of loving oneself and one's advantage and supporting one's endeavor by illusions, one instead, hating oneself, removes illusions), or it is the dialectical method: in *working* also to *work against oneself*, which is reduplication [*Redupplikation*] and the heterogeneity of all true godly endeavor to secular endeavor. To endeavor or to work *directly* is to work or to endeavor directly in immediate connection with a factually given state of things. The dialectical method is the *reverse*: in working also to work against oneself, a redoubling [*Fordoblelse*], which is "the earnestness," like the pressure on the plow that determines the depth of the furrow, whereas the direct endeavor is a glossing-over, which is finished more rapidly and also is much, much more rewarding—that is, it is worldliness and homogeneity.¹⁰⁸

On My Work as an Author is a self-disclosure of Kierkegaard's project, emphasizing the ways in which his pseudonymous literature (his "aesthetic writing") works together with his religious writings to produce a corpus that "regarded as a *totality*, is religious from first to last, something anyone who can see, if he wants to see, must also see."¹⁰⁹ Kierkegaard's footnote quoted above comments on his description of his authorship as starting "with a sensation, and with what belongs to it, the public"¹¹⁰ and progressing from there toward the goal of gaining the attention

¹⁰⁷ PIC, 134.

¹⁰⁸ PV, 9, emphasizes his.

¹⁰⁹ PV, 6, emphasis his.

¹¹⁰ PV, 9.

of the individual reader. Kierkegaard sees this movement as inverse from the usual "direct" method, in which "the task or the movement is to gather a large number, to acquire an abstraction: the public."¹¹¹ Instead of moving from a readership of a few souls toward a larger goal of reaching a broad public, Kierkegaard sees the trajectory of his authorship as moving from the public to the individual. Kierkegaard's work, therefore, is a dialectical movement in multiple ways: in the dialectical interplay between his pseudonymous and his declared writings; in his unusual aim and indirect method for acquiring an individual reader; and in the way in which his beliefs about communication are wedded to his own act of writing.

Reduplication is characterized here as a dialectical movement. Kierkegaard indicates that his own act of writing was a working *against* himself, at least initially. As we will discuss in further detail later, Kierkegaard speaks of *fordoblelse* as something being "first of all its opposite,"¹¹² and that same description could be fitting for the movement Kierkegaard is speaking of here. Kierkegaard's authorship begins with an action that is opposite to what one would expect in order to achieve the intended result. Yet is this dialectical movement a reduplication or a redoubling? Interestingly, it is both. Kierkegaard uses both terms to describe the movement of working by first working against oneself.

So does this mean that *reduplikation* and *fordoblelse* are interchangeable terms—at least at this stage in the development of Kierkegaard's thought—or is Kierkegaard using the two terms to qualify his description of the dialectical movement in two unique ways? Quite frankly, it is difficult to say for certain. There is obviously a deep kinship between the two ideas and they share certain qualities. Both seem to be characterized by dialectic and to fall under the category

¹¹¹ PV, 9.

¹¹² JFY, 98.

of the indirect rather than the direct. The direct method is straightforward, simplistic, and amply rewarded, whereas working against oneself is, we may assume, the opposite of all of these: dialectical, difficult, and poorly rewarded in worldly terms. Kierkegaard goes so far as to describe the "direct endeavor" as "worldliness." Worldliness and "homogeneity" go hand in hand. The "true godly endeavor," on the other hand, is distinguished by this working against oneself, this dialectical method.

As we noted above, Anti-Climacus describes reduplication as "to exist in what one understands."¹¹³ When reduplication is referred to in Kierkegaard studies, this is the kind of definition that is usually being referenced—and with good reason. The essential unity between communicating or understanding a truth and *living* that truth is of vital importance to Kierkegaard's whole project and informs his method throughout his authorship. In a journal entry, Kierkegaard describes reduplication as "a how:"

My thesis is not that the substance of what is proclaimed in Christendom as Christianity is not Christianity. No, my thesis is that the *proclamation* is not Christianity. I am fighting about a *how*, a reduplication. It is self-evident that without reduplication Christianity is not Christianity.¹¹⁴

It is only in practicing what one preaches that one can be said to be properly preaching.

Christianity is only Christianity in the attempt to live what one understands.

In the passage from *On My Work as an Author* quoted above, reduplication is being used in the context of Kierkegaard's own understanding and explanation of his authorship. His unique methodology that used multiple pseudonyms and genres provided him with a way in which he could efface himself as author and bring the reader alone before God—"maieutically, to shake

¹¹³ PIC, 134.

