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Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason, by Sebastian Gardner. London: Routledge, 1999. Pp. xiv + 377. H/b £45.00, P/b £8.99.

Sebastian Gardner claims a modest goal for his noteworthy new book, *Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason*, a *Routledge Philosophy Guide Book*. He states that the most a brief commentary such as his own can hope to accomplish is to 'communicate a broad picture of what Kant says in the *Critique*' (p. xiii), thereby providing a framework for further study. But Gardner's achievement far surpasses his stated goal. In his clear and well-organized book, Gardner succeeds in providing a charitable and compelling reading of the most important sections of Kant's text, while also offering fresh and lucid interpretations of Kant's most provocative arguments. The result is an invaluable companion to the *Critique* that helpfully illuminates a notoriously opaque work.

Gardner's success is due, at least in part, to the attitude with which he approaches Kant's *Critique*. He favours commentary that treats transcendental idealism as '(at the very least) a highly interesting philosophical project' rather than 'a mere curiosity in the history of philosophy' (p. xii). Accordingly, his exegesis and analysis is motivated by a rehabilitative attitude toward Kant's doctrines and framed by a desire to explain, in particular, Kant's defence of transcendental idealism; this is as it should be in a commentary devoted to Kant's most important and influential work. Gardner does not, however, play the role of an apologist. On the contrary, by providing a careful and close reading of Kant's own text, interpreting it in the context of the philosophical milieu in which Kant's arguments developed while simultaneously capturing their time-honoured force, Gardner produces a balanced reconstruction and defence of Kant's most compelling claims.

Gardner uses Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism as a thread with which to stitch together the many seemingly disparate ideas and theories advanced in the *Critique*. In analysing arguments from the Aesthetic, Analytic, and Dialectic, Gardner consistently maintains that Kant's chief goal was to develop and defend a form of idealism that is strictly distinct from Berkeleyan idealism and Lockean realism. Consequently, Gardner's discussions of Kantian themes as diverse as the transcendental unity of apperception and the cosmological antinomy, the sensible form of experience and the problematic intelligible world, are each informed by a well-developed explication of transcendental idealism.

In order to make Kant's idealism accessible to the reader (or, at the very least, to make it significantly more accessible than Kant himself manages to

do), Gardner draws an extended comparison between the transcendental idealism that Kant defends and the sort of transcendental realism that he takes Kant to reject. This may seem an obvious way of proceeding in trying to understand any philosophical attitude: get clear on what sort of view is being rejected in order to understand the favoured alternative. But despite the salience of this approach, it is a difficult feat with respect to Kant's transcendental idealism; one must grasp the subtleties of empirical idealism, empirical realism and transcendental realism in order to draw a proper contrast and fully characterize Kant's own view. Gardner not only succeeds in making out the necessary contrasts, but also reminds the reader at every turn what sort of views Kant wants to resist and what sort he wants to embrace. I expect it will come as a welcome relief to many students of Kant finally to have a detailed view of the perspective of a transcendental *realist*, and a commensurately deeper understanding of Kant's revolution in epistemology.

Gardner begins his book with a helpful introduction that situates Kant's critical thought relative to both his rationalist and empiricist predecessors as well as to his own earlier views. This discussion traces Kant's philosophical development via the possibility of objecthood, what Gardner deems the 'problem of reality': 'a generalised version of the Critical problem identified in the letter to Herz' (p. 33). In Kant's own words this problem amounts to finding an answer to the following question: 'what is the ground of the relation of that in us which we call "representation" to the object?' (p. 28) Gardner subsequently shows how Kant solves the problem of reality in the *Critique* by effecting the Copernican revolution; distinguishing between appearance and thing-in-itself; and identifying the bounds of our possible experience on the basis of the limitations of our cognitive constitution. These traditional Kantian themes are illuminated and explained with great subtlety. Despite treading well-worn ground, Gardner never falls back on clichéd illustrations or misleading caricatures of Kant's ideas.

Gardner proceeds to analyse all of the key arguments from the Aesthetic, Analytic, and Dialectic, always invoking transcendental idealism as Kant's chief philosophical goal. The material is dense (owing of course to the far greater density of the *Critique* itself) but always readable and never tedious. His analyses are refreshing in a unique sense: though they unavoidably rely on Kant's own technical terminology, they are genuinely enlightening for being both explications *and* interpretations. That is, Gardner explains Kant's arguments in Kant's own terms—having also, of course, explained those very terms—while providing a fresh and original reading that faces all the major objections brought to bear on Kant's thought by previous commentary.

