

Kant's Deduction thus overturns his previous two-world view (see Shaddock 2014: 48–54).

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Allen W. Wood, *The Free Development of Each: Studies of Freedom, Right and Ethics in Classical German Philosophy*
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Allen Wood's new book provides a provocative model for scholarship that takes the German idealist tradition as a source of vibrant debates oriented by shared commitments to compelling ideas that need to be taken seriously today by citizens as well as scholars. The book gathers twelve articles, all but three of which have been published previously. The first four focus on particular issues in Kant scholarship, followed by a chapter on Kant and Herder and another on

consequentialism, two and a half chapters on Fichte, one and a half on Hegel, a chapter on Marx and an essay on coercion, manipulation and exploitation. The short introduction and conclusion situate this scholarship in the context of the overall theme of freedom and its specific application to the contemporary world. For those interested in Wood's reading of Kant's ethics, the chapters included here expand on his interpretation both in detail (particularly in chapter 1) and scope (particularly in chapters 2 and 4). More generally, while it does not amount to a single sustained argument or narrative, the book as a whole offers a refreshing approach to the relationship between Kant, the later German idealist tradition, and contemporary philosophy (and life).

Scholarship on Kant and German idealism often involves broadly Hegelian master narratives of progress from various one-sidedly and misleadingly formulated insights in Kant through their ultimate fulfilment in Hegel, with discussion of Fichte (and perhaps Schelling) along the way. Recently, a historically sensitive Kantian pushback has offered an alternative story, one in which Kant's deepest insights were lost by overzealous post-Kantian idealists (e.g. in Ameriks 2000). Allen Wood's new book avoids both tendencies and has three important features, which organize the rest of this review. First and most importantly, Wood 'emphasize[s] continuities and agreements rather than squabbles and differences' (pp. 1–2). Second, he treats Fichte as the major philosopher that he was (and is), rather than as a mere stepping stone from Kant to Hegel. Third, he extends the tradition of Kant's 'successors' beyond Hegel to include Marx. One way of reading the book, in fact, is as a sustained argument for the necessity of understanding German idealism (starting with Kant) in order to make sense of Marx's fundamental ethico-political vision of 'an association in which the free development of each is a condition for the free development of all' (p. 314, quoting from Marx's *Collected Works*, 6: 506).

First, then, Wood's

general approach to Kant and his successors ... is not to harp on the relatively minor quarrels and quibbles among them, but rather to emphasize the continuity that separates them from pre-critical metaphysicians, dogmatists, empiricists, and all others who have yet to rise to the point of even understanding the project they all share, or appreciating why it is indispensable to philosophy. (p. 214, see too pp. 1–2)

With respect to Kant in particular, the form that this continuity often takes is exemplified by a comment at the end of Wood's discussion of Kant on practical reason:

Kant may thus be seen as the Moses of the moral world, who leads us to the borders of traditional ... conceptions of practical

reason, and even points us towards what might lie beyond them, but never quite himself sets foot in the promised land. (p. 69)

This way of putting the point might seem to fit into traditionally Hegelian readings, except that Wood takes seriously that later thinkers moved into this promised land, to varying degrees, more by positive engagement with insights in Kant than by fundamental overturning of his errors, and the ways in which later thinkers moved beyond Kant do not in any way undermine the ways in which Kant himself can and should continue to enlighten us. Wood's goal is not moving *from* Kant *to* Fichte or Hegel or Marx, but rather engaging in the conversation that they are all a part of in order to 'find a way forward to a freer human future' (p. 316).

Thus Wood's first four chapters are not merely preparation for moving beyond Kant. In chapter 1, he fleshes out and further defends the claims (cf. Wood 1999: ch. 1) that 'moral worth is different from merit' (p. 16) and that deeds can be morally good without having 'moral worth', such that 'person[s] can perform dutiful actions – even perform them with a good will – without needing to constrain themselves from the motive of duty' (p. 31). These points allow Wood's Kant to affirm that even acts done from inclination can be morally good (hence avoiding criticisms of Kant that go back at least as far as Schiller), while still affirming a distinct *kind* of moral value – moral worth – that is the 'true, inner ... moral form' of the good will (p. 32). And Wood takes from this analysis not an endorsement of the possibility of a delightfully integrated moral life where we do our duty from inclination all the time, but rather an important reminder that 'our life as moral beings is doomed to be an essentially unnatural, uncomfortable, conflict-ridden life' (p. 37). In Wood's view, this is not a *problem* with Kant's view, but a very important 'encroach[ment] on our complacency' (p. 37). Wood's detailed Kant scholarship serves to highlight moral truths that we need to hear today.

