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***Interpreting Kant* Moltke S. Gram, editor Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1982. Pp. 149**

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Interpreting Kant

MOLTKE S. GRAM, editor

Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1982. Pp. 149

Kant's philosophy and Kant's terminology are equally original. When the first *Critique* appeared, it was criticized almost as much for introducing "a new language" to philosophy as for its supposed idealism and skepticism. (In fact, these two criticisms were closely connected). Therefore, trying to understand Kant has always also been an attempt to learn this "new language".

For us, who read Kant in translation, and who, for the most part, read, think, and write about him in English, there are added difficulties. To be sure, we are blessed with such excellent translations as those by Norman Kemp Smith and Lewis White Beck, Kant is widely read and discussed in English (what has come to be taken as), his terminology has shaped past and present philosophizing in the English-speaking world, and, in the most recent past, some of the most influential Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American philosophers have so cultivated a certain *Wahlverwandschaft* with him, that it is possible to think of him as a completely naturalized citizen of the English-speaking philosophical community. But this would be a mistake. The serious philosophical student of Kant should never forget that he is not dealing with the original. He cannot dispense with the original texts.

The more than two hundred years that have passed since its first appearance have made the task of understanding Kant's "new language" no easier. But perhaps they have made it appear easier: Kant's language does not appear to be so new any longer, and it is often taken for granted that the question facing the interpreter of Kant concerns not so much what he *says* as what he *means*—and the latter is quite often not taken to be a question concerning what *Kant* himself might have meant, but what Kant means to *us*. Interpreting him is often understood as *reconstructing* his thought, or as presenting it "in a modern idiom". Furthermore, recent developments have clearly made it much easier to discount difficulties as "verbal mannerisms" or as things that are "not intelligible to anyone, even to Kant."¹ *Interpreting Kant*, which could also have been entitled *Translating Kant*, is a vivid reminder of the impossibility of reconstructing Kant without prior attention to constructing what he said by paying the closest attention to his German and its eighteenth-century background.

The book consists of an Introduction by the editor (1-10), followed by eight papers. These are: "Is Sensation a Matter of Appearances?" by Richard E. Aquila (11-29), "Vorstellung and Erkenntnis in Kant" by Rolf George (31-39), "The Sense of a Kantian Intuition" by Moltke S. Gram (41-67), "Wille and Willkür in Kant's Theory of Action" by Ralf Meerbote (69-84), "How to Render Zweckmässigkeit in Kant's Third Critique" by Werner Pluhar (85-98), "Translation and Anschauung, Verstand, and Vernunft" by Hans H. Rudnick (99-114), "Kant's 'Spanish Bank Account': Realität and Wirklichkeit" by Hans Seigfried (115-132), and W. H. Werkmeister's "What Did Kant Say, and What Has He Been Made to Say?" (133-145).

The titles of these papers are good indications of their subject matter. Most of them concern Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, or, more exactly, what T. D.

1 See Roger Scruton, *Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

Weldon called "Kant's Perceptual Vocabulary". The terms that receive special consideration are *Erscheinung* or appearance, *Empfindung* or sensation, *Vorstellung* or representation, *Erkenntnis* or knowledge (mode of knowledge), *Anschauung* or intuition, *Verstand* or understanding, *Vernunft* or reason, *Realität* and *Wirklichkeit* or reality and actuality. But this does not mean that the book is of interest only to those concerned with the first *Critique*. For, first of all, Kant's perceptual vocabulary is also of relevance for understanding the rest of his work, and, secondly, the analysis of the terms just mentioned is complemented by a discussion of *Wille* and *Willkür* and *Zweckmässigkeit*.

Since each paper raises significant problems concerning the translation and interpretation of some key terms in Kant's philosophy, they are all well worth reading for anybody more than casually interested in Kant. Indeed, they should be considered indispensable and required reading for the serious student of Kantian philosophy. The Index and the well-written Introduction make it easy for the reader of Kant to consult the work on particular issues. It should therefore become a useful tool for Kant scholars.

Interpreting Kant breaks new ground indeed, being the first "unified attempt" in English to explore the "relation between philology and philosophy in the Kantian tradition" (Gram, 1). But the aim of the collection seems still more ambitious. Gram says the book is not intended as

an exercise in lexicography. No appeal to the dictionary can solve the problems that face the tradition of Kant scholarship here. Kant's German usage ... often diverges from the standard, received German of his time. But traditional and Kantian contexts of usage nonetheless overlap, and this generates the overriding problem of interpretation (1).

Further, he thinks that the problems surveyed in the book add up to

a set of conditions for the possibility of any future translation of Kant's work. But it is more than that. The set of problems and perplexities which has been surveyed briefly here betokens the profound philosophical issues which must be resolved if we are to establish a framework within which translation of Kant is possible at all (10).

But, perhaps, less would have been more—at least at this stage of the discussion. Though I agree that philosophical discussions should never be merely exercises in lexicography, and that no mere appeal to the dictionary can solve a genuine philosophical problem, I do think that in a volume dealing with the relation between philology and philosophy, lexicography is of primary importance. The dictionary cannot solve the problem. But the problem cannot be solved without lexicography. Second, and not unrelated, the opposition between "Kant's German usage" and "the standard, received German of his time", is, at the very best, an oversimplification. If ever there was a time in which talk of "the standard, received German" is inapplicable it is the time of Kant, which, after all, was also the time of Lessing, Wieland, Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Hamann, Lichtenberg, Holderlin, Kleist ... , or the time during which literary German, as we know it, was created. Third, traditional vs. novel is in many of the papers construed as Leibniz-Wolffianism vs. Kant. But Leibniz-Wolffian philosophy had already undergone profound changes when Kant published his first *Critique*. The philosophical terminology of Kant is coloured by the philosophical and literary discussion of the sixties and seventies of the centuries. And this has the most profound significance for the understanding of some of the key terms in Kant.

