

als sachgerecht und der Vielschichtigkeit des Denkens Kants angemessen. Diese Pluralität der interpretatorischen Perspektiven ist also positiv zu erwähnen und zu begrüßen. Zur Lektüre ist der Sammelband zu empfehlen, da er eine breite und vor allem problemorientierte Palette an möglichen Ansätzen bezüglich des Themenkomplexes der menschlichen „Gefühlswelt“ im Werk Kants anbietet. In dieser Hinsicht stellt das Buch eine sehr gute Anregung hinsichtlich der untersuchten Problematik dar, die eine kritische Diskussion nicht abschließt, sondern herausfordert.

Lawrence R. Pasternack: Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant on *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: An Interpretation and Defense*. London/ New York: Routledge, 2014. XV; 272 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-50786-8.

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Over the past two decades, English-language Kant scholarship has witnessed an unprecedented flurry of interest in Kant's monumental book, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* (1793/1794) – a work that had been largely ignored in previous periods, even though it is the only book other than *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* that Kant published in a significantly revised second edition. This interest reached such a crescendo that several years ago four major academic publishers commissioned English-language commentaries on Kant's *Religion*, which have appeared in four consecutive years: James DiCenso (June 2012), Lawrence Pasternack (October 2013), Eddis Miller (November 2014), and Stephen Palmquist (December 2015). Each adopts a distinctive hermeneutic approach that comes with various advantages and disadvantages, but together they guarantee that Kant's cryptic work will remain a central focus of English-language Kant-scholarship for some time to come.

Pasternack's *Guidebook* stands head and shoulders above the other three recent commentaries in one key respect: setting his discussion in the context of Kant's theory of the highest good, he provides persuasive evidence that, from start to finish, Kant's *Religion* applies and further develops this key theory. After an Introduction that sketches essential background material for understanding *Religion*, Chapter 1 reviews Kant's theory of the highest good as he had developed it during the ten years when he published the three *Critiques*. Pasternack, tracing how Kant's understanding and application of the highest good continually developed during this period, suggests that Kant remained dissatisfied with its form.

In Chapter 2 Pasternack examines the first few paragraphs of the Preface to the first (1793) edition of *Religion*, arguing that Kant there makes several noteworthy changes to his presentation of the highest good, thus improving the argument and clarifying what is at stake. Chapters 3 through 6 then present a section-by-section summary of the content of *Religion*, devoting one chapter to each *Stück* (literally “piece”, though Pasternack follows the Cambridge Edition’s potentially misleading use of “part” to refer to the book’s four main essays). In his straightforward and balanced discussion of each piece, Pasternack masterfully unearths evidence that the highest good serves as the backdrop for many of Kant’s arguments.

The book’s Conclusion somewhat abruptly shifts gears: setting aside his former focus on the highest good, Pasternack highlights and responds to three questions that have dominated much of the recent literature on *Religion*. He answers the first question, Nicholas Wolterstorff’s “Is it possible and desirable for theologians to recover from Kant?” (240 f), by pointing out that the question imposes a false assumption onto Kant’s position: Kant does not (as some have claimed) adopt a positivist view of the limits of human knowledge, and so (243) he “does not deny the intelligibility of theistic language.” The second question, as posed in my 1992 *Kant-Studien* article (republished in *Kant’s Critical Religion* [2000]), “Does Kant reduce religion to morality?” (244 f), prompts an equally decisive response: although Pasternack agrees with my claim, that “Kant does not outright explanatorily reduce miracles and revelation” to morality (247), he thinks interpreters of *Religion* cannot deny that, given Kant’s insistence that rational/moral religion takes precedence over historical religion, Kant sometimes treats “various traditional doctrines [...] in a way that many Christians would find unacceptable.” Finally, Pasternack offers a nuanced discussion of a third question posed by many interpreters: “Is Kant a Pelagian?” (248 f). After a helpful overview of the original context of the theological debate between Augustine and Pelagius, Pasternack concedes that Kant “does deviate from the Augustinian conception of sin and salvation, and instead follows the same trajectory as Pelagius” (249); yet he goes on to demonstrate how Kant is not *fully* Pelagian, for Kant portrays “our debt of sin” as *infinite*, such that it cannot be “repaid through our own efforts” (252). The Conclusion ends by returning briefly to the main theme of Pasternack’s overall reading of *Religion*, noting that Kant’s doctrine of the highest good, as fully developed for the first time in *Religion*, is what saves Kant from being an out-and-out Pelagian (257): “once we turn to the role of God in the establishment of the Ethical Community and the Highest Good, His aid does become necessary.”