¹¹⁴ #3684, JP, 706, emphasizes his.

off 'the crowd' in order to get hold of 'the single individual', religiously understood."¹¹⁵ To an extent that perhaps few authors in history have rivaled, Kierkegaard's understanding of his own authorial method was inextricably bound to his beliefs about existence, about God, about selfhood. His endeavour to match content with form can truly be identified as a reduplication by Anti-Climacus's definition of existing in what one understands. It is therefore highly appropriate to look at Kierkegaard's authorship as a reduplication. For Kierkegaard, the highest task of human existence is to become an individual before God, and his goal as an author is to assist others in this task. In beginning with public sensation in order to shake off the crowd, therefore, he is reduplicating his own understanding of the nature of human existence and of the nature of his own task.

Yet Kierkegaard also describes his method of working by working against himself as a redoubling. As mentioned, the idea of opposites is significant here. Kierkegaard's illustration of the pressure on the plow is evocative. Anyone who has spent time working the soil knows the difference between skimming just under the surface of the earth and penetrating deeper by applying pressure. The first is easy and may give the impression of being effective, but it is only through the hard labour of the second that real progress is made. This is like the redoubling of working against oneself, which is earnestness, Kierkegaard says. Beginning with the opposite produces a tension, a consistent pressure, yet it is only through this redoubling that the appropriate depth is reached.

¹¹⁵ PV, 9, emphasis his.

Reduplication and the redoubling of truth

The waters are muddied again by Anti-Climacus's discussion of the redoubling of truth, which aligns closely with the reduplication that he described earlier:

Thus Christ is the truth in the sense that to *be* the truth is the only true explanation of what truth is. Therefore one can ask an apostle, one can ask a Christian, "What is truth?" and in answer to the question the apostle and this Christian will point to Christ and say: Look at him, learn from him, he was the truth. This means that truth in the sense in which Christ is the truth is not a sum of statements, not a definition etc., but a life. The being of truth is not the direct redoubling of being in relation to thinking, which gives only thought-being, safeguards thinking only against being a brain-figment that is not, guarantees validity to thinking, that what is thought is—that is, has validity. No, the being of truth is the redoubling of truth within yourself, within me, within him, that your life, my life, his life expresses the truth approximately in the striving for it, that your life, my life, his life is approximately the being of the truth in the striving for it, just as the truth was in Christ a *life*, for he was the truth.

And therefore, Christianly understood, truth is obviously not to know the truth but to be the truth.¹¹⁶

This passage seems to complicate Andic's rubric on more than one axis. There is no distinction here between the redoubling action of the Divine and that of existing human beings—although the God-man is, to be sure, an existing human being, as well as Divine. Yet however one handles that special case, redoubling remains here a *task* for human beings. Indeed, it is very difficult to discern a difference between the redoubling that Anti-Climacus speaks of in this passage and reduplication as it is often used throughout the corpus.

The distinction that Anti-Climacus does make here is not between redoubling and reduplication, but rather between two kinds of redoubling: direct and, by implicit contrast, indirect, a choice of phrase that fits nicely within the context of direct and indirect communication with which he is so preoccupied in *Practice in Christianity*. The direct redoubling Anti-Climacus speaks of here—"the direct redoubling of being in relation to

¹¹⁶ PIC, 205, emphases his.

thinking"—is the kind of redoubling sought by those afflicted with Cartesian concerns regarding the correspondence between objective external reality and thought experience. This may be a redoubling, but Anti-Climacus is unwilling to grant that the negative quality of not being a mere "brain-figment," but rather having a correspondent objective reality, can account for "the being of truth." That requires much more than a direct redoubling; it requires that the truth be redoubled in you, in me, in her. It requires, we might say, reduplication.

Johannes Climacus presents a similar perspective on the redoubling of truth. The nature of truth is a primary concern in his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*. Climacus examines the idea of truth as a being-thinking correlation and determines that the only way such a definition can be sustained is to translate "being" from an empirical reality to an abstract ideality. Any other approach obscures the fact that both the knower and the external reality are by nature in a state of flux: "the empirical object is not finished, and the existing knowing spirit is itself in the process of becoming."¹¹⁷ Under these circumstances, truth cannot be seen as an entity that is whole and complete at any moment, but rather "an approximating whose beginning cannot be established absolutely, because there is no conclusion that has retroactive power."¹¹⁸ The alternative is to translate existing, empirical realities into static, abstract ideals.¹¹⁹ However, when this abstraction is undertaken, little has been accomplished:

But if being is understood in this way, the formula is a tautology; that is, thinking and being signify one and the same, and the agreement spoken of is only an abstract identity with itself. Therefore, none of the formulas says more than that truth is, if this is understood in such a way that the copula is accentuated—truth *is*—that is, truth is a redoubling [*Fordoblelse*]. Truth is the first, but truth's other, that it *is*, is the same as the

¹¹⁷ CUP, 189.

