more sustained and critical engagement with recent scholarship on its topic (beyond passing references in the footnotes), in order to see where the author disagrees with that scholarship and, more importantly, why he does so. Lastly, the book tends to see the phases in Kant's intellectual development as steps in an inevitable 'march' toward the mature critical philosophy (e.g. 31, 175, 189) – though I admit that this is a temptation that is hard for any historical-developmental research to resist.

These reservations aside, one has to admire the scholarship and preparation that went into and made possible this well-documented and thorough book. It should be of interest to Kant scholars interested in the relation between ontology and transcendental philosophy, Kant's method and the development of Kant's thought about these and related themes.

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Edward Kanterian, *Kant, God and Metaphysics: The Secret Thorn*, London and New York: Routledge, 2018
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This is a chronological commentary on Kant's writings through 1769 whose aim is to reveal that the 'secret thorn' driving Kant's thought through its twists and turns is the scripture-based faith of the German-Protestant tradition. On Kanterian's telling, Kant's 1763 'Only Possible Proof' essay aims to 'build a metaphysical fortress for his articles of faith, i.e. to defend faith through knowledge' (p. 312). This essay already contains the seeds of the sceptical

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attitude toward any such 'metaphysical fortress' that emerges in the 1766 'Dreams' and subsequent work of that decade. During this period, Kant experiments with a different strategy that aims instead to 'defend faith through ignorance' (p. 312). Then, starting around 1769 and continuing through the critical period, Kant's project shifts again: he aims to 'rebuild a metaphysical fortress around his faith' (p. 364).

A significant hurdle for this interpretation is that Kant does not describe his own philosophical activity this way. The 'Only Possible Proof' keeps religion within the boundaries of reason to the extent that it offers an argument for God's existence that proceeds by means of an analysis of concepts of the understanding. And even if the 'Dreams' essay marks an abandonment of the speculative project in theology that culminates in the works of 1762–3, Kant does not retreat therein to a fideism of the sort toward which Hamann had been trying to push him. True, Kant ends the 'Dreams' by noting that skirmishes among metaphysicians leave untouched the truly upright person's 'moral faith' in a future life. But Kant does not take this indifference regarding metaphysical theories to be an opportunity to champion, say, a foundational feeling of the divine that receives content from scripture.

In the critical period, Kant famously expresses the need to 'deny knowledge to make room for faith' (Bxxx). But he persists in characterizing the religious-theological content of the *Critique* as wholly within the boundaries of *reason* even if no longer of *knowledge*: the idea of God is an *idea of reason*; our hope for a future life is an expression of the *interests of reason*; and the whole history of speculation regarding a supreme being is part of the *history of reason*. Although Kant reassures his readers in the *Religion* that revelation can contain the religion of reason within itself (6: 12), he also claims that the authors of scripture themselves accept and report the events of sacred history because moved by reason to do so (cf. 'Conflict of the Faculties', 7: 40). By contrast, a faith based merely on alleged miracles or the testimony of others 'is in no way a part of religion' (7: 42; 6: 84.11–14). Indeed, since the authors of scripture make errors, a historical faith can become compatible with religion only *after* reason corrects it (7: 38, 41).

For Kanterian, this rationalism turns out to be superficial. He reads Kant with a view to finding evidence for a traditional faith lying hidden *beneath* the text, hunting for places where Kant 'drops his academic reservations to reveal a rather ardent faith' (p. 176). Kanterian's approach thus shares something with Marxist, psychoanalytic or Straussian hermeneutics.

Kanterian's brief introduction aims to motivate his favoured hermeneutical approach. Taking his cue from Gadamer, Kanterian claims that a sophisticated reading must 'historicise Kant' by understanding his explicit arguments as 'built on' or in 'defense' of the ideas and beliefs that characterize a lived, historically situated *Weltanschauung* (p. xiv). For Kanterian, this

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Weltanschauung is strictly metaphysical-religious in character. He does not consider whether any political, social, economic or idiosyncratic psychological forces might be driving Kant's thought.