For example, in an early chapter entitled 'How are synthetic a priori judgements possible? (The Introduction)', Gardner devotes considerable space to developing a Kantian response to the challenges faced by the analytic/synthetic distinction in the centuries since Kant originated the notion. Further, Gardner's discussion of the forms of sensibility is especially thorough and ambi-

tious: he shows how Kant's metaphysical exposition of space is augmented by both the so-called 'argument from geometry' and the argument from incongruent counterparts, helping Kant to escape from the challenge posed by non-Euclidean geometry. To this end, he makes very effective use of Kant's notoriously obscure distinction between form of intuition and formal intuition, a distinction not typically addressed in a commentary of this kind.

In discussing Kant's idealism and its role throughout the *Critique*, Gardner emphasizes what he calls Kant's 'ontological denial': 'the full strength of Kant's transcendental idealism is grasped only when it is appreciated that Kant maintains not just that we *cannot* know that things in themselves *are* spatio-temporal, but that we *can* know that they are *not* spatio-temporal' (p. 99). This claim of Kant's needs defending, of course, and Gardner spends much subsequent discussion addressing it. His most powerful tool here is an interpretive methodology based on the claim that the Analytic is itself 'premised on the truth of transcendental idealism'. This interpretive attitude renders Gardner far more successful than previous commentators in his attempt to draw both metaphysical and epistemological morals from Kant's 'ontological denial'.

What is perhaps Gardner's most impressive discussion comes in a chapter late in the book where he knots the thread mentioned earlier: 'The Meaning of Transcendental Idealism'. In this chapter, Gardner defends Kant against Jacobi's famous charge that it is impossible to enter the Kantian system without the presupposition of the thing-in-itself and impossible to remain within the Kantian system with it. In order to assuage Jacobi's worry, Gardner must present a definitive answer to long-standing questions regarding the relationship between appearances and things-in-themselves. He does this admirably, surveying the usual double-object and double-aspect views and considering a new 'disjunctive' view, finally concluding that an indeterminate conception of objecthood and its application to the mind-independent realm is unavoidable. This discussion requires a final survey of the categories mentioned above: transcendental idealism; transcendental realism; empirical idealism; and empirical realism. Gardner clearly identifies Kant as, again, both a transcendental idealist and an empirical realist by contrasting his view with Berkeley's in a novel way: he argues that Berkeley's empirical idealism—from which Kant took pains to dissociate his own idealism—is at bottom a form of transcendental realism. The contrast Gardner makes is so vivid that the reader will find it difficult to believe that Kant's idealism was ever assimilated to Berkeley's.

I have merely described some highlights of Gardner's commentary, which surveys the *Critique* and, indeed, the critical philosophy, in its entirety. He provides interesting discussions of the Dialectic and transcendental illusion, as well as concluding chapters on Kant's practical philosophy and modern legacy. My complaints are very minor, the most serious being that the discussion of the Transcendental Deduction proceeds too quickly to interpretation and analysis and would be helped by a more deliberate rehearsal of the arguments. Admittedly, this weakness could be due to the especial obscurity of that partic-

ular portion of Kant's text; in any case, the sections on the Deduction do not benefit from Gardner's usual talent for organization and clarity. Other complaints are so minor as to be mere curiosities and not necessarily of general interest; for example, I wonder why Gardner persists in distinguishing mathematics from geometry, as if Kant himself meant to designate two different disciplines by the terms (which he did not). These small worries notwithstanding, Gardner's book is an invaluable resource for any student of Kant and, thus, for any student or teacher of philosophy.

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Sociality and Responsibility: New Essays in Plural Subject Theory, by Margaret Gilbert, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000. Pp. x + 180. H/b \$59. P/b \$20.

According to Margaret Gilbert, social groups, languages, and other social phenomena are plural subject phenomena, which means a special type of commitment, a joint commitment, underlies them. People who are jointly committed to something constitute a plural subject.

A joint commitment is a holistic concept insofar as 'it cannot be analyzed in terms of a sum or aggregate of personal commitments' (p. 3). In the realm of intention, if I understand correctly, we might speak of what we intend to accomplish as a team, and we may note how awkward and misleading it could be to try to reduce what we intend as a team to what each of us intends as individual players. We need not reify the team as a social organism or collective consciousness. In some perfectly ordinary sense there is nothing to the team beyond the individual members that make it up, and yet in an equally ordinary sense, when we function as a team, we are functioning as a plural subject, not or at least not only as individual subjects.

In the realm of belief, 'when people speak of what "we believe" or (in that sense) "accept", they typically refer to a situation involving a joint commitment to accept a certain proposition as a body' (p. 4). Gilbert takes collective belief to be an everyday phenomenon. Those who collectively believe *p* see themselves as jointly committed to believing *p* as a group. For better or worse, moreover, there is a cost to bucking the consensus. Those who do not subscribe to a collective belief tend to be viewed with suspicion. Thus, collective beliefs stifle private thoughts, 'inhibiting one from pursuing spontaneous doubts about the group view, inclining one to ignore evidence that suggests the falsity of that view' (p. 45). What she says is true, and I am glad to hear her