act. Somehow, the public groupings capable of sustaining the natural and historical development of a language and culture had to allow for opportunities for participation and discourse, while nonetheless remaining in some associational connection to one another, reflecting some kind of underlying "uniformity" (though not, Spencer thinks, a "uniform constitutionalism," 202). This argument leads Spencer into speculations about the match between Herder's ideas and the contemporary reality of immigration and multiculturalism, speculations which seem strained at times. Still, the case she makes for imagining the use Herder's philosophy could be put to in morally validating even multilingual states—something that most readings of Herder have thought impossible; whatever else Herder wanted out of a community, it has been assumed, it was an essential connection between the *Volk* and their language!—is intriguing, and deserves further thought.

Early in her book, Spencer admits that Herder never produced "one major text to include in the philosophical canon" (20), though she insists that isn't a valid reason for his ideas to have been so rarely incorporated into the debates over the Western tradition. This is something on which all Herder scholars can agree—we rarely actually need complete philosophical arguments to be persuaded of valuable ideas. Herder has many such ideas; Spencer very ably elucidates many of them here. Even if her explorations open up questions which require, if Herder is to be taken fully seriously, more philosophical sophistication than her book provides, she is to be commended for her insightful readings. This is a fine book, one which all scholars of the eighteenth-century roots of contemporary debates over community and identity ought to take seriously.

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## BEYOND RATIONALIST DOGMATISM

Nicholas Tampio: *Kantian Courage: Advancing the Enlightenment in Contemporary Political Theory.* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012. Pp. xiv, 255.)

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Nicholas Tampio's *Kantian Courage* is a stellar example of what is best in the field of contemporary political theory. The book consists mainly in a series of engagements with the moral-political thought of Kant and Kantians, yet it refuses to fall into the scholarly trap of a politically irrelevant Kantian "scholasticism" (195, 50). Its central thesis is that, precisely as true heirs of the Enlightenment (of which Kant is perhaps "the most profound and influential" representative), we—that is, "Euro-American liberal-left political theorists and actors"—are compelled by Kant's "critical ethos" to modify elements of

Kant's own thought lest it become just another of the very dogmas that Kant himself sought to free us from (2, 8, 8–15). Holdovers within Kant's thought from the medieval worldview that he rejected, such as his Platonic understanding of "pure" reason and his "two-world metaphysics" (73–74, 107–8), need to be jettisoned in light of late-modern and postmodern critiques of reason, as does the rigidity of the Kantian moral and political doctrines that seem to rest on those metaphysical doctrines. In this effort to balance the new against the old, Tampio's work displays an exemplary degree of open-mindedness, intellectual honesty, scholarly care, and attentiveness to the complex difficulties that we as political thinkers of the twenty-first century find ourselves in.

Perhaps even more impressive is the book's public-spiritedness. Tampio presents it as having been written in response to the rise of political Islam in Europe and across the globe, which he identifies as the "most pressing" political issue of our time (24, 167–68). The Enlightenment was originally a movement united by the aim of ending intra-Christian religious warfare, yet no one has "taken up the Enlightenment's flag" in the equally great if not even greater contemporary task of "preventing the emergence of [the] new religious wars" that could "dwarf the scale of the Thirty Years War" and that the "global Islamic revival" now threatens to bring upon us (x, 4–8, 159, 186). Tampio sees it as the responsibility of a political theorist to give guidance to political practice in such a "historical crisis" (15, 18, 48, 186). The first three of his four main chapters offer a sympathetic engagement with Kantianism that promises to lay the groundwork for, in the fourth, an approach to political theory that would apply the best of Kant's legacy to the world undergoing this crisis. The ambition of the "Euro-American political theorists" who make up Tampio's immediate audience should be no less than "to forestall further attacks from militant universalists" by "forging alliances with religious activists around the globe" (71, 77).

The boldness of this goal is as admirable as is Tampio's refreshing candor about the difficulties involved in it. After sketching the character of his project of partial criticism and selective appropriation of Kant (chap. 1), Tampio seeks to carry out that project in questions of morality and psychology (chap. 2) and finally, of political theory (chap. 3). The main difficulty that surfaces in various guises over the course of these chapters is summarized in the tension between Rawls and Deleuze, two thinkers whose theories Tampio spends the bulk of the book summarizing and who represent two rival strains (namely "liberal" and "postmodern") of the Kantianism he seeks to foster (174). Insofar as Rawls is willing to use force to impose Enlightenment political principles on individuals or governments unwilling to accept them, he seems to fall into a version of precisely the sort of moral dogmatism that Kant's thought at its best was a protest against and that today is neither intellectually tenable nor (in the face of the growing power of political Islam) politically viable (e.g., 167). Even Rawls, "when pressed,"

