

Philosophische Schriften

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Band 96

**Reflexion, Gefühl, Identität  
im Anschluß an Kant**

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**Reflection, Emotion, Identity.  
From Kant Onwards**

Herausgegeben von

**Ana Marta González  
und Alejandro G. Vigo**



**Duncker & Humblot · Berlin**

ANA MARTA GONZÁLEZ/ALEJANDRO G. VIGO (Hrsg.)

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Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in  
der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten  
sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

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Druck: CPI buchbücher.de gmbh, Birkach

Printed in Germany

ISSN 0935-6053

ISBN 978-3-428-15778-5 (Print)

ISBN 978-3-428-55778-3 (E-Book)

ISBN 978-3-428-85778-4 (Print & E-Book)

Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem (säurefreiem) Papier  
entsprechend ISO 9706 ☼

Internet: <http://www.duncker-humblot.de>

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## Introduction

### Sentiment and Reflexivity: Kantian Approaches to the Unfolding of the Human World

Ana Marta González and Alejandro G. Vigo

The present collection brings together the work of scholars interested in highlighting the role of reflexivity and sentiment in Kant's philosophy. It began with three papers by Ana Marta González, Nuria Sánchez Madrid and Alejandro G. Vigo, which were presented at a seminar held at the University of Navarra in 2015,<sup>1</sup> and to complete the collection, contributions from Christel Fricke, Soledad García Ferrer, Alba Jiménez and Mariano Crespo were subsequently added. The result is a stimulating volume that illuminates the possibilities implicit in Kant's philosophy to account for the unfolding of a human world, an interest shared by much of contemporary Kantian scholarship.

If philosophy is by definition a reflective endeavor, Kant's writings document a particularly powerful philosophical enterprise not only because he constitutes reflexivity itself as the cornerstone of the philosophical method, but also because, in doing so, he unveils fundamental structures of human subjectivity. As a result, it becomes all the clearer why philosophy, since Socrates was first challenged with self-knowledge, was never meant to concern itself merely with the objects in the world, but rather is called to focus its attention on the subject of experience, as well as on the structure of that experience.

Accordingly, Kant's three *Critiques* explicitly brought to the fore that there are many forms of experience, which should be suitably differentiated. Thus, the experience of knowledge, as determined in the first *Critique*, should not be confused with moral experience as examined in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, and neither should the latter be confused with aesthetic experience, or the search for meaning, that Kant explores in the *Critique of Judgment*.

Authors in this volume have succeeded in highlighting how Kant's commitment to reflexivity represents a privileged gateway to exploring the complexity

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<sup>1</sup> The Seminar "Sentiments and Reflexivity" was hosted by the "Action, Emotions and Identity" project (FFI2012-38737-C03-01), funded by the Spanish Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad.



and richness of human experience. Covered topics include the depth of the Kantian approach to aesthetic sentiment (Christel Fricke), the unexpected role Kant reserved for happiness in politics (Soledad G. Ferrer), the manifold meanings of Kant's notion of humanity (Ana Marta Gonzalez), the sentimental conditions of morality (Alba Jimenez), the social and worldly context implicit in Kantian prudence (Nuria Sanchez Madrid), and the disclosure of further experiences through the liberation of sentiment (Alejandro G. Vigo). How these kantian insights lay out the ground for further developments on the role of feeling and sentiment in the articulation of personal identity is well illustrated by the case of Husserl (Mariano Crespo).

While philosophers have always dealt with aesthetics or morality as integral parts of human experience, Kant's work invites reflection on the principles governing those experiences, as well as on the human quest for the ideal world, which is so deeply engraved in our finite reason. Along these lines, Kant's philosophy represents a distinctive position that is far from empiricist approaches to human experience, yet is deeply aware of human finitude.

Indeed, the manifold varieties of experience that Kant highlights in his main works are witnesses to the finitude of our reason, which depends on empirical data, but also desires the unconditioned. Aesthetic and moral experiences are particularly eloquent in this regard, insofar as both experiences include a reference to our sensible nature, which nevertheless would be insufficient to generate those peculiar experiences in absence of the work of either understanding or reason.

In light of those experiences, however, it becomes clear that aesthetic and moral sentiment represent for Kant a particular site of human reflexivity: they are indicators of the work of Understanding and Reason when confronted with empirical data or empirical incentives. What emerges, in the meantime, is a specifically human world that is marked by different kinds of normativity and that reminds us of the distance between facts and ideals when it comes to lived human reality.

## Reflective Sentimentalism in Aesthetics:

### Hume's Question and Kant's Answer

Christel Fricke

Both Hume and Kant held the view that aesthetic judgments concerning beauty are based on sentiments of aesthetic approval or disapproval. And both were puzzled by what their inquiries into our common practices of making aesthetic judgments revealed. When looking at the way different people aesthetically respond to one and the same object, they found a great variety of sentiments and a corresponding disagreement on matters of aesthetic judgment. But they also found a widely held belief according to which not all of these sentiments were equally reliable sources for making right or well-grounded aesthetic judgments, that is, aesthetic judgments that other people have reasons to agree with. Today, our practices of aesthetic appraisal reveal the same puzzling phenomena: various kinds of objects, including in particular the works of modern and contemporary artists, give rise to widely diverging sentiments and aesthetic judgments; nevertheless, we have not given up our belief that, in matters of aesthetic judgment, there is a distinction between right and wrong and that not every aesthetic judgment is equally well-grounded.

These empirical findings are philosophically puzzling because they seem to provide evidence for incompatible conclusions. Whereas the actual diversity of aesthetic sentiments and judgments about one and the same object seems to speak in favour of aesthetic anti-realism, of an expressivist account of aesthetic judgments and a subjectivist and relativist account of aesthetic value, the common belief that aesthetic judgments can be more or less justified seems to speak in favour of a realist account of aesthetic judgments and an objectivist account of aesthetic value:

“...the proverb has justly determined it to be fruitless to dispute concerning tastes ... But though this axiom, by passing into a proverb, seems to have attained the sanction of common sense; there is certainly a species of common sense which opposes it...”  
(*SoT*, p. 230).

In response to this puzzle, both Hume and Kant tried to pave a way to a third mode of understanding the aesthetic judgment and its underlying semantic, metaphysical, and epistemic commitments: Put in contemporary terms, their claim