

KIERKEGAARD ON SELF, ETHICS, AND RELIGION

Many of Søren Kierkegaard's most controversial and influential ideas are more relevant than ever to contemporary debates on ethics, philosophy of religion, and selfhood. Kierkegaard develops an original argument according to which wholeheartedness requires both moral and religious commitment. In this book, Roe Fremstedal provides a compelling reconstruction of how Kierkegaard develops wholeheartedness in the context of his views on moral psychology, metaethics, and the ethics of religious belief. He shows that Kierkegaard's influential account of despair, selfhood, ethics, and religion belong to a larger intellectual context in which German philosophers such as Kant and Fichte play crucial roles. Moreover, Fremstedal makes a solid case for the controversial claim that religion supports ethics, instead of contradicting it. His book offers a novel and comprehensive reading of Kierkegaard, drawing on important sources that are little known.

ROE FREMSTEDAL is Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at NTNU, Trondheim. He is the author of *Kierkegaard and Kant on Radical Evil and the Highest Good* (2014), and has published extensively on German philosophy, existentialism, ethics, and religion.

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ETHICS, AND RELIGION

Purity or Despair

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To Johan and Oskar

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- Chapters 1–3 contain excerpts from Roe Fremstedal (2015b) “Kierkegaard’s Views on Normative Ethics, Moral Agency, and Metaethics,” in Jon Stewart (ed.), *A Companion to Kierkegaard*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell (Blackwell Companions to Philosophy, vol. LVIII), 113–25.
- Chapters 2–3 contain excerpts from Roe Fremstedal (2015c) “Why Be Moral? A Kierkegaardian Approach,” in Beatrix Himmelmann and Robert B. Loudon (eds.), *Why Be Moral?*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2015, 173–97.
- Chapter 3 contains excerpts from Roe Fremstedal (2019b) “Demonic Despair under the Guise of the Good? Kierkegaard and Anscombe vs. Velleman,” *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, 1–21, DOI:10.1080/0020174X.2019.1610047.
- Chapters 8–9 contain excerpts from Roe Fremstedal (2019c) “Hidden Inwardness and ‘Subjectivity Is Truth’: Kant and Kierkegaard on Moral Psychology and Religious Pragmatism,” in Lee C. Barrett and Peter Sajda (eds.), *Kierkegaard in Context: A Festschrift for Jon Stewart*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press (Mercer Kierkegaard Series), 112–29.
- Chapter 10 contains excerpts from Roe Fremstedal (2020a) “Kant and Existentialism: Inescapable Freedom and Self-Deception,” in Jon Stewart (ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of German Idealism and Existentialism*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan (Palgrave Handbooks in German Idealism), 51–75, reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan.
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Abbreviations

Works by Kant

Except for *Critique of Pure Reason*, references to Kant use the pagination in the German Academy edition of Kant's works, specifying volume and page number (e.g., Ak 2:268). I quote the translations in the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* (15 vols., ed. by Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992–2012). The following abbreviations are used:

- A *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, in *Anthropology, History, and Education*, ed. by Günter Zöllner and Robert Loudon, transl. by Mary Gregor, Paul Guyer, Robert Loudon, et al., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- A/B *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. and transl. by Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (references are to the A and B editions).
- Ak *Gesammelte Schriften*, 29 vols., Berlin: Reimer, later de Gruyter, 1900–.
- CF *The Conflict of the Faculties*, in *Religion and Rational Theology*, ed. and transl. by Allen Wood and George Di Giovanni, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- CPR *Critique of Practical Reason*, in *Practical Philosophy*, ed. and transl. by Mary Gregor, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- G *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, in *Practical Philosophy*.
- LE *Lectures on Ethics*, ed. by Peter Heath and J. B. Schneewind, transl. by Peter Heath, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

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- LL *Lectures on Logic*, ed. and transl. by J. M. Young, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- LPDR *Lectures on the Philosophical Doctrine of Religion*, in *Religion and Rational Theology*.
- MM *The Metaphysics of Morals*, in *Practical Philosophy*.
- O “What Does It Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking?” in *Religion and Rational Theology*.
- R *Religion within the Boundaries of Bare Reason*, in *Religion and Rational Theology*.
- WE “An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment,” in *Practical Philosophy*.

Works by Kierkegaard

References to *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* use volume and page number (e.g., SKS 1, 61). References to *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer* use volume and tome number, entry category and number, and page number where appropriate (e.g., Pap. X–6, B68, 73). When the relevant text is translated into English, I also refer to *Kierkegaard’s Writings* and *Journals and Papers* (both transl. by Howard Hong and Edna Hong), alternatively to *Kierkegaard’s Journals and Notebooks*.

I use the following standard abbreviations:

- BA *The Book on Adler*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- B&A *Breve og Aktstykker vedrørende Søren Kierkegaard*, ed. by Niels Thulstrup, 2 vols., Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1953–54.
- CA *The Concept of Anxiety*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- CD *Christian Discourses*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- CI *The Concept of Irony*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- CUP1 *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, vol. 1.
- EO1 *Either/Or, Part I*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- EO2 *Either/Or, Part II*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- EUD *Eighteen Upbuilding Discourses*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

- FSE *For Self-Examination*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- FT *Fear and Trembling*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.
- JC *Johannes Climacus, or De Omnibus Dubitandum Est*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- JFY *Judge for Yourself*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- JP *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers*, 7 vols., Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967–78 (references are to the numbering of the passages, unless otherwise stated).
- KJN *Kierkegaard's Journals and Notebooks*, ed. by N. J. Cappelørn, A. Hannay, B. Kirmmse, et al., 11 vols., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007–20.
- LD *Letters and Documents*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.
- M *The Moment and Late Writings*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Pap. *Søren Kierkegaard's Papirer*, 2nd expanded ed., ed. by Niels Thulstrup, 16 vols., Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1909–48, 1968–78.
- PC *Practice in Christianity*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- PF *Philosophical Fragments*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- PV *The Point of View*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- SKS *Søren Kierkegaard's Skrifter*, ed. by N. J. Cappelørn, J. Garff, J. Kondrup, et al., 55 vols. (SKS 1–28, K1–K28), Copenhagen: Gad, 1997–2013.
- SLW *Stages on Life's Way*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- SUD *The Sickness unto Death*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.
- TA *Two Ages*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.
- TD *Three Discourses on Imagined Occasions*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- UD *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- WA *Without Authority*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- WL *Works of Love*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.