This brings Kanterian to a pointed complaint: Anglophone Kant scholarship – or at least 'prevailing' Anglophone scholarship – neglects to consider Kant in this national-religious historical context. The result of this neglect is a naïve anachronism: a non-confessional and anti-metaphysical Kant that 'appeals to our own, more secular attitudes' (p. xiii). Kanterian claims that the secular-scientific outlook informing this historically naïve Anglophone scholarship has an affinity with the Marburg neo-Kantianism initiated by Hermann Cohen that emphasizes the transcendental-philosophical underpinnings of natural science, mathematics and logic. This is not a fair assessment of the breadth of approaches in Anglophone Kant scholarship – to say nothing of Cohen and the Marburg school. At any rate, Kanterian proclaims his preference for the outlook of anti-Marburg scholars such as Bruno Bauch, Heinz Heimsoeth, Max Wundt and Martin Heidegger. As examples of the kind of approach that Anglophone scholarship has failed to give 'due weight', Kanterian cites Bauch's claim from 1904 that Kant's philosophy gives rational form to Luther's moral-religious sentiment and Wundt's claim from 1924 that 'the revelation of God in the world was the actual content of Kant's philosophy' (p. xv).

Bauch and Wundt are, it must be said, unfortunate choices to serve as models for an historically informed hermeneutic. It was Bauch who, in 1917, introduced into the pages of the *Kant-Studien* the hermeneutic principle of a *racial* horizon of understanding. Significantly, Bauch takes his cue from Treitschke's remark that Luther remains baffling to the foreigner but as 'blood of our blood' is innately familiar to 'us Germans'. Bauch generalizes Treitschke's thought, concluding that 'where we cannot say "that is the blood of our blood", there it is certain that our comprehension simply finds a limit'. Bauch's barely concealed implication is that a Jew like Hermann Cohen cannot adequately understand Kant, especially in his moral-religious dimensions. As for Wundt, his claim that the 'actual content' of Kant's philosophy is God's revelation in the world assimilates Kant to an alleged Christian-Germanic '*völkische Weltanschauung*', whose 'actual content' is, similarly, the 'reconciliation' of God and world. For Wundt, 'idealism' – whether of Plato, Kant or Hegel – is merely the philosophical expression of this primordial *Weltanschauung*. Any contrary tendencies in European philosophy toward metaphysical materialism or political egalitarianism are to be explained by the malign influence of an alien Jewish *Weltanschauung*, whose defining feature is God's absence from the world. Wundt of course finds that this also characterizes what he calls the 'Jewish strand' of neo-Kantianism. Wundt brings this thought – at once laughable and despicable – full circle

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by identifying *Rasseforschung* as the contemporary heir to philosophical idealism's principle of the interpenetration of the spiritual and material. To be clear, Kanterian's reading is not implicated in the fundamentally anti-Semitic orientation of these approaches. Nevertheless, in this case, it is Kanterian who appears historically naïve in his uncritical appeal to such figures in support of reading Kant's thought as a philosophical expression of a primordial national-religious *Weltanschauung*.

In keeping with his *Weltanschauung* hermeneutics, Kanterian warns us at the outset that he will not claim any direct influence of Luther on Kant (p. 1). Nor does he wish to offer a comprehensive discussion of Kant's debts to prior philosophers or theologians (p. xvi). This accounts for the somewhat unusual structure of the book: his 300-page commentary on Kant's texts is preceded by an 88-page chapter presenting a whirlwind intellectual history of philosophical and religious thought in the quarter millennium from the Reformation to the Age of Enlightenment. Here Kanterian introduces the religious 'themes' he finds re-emerging in Kant: the 'anxiety' created by the modern scientific worldview together with the 'safety' provided by faith; and the 'weakness motif', according to which human reason in its fallen state is so feeble that it not only fails to grasp the divine but is also likely to lead us away from authentic faith. Perhaps inevitably given the dozens of figures covered, there are a few places to quibble with the presentation of this history. One might also question the relative lack of focus on the German-Protestantism central to the hermeneutic principle guiding the commentary. Nevertheless, the chapter provides a good sense of the variety of views in the period on the question of status of reason *vis-à-vis* faith as well a useful entry point into some of the relevant secondary literature.

Kanterian finds these religious themes in various guises in virtually all modern philosophers, from Descartes and Locke to Hume. Anti-dogmatism, if not explicitly atheistic, is always subservient to traditional faith because reflective of the 'weakness motif'. And dogmatic metaphysics, as long as it is theistic, is *also* always merely, in Anselm's phrase, 'faith seeking understanding': Leibniz, Wolff and Baumgarten are all 'God-obsessed' (p. xiii); their natural theology is a form of 'rational apologetics' (p. 158). Kanterian does not say whether this judgement also applies to figures such as Reimarus and Christian Gabriel Fischer, whose rationalism pushes them in more clearly heterodox directions within the eighteenth-century Lutheran context.

