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A REPLY TO CRITICS OF
IN DEFENSE OF KANT'S RELIGION

Nathan A. Jacobs

In this essay, I reply to the above four critics of *In Defense of Kant's* Religion (*IDK*R). In reply to George di Giovanni, I highlight the interpretive differences that divide the authors of *IDK*R and di Giovanni, and argue that di Giovanni's atheist reading of Kant does not follow, even granting his premises. In reply to Pamela Sue Anderson, I show that if her reading of Kant is accurate, Kant's own talk of God becomes empty and contemptible by his own lights, and I then show how her empirical bias prompts a significant misreading of *IDK*R. In reply to Stephen Palmquist, I expose four fallacious maneuvers in his paper, which comprise the bulk of his essay. And in reply to Michalson, I address a series of minor concerns raised in his essay, and then set the record straight on the motives behind *IDK*R in general and my own take on Kant's compatibility (or lack thereof) with Christianity in specific.

1. Reply to George di Giovanni

I begin my reply to di Giovanni with two points of agreement. First, di Giovanni asserts that Kant's argument is coherent. Kant is wrong, but coherently wrong (164). One way of putting the task of *IDK*R is that it argues the validity of Kant's argument; it leaves unanswered whether his argument is sound. I will discuss my take on Kant toward the close of this essay, but for now suffice it to say that I agree with di Giovanni. I take Kant's argument to be valid, not sound. This is noteworthy because, as Part 1 of *IDK*R makes plain, there are many scholars who take the validity of Kant's argument to be suspect. Nicholas Wolterstorff, Philip Quinn, and Gordon Michalson level serious charges against the coherence of *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason* (*IDK*R, 46–57; and chap. 3). No doubt di Giovanni and the authors of *IDK*R disagree about what Kant is saying, but to grant that Kant is coherently wrong is no small point of agreement.

The second point of agreement comes in the opening of di Giovanni's comment. He writes, "I am pessimistic about the possibility of initiating a genuine dialogue. My understanding of Kant's critique of reason and the historical context in which I place that critique, are simply too far removed from theirs" (163). I commend di Giovanni's honesty and echo his sentiment. The divide between di Giovanni and the authors of *IDK*R goes well beyond *Religion*, so much so that to dialogue about the interpretive specifics of *Religion* runs the risk of our speaking past one another. But, as di Giovanni says, one can at least try.

The most basic divide between di Giovanni and the authors of *IDK*R concerns where Kant marks the limits of rationality. Di Giovanni identifies himself as a "Christian atheist" (165), and his paper leaves the impression that he would say the same (or something similar) about Kant. If I understand di Giovanni correctly, he takes Kant's critique of reason to land us at knowledge of the empirically known, while reason's transcendental self-examination produces "rational myths" (167). In other words, given the needs of reason, it invents chimeras to address its own instabilities; yet these myths are empty concepts that are "practical" only in the sense that they serve a stabilizing function. The transcendental boundary line is not, then, an epistemic line but an ontic one, dividing that which is (the empirically known) from that which is not (that for which there is no possible intuition). The implication is that God, freedom, immortality, and the soul are non-entities invented by reason to address its own impotence.

Such a take on Kant's philosophy stands in stark contrast to that of the authors of *IDK*R. We take the transcendental boundary line to divide the empirically knowable from the empirically unknowable. But we do not presume that empirical unknowability indicates non-existence. Rather, the limits of empirical knowledge press reason into practical, aesthetic, and teleological considerations, and these considerations commend God, freedom, immortality and the soul, neither as objects of knowledge nor as myths, but as rational beliefs (*IDK*R, 112).

The divide between di Giovanni's understanding of Kant and ours is significant. Yet, this divide goes well beyond *IDK*R; it represents a divide between two camps of Kant interpretation. The case is made in *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion* that there are two interpretive trends in Kant studies, which the editors dub "traditional interpretations" and "affirmative interpretations." Interpretations designated "traditional" are negative toward the prospects of grounding religion and theology in the Kantian paradigm, while interpreters designated "affirmative" believe a proper reading of Kant offers some form of theological affirmation.[2] Di Giovanni is a traditional interpreter, while the authors of *IDK*R are affirmative

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[2]See Chris L. Firestone and Stephen R. Palmquist, "Editors' Introduction," in *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Firestone and Palmquist (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).

interpreters. Acknowledging this divide, I will highlight three flaws that I see in di Giovanni's approach to Kant.

Assuming di Giovanni would label Kant an atheist, the first difficulty this label creates is that it ignores Kant's insistence that his strictures on knowledge cut two ways, silencing both the dogmatist and the skeptic (A388–389).[3] As a theologian, I am often reminded of the implications for my discipline, so allow me to return the favor. Under Kant's strictures, atheism is a form of dogmatism. It asserts a knowledge claim (albeit a negative one) regarding God that violates Kant's limits on human knowledge.[4]

Since we are here focused on Kant's *Religion*, I will cite Book 4 on this point. There Kant identifies the position of the naturalist as out of bounds for the rationalist: "Hence [the rationalist] will never deny in the manner of a naturalist . . . the intrinsic possibility of revelation" (6:155). Were Kant a naturalist (as opposed to a rationalist) and thus certain that God does not exist, rejecting the possibility of revelation would not only be rational but necessary. For there would exist no being worthy of the name *God* that may reveal himself. Yet, it is Kant's epistemic strictures that stave off dogmatic atheism and demand that the door remain ever-open to the possibility that God exists and may reveal himself.[5]

For the purposes of Kant interpretation, Kant's insistence on our epistemic limits is essential, since the limits of knowledge serve a positive function: they force us to seek non-empirical grounds by which we may consider questions of God, freedom, and immortality. When reason commends belief in God, it does not do so in the manner of the theological non-realist who is certain that such talk is useful but empty.[6] Reason commends belief as rational because it cannot discount the possibility that these concepts, commended by reason's transcendental self-examination, may be rooted in reality.

This brings me to a second feature of di Giovanni's comment, which is susceptible to the charge of begging the question. Di Giovanni's presentation presumes that if a reading of Kant is theologically or metaphysically robust, then it is wrong. Di Giovanni is certainly within his intellectual rights to presume such a reading of Kant. However, to presume this reading and its entailments in the current context begs the question at hand,

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[3]Throughout this essay, citations of Kant's writings are embedded in the body of the essay and refer to the German *Akademie* pagination. English quotations are based on the Cambridge University Press translations of Kant's works.

