

connecting thread between the two parts of the third *Critique*, implying that the arguments presented in the latter are in effect supported by the former (p. 199). Although he eventually applies the importance of aesthetic experience to the notion of ‘life’, stating that ‘Kant’s concept of aesthetic experience, taken broadly, allows us . . . to feel life itself . . . as it is shared by humanity’ (pp. 266–7), I find the kind of reading proposed by Chaouli indirectly opens new ways of thinking that also correspond to the critical metaphysical direction to which the *Critique of Judgement* ultimately guides us, namely, the possibility of moral theology and the question of the supersensible.

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Notes

- 1 The etymological root of ‘serendipity’ is in the fairytale ‘The Three Princes of Serendip’ which tells the story of three princes being saved by reconstructing past events following only hints and traces they find in nature.
- 2 Chaouli indeed declares throughout the text that he perceives the aesthetic experience of the beautiful as delivering ‘a jolt no less sharp than the one many readers of Kant believe they can find only in the sublime’ (p. 13). And again ‘beauty itself can become the occasion for a sublime experience’ (p. 93).

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James R. O’Shea (ed.), *Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason: A Critical Guide*

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There are numerous books that are intended to serve as an introductory resource to Kant’s first *Critique*. Such resources must navigate between maintaining accessibility and succumbing to an oversimplification of Kant’s philosophy, possibly by focusing too heavily on a single interpretation or considering too many interpretations. Introductions to Kant must compromise between these factors to some extent. O’Shea’s edited collection of

fourteen essays navigates these Kantian challenges successfully by showcasing the diverse and wide-ranging areas of research undertaken within contemporary Kant scholarship whilst offering an accessible introduction to many of the core issues within Kant's first *Critique*. Some chapters will be demanding for those with little prior knowledge of Kant's first *Critique*, but collectively these essays explore a variety of approaches toward Kant's philosophy, including the historical context of the first *Critique*, the systemic relation of the first *Critique* with Kant's other works, the diversity of interpretations within Kant scholarship. There are some notable topics not included, mainly from the Transcendental Dialectic such as the Paralogisms; however, it would be unreasonable to expect all topics and interpretations to be considered in this relatively short text. This review will offer a selective consideration of the volume's contributions, focusing largely on those contributions that consider Kant's philosophy from a historical point of view or those which focus on the relationship between elements of the first *Critique* and Kant's broader philosophical system.

Eric Watkins' chapter considers how examining both Kant's Inaugural Dissertation and the influence of his predecessors can offer a defence against arguments directed toward elements of Kant's Critical philosophy – specifically, against the assertion that Kant's distinction between sensibility and understanding is question-begging in relation to his predecessors. Watkins argues the reasons for the distinction between these faculties can be identified in a germinal form in the Dissertation. He argues that Kant lays the foundation for denying that the distinction between the faculties of understanding and sensibility essentially rests on that between activity and passivity. According to Watkins, 'sensibility is still active insofar as it does not literally *receive* representations from without, but rather *actively* forms representations in *response* to affection from without' (p. 24). Watkins' account successfully demonstrates how examining Kant's pre-Critical philosophy can offer new perspectives on certain ambiguities within the Critical philosophy, while defending Kant's division of the faculties of sensibility and understanding against the charge that it is question-begging, thus revealing that Kant's Critical philosophy was partially imbedded in his pre-Critical thought and the surrounding philosophical milieu.

Stephen Engstrom also takes a broadly historical stance on understanding Kant's account of the relationship between knowledge and objects. He begins from Strawson's assertion that one of the chief obstacles to a sympathetic understanding of the *Critique* is Kant's reversal of traditional metaphysics following his argument that objects must conform to knowledge. Engstrom argues this is not necessarily a break with traditional metaphysics as Kant's philosophy corresponds to previous metaphysical accounts such as those of Aristotle and Aquinas on various topics. According to Engstrom,

these philosophers also recognized that knowledge does not conform with its objects and they appealed to a non-finite form of knowledge in relation to our finite form of knowledge to explain this. Kant makes this move too, however, the difference between them is that Kant separates this form of non-finite knowing from our knowledge by means of his distinction between discursive and intuitive intellect (p. 34). Within discursive knowledge there is a twofold interdependent relationship: the object must possess the capacity to affect the subject and the subject must determine the object through its universal cognitive legislation (pp. 42–3). The relationship between traditional conceptions of metaphysics and Kant's philosophy is not, therefore, a complete reversal of the relation between knowledge and its object, but rather a distinction between the formal and the material elements of cognition's relation to its object. Whilst both traditional and Kantian accounts agree that objects must be given from elsewhere, Kant's philosophy adds that the object must also conform to the subject's capacities for knowledge.