¹¹⁸ CUP, 189.

¹¹⁹ CUP, 190.

first; this, its being, is the abstract form of truth. In this way it is expressed that truth is not something simple but in an entirely abstract sense a redoubling, which is nevertheless canceled at the very same moment.¹²⁰

This conception of truth contains a redoubling, but only in an abstract sense. Indeed, it is so abstract that Climacus tells us the redoubling is negated as soon as it occurs.¹²¹

In contrast to this completely abstract concept of truth, Climacus maintains that existence itself creates a natural division between thought and being, between the subjective and the objective:

When for the existing spirit *qua* existing there is a question about truth, that abstract reduplication [*Reduplikation*] of truth recurs; but existence itself, existence itself in the questioner, who does indeed exist, holds the two factors apart, one from the other, and reflection shows two relations. To objective reflection, truth becomes something objective, an object, and the point is to disregard the subject. To subjective reflection, truth becomes appropriation, inwardness, subjectivity, and the point is to immerse oneself, existing, in subjectivity.¹²²

Anticipating Climacus's train of thought somewhat, it will be the subjective aspect of truth with which he is most interested.¹²³ Part of his concern is that "mediation" (read: Hegelian philosophies) have attempted in their own ways to bring subject and object together, but the result is, once again, an abstract redoubling: "With the subject-object of mediation, we have merely reverted to abstraction, inasmuch as the definition of truth as subject-object is exactly the same as: the truth *is*, that is, the truth is a redoubling [*Fordoblelse*]." ¹²⁴ This muddling of

¹²⁰ CUP, 190, emphasizes his.

¹²¹ This resonates with Anti-Climacus's description of the defiant self's abstract self-redoubling, which ultimately results in a non-self, as discussed above in Chapter 3.

¹²² CUP, 191-2.

¹²³ Kierkegaard's emphasis on the subject's reception of truth claims as opposed to the objective content of these claims is rather humourously displayed in the division of the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments* into two major parts: Part One "THE OBJECTIVE ISSUE OF THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY," which consists of 38 pages in the Princeton English translation, and Part Two "THE SUBJECTIVE ISSUE, THE SUBJECTIVE INDIVIDUAL'S RELATION TO THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY, OR BECOMING A CHRISTIAN," which comes in at a mere 564 pages.

¹²⁴ CUP, 192, emphasis his.

categories gets the existing person no closer to truth and, indeed, disregards the nature of his own existence.

It is interesting to note that Climacus refers to an "abstract reduplication" in the passage above. Once again, we are left with questions as to what exactly may be intended here, and this reference could serve to further blur distinctions between *reduplikation* and *fordoblelse*. This reduplication may be referring again to the tautological redoubling that occurs in an abstract definition of truth, in which case Climacus would be using the two terms synonymously.

However, Climacus could possibly be referring to the abstraction of the individual who attempts to attain truth in this way. He writes that "the abstract answer is only for that *abstractum* which an existing spirit becomes by abstracting from himself *qua* existing, which he can do only momentarily, although at such moments he still pays his debt to existence by existing nevertheless."¹²⁵ Is this abstracting of oneself a kind of reduplication of an abstraction—a strange existing in what one understands? If such is the case, the true nature of existence quickly asserts itself in the face of such abstract reduplication.

The abstract redoubling of thought-being or subject-object bears some similarities to the redoubling of the universal in the particular that Climacus identified earlier, as recounted in his eponymous novella *Johannes Climacus or De Omnibus Dubitandum Est*. This is the redoubling that takes place in consciousness when a connection is made between the particular reality and the general or abstract ideality.¹²⁶ We will discuss this redoubling in more detail when we consider possible connections between repetition and redoubling. This redoubling relates, again, to the correlation between thought and reality, and it is therefore resonant once more with the

¹²⁵ CUP, 191.