[4]I develop this line of argument in "Kant's *Apologia*: A Look at the Usefulness of Kantian Insights for Christian Thought," *Philosophia Christi* 9:1 (2007).

[5]See Chris L. Firestone, "The Illegitimate Son: Kant and Theological Non-Realism," in *The Persistence of the Sacred in Modern Thought*, ed. Chris L. Firestone and Nathan A. Jacobs (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), chap. 10.

[6]E.g., Don Cupitt, *Nothing Sacred? The Non-Realist Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002); Don Cupitt, "God and the World in Post-Kantian Thought," *Theology* 75 (1972); Don Cupitt, *The Nature of Man* (London: Sheldon Press, 1979); and Don Cupitt, "Kant and the Negative Theology," in *The Philosophical Frontiers of Christian Theology*, ed. B. Hebblethwaite and S. Sutherland (Cambridge University Press, 1982).

namely, whether Kant's rational religion is in fact metaphysically robust. The authors of *IDK*R maintain that the matter must be adjudicated by Kant's texts, and the textual finding of *IDK*R is that *Religion* is a metaphysically and theologically robust text.

I will highlight one example from Book 4. In 6:153–155, Kant identifies various positions on revelation. In *IDK*R, we give both textual and contextual reason to think that Kant's assessment of the matter is as follows. Concerning revelation, one may reject its very possibility and be a naturalist or accept its possibility and be a rationalist. The question facing the rationalist is whether revelation is a possible but unnecessary hastening influence on reason or is a catalyst necessary to awaken reason. The former position is that of the pure rationalist; the latter is that of the supernaturalist rationalist. These positions correspond to those identified by G. E. Lessing in §§4 and 77 of *The Education of the Human Race*,[7] and their influence is noted by historians, such as August Dorner and Emmanuel Hirsch (*IDK*R, 211–220).[8] The fact that Kant narrows his discussion to these two positions is significant. For though he does not solve the debate, he does place himself within a discussion of philosophical theology very unlike what would be expected from the traditional Kant.

The third point is this. Even if we grant di Giovanni's reading of Kant, the atheist conclusion does not follow. For the inference moves from a *de jure* criticism (concerning how the belief emerges) to a *de facto* conclusion (concerning the truth or falsehood of the belief). The inference is a genetic (or, given the turn to the subject, psychogenetic) fallacy.

Alvin Plantinga makes a similar point in reference to Sigmund Freud's charge that religious belief is the product of wish fulfillment. Plantinga points out that Freud's claim is a *de jure* criticism. Building on his own work concerning warranted belief, Plantinga argues that the question of whether this *de jure* criticism yields the *de facto* implication that religious belief is false depends on (a) whether Freud's claim concerning wish fulfillment is true and (b) whether this wish fulfillment constitutes a faculty aimed at something other than truth.[9] Concerning (b), Plantinga points out that one could argue that when considering which possible means is most efficient for producing belief in God, God concluded that wish fulfillment is that most efficient means. If this were the *de facto* origin of wish fulfillment, then wish fulfillment would be a faculty aimed at

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[7]*The Education of the Human Race* can be found (in German) in *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, ed. Der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin (Berlin, 1923–), vol. 13, 413–436 and (in English) in *Lessing's Theological Writings*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1957).

[8]See also I. A. Dorner, *History of Protestant Theology, Particularly in Germany, Viewed According to Its Fundamental Movement and Connection with the Religious, Moral, and Intellectual Life* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1871), vol. 2, bk. 2, div. 2, pt. 3, ch. 1ff.; and Emanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der Neuern Evangelischen Theologie. Im Zusammenhang mit den allgemeinen Bewegungen des europäischen Denkens* (C. Bertelsmann Verlag Gutersloh, 1949), vol. 1, pt. 1, chaps. 47–48.

[9]See Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 194–195.

truth, and the *de jure* criticism would be no criticism at all. Merely naming the faculty "wish fulfillment" does not show the falsehood of the beliefs it generates.

The same reply could be offered to di Giovanni's Kant. Even if we grant that God, freedom, etc., are mere inventions of reason to stabilize itself (a point the authors of *IDK*R deny), this concession would not demonstrate the *de facto* falsehood of such beliefs. It may well be that God has created reason with all its limits and instabilities precisely because these are the most efficient conditions for generating concepts of and beliefs in God, freedom, immortality, and the soul. It may well be that all of these inventions of reason have referents in reality (empirically inaccessible) to which these beliefs correspond. Simply naming them "rational myths" does not indicate their falsehood.

I close this reply to di Giovanni with a comment on the passage he cites from the third *Critique* (5:402). First, I would note that di Giovanni's take on the import of this passage is flawed on logical grounds. In the passage Kant highlights the failing of the understanding to show any connection between possibility (concepts) and actuality (intuitions). From this di Giovanni concludes that modal categories do not apply to things in themselves (168). But failing to prove q is different from disproving q.

Aside from this quibble, however, I take issue with di Giovanni's understanding of the subject of the passage. Di Giovanni reads the passage as a remark on modality and concludes that the understanding's inability to bridge the gap between possibility and actuality means that Kant cuts off possibility, accepting only actuality (168). In its broader context, however, this passage is not about modality. Prior to this remark, Kant discusses the need of reason to posit an intelligence (God) as the source of teleology. In the remarks, he goes on to discuss an important distinction between reason and understanding. The entire discussion of possibility and actuality is in the context of a problem that understanding (not reason) runs into, given its dealings with the empirical. Understanding deals in either intuitions, which are present to the senses, or concepts unemployed. The former concerns actual things (things known to have being because they are present to the senses), while the latter considers only the internal coherence of objects of thought. When limited to the understanding, we run aground in thinking of anything beyond mere possibility and mere actuality, and have no basis on which to bridge the two—the point on which di Giovanni harps. But Kant's opening distinction between reason and understanding is pivotal and goes to the heart of our distinction in *IDK*R between pure cognitions of reason and empirical cognitions. Cognitions of reason are not mere mental pictures. Cognitions of reason deal in the *a priori* understanding of God as the *ens realissimum* for which there is no possible intuition (A575–78/B603–606, A621/B649, 28:1020; *IDK*R, 104–105). Reason is here purged of its tendency to embellish God with anthropomorphisms, and instead deals in practical, aesthetic, and teleological considerations that are derived from reason's transcendental

self-examination. Understanding has difficulty with such cognitions because it seeks to either force them into the realm of the actual (empirical intuition) or relegate them to the possible (unemployed concepts). But this is a problem for the faculty of understanding, not for the faculty of reason.