While I am sympathetic with (and deeply impressed by) Pasternack’s ability to show how Kant’s theory of the highest good operates in *Religion*, I have one concern about his approach. Pasternack sometimes writes as if Kant himself *explicitly emphasizes* the highest good in *Religion*. However, a close look at the text

reveals that, after the first Preface (where Kant does indeed appeal explicitly to his doctrine of the highest good, using the term seven times), Kant uses “highest good” only *four* times in the entire book! The unsuspecting newcomer to *Religion* who reads this *Guidebook* as an initial introduction might get the impression that Kant’s usage is far greater, for the author never tells the reader that Kant himself does not use this term on most of the occasions when its application is discussed. Is Pasternack *misreading* Kant’s text in such cases? Probably not, because Kant himself states in the second edition Preface (RGV, AA 06: 13–14) that he has intentionally minimized his use of the Critical philosophy’s technical terminology, in hopes of rendering *Religion* comprehensible to the non-philosopher. My point is only that Pasternack could have been clearer about the *nature* of his hermeneutic assumption that Kant saw *Religion* as an opportunity to develop and perfect his theory of the highest good: this would have avoided the danger of some readers thinking Pasternack’s position is that Kant explicitly focused on the highest good, whereas his focus is actually on religion as such, especially the relation between its rational meaning and its historical manifestations.

In other respects Pasternack’s *Guidebook* is a straightforward and reliable presentation of Kant’s exposition, with moderate coverage of the most essential secondary literature; though many recent studies go unmentioned, he strikes a good balance overall – especially for an introductory-level text – by focusing mainly on the most widely discussed debates. In numerous contexts and with the help of five diagrams, he significantly illuminates Kant’s sometimes tortuously complex arguments. For example, Figure 3 (144) highlights an important modification to the second *Critique*’s “soteriological threshold” that Kant introduces in *Religion*: whereas the former argues that human beings who constantly strive for perfection thereby make themselves worthy of God’s forgiveness for the ways in which their moral behavior has fallen short of God’s demands, the latter argues that a sudden “revolution” is required and that those who experience this “change of heart” are thereby fully justified and acceptable to God. Pasternack’s diagrammatic depiction of this distinction, though helpful, could mislead a casual reader to think these two arguments are mutually exclusive, whereas in fact – as Pasternack himself acknowledges in the surrounding text – both arguments function together in *Religion*, as two aspects of Kant’s mature theory of salvation.

Pasternack makes his book easy to use in conjunction with Kant’s text by correlating the section headings of his central chapters (3 through 6) to Kant’s own subdivisions in each of *Religion*’s four pieces, thus furthering his goal of covering the text “holistically” (2). Unfortunately, in spite of claiming to buck the trend of downplaying the importance of the later pieces, Pasternack partially exemplifies it: his treatment of the Second and Third Pieces is in each case only slightly shorter than that of the preceding piece; however, he devotes only about

half the space to the religiously crucial Fourth Piece than to each of the previous three. The secondary literature rarely reflects the fact that Kant's text devotes almost 50 % *more* space to the Third and Fourth Pieces than to the first two. Similarly, Pasternack (like DiCenso, Miller, and nearly all other interpreters) ignores the substantive differences between the two editions – an oversight that can be excused, since the importance of these differences was first brought to light only recently, in my subsequent *Commentary on Religion*.