At the same time, Wood is more than willing to criticize and correct Kant when he thinks Kant gets things wrong. This is clearest in chapter 2, where Wood's *Groundwork*-based discussion of practical reason is generally sympathetic to Kant on instrumental and moral reason, with a particularly helpful emphasis on the role of freedom in instrumental reason (see p. 50), but explicitly revisionary with respect to prudential reason, saying that Kant's remarks 'require some careful – perhaps even selective – interpretation' (p. 52) and in the end concluding that 'Kant's account of prudential reason seems conspicuously confused' (p. 60). In keeping with the major overall theme of the book – pulling together Kant with later idealists – Wood emphasizes that 'justification is always justification *to* someone' (p. 42, see too pp. 65–9) and thereby anticipates social conceptions of justification and cognition that are internal to the structure of justification in Fichte and Hegel

and that Wood sees as internal to justification in Kant as well. Wood is certainly correct that, for Kant, it is ‘an empirical fact that human beings are capable of grasping what is universally valid only by communicating with others’ (p. 66), but may go too far in ascribing ‘an essential element of intersubjectivity in rational justification’ (p. 66) to Kant. In keeping with other (more minor) themes of the book, Wood argues that Kantian practical reason always involves ‘self-constraint’ (p. 43), that *all* rational principles (even technical or prudential ones) ‘are always universally valid’ (p. 43) and that practical reason *in general* responds to ‘objective reasons for doing or not doing some things that ... are distinct from desires (though they might create desires, or give rational support to already existing desires)’ (p. 45).

Chapter 3 – ‘The Independence of Right from Ethics’ – is a direct response to Paul Guyer’s recent argument for the possibility of a deduction of principles of right from more fundamental moral principles (see Guyer 2005: 203–22). Wood argues that ‘there is clearly no discernible “deduction” of the principles of right from the principle of morality’ (p. 71) and, more positively, that ‘Kant’s theory of right is grounded on one single, very simple and powerful thought, which identifies right with the conditions for protecting what Kant calls “external freedom”’ (p. 72). And chapter 4 – ‘The Moral Politician’ – offers a reading of Kant’s *Perpetual Peace* discussion of moral politicians. On one hand, Wood emphasizes that people ‘seldom realize how far Kant actually agrees with ... separating the standards applicable to politics from those suited to private life’ (p. 93) so that Kant is not merely an idealistic moralist about politics. But his main focus is that ‘the politician *as politician* is subject to morals only in the sense of right, not in the sense of ethics’ (p. 94; see 8: 381, 386), so there *are* principles of right that stand above any particular configuration of positive law or *realpolitik* strategizing. This emphasis on the distinction between rules of right that apply in political contexts and ethical rules that apply to private individuals is put to particularly bold use in Wood’s reading of Kant’s *Right to Lie* essay, which draws heavily from his discussion of the same text in Wood 2008. Briefly, Wood argues that this essay, and its absolute prohibition on lying, is a prohibition specifically of making false ‘declarations’, which are ‘statements on whose truthfulness others are entitled, *as a matter of right*, to rely’ (p. 112), such as statements under oath or legally enforceable contracts. And for Wood, ‘the public statements of politicians ... are regarded by Kant as declarations’ (p. 112). Thus while Wood softens the impact of Kant’s *Right to Lie* for private individuals, he emphasizes the point that politicians, *qua politicians*, are prohibited from knowingly lying, regardless of the ends they aim to achieve. In our present political context, where truth has all but vanished as even an ideal for any political candidate, Wood’s – and Kant’s – exhortation to hold politicians to truthfulness as a matter of right is bold, and much needed.

Chapter 5, which focuses on Kant and Herder, counteracts the tendency of ‘people to imagine deeper philosophical divisions than ... are really there’ (p. 119; cf. Wood 1999: ch. 7.1). Their fundamental *agreement* is ‘that it is rational to look at history as exhibiting a kind of rational purposiveness, like that found in organisms, rather than that found in intentional human actions’ (p. 120). Still, Wood highlights (with sympathy for Herder) three important disagreements: about the role of political states in history (Herder allows for hope in their ‘eventual ... withering away’ (p. 134)), the importance of happiness (important for Herder, not for Kant), and how to assess how earlier ages relate to later ones in human development (where Herder insists on fulfilment of human destiny at earlier stages (p. 135)). Oddly, Wood does not emphasize another key difference between Kant and Herder, the difference between seeing teleology as a regulative principle for the study of history and as a constitutive principle *of* history. Getting clear on this seems particularly important given the importance of ‘faith in historical progress’ (p. 137) not only for Herder and Kant but eventually – in secularized form – for Wood’s own manifesto in his conclusion (p. 314). On *this* point, Kant’s emphasis on faith in progress as a commitment to a regulative ideal (for investigation and action) seems both sufficient, and much more plausible, than the kind of commitment one finds in Herder (and Hegel) to historical progress as a metaphysical reality.