Later in the book, Kanterian adds the cross-cultural religious experience of the 'numinous' to his arsenal of themes allegedly evidencing Kant's pre-rational religiosity (p. 127). And he expands his conception of the relevant explanatory *Weltanschauung* to include the non-Christian religiosity of Proclus, Plotinus and Pythagoras (pp. 108, 256, 380). Insofar as this

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expansion links Kant to more universal expressions of religiosity, it somewhat undercuts Kanterian's attempt to 'historicise' Kant. But it is nevertheless in keeping with Kanterian's larger vision: to understand Kant's religious thought not as an isolated product of an impersonal pure reason or of Kant's own peculiar genius, but instead as part of a continuing tradition of religiously grounded thought and thus as a 'contribution to *philosophia perennis*' (p. xiv).

It might seem strange that Kanterian would refer approvingly to the 'perennial philosophy'. This is the fanciful historiography of philosophy (concocted by early Christian apologists and revived in the Renaissance) that attributes everything valuable in pre-Christian philosophy to more or less corrupted traditions originating with the divine revelations given to Noah or Moses. But the reference is appropriate in the sense that Kanterian, too, downplays the philosophical content of Kant's thought in favour of finding its deeper core in a revelation-based metaphysical-religious *Weltanschauung*.

In keeping with this outlook, Kanterian's introduction does not provide any account of the content or significance of the texts, arguments or philosophical views he treats in his commentary. Indeed, the commentary itself aims less at developing a coherent philosophical content in Kant's texts than at finding clues in those texts that any such content depends on a traditional religiosity. In practice, this means that Kanterian is quick, often too quick, to allege ambiguities, errors, confusions and contradictions in Kant's thinking.

Consider Kanterian's commentary on Kant's first extended discussion of human freedom and sin, which appears in the 1755 *Nova dilucidatio*. Kant defends a form of compatibilism in the text, but Kanterian spends several pages trying to make sense of Kant as struggling and failing to articulate a coherent libertarian view. His misunderstanding of the dialectical structure of the text leads him to claim erroneously that Kant denies divine foreknowledge – and then to complain that this denial 'stands in some tension' with Kant's affirmation that our free, evil acts can be foreseen (p. 137; cf. 1: 405.23–7, 400.14–17). In connection with this, Kanterian also misunderstands Kant's short but important dialogue between, as Kant says, 'Caius, defender of the indifference of equilibrium, and Titius, advocate for the determining ground' (1: 401). Kanterian mislabels Caius as a 'determinist' and Titius as 'a libertarian (or compatibilist?)' and then misinterprets their statements accordingly (pp. 134–5). Schönfeld makes a similar error in his own commentary (pp. 156–8), which raises the possibility that Kanterian has relied too heavily on secondary sources.

There is not the space here to assess Kanterian's commentaries on individual texts. But it may be useful to give at least an outline of his commentary on the 'Only Possible Proof' essay. Kanterian begins by defending Kant's claim, directed against the Cartesian ontological argument, that existence

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is not a real predicate. Kanterian reasons that if existence were a real predicate we could not meaningfully talk about things as existing only contingently (p. 206). But Kanterian considers Kant's own proposal for an *a priori* proof for God's existence to be fatally flawed at every step. The first step in Kant's proposed proof is something like this argument: possibility rests not merely on logical non-contradiction, but also on some material data existing for thought; and since it is impossible that there is no possibility whatever, something must exist (cf. 2: 77–9). Kanterian understands the argument as resting on the *semantic* principle that the meaning of a word is ultimately the object for which it stands. Kanterian thus claims that the argument does not even get off the ground since words like 'phlogiston' can be perfectly *meaningful* although lacking a reference (p. 226).

Next, Kant argues that when we consider 'the absolute possibility of all things in general' (2: 157) we can see that there is an absolutely necessary being, a being the cancellation of which would cancel *all* internal possibility whatever (2: 83). Kant argues, further, that this being is unique, simple, immutable and eternal (2: 83–5). Kanterian claims that all this rests on a basic *petitio* (p. 230): Kant says nothing that rules out a given possibility being grounded in something contingent (p. 231); thus, the inner possibilities of things could themselves be contingent (p. 232). Next, Kant argues that this necessary being is the most real being ultimately grounding all reality. Kant clarifies that this being does not contain all reality *among its determinations*, since then it would contain within itself a real repugnancy of opposed determinations and hence a privation (2: 85–7). Kanterian counters that the supreme being ought to be able to contain really opposed, mutually cancelling realities (p. 235). Moreover, he thinks that Kant contradicts himself by claiming that the supreme being not only *is* the ground of realities that can oppose and cancel each other but also *is not* the ground of the negations and deficiencies of the essences of things (p. 237).

