
Reflexion, Gefühl, Identität in Anschluß an Kant/Reflection, Emotion, Identity. From Kant Onwards. Ed. by **Ana Marta González** and **Alejandro G. Vigo**. Berlin 2019, 130 p., ISBN 9783428157785.

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Since Socrates, philosophy has been challenged with self-knowledge – write the editors in their introduction – which has never been meant “to concern itself primarily 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” (7). The present collection brings together the work of scholars interested in highlighting the role of reflexivity and sentiment in Kant’s philosophy. A first batch of papers was discussed at a seminar on “Sentiments and Reflexivity” held at the University of Navarra in 2015, and a second batch was added subsequently.

In his *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften*, Wilhelm Dilthey suggested grounding the human sciences in historically situated self-reflective awareness. He used the term *Innewerden* insofar as reflection is immediate and not given like an external object. Dilthey talks about “that which I experience in myself” insofar as “it is present for me as a fact of consciousness because I am reflectively aware of it: a fact of consciousness is precisely what I possess in reflective awareness” (GS1: 394, SW1: 227–228). Reflection is one pillar of the sociology of knowledge, for it structures human beliefs regarding the circular relationship between cause and effect. More precisely, reflection denotes the activity of self-referring, the internal conversation of one who is about to consider an action or an examination. Since “we deliberate about our circumstances in relation to

ourselves and, in light of these deliberations, we determine our own personal courses of action in society” – as Margaret Archer has put it – “our human powers of reflexivity have causal efficacy – towards ourselves, our society and relations between them” (*Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/New York 2003, 167).

If philosophy is by definition a reflective endeavor, Kant’s writings document a particularly powerful philosophical enterprise not only because Kant constitutes reflexivity itself as the cornerstone of his philosophical method but also because, in doing so, he unveils fundamental structures of human subjectivity. Kant made it clear in his *Reflexion über die Logik 2527* that to become a self-determined cognitive agent, the human being needs reflection because prejudices are based on cognitive passivity, on the “inclination ... towards the mechanism of reason rather than towards its spontaneity under law” (AA 16: 406[5–6]). Reflection emerges as the faculty and activity that stands at the intersection of reason in its practical and theoretical uses. The notion of reflection describes a process that relies on individuals who reflectively appropriate content and become producers of new knowledge once they share it. As the faculty and activity that stands at the intersection of reason in its practical and theoretical uses, reflection is labeled one of the most important of personal emergent properties. Reflection is proof of “the reality of the life of the mind” (Archer, *op. cit.*, 35).

The first philosopher of reflection was Johann Gottfried Herder. Herder considered reflection a process, a general function of the human being for isolating content “from the whole wavering dream of images rushing” through his/her senses, collecting “into a moment of waking,” dwelling “on one image spontaneously,” observing “it dearly and more quietly,” and finally abstracting characteristics showing him/her “that this and no other is the object” (*Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*, Voß, Berlin 1772, 52–53). Thus, the experience of knowledge, as determined in the first *Critique*, should not be confused with reflective perception as elements of a “reflective path towards the liberation of sentiment”, as highlighted by Alejandro G. Vigo (105–117), which Mariano Crespo rethinks for questioning the role of feelings in the shaping of personal identity, this time from the point of view of phenomenology, discussing Edmund Husserl, Max Scheler, Alexander Pfänder and recently Roberta De Monticelli (119–130). Moral experience as examined in the *Critique of Practical Reason* is considered from the innovative perspective of “revolutionary happiness” by Soledad García Ferrer (27–39), while Ana Marta González delves into “practical identity” (41–70), Alba Jiménez into the “folds of sentiment” (71–90), and Nuria Sánchez Madrid into Kant’s “theory of prudence” (91–104). The search for meaning – which Kant explores in the *Critique of Judgment* – is at issue in the contribution by Christel Fricke on “reflective sentimentalism” (9–26).

In the meantime, Melissa Merritt has dedicated a full monograph to *Kant on Reflection and Virtue* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/New York 2018). Most unfortunately, none of the authors of this collection has had the time to include a discussion of Merritt's comprehensive reconstruction. What they offer instead is a consideration of how Kant's three *Critiques* bring to the fore the notion that there are as many forms of experience, which should be suitably differentiated. Kant's work "invites reflection on the principles governing those experiences, as well as on the human quest for the ideal world, which is 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" (7).

The biggest challenges of this century, i. e., globalization, climate change, biodiversity collapse, and disaster risk reduction, ask for a philosophical narrative, and what Kant has written on reflection and virtue is the key to shaping the effort. Reflection has become a common denominator for policies in education, culture, and research. It is useful to recall that the Council of Europe's *Faro Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* explicitly encourages reflection on the role of citizens in the process of defining, creating, and managing a cultural environment in which communities evolve.