2. Reply to Pamela Sue Anderson

The distinction between reason and understanding brings me to Anderson's paper, which proves just as befuddled by pure cognitions of reason as the faculty of understanding. Anderson cannot find where to place cognitions of reason, since she is dealing in only empirical intuitions and concepts unemployed. If God or other rational concepts, such as those discussed in *IDK*R, are in mind, Anderson concludes that they must be an empirical intuition, a concept unemployed, or some *via media* that moves from the latter to the former—what she calls "coming to know" (152, 155). Firestone has given ample attention to Anderson, so I will simply add two points.

The first is this. If we limit Kant's philosophical inquiries to only concepts and intuitions, then Kant's own concept of God becomes empty, if not contemptible by his own lights. To explain, Kant is quite clear that the *a priori* understanding of God is different from anthropomorphic ideas of God, which find their footing in the empirical. As Kant states,

> For if in some other, perhaps practical relations, the **presupposition** of a highest and all-sufficient being, as supreme intelligence, were to assert its validity without any objection, then it would be of the greatest importance to determine this concept precisely on its transcendental side, as the concept of a necessary and most-real being, to get rid of what is incompatible with the highest reality, what belongs to mere appearance (anthropomorphism broadly understood), and at the same time to get out of the way all opposed assertions, whether they be **atheistic**, **deistic** or **anthropomorphic**; all this is very easy to do in such a critical treatment, since the same grounds of considering human reason incapable of asserting the existence of such a being, when laid before our eyes, also suffice to prove the unsuitability of all counter-assertions. (A640–641/B668–B669)

Kant is explicit that if the presupposition of a highest and all-sufficient being (the *a priori* concept of God) is to assert its validity, then it must be purged of empirical elements. But we must ask: *If Kant cannot have anything in mind but the empirical, how can any concept survive the disposal of all empirical elements?*

The same question emerges in Kant's articulation of the problem of divine revelation. According to Kant, the idea of God is such that only an infinite experience would be adequate to the concept (A621/B649). Yet, because Kant thinks such an experience is impossible, he presumes that any finite appearance must always be judged to be something other than God. For no matter how grand the empirical intuition, as finite it is at odds with the *a priori* concept of a being having all reality (7:63, 8:142–143, 28:1022, 28:1118). Once again, however, we must ask: *If all concepts are empirically*

derived, what is the alternative to anthropomorphic concepts of God? With what does Kant think we are to compare an empirical appearance?

Kant's insistence that we purge our concept of God of all empirical elements implies that a non-anthropomorphic concept of God is possible. Kant speaks of God and thus has a concept of him. But if all concepts find their footing in the empirical, as Anderson seems to think, then even Kant's concept of God is corrupt by his own standards.

The authors of *IDK*R, arrive at a different conclusion. We take Kant's continual distinction between *a priori* and anthropomorphic views of God to indicate that a non-anthropomorphic concept of God is possible. This brings us once again to the distinction made in *IDK*R between pure and empirical cognition. Our claim is simply that, for Kant, not all that one gets in mind is grounded in empirical intuition. Hence, Kant can get God in mind without anthropomorphism, and it is this type of pure cognition that is in play when Kant speaks of God as the "being of all beings" (A578/B606), "a being having all reality" (631/B659), and so on. This *a priori* concept is the object of rational belief and is in view amid Kant's transcendental arguments, including those in *Religion* (*IDK*R, 105–119, 155–170, 202–205).

This brings me to my second point concerning how Anderson's empirical bias prompts a severe misreading of *IDK*R. Anderson characterizes the role of pure cognition in *IDK*R as "meant to stress the process of coming to know" (153). I am not clear on what Anderson has in mind here, but my impression is that she reads us as beginning with rational concepts and moving toward, or arriving at, an empirical intuition (152–153, 156–157). Hence she argues that our take on transcendental claims seems un-Kantian because they depend on the "intellectual intuition of a prototype, i.e., Christ as God and man" (160). But the authors of *IDK*R make no such claim. The only place in *IDK*R in which we speak of "coming to know" is in reference to an article by Rolf George in which he notes that though *erkennen* can mean "to come to know," it can also have a more general meaning of getting something in mind (*IDK*R, 110). As we go on to explain, our use of "pure cognition" (e.g., in reference to the prototype) refers to the latter use, not to empirical knowledge (*IDK*R, 110–114). As noted above in reference to di Giovanni, we do not take the concepts at which reason arrives by its transcendental self-examination to be mere chimeras. However, as argued above in reference to Anderson, not all rational concepts are possible objects of experience. Instead, *IDK*R contends that the moral disposition and the prototype are pure cognitions (or non-empirical rational concepts) that are gotten in mind and for which there are critically satisfying moral and religious support for their affirmation as rational beliefs. They are not, however, known (in the Kantian sense), nor do we come to know them.

As for Anderson's charge that "Firestone and Jacobs seem to assume that pure cognition of what is empirically unknowable is rendered possible by Christ as 'the prototype' of the pure moral disposition" (12), this too

is false. Such a characterization is much closer to Jeffrey Privette who employs Henry Allison's double-aspect reading and Palmquist's principle of perspective to claim that Christ is the empirical side of the transcendent God.[10] This position I wrote against prior to *IDK*R,[11] and *IDK*R too rejects it. For example, "The prototype is not a translation of Christian theology or a symbolic rendition of Jesus of Nazareth" (*IDK*R, 154, also 117, 155).

*IDK*R states explicitly that neither the moral disposition nor the prototype is a possible object of experience (*IDK*R, 142, 158). The prototype, on our reading, is a concept of reason. We argue that Kant's prototype is an archetypal Idea (in the Platonic sense) of morally perfect humanity. This prototype proceeds from God from eternity, much like the Kabbalist concept of Adam Kadmon (*IDK*R, 155–170).[12] As for the relationship (or potential relationship) between the prototype and Jesus, we address this issue in our treatment of Book 3. There we make clear that, for Kant, it is possible that Jesus is an appearance of the prototype, but we could never know this to be so. The prototype is defined by his perfect disposition, and the disposition is not a possible object of experience. One could believe that Jesus is the prototype, but Kant would insist that such faith, to remain rational, be committed first to the prototype of reason and then to Jesus who is thought to be the prototype. For moral hope resides in the former; the latter, for Kant, offers hope only if he is indeed the prototype—something of which Kant believes we cannot be certain (*IDK*R, 203–204).