¹²⁶ JC, 171.

direct redoubling of truth to which Anti-Climacus referred. For Climacus, consciousness is the seat of "interest," which indicates existential investment on some level,¹²⁷ so this meeting should not be seen as an abstraction; rather, it is a point of contact with a concrete reality. However, it remains a different breed of redoubling from Anti-Climacus's redoubling of truth, which is an ethical or religious movement. Climacus, too, recognizes that there is also an *existential* kind of redoubling: "Yet coming into existence can contain within itself a redoubling [*Fordobling*], that is, a possibility of a coming into existence within its own coming into existence."¹²⁸ We will discuss this redoubling further in Chapter 5, but suffice it to say that this existential redoubling is more closely related to Anti-Climacus's redoubling of truth as truth that is redoubled in you and in me than to the direct redoubling of a thought-reality correlation.

Reduplication: inward or outward?

If we look back to redoubling as explicated in *Works of Love*, we recall that it is structured as a single movement with two simultaneously occurring modes. We can discern a similar structure to the redoubling of truth within an individual's life, such as Anti-Climacus describes, yet the emphasis falls on a different mode. In his discussions of love's redoubling, Kierkegaard was focused on the ways in which *outward* works of love are redoubled *inwardly* in the loving individual. In Anti-Climacus's discussion of truth's redoubling, he focuses on the ways in which the *inward* experience of truth is manifested *outwardly*. Anti-Climacus's perspective falls perfectly in line with Kierkegaard's famous (yet oft-misunderstood) dictum:

¹²⁷ JC, 170. For the most thorough explication of Kierkegaard's use of "interest," see Patrick Stokes, *Kierkegaard's Mirrors: Interest, Self, and Moral Vision* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

¹²⁸ PF, 76.

"Truth Is Subjectivity."¹²⁹ Attempting to speak of truth outside of a subjective, personal engagement with the truth is to miss what truth essentially is. Christ *is* the truth, and the task of becoming a Christian involves following Christ by similarly redoubling the truth in our own lives. This redoubling of truth in one's outward actions forms the essence of reduplication.

However, at the same time, we must be wary of making a distinction between outer and inner into the basis for differentiating between redoubling and reduplication. This is a trap that Andic may be guilty of falling into. He writes:

If we think of the eternal's presence as "inwardness" and "subjectivity," and its inward movement as "the like for like," then we can regard its outward movement as "reduplication" understood as making (religious and ethical) truth recognizable to people in your existence, or realizing it *outwardly* in what you are for others, and thus communicating it. It is manifestly being what you believe, or so existing in it that it is visible in how you act and live.¹³⁰

Andic is correct to associate redoubling with inwardness (particularly as it is used in *Works of Love*, the focus of his essay) and to see it as a movement inward, in that one's outward actions toward others are redoubled in one's inward relationship with God. However, Kierkegaard tells us that the movement from outward to inward is simultaneous with a movement from inward to outward:

When, however, the eternal is in a human being, this eternal redoubles in him in such a way that every moment it is in him, it is in him in a double mode: in an outward direction and in an inward direction back into itself, but in such a way that this is one and the same, since otherwise it is not redoubling. [...]

So also with love. What love does, that it is; what it is, that it does—at one and the same moment. At the same moment it goes out of itself (the outward direction), it is in itself (the inward direction); and at the same moment it is in itself, it goes out of itself in such a way that this outward going and this returning, this returning and this outward going are simultaneously one and the same.¹³¹

¹²⁹ CUP, 189.

¹³⁰ Andic, 18, emphasis his.

¹³¹ WOL, 280.

Therefore, the redoubling of the eternal like for like is precisely *both* an inward and an outward movement. By the same token, reduplication is not a merely outward movement, nor solely identified with communication, despite Anti-Climacus's emphasis on the subject in *Practice in Christianity*. Kierkegaard describes reduplication as the "how" of Christianity, and as such, it can never be an outward movement only but is also—essentially, we might even say—a movement of inwardness. Reduplication may not be visible to others; indeed, in its truest form it may be likely to be misunderstood.

Conclusion

The difficulty regarding the relationship between *fordoblelse* and *reduplikation* lies not in seeing their kinship, but in determining the differences between the two. Andic's contention that redoubling and reduplication can be differentiated by their subjects—divine and human respectively—is difficult to maintain given Kierkegaard's own use of the terms. In particular, the redoubling of truth in one's life—a redoubling that sounds very much like reduplication—is an action that is undertaken by both human individuals and the God-man.

If Andic's rubric does not offer complete satisfaction, does this mean that we must join Come in his conclusion that one might as well translate *fordoblelse* as reduplication? Is there really no difference in meaning between the two words? Ambivalence certainly arises at multiple points, as we have seen. Yet despite these complications, I want to maintain that the two terms should not be seen as completely identical or interchangeable.

