

Part I

Anxiety and Individuality

Part I is an attempt to explore the various aspects of Kierkegaard's treatment of the concept of anxiety. His celebrated book *The Concept of Anxiety*, published in 1844, provides the basis for a proper understanding of anxiety and it is consequently pivotal to the development of the argument. *The Concept of Anxiety* is signed pseudonymously Vigilius Haufniensis, which means 'watchman of Copenhagen'. Importantly, Vigilius Haufniensis can be interpreted as 'Watchman of the Marketplace', since Copenhagen means 'marketplace' in Danish (Palmer, 1996, p. 58).

Although the *Concept of Anxiety* belongs to the group of the so-called aesthetic writings in Kierkegaard's famous distinction of his own work, it is debatable whether it should be treated as an aesthetic work.

One of the many peculiarities of this book is undoubtedly that Kierkegaard himself signed the original draft, impoverishing consequently the strength of pseudonymity (see Thomte, 1980, p. 222; CA, p. 177). Moreover, in the book allegedly providing the bridge between Kierkegaard's aesthetic and religious works – namely, the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* – Climacus characterizes *the Concept of Anxiety* as being essentially different from the other pseudonymous works 'in that its form is direct and even somewhat didactic' (CUP, pp. 269–70; CA, p. 221). Numerous and quite significant consequences follow, especially given that, in Kierkegaard's terminology, direct communication points to direct authorship, while indirect communication to pseudonymity.

Thus, in the present treatment of *The Concept of Anxiety*, the ambiguity regarding pseudonymity and direct authorship will be left open, since it would be unfair to both the author and his works if hasty conclusions were drawn at the outset. It furthermore seems that paying heed to

this ambiguity is more than consonant with the spirit of the book in question, the very title of which is but a provocation.

Moreover in Part I we also consider many of Kierkegaard's other works, while specific emphasis is placed on *Sickness unto Death* and *Johannes Climacus* in an attempt to 'take notice' of the Fall and anxiety, of inwardness and pseudo-Christianity. In this respect a fruitful comparison is drawn with Nietzsche's announcement of the death of the divine at the heart of European civilization.