"concedes" the force of Deleuze's and other postmodernists' objections to this hegemonic liberalism in the name of the very autonomy and individual freedom that liberalism claims to champion (106, 142). Yet Deleuze, for his part, offers at best an "ambiguous" account of what, if any, moral and political limits may be imposed on the autonomous individual: can the "political predispositions" that he or she ought to be encouraged to "dismantle" include even those of liberal democracy itself (142, 128–30)? One seeks some way of balancing our awareness, on the one hand, that our (currently liberal) "reflective self-identities" are always "liable to shift," that we might one day find "even the most sacrosanct of Enlightenment doctrines" as unsatisfactory as we now find the Platonic elements in Kant (125, 122, 10–13, 53), with, on the other hand, our hope to "(partially) escape the cave of historicity" and so to regard our attachment to liberal principles as something more than mere cultural preference (53–54, 63, 83, 89–90, 95, 107, 126, 134, 194). Tampio's repeated presentation of this problem is second to none in its clear and honest articulation of the difficulties attached to both horns of this dilemma. In the end he suggests that these two "contending visions … express different sensibilities rather than necessarily divergent philosophical positions," and that "the Enlightenment benefits" from the "productive tension" between them (65–69, 77–81, 98, 108–12, 155–57; see also 89).

Tampio confronts with almost the same frankness a second (and related) difficulty his project faces. For precisely the rationalist dogmatism that he seeks to purge from Kant had been the basis for Kant's rejection of the same bellicose or totalitarian religious doctrines that, Tampio maintains, the twenty-first-century Enlightenment too must fiercely combat. In the face of irrational religious-political ideologies based on the demand for unquestioning submission to an incomprehensible divine will, Kant advanced an understanding of pure reason that was meant to be binding on man and God alike, and a corresponding understanding of pure religion as fully compatible with, and in a sense even reducible to, the demands of the categorical imperative (80, 100, 116, 125, 160–63, 185, 192; see also 34–35). Now that we post-Darwinians can no longer share Kant's optimism about the purity of a reason that we recognize as the chance result of blind evolutionary processes (72–74, 137)—and now that the most Kantian religions in the world seem to be precisely those most in decline (166–67)—can liberals be so confident about the irrationality of the religious doctrines they continue to combat? Certainly Tampio himself offers his skepticism about human reason as a *strength* of his twenty-first-century Kantian position: unlike Kant, whose understanding of "pure" religion led him to a categorical rejection of Islam, Tampio's new Enlightenment "should be capacious enough" to include Muslims as well (159, 165–67). But when Tampio discusses his single example of such a Muslim during his concluding (and disappointingly brief) treatment of Islamic political thought (176–86), the difficulty resurfaces. Tariq Ramadan praises Western societies for offering Muslims what he calls a "space of testimony" (*dar al-shahada*), in which they do not "aim to convert

everyone to Islam" but seek only "to remind the people around them of God [and] of spirituality and, regarding social affairs, to work for values and ethics, justice and solidarity" (181–82). Although Tampio does insist that this amounts to a "refusal" of the paleo-Kantian "call … to discard the 'historical shell' of Islam and 'accept the "rational kernel" of pure moral religion'" (183), his case would be strengthened by a concrete example of the difference between the two (cf. 21).

Tampio agrees with Kant, Rawls, and even Deleuze on the basic liberal principle that each individual should be granted the maximum freedom consistent with the freedom of others, and that this principle ought to be "effectively … the supreme [law] of the land" (141, 183, 103). Religious individuals and groups, including some thoughtful Muslim extremists (179), whose radically different understanding of the very term "freedom" prevents them from submitting to this "constitutional order," may be among those that "need to be eradicated," not only through the "coercion of the state" at home but (in extreme cases) even through foreign military intervention, to say nothing of the supposedly "noncoercive" means of "diplomacy," "commerce," and international organizations (107, 128, 120–21, 99, 170, 169, 172). For liberalism, even Tampio's chastened liberalism, does seek to "exercise authority," to "legislate," to "exercise power" (20, 68). The postmodern critique of religious as well as secular "fundamentalists" who "want their word (*logos*) to govern the polity," who "seek to impose their moral vision on the world," would seem then to apply equally to Tampio and to all of us (27, 76–77, 84, 151; cf. 101, 142, 165). We are postmodernists in theory and unreconstructed Kantians in practice (cf. 142). How can such practice be justified, especially to those who share Tampio's obvious sympathy for the "legitimate complaints," by religious and other thinkers, against the secular world whose essential contours are accepted by all "heirs of the Enlightenment" (6–7, 30–31, 50, 67, 166–67; 102, 119, 135)? Or alternatively, if those heirs "must be amenable to changing their ideas and their principles to forge alliances with" Muslims and others—even with those who hold radically illiberal views of, for example, "family and community life"—then by what right can we remain so firmly committed to "tolerance," "sexual justice," or the other "traditional concerns of the Left" that Tampio still wishes to defend (102, 168–69, 183; 40, 106, 139, 141, 156, 170)?

That *Kantian Courage* raises questions like this is a testament to Tampio's clear and direct approach to today's most pressing political-theoretical questions and his care and depth in probing those questions. Both in its articulation of the state of present debate on those questions and in its impressive effort to advance that debate, it is and ought to be a model in its field.

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