In the end, Anderson's empirical bias hinders her from grasping what is meant by pure cognitions of reason and its role in *IDK*R's interpretation of *Religion.* The result is a faulty understanding of what is being claimed about the status of rational beliefs, and about the relationship between these beliefs and historical faith.

3. Reply to Stephen Palmquist

I have chosen to focus on four significant fallacious maneuvers in Palmquist's piece. To my mind, these comprise the bulk of his essay.[13]

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[10]See Jeffrey S. Privette, "Must Theology Re-Kant?," *Heythrop Journal* 40 (1999).

[11]See Nathan Jacobs, "Kant's Prototypical Theology: Transcendental Incarnation as a Rational Foundation for God-Talk," in Firestone and Palmquist, *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion*.

[12]I gather that one source of Anderson's confusion is my/our talk of "transcendental incarnation," a term Anderson must be reading as the transcendent becoming enfleshed (see her footnote 24). However, as I explain in my work prior to *IDK*R, and as we repeat in *IDK*R, "transcendental incarnation" does not refer to the prototype becoming empirical (see Jacobs, "Kant's Prototypical Theology," 134; and *IDK*R, 164). It refers to this supersensible entity uniting himself with our secondary substance, *human*, thus making his moral disposition available to us; yet this descent or union is transcendental because it is a non-empirical concept commended by the needs of reason (*IDK*R, 164).

[13]I have catalogued many more fallacious claims in Palmquist's essay than I have space to itemize. E.g., under Errors of Fact, I have excluded five less-vital instances: (i) *The authors consider no "Axinn-type" affirmative approaches* (172). Ad contra: we address the reading of Adina Davidovich, which fits the affirmative genre of an Axinn-type approach (*IDK*R, 62–69). (ii) *The authors claim that all other interpreters truncate the* Religion *text* (174). Ad con-

3.1 Errors of Fact

The most common feature of Palmquist's paper is the Error of Fact. The first of these has already been noted by Firestone and comprises the entirety of Palmquist's first question, namely, that the authors of *IDK*R claim that their reading of *Religion* is unique because it is holistic and linear (171–174). The word *linear* appears only once in *IDK*R, and it is not there identified as a uniqueness (*IDK*R, 233). To the contrary, our treatment of the secondary literature in Part 1 presents alternative readings in as linear a manner as possible. The uniqueness of our position consists in (a) some of our preliminary considerations, (b) key features of our interpretation that emerge in response to the conundrums, and (c) the ability of our read to answer the conundrums.

The next three Errors of Fact all center on *IDK*R's treatment of the two experiments. They are: (i) *the authors do not consider alternatives to their reading of the two experiments*, (ii) *the authors provide no rationale for their reading of the two experiments*, and (iii) *the authors do not address Kant's use of scripture as potential counter-evidence to their reading of the two experiments* (175–176). To (i), we do consider the reading of Hare and Reardon, which presumes that the first experiment consists of *Groundwork* and the second *Critique* (*IDK*R, 69–82, 114–119). This read has a commonsense appeal to it, since these works present Kant's moral philosophy, and as we show in *IDK*R, this reading is able to handle a number of conundrums (*IDK*R, 73–82).

However, coming to Error of Fact (ii), we note several reasons for preferring our reading of the two experiments over the reading of Hare and Reardon. First, Kant indicates in Book 4 that he is now turning to New Testament (NT) Christianity, and is going to test it to see what in it falls to the realm of reason. This talk of turning to NT Christianity indicates that he has not previously done so in the manner of Book 4, and the nature of this turn fits what he describes in the Second Preface of *Religion* as his second experiment. Second, Kant's terminology for the Christ figure of *Religion* shifts in Book 4. In Books 2 and 3, Kant consistently refers to *the*

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tra: we do not claim that all other interpreters truncate the *Religion* text, only that we do not do so when defending its coherence (*IDK*R, 234). (iii) *The authors accuse others of making the text appear more persuasive than it actually is* (178). Ad contra: I know of no place in *IDK*R in which we claim that other Kant interpreters are guilty of making the text appear more persuasive than it actually is. (iv) *The authors take Kant's "metaphorical pruning" to apply only to Christianity, not to any other historical faith* (176). Ad contra: we make quite clear that Kant's "metaphorical pruning" could be applied to any historical faith, even though Kant chooses to make focus on NT Christianity in *Religion* (*IDK*R, 197–201). (v) *We portray Palmquist as advocating mystical irrationality* (see his footnote 8). Ad contra: we distinguish the Critical Mysticism discussed by Palmquist from the uncritical mysticism of Swedenborg (*IDK*R, 21–24). I have excluded instances of Begging the Question. E.g., Palmquist presents our conclusion that Kant's prototype is Platonic rather than Christian as a strike against us (179), which begs the question of whether we are correct. I have also excluded an instance of Internal Contradiction. To wit: Palmquist at one moment attacks *IDK*R's reading of the two experiments because the relationship between rational religion and historical faith, addressed in Book 3, belongs to the second experiment (contra *IDK*R) (176); and later Palmquist argues that the relationship between rational religion and historical faith, addressed in Book 4, belongs to the first experiment (contra *IDK*R) (177).

prototype, while in Book 4 he refers to Jesus as *the Teacher of the Gospel*. This sharp distinction gives reason to think that Kant's talk of the prototype in Books 2 and 3 is different from his discussion of Jesus in Book 4. Third, Kant is clear that rational faith in the prototype is distinct from historical faith in a particular historical figure. In this light, any reading that conflates his discussion of the prototype in Books 2 and 3 with a discussion of Jesus is misguided. Kant's turn to the Teacher of the Gospel in Book 4 should therefore be read as distinct from his prior discussion (*IDK*R, 114–119).

