

## Béla Mester Immanuel Kant was born 300 years ago

This thematic compilation contains a part of the proceedings of the conference by the opportunity of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Immanuel Kant, organised by the Institute of Philosophy of the ELTE University and by the Department of Philosophy of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest, 2024. The great material of the proceedings was divided in two parts thematically: Papers on *epistemology* and *philosophy of science* will be published in *Hungarian Philosophical Review*, papers on *aesthetics*, *anthropology* and on the idea of *cosmopolitanism* will be published in *Kellék*. Both thematic issue will contain almost the same number of authors, and they will be published in the same time.

**Keywords:** aesthetics, anthropology, cosmopolitanism, epistemology, Immanuel Kant, philosophy of science

## Tamás Ullmann Intelligible deed

The paper explores the Kantian concept of the intelligible deed. Kant distinguishes between intelligible application and empirical application in the concepts of freedom, action and guilt. The notion of evil is linked to the willingness to do evil (*Hang zum Bösen*) and the notion of intelligible deed. The latter, however, is highly problematic. The second part of the paper will attempt to present all the paradoxes of the concept of intelligible deed and will overview some of the possible interpretations. Finally, the paper argues that the intelligible deed can be understood as

the loss of innocence, a primordial event through which the moral person with self-consciousness is born, and which Kant links to responsibility for evil.

**Keywords:** freedom, radical evil, intelligible deed, personality, moral character, innocence

**Márton Dornbach**

**Is spatio-temporality a contingent feature  
of the human standpoint?  
A debate in contemporary Kant interpretation  
and an answer with Plessner's help**

While early debates surrounding Kant's theory of space and time were mainly concerned with the thesis of transcendental ideality, recent discussion has focused on the claim that the a priori forms of our sensible intuition are contingent features of the human standpoint. Following a problem-oriented survey of recent arguments, I hazard a position on the philosophical problem at issue. I begin by clarifying why the threat of contingency poses a greater challenge with respect to our forms of intuition than our categories, even though the latter cannot be fully immunized against that threat. Since Kant's central attempt to dispel the worry about the contingency of our forms of sensibility occurs in the second-edition version of the Transcendental Deduction, I turn to recent Kantian scholarship and John McDowell's Hegel-inspired diagnosis in order to show why the problem arguably persists even in the wake of the B-Deduction. After briefly reviewing three proposed solutions to this problem, I consider and endorse Simon Gurofsky's argument that the semblance of contingency vanishes in light of Kant's constraints on what we can meaningfully think. I then extend Gurofsky's argument with a line of thought that yields a substantively framed thesis about the necessity of space and time. Here I approach the limits of thinkability in view of a key feature of our standpoint seldom considered by Kant, namely, the fact that we are living beings. I develop relevant consequences of our aliveness by drawing on the radical reworking of Kantian insights in Helmuth Plessner's philosophical anthropology. Since we can form no meaningful thought of a subject of knowledge

except as an animal living being, and space and time are in the context of biological life not just phenomenal forms of sensibility but categorial determinations of what it is to be alive, I argue that we must conceive of any finite subject of knowledge as spatio-temporally experiencing. Space and time as forms of intuition are grounded in the categorial spatiotemporality of the living.

**Keywords:** biological life, Helmuth Plessner, John McDowell, Kant, space and time

Nóra Szegedi

**A far-reaching ethical contribution  
of Kant's anthropological turn:  
The distinction between subjective and objective practical  
philosophy between 1763 and 1765**

At the beginning of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, in the first paragraph of the *Analytics*, Kant makes a fundamental distinction between maxim and law. He calls the subjective practical principles maxims, whereas the objective practical principles are called laws. On closer inspection, however, this apparently easy-to-understand juxtaposition hides an ambiguity that is fundamental to critical ethics and dates back 25 years. In my study, I will briefly describe this ambiguity, and then return to the first appearance of the distinction in texts written between 1763 and 1765. By analysing the various occurrences of the differentiation, I will try to provide an overview of this extremely dense period in Kant's philosophical development, which is usually called the anthropological turn, and in which Kant was deeply influenced by the British moral philosophers and Rousseau.