Without further research, I am not ready to make precise assertions as to where the distinctions lie. However, I would hesitantly join Andic in affirming that "reduplication has for

[Kierkegaard] a special meaning narrower than that of redoubling."¹³² This special meaning could be summarized well in Anti-Climacus's statement that "to exist in what one understands is to reduplicate."¹³³ Deeper inquiry into the meaning of *reduplikation*, along with its relationship with *fordoblelse*, could be an avenue for further research in Kierkegaard studies.

A close look at redoubling inevitably leads not only to an investigation of reduplication, but, if one lingers long enough, to the category of repetition [*gentagelsen*], as well. In the final chapter, I will turn to an analysis of the relationship between these two terms.

¹³² Andic, 12.

¹³³ PIC, 134.

CHAPTER 5: REDOUBLING AND REPETITION

Redoubling, reduplication, and repetition are conveniently linked in English through the prefix *re-*, but an inherent resonance between the terms seems to hold for Danish speakers, as well. The historical Danish dictionary found at ordnet.dk offers *fordoble* and *gentage* as the defining synonyms for *reduplicere* (verbal form of *reduplikation*).¹³⁴ Similarly *Soren Kierkegaards Skrifter's* notes to *The Book on Adler* links the three concepts in its explanation of *redupliceret*:

redupliceret i.e. *redupliceret*, *fordoblet*, *gentaget*. To reduplicate is in grammar to double or repeat syllables or letters. SK usually uses the word as a reflection relationship, in which some abstract concept becomes repeated, translated or realized in concrete, existential practice, a 'reduplication' or 'redoubling'.¹³⁵

The concept of repetition, in its most everyday sense, is that of something happening again. Constantin Constantius, pseudonymous author of *Repetition*, describes the young man of his acquaintance's understanding of repetition as "the raising of his consciousness to the second power,"¹³⁶ a phrase that some commentators interpret as expressing an exponential self-generating power.¹³⁷ Redoubling may contain a similar connotation of exponential power, particularly in those instances in which something, such as love, contains a redoubling in itself.

As noted above, Arnold B. Come sees an ambivalence between redoubling and reduplication. He elaborates, "In English, to 'redouble' means literally to make twice as great or, broadly, to intensify, whereas with both words Kierkegaard clearly means to reduplicate or

¹³⁴ <http://ordnet.dk/ods/ordbog?query=reduplicere&search=S%C3%B8g>

¹³⁵ Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, et al. "Kommentarer til *Bogen om Adler*," *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*. http://sks.dk/boa/kom.xml?hash=k1035&zoom_highlight=reduplikation#k1035, translation mine. The word that I have translated here as "double" is *fordoble*, which can translate into either "double" or "redouble" in English. Obviously, in a grammatical context, "double" is the appropriate choice, but this simple example does point once more to the question of whether "redoubling" is the best English word for *fordoblelse*.

¹³⁶ R, 229.

¹³⁷ See, for example, Clare Carlisle, *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Becoming: Movements and Positions* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005), 76.

repeat."¹³⁸ We have already discussed the question of whether or not Come's conclusion is valid. However, his use of the word "repeat" here is interesting. Does redoubling—or reduplication, for that matter—carry connotations of repeating, of repetition?

Unlike redoubling with its scattered references throughout the corpus, Kierkegaard's discussion of repetition is centralized in one his earliest books, an enigmatic little novella whose title, *Repetition*, leaves the reader in little doubt as to the subject of the book. It follows the relationship between the pseudonymous author Constantin Constantius and a young man of his acquaintance in their mutual quest for a repetition. Constantin is interested in the concept theoretically—*is repetition possible?*—while the young man, paralyzed by his poeticization of his own love affair, is in need of a repetition existentially, as the only way in which he can move forward in his love. Most commentators read Constantin as representing a philosophical or speculative stance towards repetition and the young man as inhabiting a more existential relationship to the category.¹³⁹ Ultimately, the reader is led to the realization that repetition is in fact a religious movement, which neither the young man nor Constantin is fully prepared to make.¹⁴⁰

Martin Andic suggests that redoubling "focuses and replaces another puzzling category that has received more attention from scholars, namely, 'repetition' (*Gjentagelsen*)."¹⁴¹ Unfortunately, although Andic's instinct may have merit, he offers little in the way of justification. Repetition as a category does seem to drop out of sight somewhat mysteriously

¹³⁸ Come, 86.