Lucy Allais also examines the relationship between the limits of knowledge that we have as finite rational beings and the broader metaphysical implications of this. Overall, she interprets Kant as a moderate metaphysical antirealist. According to Allais '[t]he antirealist reading ... sees space as something that does not exist apart from the possibility of its being presented to minds like ours' (p. 62). Allais contrasts the antirealist account with the phenomenological account. The phenomenological account results in the view that intuitions are immediate-seeming images of objects, however the antirealist account is able to uphold Kant's claim that intuitions give us objects, meaning that they put us in direct mental contact with objects (p. 50). Moreover, Allais argues that the antirealist interpretation of Kant offers further support to the transcendental ideality of space. This is because the antirealist account helps orient us toward objects in such a way that does not lead us to investigate the existence of objects independent of experience. The moderate metaphysical antirealist interpretation potentially lays the foundation for a novel understanding of the relationship between theoretical and practical reason as, by denying space and time as metaphysical properties of things in themselves, it allows us to consider how practical reason (as operating in a non-spatial temporal domain) is an essential aspect of Kant's metaphysics.

Michaela Massimi's argument probes into the significance of what she terms Kant's *argument from Spinozism* as offering support for the transcendental ideality of space. The argument is located in the second *Critique* and Kant's lectures on metaphysics, but it is significant for understanding themes central to Kant's philosophy. The similarity between Spinozism and Newtonianism is that both suggest that the determining ground of our action is 'in *something altogether beyond our control*' (p. 70). Massimi

suggests that this association between the theories of Spinozism and Newtonianism would have been part of the academic milieu from which Kant's philosophy developed. Yet, Massimi cautions that the argument from Spinozism should not be too heavily associated with Newton and traces an alternative conceptual lineage for the relationship between nature and God. She draws from Kant's pre-Critical works which were responding to a broader metaphysical tradition including Malebranche, Leibniz, Crusius and Baumgarten. She outlines how Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* contained the separation of God as infinite substance from the finite world. Baumgarten argued that Spinoza denied this separation and hinted at the association between Spinozism and Newton. Massimi considers how various pre-Critical works exemplify Kant's departure from both Spinozism and Newtonianism as crucial moments in the development of Kant's Critical philosophy, especially his arguments relating to the transcendental ideality of space and God.

Ralf Bader's chapter develops an assessment of Kant's Refutation of Idealism with exceptional clarity. Bader begins by explaining that the Refutation of Idealism should be understood as a response to the moderate, rather than radical, sceptic. The moderate sceptic is associated with the problematic idealist and accepts that we possess immediate consciousness of own existence and mental states, however they doubt that this also holds for objects of outer sense, whereas the radical sceptic doubts *both* inner sense and outer sense. Moreover, Bader demonstrates how the Refutation of Idealism can help to contextualize certain changes in the First Analogy from the A to B edition and is consistent with the conservation of energy principle in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*. Bader explains Kant's aim as attempting to show that 'inner experience is parasitic on outer experience, such that we only have inner experience if we have outer experience' (p. 211). He carefully traces Kant's argument showing that the Refutation is directed toward establishing the permanent in perception, which cannot be proven in inner but only in outer sense. This is because only that which has substance can be permanent, but substance cannot be applied to the self (p. 217). Moreover, Bader demonstrates how the Refutation of Idealism is far more important than a mere response to the charges of Berkeleyan idealism following the publication of the first *Critique*. It serves as guide both for understanding essential changes in Kant's thought between the two editions of the text, and revealing how these changes should be considered in relation to the *Metaphysical Foundations*.

Overall, this collection succeeds in introducing the reader to crucial debates and interpretations in Kant's philosophy, paying specific attention to how historical consideration can elucidate current understandings. Many of the contributors demonstrate how considering the first *Critique*

in terms of its historical context can offer extremely valuable insights for Kant scholarship. It offers much more than this, however, as this book would also excel as an introduction to the diversity of debates and interpretations within contemporary Kant scholarship. Overall, it offers a broadly accessible, yet challenging, collection of essays on many essential aspects of Kant's first *Critique*.

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Mark Timmons, *Significance and System: Essays on Kant's Ethics*

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Significance and Symbolism collects Timmons' groundbreaking work on Kant's ethics spanning more than twenty years. Having the papers collected in a volume is not just convenient; it also helps us appreciate the immense importance of Timmons' contributions to the field. Each paper is clear, insightful and well-argued. The collection ranges from topics that receive sustained attention from Kant interpreters (such as the problem of relevant descriptions) to under-explored issues in the analytical tradition of Kant scholarship (such as questions about the psychology of devilish vices).

The first chapter, 'Necessitation and Justification in Kant's Ethics', aims to explain why Kant considers the hypothetical imperative to be analytic while he takes the categorical imperative to be synthetic. Timmons' discussion is mostly focused on trying to understand how imperatives can be analytic or synthetic, given their imperatival form. After all, Kant's definitions of analytic and synthetic seem to focus on judgements that have a subject/predicate form (CPR, B10). Timmons' strategy is to focus on the relation of necessitation, given that according to Kant 'oughts', or imperatives, are 'The representation of an objective principle, insofar as it is necessitating for a will' (cf. G, 4: 413). Timmons argues that, once we understand necessitation, we can see that these imperatives can be reduced to descriptive statements with predicative form. In particular, to say that a subject is necessitated to adopt a certain maxim is to say that she would act on this maxim if she were 'reasoning in a completely rational manner' (p. 24). The proposed reduction then reads as follows (S is a subject and M is a maxim):