I hope that by exploring the development of the Kantian distinction in the pre-critical moral philosophy, we will also gain a deeper understanding of the root of the ambiguity in the critical ethics.

**Keywords:** Kantian ethics, *Critique of Practical Reason*, development of the Kantian ethics, anthropological turn

**Zoltán Gyenge**  
**Contains traces of Kant**  
**Kant and 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup>-century thinking**

Post-Kantian philosophy implies both continuity and discontinuity with Kantian principles. Without Reinhold's interpretation, there is no Kant, according to many. Fichte is closely linked to Kantian philosophy, but the *Wissenschaftslehre* represents a distance. Hegel and Schelling, as their correspondence shows, are deeply convinced that philosophy does not end with Kant, since Kant "only gave the results"; the premises are still missing. Moreover, this premise is the *Grundsatz* that Reinhold also lacks.

**Keywords:** German idealism, Hegel, Schelling, *Grundsatz*

**István Danka**  
**Kant and (non-artistic) genius**

This paper investigates Kant's concept of genius in the context of scientific (more precisely, mathematical) knowledge acquisition, arguing that in the (pre-critical) Kantian approach, the difference between artistic and scientific excellence is much weaker than even (the post-critical) Kant often seems to suggest. Connections between artistic and scientific activities can be established by focusing on post-critical metaphilosophy instead of philosophy of art, explaining their relationship with respect to the synthetic *a priori* nature of both creation processes.

The paper builds on a historically informed rational reconstruction of Kant's thought about scientific genius, building on Kant's insights but also taking further steps that Kant may not necessarily accept. The reason is that Kant is rather unclear about the issue, and hence, the questions posed here are whether Kant *could have thought* what is implied by the present line of thought on the one hand and whether it would have been *reasonable* for him to think so on the other. Even though the answer to the first question seems to be 'no', I shall argue that the second can be answered by 'yes': Kant's post-critical philosophy would have been more coherent if he had accepted the possibility of scientific, and also philosophical, genius.

**Keywords:** Kant, genius, rule-following, synthetic *a priori*

Adrienne Gálosi

## What would it mean to be a Kantian in terms of taste today?

This paper presents a variety of philosophical positions that have drawn implications from Kant's philosophy of the nature and function of aesthetic judgement for their understanding of the crucial exemplary role of aesthetic judgement in contemporary pluralistic society. Rather than simply presenting divergent interpretations of Kant, of which there are obviously many, I will outline four distinctly different positions, each of which I will present through an influential representative. All of these theories recognise that the *sensus communis*, the assumed or required community, is the main focus of Kantian criticism, and thus its existence or status is discussed as the basis for aesthetic reflective judgements. This presupposed community makes it clear that the issue at stake in the third Kantian critique is whether or not there can be a philosophical foundation for the unity of culture. In setting out the different positions, then, I will examine the ways in which their understanding of the nature and operation of aesthetic judgements is bound up with their understanding of the operation of society and culture.

The first position, of which I take Arthur C. Danto to be representative, regards Kantian analysis as absolutely untenable. But I argue that Danto understands Kant simply as a conservative critic and not as a transcendental philosopher.

The second position, represented by Richard Schusterman, is that of contemporary pragmatist aesthetics, a position, which, in my interpretation, understands the apriority of the *sensus communis* as a malleable normativity elaborated and mediated by the discursive community.

The third position is that of Hannah Arendt, who seeks to use Kant's notion of *sensus communis* for political thought at the cost of detranscendentalising it.

Jean-François Lyotard, who understands *sensus communis* as an idea and removes its interpretation from the field where it could serve as the basis for any possible empirical community, represents the fourth position. In his interpretation, the mental state of pleasure that accompanies certain representations is pre-cognitive and pre-subjective and cannot serve as the basis for any empirical community.