The rest of the book explicitly departs from Kant. Even chapter 6 (‘Leaving Consequentialism Behind’), which offers a sustained defence of the claim that ‘we ought to care about the consequences of our actions only because we care more fundamentally about acting as we should’ (p. 145) on the grounds that ‘which consequences of action we should treat as objects of pursuit and avoidance are determined by the ends we set’ and not vice versa (p. 156), defends a ‘deontology’ that is explicitly Fichtean, even if in a formulation that Kant could also accept (see p. 146) and that explicitly pulls together Fichte, Hegel, Aristotle, Marx ‘and even ... Mill’ (p. 155).

Chapters 7–9 focus on Fichte, and in my view these chapters are the most important contribution of this volume to Wood’s overall corpus of work, one that already includes *Karl Marx* (1981), *Hegel’s Ethical Thought* (1990) and *Kant’s Ethical Thought* (1999). Wood has not yet published a *Fichte’s Ethical Thought*, but these three chapters provide at least the core of what such a book would be. Chapter 7 lays out the conception of ‘Absolute Freedom’ that lies at the core of Fichte’s thought. The I is a ‘free volitional act’, the vehicle of which is the body and the essence of which is an activity of self-determination governed by a norm requiring self-activity (see pp. 168–9). Chapters 8 and 9 focus on Fichte’s most important contribution to idealism, his deduction of intersubjectivity, that is, his attempt ‘to deduce transcendently from a minimal standpoint – that of the self-positing I – not only the

material world and the necessary material embodiment of the I itself, but also the presence in experience of other I's, all as fundamental conditions for the possibility of the I's own original activity' (p. 201, cf. p. 214).

Throughout the book, Wood enlists the support of idealists in articulating and defending broadly Marxian conceptions of freedom. This emphasis on Marx becomes explicit in a new and very illuminating chapter on Marx's conception of equality (chapter 11), but it is implicit even in, for example, Wood's apt reminder in chapter 3 that 'the consensus of more recent treatments of Kantian right ... have all ... argu[ed] that Kantian right would sooner result in a social democratic state than in the state friendly to wealth and privilege that is celebrated by libertarians' (p. 84), which he more provocatively puts: 'Kantian Right is Sooner Socialist than Libertarian' (p. 83).

More importantly, and despite Wood's explicit intention to 'present these historical philosophers in their own terms' and 'draw my own conclusions from their thought largely in the introduction and conclusion' (p. 307), there is a pervasive sense of urgency throughout what might otherwise seem mere scholarship, and regular applications of historical thought to contemporary social and political life. Following the example he sees in Kant, who 'did not believe in holding his tongue when he could get away with speaking truth to power' (p. 117), Wood's discussion of *Perpetual Peace* (chapter 4) is a clear indictment of present-day politicians who 'are never servants of "the people" as much as they are of the wealthy private individuals or ... corporations ... who finance their campaigns' (p. 91), and his discussion of Fichte and Hegel on recognition provides a springboard for critiquing as 'shared self-deception' various contemporary social systems, such as that of equal 'opportunity' that 'merely establish on a "free market" basis the relation of lordship and bondage' (p. 227). I often found Wood's particular political pronouncements frustratingly underdefended and polemical, but by the end of the book I found the general tone of urgency to be a refreshing reminder that historical-philosophical scholarship really *is* important in the world in which we live.

In the end this book, despite being essentially a collection of articles written for different occasions, does as a whole something more and better than the sum of its parts. For all citizens and scholars, it shows the importance and relevance of history of philosophy, and history of German idealism in particular, for extremely pressing problems facing the world today. It effectively draws on the idealist tradition to highlight the deep failures of our society to realize its ideals for human freedom, while offering – again by means of that tradition – an articulation of a realistic notion of moral-historical hope. For Kantians in particular, it offers several clear articulations of Wood's often distinctive interpretations of Kant, with important

clarifications and challenges for Kantians who want to stick with alternative interpretations. More importantly in my view, however, is Wood's invitation (dare I say, *Aufforderung*) to read Kant and his successors as engaged in a common project, one we should continue by drawing what is best from *all* of these figures (not *just* Kant), doing so with scholarly rigour but also with a vibrant sense of the stakes of the positions in our contemporary social-political-economic context.

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Julian Wuerth, *Kant on Mind, Action, and Ethics*

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Julian Wuerth's *Kant on Mind, Action, and Ethics* is a major study of Kant's views on the nature of the mind. Wuerth's primary aim is to show that Kant accepted a robust, complex metaphysical view of the mind in his mature theoretical and practical philosophy. In support of this aim, Wuerth offers an extremely detailed reading of many of Kant's overlooked texts, in particular, the student notes on lectures he gave throughout his career. Out of these hundreds of difficult pages of primary text, he assembles a 'map of the mind' that identifies what Kant saw as our fundamental capacities. In our estimation, most of Wuerth's central claims are correct, and his book presents a serious challenge to anti-metaphysical and metaphysically simple readings of Kant.

The virtues of Wuerth's detailed textual arguments are difficult to capture in a short review. Instead, we will describe the main claims of each chapter of the book and offer some critical remarks.