To Error of Fact (iii), we address Kant's use of scripture directly prior to moving into our reading. I will simply quote the key passage on the point:

> Three points should be kept in mind. . . . First and foremost, Kant is explicit in the claim that the philosophical faculty is free to draw on any resources it likes, even the Bible, in its critical evaluation of reason, but such drawing does not mean that the use is dependent upon these resources. . . . Second, Kant also gives indication in the First Preface of *Religion* that he intends *Religion* to be (at least partly) in dialogue with theologians. . . . A third point to consider is that we find in Book Four of *Religion* Kant's affirmation of the claim that revelation, which cannot be viewed as impossible, could present itself as a catalyst for awakening truths already embedded in reason. . . . Such statements indicate that Kant is not adverse to the idea that an insight (a rational insight) may be awoken by engagement with a purported revelation. (*IDK*R, 117–118)

These three Errors of Fact appear in the context of one claim that is true: we do not consider Palmquist's reading of the two experiments (175–176). The reasons for this have already been noted by Firestone. In Palmquist's published works, the main evidence for his reading is his broader system of Kant interpretation—a system we do not endorse. In addition, *IDK*R is a problem-driven project, and we did not find in Palmquist either acknowledgement of or dealings with the conundrums in Kant's *Religion.* As for the "massive" textual evidence Palmquist forwards in his paper, once one cuts through the fallacious claims catalogued therein, the case amounts to an observation that Kant quotes scripture prior to Book 4.[14] As noted above, we address this point in *IDK*R, and I believe our exposition makes clear that what Kant is doing with Christianity in Book 4 is different from what he does in Books 1–3.

3.2. Direct Attacks

A second prominent maneuver invoked in Palmquist's criticism is the Direct Attack in which he makes an unsupported assertion. The majority, though not the totality, of these appear in Palmquist's attack on *IDK*R's reading of the two experiments. The first three state in different ways that

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[14]A serious problem for Palmquist's reading is that Kant quotes Scripture unpredictably throughout each book of *Religion*. If biblical quotations constitute evidence of the second experiment, I would conclude that *Religion* contains only the second experiment, as per the Hare/Reardon reading.

Book 4 adds something crucial to the first experiment. Palmquist asserts that Kant says something essential about the first experiment in Book 4, but he does not tell us what this something is (177). The closest he comes to defending the claim is another Direct Attack in which he asserts that the distinction between true and false service to God is a "crucial component of Kant's system of rational religion" (177). Is it? Palmquist does not defend the claim, and I do not know any reason to accept it. He only goes on to restate the point again, suggesting that answering the question of how one serves God in a Church is crucial to the first experiment (177). But again, the point is asserted, not defended.

The fourth instance of Direct Attack focuses once again on *IDK*R's reading of the two experiments, but takes aim at a different target than the above three instances. As mentioned, *IDK*R argues that Kant's turn to NT Christianity to test it is one of several reasons to think the second experiment begins in Book 4. Palmquist asserts that Kant's word "test" (*prüfen*) carries a distinctive meaning that is irrelevant to the two experiments; the term for experiment (*Versuch*) used in the Second Preface does not appear in Book 4 (see footnote 12 of Palmquist's essay). Yet, Palmquist does not say what the distinctive meaning of *prüfen* is or why it is irrelevant to the two experiments. Is it true that *Versuch* (experiment or trial) has a technical meaning wholly unrelated to *prüfen* (to test or examine)? It is not clear to me that the meaning of these terms are unrelated or that either is so technical that Kant is bound to invoke the given word and only that word when discussing the particular aspect of his project to which it refers.

There is a fifth instance of Direct Attack in Palmquist's critique that does not focus on the two experiments. This instance aims at dismissing *IDK*R's reading of Book 3. In our exposition thereof, we make the case that Kant understands the morally converted individual to be fine in isolation, but easily corrupted when in community with other individuals who have not undergone a moral conversion; therefore moral converts must band together in moral community (*IDK*R, 185–192). Contra *IDK*R, Palmquist claims that converted individuals corrupt one another (179). But once again, Palmquist provides no evidence for this counter reading.

3.3. Arguments by Half Truth

I find two fairly significant instances of Argument by Half Truth in Palmquist's paper, both of which center once again on *IDK*R's understanding of the two experiments. The first is Palmquist's claim, "*IDK*R repeatedly identifies the second experiment with the entire Fourth Piece, yet admits the turn to the second experiment actually occurs only *after* Kant makes this distinction in the introductory section" (178). It is certainly true that the authors of *IDK*R suggest that Books 1–3 contain the first experiment, while Book 4 contains the second experiment (e.g., *IDK*R, 119). But I know of no place where we put so fine a point on it as to say that the entire Book 4 is the second experiment. We maintain that the first experiment resolves with Book 3, but we understand Kant to open Book 4

with a preliminary word on the relationship between reason and revelation (*IDK*R, 211–220). I do not understand why this is problematic. Kant has just spoken about rational religion, and is about to scrutinize a supposed revelation (Christianity) in light of rational religion. Prior to doing so, he addresses a dispute in his day concerning the precise relationship between reason and revelation (*IDK*R, 214–220). Given that he is turning from the one (reason) to the other (revelation), such a preliminary word seems appropriate. I see no reason to think that simply because Book 4 contains the second experiment, the first word of the book must constitute the execution of that experiment. Kant cannot offer a preliminary word?

The second example of Argument by Half Truth concerns Palmquist's claim:

> In describing Kant's account of the two experiments, they claim the first "considers only natural religion," while the second relates natural religion to a specific revelation; yet Kant introduces "natural religion" only in the Fourth Piece, *never mentioning it* in the Prefaces. By assuming the first experiment corresponds to what Kant later calls "natural religion," they cleverly make their assumption appear self-evident: the Fourth Piece, being the only place where *Religion* discusses how natural religion *as such* relates to a purported revelation, *must* constitute the second experiment! (175)

The half truth here concerns the definition of natural religion. It is true that we take "natural religion" to mean a religion based on reason. As Kant states, "a religion can be *natural* . . . if it is so constituted that human beings *could and ought to have* arrived at it on their own through the mere use of their own reason" (6:155). We thus understand "natural religion" and the "pure religion of reason" (identified in the Second Preface) to refer to the same thing. But the falsehood is that this is clever. To the contrary, it is common. Allen Wood, for example, understands these terms in the same way.[15] Palmquist's resistance to this reading implies that he thinks "natural religion" and the "pure religion of reason" are distinct, which makes me wonder how he understands these terms. If there is something clever afoot here, it is the divorce of these terms, not their marriage.