From the way in which the above arguments are presented and critiqued, I hope to develop what I consider to be a valid interpretation, and in the concluding part of the paper I use this to formulate the pillars upon which a contemporary Kantian theory of taste might be built.

**Keywords:** *sensus communis*, empirical-transcendental, subjective universality, a priori features of aesthetic judgement

Péter Tánczos

To Create According to Abstract Rules:  
Johann Elias Schlegel and Immanuel Kant on Imitation

Johann Elias Schlegel is remembered primarily as one of Lessing's intellectual forerunners, but he made a major contribution to the transformation of German Enlightenment aesthetics with his theorems on similarity and his concept of imitation in art. Although it has been suggested that Immanuel Kant may have been familiar with some of J. E. Schlegel's early writings, no direct evidence has yet been found; however, he may have been influenced indirectly by some of Schlegel's ideas. More important than the problematic nexus of influence is the fact that the dramatist made conceptual modifications to the imitation theory that dominated the period, which partly paved the way for the Kantian conception of genius.

In this paper I discuss the extent to which J. E. Schlegel's concept of the limits and framework of imitation contributed to the Kantian theory of imitation, which further restricted imitation and advocated the following of non-conceptual rules abstracted from works. I consider the similarities and differences between Schlegel's two studies on imitation and Kant's writings on aesthetics and anthropology, focusing on concepts and themes such as wit, rhyme, genius and imagination. Comparing the two authors may also provide an intermediate, transitional picture of the conceptual shift between Enlightenment and Romantic aesthetics.

**Keywords:** Immanuel Kant, Johann Elias Schlegel, imitation, similarity

Tamás Valastyán

“A sign we are...”

Hölderlin as a Subversive Reader of Kantian Philosophy

In my text, I will look more closely at the way in which Hölderlin transforms Kant's ideas into his own philosophical-aesthetic programme and poetic inspirations. I focus mainly on two kinds of transitions: how the intellectual intuition becomes an aesthetic perspective, and how the identical idea of selfhood, kept alive in the chiasmus of reality/truth and possibility, is transplanted into a trope. What is really exciting is the way the lyrical self becomes the figure of the meaningless sign, or more

precisely “a sign”. In his philosophical fragments, Hölderlin is confronted with the Kantian–Reinholdian–Fichtean heritage with great intensity, and I suspect that this experience does not pass away without a trace in him as a poet, and I would like to cite the second version of *Mnemosyne* as an example of this.

**Keywords:** subversion, being, self-consciousness, judgment, sign, chiasmus

### János Loboczky

#### Gadamer about Kant’s Idea of Taste, Beauty and Art

Gadamer deals in detail with the idea of taste and beauty in Kant’s aesthetics. Gadamer considers at the Kant criticism a radical subjectivism of the aesthetics and the elimination of the truth-validity of the work of art; however he provides an in-depth analysis of the concepts of judgement, taste, beauty, art and the genius. Gadamer’s aim with the analysis of Kant’s criticism is to moderate Kant’s conceptual “walking around” to the “right degree”. In my paper, I reflect on these Kant’s interpretations of Gadamer. In advance I demonstrate briefly that between a pre-critical study of Kant (*Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen* – 1764) and the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* we can find a certain continuity, e.g. with regard to aesthetical autonomy, the concept of beauty and magnificent, the role of non-artistic beauty, the aesthetics as reception- and feeling-aesthetics.