Pasternack glosses too quickly over one fundamental (and thus, potentially divisive) debate in the recent literature, regarding the nature and location of “the experiment” (RGV, AA 06: 10) that Kant mentions in the first Preface and its relation to “the second experiment” (RGV, AA 06: 12), explained in the second Preface. John Hare's *The Moral Gap* (1996) assumed what some have called a “translation thesis”, whereby the first experiment refers back to Kant's pure moral theory and the second to *Religion's* alleged “translation” of traditional Christian doctrines into the terms of pure morality – a task that Hare takes to be the main purpose of *Religion*. In Chapters VII and VIII of *Kant's Critical Religion* I gave a detailed account of how *both* experiments are intertwined throughout *Religion's* text, the first experiment (i. e., defining the necessary elements of a pure religion of reason) tending to come in the first section(s) of each piece, while the second experiment (i. e., determining whether certain key Christian doctrines can be interpreted as having the pure religion of reason at their core) tends to be discussed in each piece's concluding section(s). Chris Firestone and Nathan Jacobs' *In Defense of Kant's Religion* (2008) relied heavily on certain key features of *Kant's Critical Religion* but ignored its approach to the two experiments: taking Hare's position as their only interlocutor, the authors proposed a new reading, identifying the first experiment with the full text of the first three Pieces and the second experiment with the entire Fourth Piece.

Partially acknowledging the details of this controversy, Pasternack follows my *description* of the experiments (see 2–3, 12n, 82n) and tends to interpret Kant's text along similar lines, yet adopts a surprising hypothesis: because “the second experiment employs the first”, *only* “the second experiment [...] sets *Religion's* purpose and agenda” (12n); Pasternack therefore consistently refers only to Kant's “experiment”. This over-simplification of a crucial issue in interpreting *Religion* would imply that *Religion's* entire purpose is to reinterpret Christianity; yet Pasternack's own interpretations repeatedly demonstrate that this is not the case. As a result, his numerous references to “*Religion's* experiment” are potentially confusing: while correctly identifying various arguments as focused on the task of identifying the core elements of a rational religion, Pasternack's singular use of “experiment” is bound to lead some readers to think “application to historical Christianity”, whereas no such application is in view in those portions of

Religion. Readers who rely on Pasternack's usage of "Religion's experiment" are bound to view his *Guidebook* as following in the footsteps of Hare's translation thesis, even though Kant himself (and Pasternack, in his actual *interpretation!*) portrays Kant's discussion of Christianity as only of *secondary* importance to his primary project of identifying the elements that constitute a rational system of religion. Pasternack's terminology here is unfortunate, because it is bound to detract (at least for those readers who are familiar with the recent debate on the nature and location of the two experiments) from his consistently excellent elucidations of Kant's *first* experiment arguments, whose validity holds independently of their relation (or lack of relation) to historical Christianity. But this imprecise use of Kant's experiment metaphor should not overshadow the tremendous contribution Pasternack has made to our understanding of *Religion* by clarifying how Kant saw religion as a crucial step on the road to realizing the highest good. Provided they look beyond Pasternack's usage, to his actual interpretations of Kant's arguments, this *Guidebook* will offer a valuable resource to introductory students and seasoned scholars alike.

Alfredo Ferrarin: *The Powers of Pure Reason: Kant and the Idea of Cosmic Philosophy*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015, 325 p., ISBN 9780226243153.

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While agreeing that "Kant's revolution in thinking is utterly pivotal in the history of philosophy," Alfredo Ferrarin doubts "that full justice has been done to it." He thinks the best way to pay tribute to Kant's depth is "to take seriously and address the philosophical problems that threaten its unity" (2). This is what the book is about, especially given that "some of the more notable readings" of critical philosophy "are one-sided precisely insofar as they are reductive" (4). Ferrarin aims instead to read "Kant's philosophy as a developing whole." The key to and premise of his interpretation is the architectonic description of reason in the "Doctrine of Method" and of "the ideas as a result of reason's totalizing need" (5).

Special attention is given to the role of metaphysics and to the KrV's propaedeutic function with regard to metaphysics. Throughout the book, Ferrarin provides careful consideration of the "many shifts, hesitations, and subtle changes expressed by Kant" in order to understand how and why, as early as the *Prole-*