3.4. Poisoning the Well

The last of Palmquist's tactics I will address is the Poisoning of the Well. There are numerous instances of this throughout Palmquist's paper, particularly in his portrayal of what the authors of *IDK*R are doing at various stages (e.g., *we rationalize* [176]; *we are forced to downplay* [177]; *we systematically overlook* [179]). However, I will focus on one much more serious example. Palmquist suggests in several places that *IDK*R advances a reading of *Religion* very similar to his own, but does not acknowledge it (173). We advance a view of atonement similar to Palmquist's own, but do not acknowledge it (174). We take him out of context and then assert his true position (see his

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[15]See Allen W. Wood, "Kant's Deism," in *Kant's Philosophy of Religion Reconsidered*, ed. Philip J. Rossi and Michael Wreen (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 5.

footnote 9). *Kant's Critical Religion* directly influenced *IDK*R's understanding of the first experiment, but we do not acknowledge it (174).

In reply, I would note some of the most central insights that set *IDK*R apart as unique. In *IDK*R, we suggest that the first of Kant's two experiments occupy Books 1–3, while the second experiment is in Book 4. We follow Kant's arguments in Book 1 to the conclusion that *humanity*, in the sense of secondary substance, must possess freedom in at least one act, namely, the defining of its supreme moral maxim; and it is this monopsychic fall that constitutes radical evil. We unearth indications in Book 2 that Kant's prototype is essentially a Platonic archetype in God. We show how Kant understands the prototype to provide hope by making his disposition available to corrupt humanity, and we expound how union with the prototype's disposition in conversion puts away the guilt of our former disposition and unites us with a disposition pleasing to God. We expound the relationship between moral conversion and the need for moral community, discussed in Book 3. We exposit the peculiar weaknesses of corrupt humans and why an engagement with historical faith is required. Our exposition of Kant's preliminary word in Book 4 sheds new light on precisely how Kant understands the relationship between the naturalist, rationalist, supernaturalist and pure rationalist. And our reading systematically expounds and seeks to put away all the conundrums noted in the secondary literature.

I know of no place in Palmquist's writings in which any of the above features or insights, as expounded in *IDK*R, can be found. Quite the contrary, I understand us to hold vastly different positions on virtually every key point of interpretation of *Religion*.

4. Reply to Gordon Michalson

I begin my reply to Michalson by addressing four minor points: (a) his concern that *IDK*R bars "hostile" witnesses, (b) his fear that the courtroom metaphor of *IDK*R distorts the readings of *Religion* addressed, (c) his claim that his own work is not concerned with the argumentative specifics of *Religion*, and (d) his misunderstanding of key interpretive moments in *IDK*R.

Michalson is concerned that *IDK*R bars hostile witnesses, such as Yirmiahu Yovel, from the courtroom (191). For Michalson, this sets off alarm bells. It would for me, too, if this meant that opposing voices were not allowed when looking at the specifics of *Religion.* Yet, in the context of *IDK*R, this is not what is meant by the phrase. Certainly Wolterstorff and Quinn are hostile in a certain sense. To wit: they are hostile to the coherence of *Religion*.[16] Such witnesses we have not only invited into

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[16]We focus on the following works in *IDK*R: Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Conundrums in Kant's Rational Religion," in Rossi and Wreen, *Kant's Philosophy of Religion Reconsidered*; Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Is It Possible and Desirable for Theologians to Recover from Kant?," *Modern Theology* 14:1 (1998); Philip L. Quinn, "Christian Atonement and Kantian Justification," *Faith and Philosophy* 3:4 (1986); Philip L. Quinn, "Original Sin, Radical Evil and Moral

*IDK*R, but have given our unwavering attention (*IDK*R, 46–57). Those witnesses barred (which actually amounts to one) are readers who are hostile to the idea that *Religion* has something substantial to say. To admit these witnesses amid such a project would simply be unproductive, since they have no interest in such a project. To be sure, dismissing these readers does not ensure the coherence of *Religion*, as Michalson claims. For all apparent conundrums internal to the text and interpretive options forwarded in the literature are given ample hearing (*IDK*R, 46–57; chap. 3). The limited number of voices merely assures that time is not wasted on arguments external to *Religion* that do not advance our understanding of the text itself—the primary concern of *IDK*R.

A second issue is Michalson's fear that the courtroom metaphor used in *IDK*R distorts the readings of *Religion* addressed. Michalson is right in noting that guiding metaphors can warp interpretations (184)—as can meta-narratives regarding Kant's place in Western thought. But the courtroom metaphor in *IDK*R is simply a literary device meant to help readers navigate material that is detailed and difficult. Because our concern is the question of coherence—nothing more, nothing less—those who argue for the coherence of *Religion* are deemed "defenders"; those who argue for incoherence are dubbed "prosecutors." Defenders and prosecutors are so named relative to the coherence issue, not relative to the question of Kant's significance. Many whom we lump with the prosecution are, to our minds, devoted Kantians—certainly more so than the authors of *IDK*R. Michalson's proclamation that he is a defender of Kant's significance (183) is simply off topic. *IDK*R is not concerned with this. Regarding the question at hand—coherence—I do not believe warping has taken place. For Michalson admits his position is that *Religion* displays wobbles (188), or in the words of *Fallen Freedom*, is "riddled with inconsistencies."[17]

This brings us to a third issue, namely, whether Michalson's interest in Western thought generally adequately glosses over the specifics of *Religion*. Michalson sees his work as showing Kant's importance to contemporary thought (183). The authors of *IDK*R do not dispute this. We may not even dispute the nature of Kant's impact. What we do dispute is (a) that the story of Western thought can be told accurately without addressing the textual specifics of its players, and (b) that focus on the story of Western thought provides license to run roughshod over Kant's texts. For an important question is whether the theologically negative impact Kant has had on Western thought matches his actual views. In light of our exegesis in *IDK*R, we question whether the religiously negative perception of Kant is accurate. Michalson may want to divert attention away from his treatment of the specifics of *Religion* by deferring to his broader

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Identity," *Faith and Philosophy* 1:2 (1984); Philip L. Quinn, "Saving Faith from Kant's Remarkable Antinomy," *Faith and Philosophy* 7:4 (1990).