The final step of Kant's proposed proof is to show that this most real being has both intellect and will and is thus God. Kanterian claims that Kant's three argument-sketches for that conclusion (2: 87–8) are all either inadequate, because non-demonstrative, or else circular, because dependent on physico-theology. And he seizes on the fact that Kant admits that it is the *non-philosophical*, 'ordinary' physico-theology (which infers a divine author from the experience of the contingent order of nature) that produces a conviction that is 'unshakable' and in whose footsteps philosophical speculation quietly follows (2: 118). Kanterian claims, further, that physico-theology is indistinguishable from the Spinozism Kant instinctively opposes unless it silently draws on the conception of a providential and transcendent God found in scripture. Kanterian thus concludes that it *must* be the case that the 'Only Possible Argument' is 'written *against the background of the*

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assumed truth of scriptural revelation. … The metaphysical speculation of the modal argument is a secondary or even tertiary project, a fortress to defend, in the loftier realm of philosophy, received faith' (p. 251).

Kanterian is right that looking at Kant's development shows him experimenting with different ways of defending commitments to theism and some sort of future life without, it seems, ever questioning the commitments themselves. And he is right that Kant's two-pronged critical strategy of limiting knowledge for the sake of these commitments while stressing their connection with a moral-practical orientation is a strategy with precedents within the Christian tradition and particularly within German-Protestantism. And so he is also clearly right that it would be naïve to take Kant's professed rationalism simply at face value. Kanterian's book is useful as a reminder of this. However, his reductive hermeneutic framework leads him to see German-Protestantism not merely as *influencing* Kant's thought, but instead as providing a set of Archimedean points or hinge propositions on which everything else must turn. His readings of individual texts are at their most tendentious and one-sided precisely where he finds evidence that Kant's 'articles of faith' serve this foundational role.

How does Luther's *sola scriptura* lead to the morality of autonomy and the religion of reason? How does the sentiment underlying Luther's claim that 'reason is the devil's whore' (p. 7) develop into Kant's claim that religion must submit unwillingly to the critique of reason (cf. Axi)? Kanterian's commentary does not address such questions. Nor does it address the question why Kant seems quite prepared to dispense with traditional articles of faith insofar he considers them to lie outside the boundaries of reason. These questions are made pressing by Kanterian's interpretative framework, but it is not clear how they could be addressed within that framework.

In his Epilogue, Kanterian does briefly address some of the heterodox views Kant is willing to express in later years. In the *Opus Postumum* drafts, Kant takes the idea of God as a postulate of practical reason in what looks like a radical new direction. He claims there regarding the God that exists and judges him: 'I, the human being, am myself this being' (21: 25). Kanterian does not attempt to portray this as, say, a novel expression of a traditional conception of divine omnipresence. Instead, he links the passage with tradition in an *indirect* way: 'this subjectification is the fruit of Luther's spiritual revolution' (p. 392). And maybe it is. But Kanterian thereby leaves us with a paradox that is at odds with the hermeneutic framework guiding the rest of his commentary.

Kanterian's book provides a wealth of material inviting us to reconsider the manner and degree to which Kant's early thought is shaped by the religious tradition. His extensive reference to continental scholarship (by Redmann, Schmucker, Kreimendahl, Sala, Theis and others) is a distinctive and valuable

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contribution toward such a reconsideration. And his own attempt at such a reconsideration certainly challenges our understanding of Kant by going well beyond even so-called 'theologically affirmative' readings to what we might call a 'crypto-fideistic' reading. But since the plain meaning of Kant's texts does not by itself support Kanterian's reading, its plausibility depends heavily on his hermeneutic starting point, which is itself questionable.

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Maria Borges, *Emotion, Reason and Action in Kant*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019
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Over the past few decades, Kant's theory of virtue and his empirical psychology have received increasing attention. As the psychological conditions that hinder virtuous action, feelings and inclinations have been discussed at length, especially affects and passions. The subjective, psychological conditions that enable or aid human morality, such as conscience, self-control and cultivated sympathetic feelings, have also been addressed in great detail. Closer attention has been paid to Kant's treatment of moral feeling. Against the common caricature of the Kantian virtuous agent as someone who must be purely rational or devoid of feeling, it has been shown that certain feelings play a positive role in Kant's doctrine of virtue and therefore ought to be cultivated. Finally, Kant scholars have recently come up with a variety of creative solutions to the puzzle of how to understand his notion of moral weakness.

Borges's book represents her extensive pioneering work on these topics. It is a well-combined bundle of essays involving, for example, discussions of Kant's conceptions of virtue, moral strength, moral weakness, self-control,

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