¹³⁹ See, for example, Clare Carlisle, "Kierkegaard's Repetition: The Possibility of Motion," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 13.3 (2005): 523.

¹⁴⁰ Amy Laura Hall reads *Repetition* alongside *Works of Love*, making the provocative and compelling claim that the movement that both Constantin and the young man fail to make is that of love. See Amy Laura Hall, "Poets, Cynics and Thieves: Vicious Love and Divine Protection in Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* and *Repetition*," *Modern Theology* 16:2 (April 2000).

¹⁴¹ Andic, 12.

after the publication of *Repetition*. The kinds of questions the book addresses, such as the nature of movement, the relationship between poetry, philosophy, and existence, and the role of transcendence in existential change, remain significant questions throughout Kierkegaard's authorship, but his specific philosophical inquiry into repetition as a category appears to be left largely unpursued. Does this mean, as Andic contends, that the category of repetition itself is transcended by a new category—that of redoubling? Or has Kierkegaard simply moved on to a slightly different conversation?

There is at least one instance in the corpus in which *fordoblelse* and *gentagelsen* are formally brought together. Johannes Climacus explicitly links the two terms in his discussion of consciousness:

When ideality and reality touch each other, then repetition occurs. [...] Here is the contradiction, for that which is, is also in another mode. That the external is, that I see, but in the same instant I bring it into relation with something that also is, something that is the same and that also will explain that the other is the same. Here is a redoubling [*Fordobling*]; here it is a matter of repetition.¹⁴²

Here, Climacus is emphasizing the point of contact between ideality and reality. Writing in approximately the same time frame as Constantin, he is similarly interested in the concept of repetition. He notes that, taken separately, neither ideality nor reality is capable of repetition, for reality is always time-bound and is therefore "only in the moment."¹⁴³ It is always passing, without any endurance that could allow for a repetition. Ideality, on the other hand, "is and remains the same"¹⁴⁴ and therefore allows for no movement. Ideality's universals need reality's particulars in order to be repeated. It is only in the contact between reality and ideality—between the passing and the enduring—that repetition is possible. For Climacus, this repetition can also be described as a redoubling, for it is something that is in two modes at once.

¹⁴² JC, 171.

¹⁴³ JC, 171.

¹⁴⁴ JC, 171.

This description of redoubling fits perfectly with that found in *Works of Love*. There, Kierkegaard describes redoubling as a movement that is simultaneously directed inward and outward. In other words, "that which is, is also in another mode." Whereas Climacus notes the double mode of recognizing the universal ideal in the particular reality, Kierkegaard describes the double mode of the eternal in an individual human being.

In his book *Philosophical Fragments*, published just eight months after *Repetition*, Johannes Climacus makes another reference to redoubling, this time to a redoubling of existence:

It is [...] the perfection of the eternal to have no history, and of all that is, only the eternal has absolutely no history.

Yet coming into existence can contain within itself a redoubling [*Fordobling*], that is, a possibility of a coming into existence within its own coming into existence. Here, in the stricter sense, is the historical, which is dialectical with respect to time. The coming into existence that here is shared with the coming into existence of nature is a possibility, a possibility that for nature is its whole actuality. But this distinctively historical coming into existence is nevertheless within a coming into existence—this must be grasped securely at all times. The more special historical coming into existence comes into existence by way of a relatively freely acting cause, which in turn definitively points to an absolutely freely acting cause.¹⁴⁵

The dialectic between time and eternity is an important one for Kierkegaard, particularly the way in which the two come together in human existence. As we have already seen, the temporal and the eternal act as one of the sets of relations that Anti-Climacus sees as framing the formation of the self in *The Sickness Unto Death*.¹⁴⁶ The time/eternity dialectic is also the basis for the driving questions of *Philosophical Fragments*: "Can a historical point of departure be given for an eternal consciousness; how can such a point of departure be of more than historical interest; can an eternal happiness be built on historical knowledge?"¹⁴⁷ Johannes Climacus is still preoccupied

¹⁴⁵ PF, 76.

¹⁴⁶ SUD, 13.

¹⁴⁷ PF, 1.

with this dialectic in his *Postscript*, remarking, "The basis of the paradox of Christianity is that it continually uses time and the historical in relation to the eternal."¹⁴⁸ The tension of the paradox, of such importance throughout Kierkegaard's work, finds its ultimate expression in the God-man, Jesus Christ, in whom the radically disparate entities of eternal God and time-bound humanity are brought together in an individual human being. But this same paradox of the incarnation is echoed as the dual realities of time and the eternal are brought together in the individual's life-in-time.¹⁴⁹ What is, is also in another mode: it is a redoubling.

