

Religion und Religionen im Deutschen Idealismus. Edited by Friedrich Hermanni, Burkhard Nonnenmacher, and Friedrike Schick. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015. Pp. x + 592. €119.

As the title suggests, this volume could be regarded as an attempt to reconcile theology and philosophy. The book is comprised of 21 papers which were presented at a 2014 conference in Tübingen. This collection focuses on “three classical thinkers” and is organized into four groups: the first three focus each on Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Schelling, while the last one is devoted to “historical and systematic connections.” This final section contains three papers that some scholars will find quite interesting but appear somewhat disconnected from the major focus of the book.

The first four papers are devoted to Schleiermacher and are among the very best of the collection. Richard Crouter is an American scholar who probably knows more about Schleiermacher’s *Über Religion* than any other, having published a translation of it in 1988. Crouter contends that Schleiermacher rarely gets his proper due from philosophers despite having contributed significantly to German Idealism. He also believes that *Über Religion* resists easy interpretation despite its canonical status. Like most scholars, Crouter had regarded the second speech on the essence of religion as the most important one, but he now recognizes the real significance of the fifth speech. It is in this speech that the struggle between finite and infinite is set out most emphatically. Crouter suggests that Schleiermacher’s appreciation of these opposing forces prompted him to maintain a “sense of religious tolerance.”

Wilhelm Gräß takes up the issue of religious pluralism and he connects it to Schleiermacher’s appreciation for history and how it influences his notion of what is essential in religion. History is important for its own sake but it is also crucial because of Schleiermacher’s belief in an ethical philosophy of history. Thus, it is also a matter of truth, but not one that is single and eternal. Instead, because of its varieties, religious truth is not just of the past but for the future: “eine Wahrheit im Werden.”

Of the seven papers devoted to Hegel, the best is by Friedrich Hermanni for three reasons: he argues persuasively against the view that Hegel’s concept of religion is abstract. He also argues convincingly against the opinion that Hegel’s views on religion were static, and against the view that Hegel insisted that other religions were inferior to Christianity. Instead, Hermanni argues that Hegel’s concept of religion is concrete, that it changed as he investigated more religions, and that non-Christian religions are both intrinsically important and play significant roles in the development of the Absolute. This leads to an important point which is found in many of these papers. Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Schelling do not doubt that Christianity is the “highest” religion, but they also do not question the fundamental centrality of “religious belief” in all religions.

Stephen Houlgate’s paper is also impressive; while the opposition between reason and religion may appear irreconcilable, he believes that Hegel comes closest to achieving it. For Hegel, “religious consciousness” is not a contradiction in terms but can be regarded as the “wisdom of truth in ‘eternal reason.’” Hegel believed that God can be grasped conceptually, but he acknowledged that feelings are critical. Religious faith is

a feeling of certainty; it is the sense of certainty that God is present and the consciousness of the “eternal truths of the spirit.”

There are seven papers on Schelling and two are rather impressive. Jan Rohls offers an examination of Schelling’s criticism of *Über Religion* and Schleiermacher’s response. Schelling objected to Schleiermacher’s emphasis on subjectivity and the neglect of nature, yet Schleiermacher believed that by doing so he safeguarded the independence of religion. Nonetheless, he took some of Schelling’s criticisms seriously and by 1810 had adopted Schelling’s connection between physics and ethics. Yet, Schelling later moved away from his emphasis on nature and moved towards developing a philosophy of mythology. This is the focus of Jens Halfwassen’s paper which traces Schelling’s research on Greek mythology and how it impacts on the modern world. Both religious thinkers and secular poets attempt to explain the infinite and the unchanging within the world of the finite and of becoming.

This collection of papers does not resolve the conflict between theology and philosophy and it certainly does not clear up the opposition between faith and reason. Yet, these papers are enlightening in the ways in which they approach these contrasts. If there are problems with this collection, they do not reside with theological-philosophical interpretations. Instead, they are with the fact that they are devoted primarily to the philosophies of Hegel and Schelling and not so much to Schleiermacher’s theology. And, they are written primarily by specialists, for specialists. Nonetheless, nonspecialists and theologians will find that these essays encourage both philosophers and theologians to rethink the ways in which they approach religion and religions within German Idealism and the opposition between philosophy and theology.

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Rudolf Otto. Theologie-Religionsphilosophie-Religionsgeschichte. Edited by Jörg Lauster, Peter Schüz, Roderich Barth, and Christian Danz. Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2014. Pp. xvi + 672. \$210.00.

Rudolf Otto is known primarily for one book—*Das Heilige (The Holy)*—and for one concept—the numinous. The book appeared in 1917, immediately became a classic, and remains one today. His idea of the numinous was discussed in religious, theological, and philosophical circles, and it continues to be investigated. Unfortunately, the tremendous interest in Otto’s book and his idea contributed to the assumption that this book was the only one Otto published and the concept of the numinous was the only idea that he had. *Rudolf Otto* is intended to prove that Otto’s books and ideas were more plentiful than commonly thought, and this book admirably achieves that objective.

This volume is divided into seven sections and contains 46 papers which were presented at a three-day conference (2012) in Marburg, Germany. Marburg was chosen