Let me briefly illustrate this on the example of Aquila's discussion of "Empfindung" or "sensation" in Kant.² Aquila claims that the German term "Empfindung" in Kant is vague or ambiguous in ways in which the English "sensation" is not. This has significant consequences for deciding the question "whether, in Kant's view, the 'immediate objects' of perception are subjective entities of some sort" or not (11). For, if *Erscheinungen* or appearances, understood as these "immediate objects", are, in some way, made up of sensations, then they must be subjective. If they are of a different matter, then they may not be subjective. Aquila tries to show that Kant's text is ambiguous while the translations transform Kant into a definite subjectivist.

The ambiguity of Kant's "Empfindung", according to Aquila, is analogous to the ambiguity of his "Vorstellung". As is well known, "Kant often avails himself of the terminological license whereby the term *Vorstellung*, and its relatives, apply both to our being presented with some object and also to the object thus presented (at least *qua* 'intentional object')" (25). *Empfindungen* are a form of *Vorstellungen*. Kant is very clear on this. Therefore, it is sensible to read this ambiguity of *Vorstellungen* into *Empfindungen* as well. So *Empfindungen* can be "objective", namely as the matter of appearances. "For insofar as appearances, *qua* intentional objects of sense presentation, contain an aspect which corresponds to the presence of sensation in a sensory state, it would not be inappropriate to extend the term *Empfindung* to signify this aspect" (27). But, Aquila thinks Kant would also have been hesitant to do so, for technical reasons as well as for reasons of common philosophical usage. For "on Kant's view, sensations constitute the presentation of the 'material' aspect of appearances only insofar as they are ingredient in *intuitions*" (27), and philosophers were not usually reading the ambiguity of *Vorstellung* into *Empfindung*.

But is Kant's text as ambiguous as Aquila says it is? I do not think so. First of all, it seems to me wrong to say that Kant's supposed "extension of the term *Empfindung* ... would not have constituted an intolerable departure from everyday usage, and certainly not from philosophical usage" (27). I think it would have; *Empfindung* was much closer to the English term "sensation" than Aquila realizes. In fact, the meaning of this term and its cognates can be shown to have changed considerably during the last half of the eighteenth century precisely because of influences coming from British sources. Hutcheson's "moral sense" was translated as "*moralische Empfindungen*", and Germans looked towards British philosophers for the explication of *Empfindungen* in general. In any case, in order to make good his claim about "philosophical usage", Aquila would have had to take a closer look at Mendelssohn's *Briefe über die Empfindungen*, and Eberhard's *Allgemeine Theorie des Denkens und Empfindens*, to name only two works.

Secondly, while it is true that the extension of *Empfindung* would be consistent with the Kantian extension of other, related terms, it would be inconsistent with Kant's placement of *Empfindung* in the *Stufenleiter* of representations, as presented in A320/B376f (a passage not mentioned by Aquila, but discussed, from another point of view, by George). For there Kant clearly states that

2 It is the discussion I disagree with most. It is also the discussion that most clearly shows why Kant's contemporaries must be considered in still greater detail. But because I disagree so sharply, I should perhaps point out that I consider it important as well.

Empfindung is the kind of representation that "relates *solely* to the subject as a modification of its state" (emphasis mine), and is quite different from those representations which can be both objects and of objects. *Empfindungen*, or sensations, *qua Empfindung* or sensation can be neither.

This criticism of the treatment of *Empfindung* as an example of the work's weakness should not be taken to mean that it is flawed. I only want to show that there is much more work to be done, that the book represents a first step in the right direction, and that it is not a full canvassing "of conditions for the possibility of any future translation of Kant's work". For that project we must pay still more attention to Kant's contemporaries.

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Droits. Revue française de théorie juridique*, no 1: *Destins du droit de propriété

Paris: P.U.F., 1985. 192 p.

Le premier numéro de cette nouvelle *Revue française de théorie juridique* est principalement consacré à l'étude des « destins du droit de propriété ». Sous les signatures prestigieuses de François Terré et de René-Jean Dupuy, nous pouvons respectivement suivre « l'évolution du droit de propriété depuis le Code civil » et réfléchir sur « le patrimoine commun de l'humanité ». D'excellentes pages sont consacrées par M. F. Renoux-Zagamé aux origines théologiques du concept de propriété, par J. L. Mestre au problème de l'expropriation. Dans ce recueil dense où l'on retrouve les noms de Ch. Atias, St. Rials—les directeurs de cette revue—de Ph. Rémy, V. Bouvier, N. Rouland, H. Lepage, B. Edelman, remarquons l'information bibliographique somptueuse qui fait de ce volume un instrument de travail incomparable. Nous pouvons également apprécier de très substantielles notes de lecture ainsi que des « notules » qui font le point de manière heureuse sur les publications récentes en droit et en philosophie du droit.

Par son contenu, comme par sa conception d'ensemble qui ouvre cette nouvelle revue, malgré son titre, à des lecteurs non-juristes soucieux de réflexion plus encore qu'à des spécialistes de la technique juridique, une publication de cette qualité, en s'annonçant bisannuelle, se place sous le signe des plus heureux présages.

SIMONE GOYARD-FABRE *Université de Caen*

Paternalism

JOHN KLEINIG

Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983. Pp. xiii, 242

Paternalism is a book of closely watched arguments, both of theory and in the application of theory. Paternalistic interventions into peoples' lives are liberty-limiting and therefore objectionable to liberal thinking; being good for the one