**Keywords:** subjectivism of the aesthetics, the truth-validity of the work of art, the art and the genius, aesthetical autonomy, judgement, taste, beauty

### Alexandra Mikáczó

#### *“I am here to make you think”*

#### On the relationship between the Kantian sublime and the visual abstraction

In the 1950s, many painters from the New York School began to create a series of black paintings. Among them were Mark Rothko, Frank Stella and Franz Kline. In my paper, through the analyses of some of the works

of the latter artists, I intend to point out how visual abstraction can be interpreted through Kant's concept of the sublime and the direct or indirect impact Kant's ideas had on modern art and the art theory of the modernity. In addition to all of this, my aim through the analysis is also to point out the subtle differences that can be distinguished between the conceptual solutions of non-figurative paintings and within the aesthetic quality of the sublime.

**Keywords:** Immanuel Kant, sublime, abstraction, visual art

### **Zoltán Ábrahám**

#### **Martha Nussbaum and the Kantian cosmopolitanism**

Our age of globalisation (as well as that of the 'clash of civilisations') has urged theoreticians to reconsider and re-evaluate the cosmopolitan aspect of Kant's philosophy. My paper focuses on Martha Nussbaum's work because she identifies herself as an heir of cosmopolitan thought. As a first step, I intend to display the motives that urged the philosopher to rethink her position concerning Kant's moral philosophy, especially in the context of Nietzschean questioning of the legitimacy of the Enlightenment project of justifying morality. As a second step, I show why, for her, the central notion proves to be the 'cosmopolitanism' connecting Kant with the stoic tradition. I argue that for Nussbaum, it is crucial to make plausible that the Kantian and the Stoic moral philosophy are compatible.

**Keywords:** Cosmopolitanism, Kant, morality, Nussbaum, Stoicism

### **Csaba Olay**

#### **Perpetual Peace in international relations**

Kant's writing on perpetual peace holds a special status. The text addresses states, or more precisely nations organized in states, in form of a treaty proposal aimed at establishing peace beyond mere cease-fire – a structurally long-lasting peace. This paper focuses on this issue,

investigating Kant's renowned work in the context of international relations, with a particular emphasis on the problem of durable peace. The paper first examines the conceptual difficulties surrounding the notion of war, a necessary step for clarifying the concept of peace. The second part explores Kant's conception of republican or democratic peace. Finally, the discussion addresses the theory of democratic peace in international relations. It will be argued that the nature of military conflicts changed after WWII, rendering Kant's argumentation less applicable to the new context.

**Keywords:** Kant, democratic peace, new wars

### Miklós Mesterházi

#### On Providence, with a Cosmopolitan Aim

His lay and scholarly readers have somehow always considered Kant's smaller historical-philosophical writings to be diversions. Which could be explained several ways. Kant himself somehow seems to have considered them digressions of sorts, at times not even self-imposed ones – his remarks about the conditions of the origin of a *Cosmopolitan Aim* are well-known –, or considered them leisurely excursions from the world of science into the *Gelehrsamkeit* (setting the task of the lectures in anthropology for himself while studying at the university). Yet, more importantly, in the introductory pages of his *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, Kant himself seems to question the methodological reliability of the very undertaking in which he experiments with elaborating his “favourite notion”. And what has further harmed the reputation of the writings in question is that the reasoning in some of these historical-philosophical writings argues for Evil (not simply *Übel* but precisely *Böse*) in the service of Good (the progress towards a cosmopolitan condition), (even though Kant registered the morally questionable nature of his own argumentation) – with which Kant provoked the resentment of posterity, since the critics of the genre find the main vice of historical-philosophy in precisely this, the justification of Evil. The present paper argues for Kant in that the *Denkfigur* of Evil turning into Good did not only tempt historical philosophy, but remains a constant temptation for us, and so we cannot shake our vices off by having blamed them on the genre of historical philosophy – and that it is precisely the observations/restrictions concerning methodology that seem to argue that Kant did not think his

“favourite idea” could be taken seriously, argue in fact that the excesses of historical philosophy are worth taking into serious consideration.

**Keywords:** Kant’s *Idea for a Universal History*; the justification of Evil, private vices, public benefits, Kant’s methodological considerations concerning philosophy of history, what nature’s original design is not good for