[17]Gordon E. Michalson, Jr., *Fallen Freedom: Kant on Radical Evil and Moral Regeneration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1–10.

aims, but the fact remains that the plot of the story changes depending on whether the impact a thinker has had is true to his writings. In the end, Michalson cannot shield his exegesis by appeal to a broader interest.

Fourth, I think it is noteworthy that while Michalson's essay does not address the specifics of *IDK*R, his rare references to its specifics display misunderstandings of key interpretive moments. For example, Michalson states, "In a creative move, they fold together the issue of moral conversion and the themes of atonement and grace running through the authors' depiction in the previous chapter of *Jesus as the 'prototype'* of a moral disposition totally pleasing to God" (186; see also 187). As discussed above, central to the argument of *IDK*R is the claim that Kant's discussion of the prototype in Book 2 is not about Jesus. In fact, our entire reading of the prototype is placed in juxtaposition with readings, such as Michalson's own, that make this conflation (*IDK*R, 155).[18] This causes me to wonder if Michalson's interest in the motive of *IDK*R has caused him to miss the argument of the book.

The aforementioned interest in the motive behind *IDK*R is what I will devote the remainder of this essay to addressing. According to Michalson, the exposition of primary and secondary literature in *IDK*R is elaborate scaffolding that obscures the more interesting aim of showing Kant to be compatible with Christianity. In this charge, there are really two claims: (a) *IDK*R's treatment of primary and secondary literature is disingenuous, offering cover for a more central agenda, and (b) the authors of *IDK*R think Kant and Christianity are compatible. I will deal with these issues separately, beginning with the former.

Michalson could not be more wrong in stating that the exposition of the secondary literature (Part 1) and the exposition of Kant's *Religion* (Part 2) are mere scaffolding. *IDK*R unfolds under a very intentional methodology. In Part 1, we treat the *status quaestionis* regarding *Religion*. We do so using a courtroom metaphor that helps readers differentiate advocates of coherence from opponents of coherence. The result is a tally of charges against the coherence of *Religion*, and an accounting of hermeneutic options in the literature. Part 2 exposits *Religion* in light of Part 1. We follow Kant's arguments in a linear and expository manner until a conundrum (identified in Part 1) is confronted. Hermeneutic forks in the road are identified by drawing on existing readings (again, as per Part 1), while also noting options not yet tested. Each road is put in dialog with the conundrum at hand, and whichever road can best deal with the conundrum is taken. The entire project is driven by the twofold query: *What are the hurdles to reading Kant's* Religion *as coherent? Can these hurdles be overcome?* The above method is employed consistently throughout *IDK*R with a view to answering this twofold query.

Now we come to the second feature of Michalson's charge, namely, that the authors of *IDK*R think Kant and Christianity are compatible. I must

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[18]E.g., Michalson, *Fallen Freedom*, 109.

thank Michalson for providing an opportunity for me to set the record straight on this. Though I am a theologian by trade, I set aside my theologian's hat in *IDK*R to wear my historian of ideas hat. Allow me to put back on my theologian's hat and speak transparently about my take on Kant's philosophy of religion. I do not think Kant's "rational religion" is compatible with orthodox Christian thought.

Michalson drew on an isolated statement from page 5 of *IDK*R in which we note that, at points, Kant's *Religion* begins to look remarkably Christian. This comment, taken out of context, could give the impression that there is a positive assessment of Kant's value for Christian thought. However, in context, the remark is intended to state clearly that we are not interested in whether Kant's philosophy is compatible with Christian thought, nor are we assessing the value of Kant's philosophy of religion from a Christian perspective. The theological value of Kant is a question we do not explore in *IDK*R, and we are explicit about that fact (*IDK*R, 5–6). Our affirmation that aspects of his thought *look* remarkably Christian is simply an acknowledgment that, on our reading, Kant's philosophy advocates universal moral corruption; Kant notes the need for an alternative disposition that he locates in a moral archetype who sounds like a Christ figure; and Kant identifies the value of a moral community not unlike a Church. Indeed, these elements *look* very Christian. But looks can be deceiving.

The more important remark regarding my own assessment of Kant's value for Christian thought comes in the context of our exegesis of the prototypical theology. We state that Kant's prototype is divine "in the sense that he exists within God from all eternity," but not in the Nicene-Chalcedonian sense (*IDK*R, 163). Speaking as a confessional Christian, I think this assessment is par for the course in Kant's philosophy of religion. Assuming *IDK*R is correct, Kant's conclusions are more theologically robust than typically thought and come much closer to the central claims of Christianity than is often granted, but Kant's most theologically robust moments are still at some remove from orthodox Christianity, at best falling short of its confessional standards and at worst proving incompatible with these standards. I certainly find Kant's arguments interesting on several points. But on all major points at which Kant's project overlaps with Christian doctrine—depravity (Book 1), Christology (Book 2), and ecclesiology (Book 3)—I think his positions prove to be theologically inadequate and often heterodox.

Kant's argument for radical evil (as expounded in *IDK*R) is interesting, but I am unconvinced that it works. Kant believes the predicate *moral* indicates that *human* entails a freely chosen moral maxim concerning the moral law generally; hence it is an essential property of our secondary substance (*human*) that it (i.e., our common nature) freely chooses a moral disposition that is then innate in all particulars having that nature. Such a view has a striking similarity to the monopsychism Christian orthodoxy

has historically resisted.[19] I, for one, side with the Patristic outlook that predicates such as *good* or *evil* are accidental properties in creatures.[20] While I concede that it is essential to the very idea *human* that we have moral faculties, I do not concede Kant's claim that being a moral species entails monopsychism. The inference from the predicate *moral* to *moral maxim regarding the moral law in general* presumes Kant's moral philosophy (*IDK*R, 127–151). If one is in lockstep with Kant, this may follow. But I am not. Hence Kant's argument for radical evil falls stillborn from where I sit.