Is this the movement of repetition? *Repetition* is a complex little work, and attempting to distill what Kierkegaard means by the concept of repetition into a brief definition would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. Yet I would suggest that the eternal-in-time represents at least one aspect of repetition. As Climacus discovered, both the enduring and the momentary are required in order for a simple repetition to occur, and the same might be said for an existential repetition, as well. If we were forced to crystallize Kierkegaard's understanding of time into a summary statement, these words from Vigilius Haufniensis might serve well: "Nothing is as swift as a blink of the eye, and yet it is commensurable with the content of the eternal."¹⁵⁰ Indeed, as we saw earlier, Haufniensis sees time itself as posited by the eternal. At least in part, the quest for a repetition is the quest for the eternal in time.

¹⁴⁸ CUP, 95.

¹⁴⁹ See George Pattison, *Kierkegaard, Religion and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Pattison has a firm grasp on the importance of "the inseparability of the eternal and the ephemeral" (34) in Kierkegaard's thought and method.

¹⁵⁰ CA, 87.

Conclusion

Is Andic correct in suggesting that the category of redoubling replaced that of repetition in Kierkegaard's thought? Andic does not really give us an apologetic for his claim, and a full answer to the question would require much more space and time for tracing the trajectory of Kierkegaard's development than is available here. Without a fuller exploration, I am hesitant to join Andic in such an assertion. It is clear that certain intimacies hold between *gjentagelsen* and *fordoblelse*, but they remain complicated terms, each with its own life-blood and field of extension. Painting with broad strokes, we can identify repetition as an important concept in an earlier stage of Kierkegaard's career, and redoubling as gaining significance in his later life. For whatever reason(s), the conversation appears to have shifted for Kierkegaard, and it is possible that *fordoblelse* became a more useful apparatus for his discussion. Yet as we have noted, there is some chronological overlap in the terms, even within the same text. Andic's claim remains a provocative one, however, and may prove a fruitful opportunity for future research.

CONCLUSION

Teasing out the meaning of redoubling is, as we have discovered, neither a direct nor a straightforward task. Yet there is a sense in which it is perfectly appropriate that *fordoblelse* should prove to be something of a thorny problem. As we have seen, redoubling speaks of duplexity, indirect communication, opposites being brought together, existential inversions, the outward becoming inward, and so on. Commentators who naively attempt to circumscribe redoubling within simple parameters may, in fact, be missing something vital.

Judge for Yourself!, written in 1851 but withheld by Kierkegaard until after the death of Bishop Mynster and ultimately published after Kierkegaard's own death,¹⁵¹ contains only one reference to *fordoblelse*, but the statement is nevertheless a strong one. Kierkegaard begins his first discourse of the book, entitled "Becoming Sober," by reflecting on the accusation by the crowds on the day of Pentecost that Jesus's disciples were drunk. Kierkegaard writes:

And Christianity is of the opinion that particularly the true Christian is sober, that on the contrary the less Christian anyone else is the more that person is in a state of intoxication. And Christianity is of the opinion that its first effect or the first effect of the Spirit on a person is that he becomes sober. In other words, everything essentially Christian is a redoubling [*Fordoblelse*], or every qualification of the essentially Christian is first of all its opposite, whereas in just a human or secular view a thing is just what it is. Thus, in just a human view, a spirit that gives life is a life-giving spirit and nothing more; Christianly, it is first of all the Spirit who kills, who teaches dying to. In just a human view, elevation is only elevation and nothing more; Christianly, it is first of all humiliation. So also with inspiration—in just a human view, it is inspiration; Christianly, inspiration is first of all becoming sober.¹⁵²

Once again, we can see that Kierkegaard grants a deep significance to redoubling. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that "everything essentially Christian is a redoubling." His use of redoubling in this passage is reminiscent of the idea of paradox, which was so important to Anti-Climacus's

¹⁵¹ "Historical Introduction," JFY, vii, xii, xv.

¹⁵² JFY, 98.

discussion in *Practice in Christianity*. Kierkegaard is not speaking here specifically of the paradox of the God-man, but we should not be surprised that he would take special note of the paradoxical structure inherent to all the movements of the Christian life. Christian teaching is full of inverse relations—in dying you will live, in giving you receive, the last shall be first, and so on. As Kierkegaard explains, this is an identifying mark of the “essentially Christian,” that it “is first of all its opposite.” And this, he says, is a redoubling.

