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Kierkegaard on Self, Ethics, and Religion

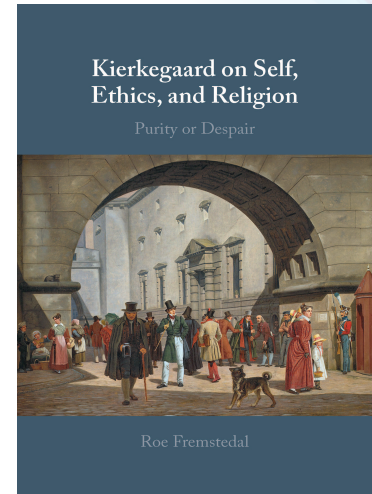
Purity or Despair

Roe Fremstedal

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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, meta-ethics and the ethics of religious belief. He shows that Kierkegaard's influential account of despair, selfhood, ethics and religion belongs 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.

Introduction; Part I. Self, Despair and Wholeheartedness: 1. Selfhood and anthropology; 2. Why be moral? The critique of amorality; 3. Moral inescapability: Moral agency and meta-ethics; Part II. Morality, Prudence and Religion: 4. The critique of eudaimonism: Virtue ethics, kantianism and beyond; 5. Non-eudaimonistic ethics and religion: Happiness and salvation; 6. The 'Teleological suspension of the ethical' and Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac; 7. Moralized religion: The identity of the good and the divine; Part III. 'Subjectivity, Inwardness, is Truth': 8. 'Hidden inwardness' and humor: Kantian ethics and religion; 9. Subjective truth: 'Kierkegaard's most notorious...claim'; Part IV. Faith and Reason: 10. A leap of faith? The use of Lessing, Jacobi and Kant; 11. Faith neither absurd nor irrational: The neglected reply to Eiriksson; 12. Faith beyond reason: Supra-rationalism and anti-rationalism; 13. The ethics of belief: Fideism and pragmatism; Conclusion; References; Index.



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