Kant's Christology, as mentioned above, has precedence in the Kabbalist notion of Adam Kadmon and other NeoPlatonic versions of Judaism, such as Philo of Alexandria's Heavenly Man.[21] I think it is likely that these NeoPlatonic versions of Judaism are precisely what sit in the background of Kant's thought, since these were already employed in Kant's day as a way of evangelizing Jews without appeal to the NT or the historical Jesus.[22] However, I think such Christology offers an inadequately low standard of divinity. Granting the reading of *IDK*R, Kant's prototype is not a second divine particular (*hypostasis*) having the same essence (*ousia*) as God the Father. Rather, the prototype is divine in the same way that any Platonic Idea emanating from the mind of God in eternity is divine. It is divine by virtue of being in God (6:60, cf. 28:1058–1059). On this reading of Christological divinity, I cannot see how such a divine-human archetype is any different than, say, the divine-canine archetype of a dog that is in God's mind from eternity. Kant could reply that he has no rational basis for believing that God has an archetypal Idea of dog; he only has a rational basis for believing in God's Idea of our moral prototype. But this only delays the issue. If God does have Ideas other than the human prototype, those Ideas are just as divine as the Son of God, or to invert it, Kant's prototype is no

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[19]E.g. monopsychism was targeted in the Condemnations of 1270.

[20]See, e.g., Origen, *De principiis*, 1.5.3; 1.8.3 (PG 11:158–160; 178–179); Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio catechetica magna*, 8; 21 (PG 45:33a–40b; 57a–60b); and John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, 2.27 (PG 94:960b–961a). Patristic citations refer to standardized divisions and their locations in *Patrologiae cursus completes*, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1844–1866).

[21]Gershom Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (New York: Schocken, 1965), 159–165; Philo of Alexandria, *Legum allegoriae, I*, xii (31); and Samuel Sandmel, *Philo's Place in Judaism* (New York: Ktav, 1971), xxi, 100.

[22]Allison P. Coudert, "The Kabbala Denudata: Converting Jews or Seducing Christians," in *Jewish Christians and Christian Jews: from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, ed. Richard H. Popkin and Gordon M. Weiner (Kluwer Academic Publishers), 79–80; Sarah Hutton, *Anne Conway: A Woman Philosopher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 123; Sheila A. Spector, *"Wonders Divine": The Development of Blake's Kabbalistic Myth* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2002), 32; Allison P. Coudert, "Isaac Luria and the Lurianic Kabbalah," in *The Columbia History of Western Philosophy*, ed. Richard H. Popkin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 214–215. For Leibniz's comments on *Adam Kadmon*, see "Leibniz to Maturinus Veyssière la Croze (Berlin, 2 December 1706)" in *Opera Omnia*, ed. Ludovic Dutens, vol. 5, 479–484; "Leibniz to Thomas Burnet, 26 May 1706" in *Correspondance de Leibniz ave l'Electrice Sophie de Brunswick-Lunebourg*, ed. O. Klopp (London: William & Norgate, 1874), vol. 3, 217; *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, ed. C. I. Gerhardt, 7 vols. (Berlin, 1875–1890), vi, 112–113; Maria Rosa Antognazza, *Leibniz on the Trinity and the Incarnation: Reason and Revelation in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Gerald Parks (Yale University Press, 2008), 140–143.

more divine than those Ideas. Surely this is not the Christ of Chalcedon or of history.

As for Kant's ecclesiology, it finds practical footing, but this footing is far different than that of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. For Kant, the gathering of moral converts is mere utility, providing support in the battle against moral regress (*IDKR*, 185–192). The collection of converts is *ad hoc*, built on nothing but a common moral struggle. I understand the Christian Church to be something far different. The Church is an organism that is mystically united with Christ as his body. Its existence is grounded not in utility, but in the Incarnation. This event marks the moment at which the life that is in God the Father—a life given by eternal generation to God the Son—descended to humanity, communicating that life to our dying species. That life was breathed into the apostles at Pentecost, given to the clergy, and is distributed to all who are willing to receive it by means of the sacraments. Through this organism, the immortal life of God spreads throughout the world and throughout time. The Church is not a club whose value resides in group support; its value resides in its sacramental power to commune its members with the life-giving flesh and blood of Christ, and the life of God found therein.

All of the above points, however, come down to a fundamental difference between the respective starting points for Kant and me. Kant begins with epistemic strictures that pose serious difficulties for theological knowledge and discourse. I believe Kant's strictures are in many ways correct, as is his understanding of the problems these strictures pose. In my assessment, the Eastern Church fathers shared these very same strictures. The great difference concerns not the limits of human reason but the way forward. Kant establishes the limits of human reason; he presumes these limits to be stable; and from within these limits he seeks a rational theology. Yet, the Church fathers grant the same limits concerning both God and things in themselves.[23] Unlike Kant, however, they take our faculties to be mutable and susceptible to transfiguration, and such metamorphosis is the very promise of the sacramental life and the goal of mystical pursuit.[24]

For my part, I think Kant does a remarkable job of offering arguments that press in the direction of a great many truths. But Kant's arguments,

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[23]I have in mind here the patristic distinction between *ousia* and *energia*, according to which the essence of a thing is never accessible to our faculties, since we only ever interact with appearances and operations. See, e.g., Irenaeus, *Contra haereses*, 4.20.5–11 (PG 7:1034–1041); Origen, *De principiis*, 1.1.5–6; 1.1.9 (PG 11:124–126; 129–130); Basil of Caesarea, *Epistolae*, 233.1–2; 234.1–2; 235.1–2 (PG 32:264b–268b; 268b–272b; 872b–873a); and Gregory of Nazianzen, *Orationes*, 27–28 (PG 36:12b–72b).

[24]See Irenaeus, *Contra haereses*, 4.20.5–11 (PG 7:1034–1041); Athenagoras, *Legatio pro Christianis*, 9 (PG 6:905a–908b); Basil of Caesarea, *De Spiritu sancto*, 9.23 (PG 32:109a); *Epistolae*, 236 (PG 32:876b–885a); and Gregory of Nazianzen, *Orationes*, 27–28 (PG 36:12b–72b). I argue this point in "What Hath Königsberg to Do with Byzantium? An Eastern Reply to the Problem of Post-Kantian Theology," *45th International Congress of Medieval Studies*, May 13–16, 2010, Kalamazoo, MI.

in my assessment, distort these truths. The end result is more a testimony to the ingenuity of the human mind than a fount of knowledge. To be sure, I am not saying that Kant's arguments should not be considered on their own merits. Yet, my assessment is that the results are so distinctly Kantian that even if the arguments prove valid, as *IDK*R argues, they are bound to die the death of a thousand qualifications that none other than Kant himself would grant.

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