We have seen repeatedly that redoubling is associated with the indirect rather than the direct, and Kierkegaard once again sets up a contrast between the two in this passage. He states that “in just a human or secular view a thing is just what it is”—it is obvious, straightforward, direct. By contrast, the essentially Christian cannot be taken at face value. It has a hidden life, which is not immediately visible. The natural human way of looking at things consistently takes things to be as they appear to be and, in so doing, mistakes them for less than what they are. The human way of looking at things expects that there is “nothing more,” but Christianly, there is always something else at work—perhaps something initially more difficult than was expected.

Redoubling's connections with paradox and indirectness are reiterated in an issue of *The Moment* published in July 1855, less than six months before Kierkegaard's death:

The spiritual person is able to bear a redoubling within himself; with his understanding he can maintain that something is against the understanding and then will it nevertheless; with his understanding he can maintain that something is an offense and then will it nevertheless; that something, humanly speaking, makes him unhappy and then will it nevertheless, etc. But that is precisely the way the Christianity of the New Testament is constituted. We human beings, however, are unable to endure or bear a redoubling within ourselves; our will changes our understanding. Thus our Christianity (“Christendom's”) is also designed for this; it removes from the essentially Christian the offense, the paradox, etc. and replaces it with: probability, the direct. That is, it changes Christianity

into something completely different from what it is in the New Testament, indeed, into the very opposite; and this is the Christianity of "Christendom" (of us human beings).¹⁵³

A journal entry from 1854 continues to echo these themes:

Everything essentially Christian has a double meaning [*Dobbelt-tydigt*], is a redoubling [*Fordoblelse*]. And this is what is so strenuous, also what makes it difficult to have an understanding with others.

In the ordinary direct sense of being happy or suffering, how direct and easy it is to be understood.

But to say that suffering signals blessedness has a double meaning.¹⁵⁴

As we have noted throughout, one of the defining features of authentic faith and love is that neither can be infallibly recognized by any specific outward manifestation. Instead of a direct correlation between inward reality and outward visibility, the true reality of faith, love, or blessedness may be hidden to others. As Kierkegaard states here, this kind of "double meaning"—a true meaning behind the apparent, direct meaning—is a redoubling and, again, is a feature of all that is "essentially Christian."

I was initially drawn to a study of redoubling because it posed a puzzle. A few scholars have dipped their toes in *fordoblelse*, but I felt that scholarship still awaited a thorough explication. At the close of this particular investigation, *fordoblelse* continues to hold mysteries for me, but it seems easier to make sense of when understood as a formal rather than as a substantive term.¹⁵⁵ *Fordoblelse* is not so much a thing-in-itself as an indicator that some kind of doubleness or paradox is at work. Kierkegaard turns to the term as a way of gesturing toward double meaning, toward dialectic, toward relationships between opposites, toward duplexity. As he contemplates one of love's paradoxical challenges in *Works of Love*, Kierkegaard remarks,

¹⁵³ TM, 183-184.

¹⁵⁴ #3664, JP, 697.

¹⁵⁵ Thank you to Dr. Bob Sweetman for helping to point me in this direction.

"Truly a miracle if it succeeds, since like everything essentially Christian it contradicts the proverb that one cannot do two things at the same time."¹⁵⁶ It is this idea of two things at once—of paradox—that is so vital to Kierkegaard's understanding of Christianity. And it is because *fordoblelse* points to this duplexity that the term bears such significance for him.

As human beings, we are indelibly marked by paradox and duplexity. We are caught between the poles of finite and infinite, time and eternity, freedom and necessity. Paradox is not accidental to human nature, but essential. It is not a result of humanity's fall, but an intentional aspect of our good creation. Despite the duplexities inherent to our human nature, however, we balk at the requirements of living with paradox. We chafe at that which is not straightforward and apparent, at the "double meaning" that is "so strenuous,"¹⁵⁷ at having to live in dual realities simultaneously.

Yet for those of us who, like Kierkegaard, are on the journey of attempting to become a Christian, our exemplar for existence is the Paradox himself, Jesus Christ, the God-man. The offence of this Paradox requires an authentic choice from us. And walking in the footsteps of this Paradox will prove to be a way marked by suffering, a suffering that is yet—somehow—blessedness.

Paradox remains our calling. It is, indeed, the only way that we can make sense of these time-bound, flesh-bound, finite, infinite, eternal, freely choosing selves that we are. May God grant us grace that we might bear redoubling in ourselves.

¹⁵⁶ WOL, 339.

¹⁵⁷ #3664, JP, 697.

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