

KANT AND THE DOUBLE GOVERNMENT METHODOLOGY

A PALLAS PAPERBACK



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KANT AND THE DOUBLE GOVERNMENT METHODOLOGY

*Supersensibility and Method
in Kant's Philosophy of Science*

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For Mary Diamond

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	xiii
INTRODUCTION	1
Kant as Physician of the Soul	1
Spiritual Medicine: Placebo and Prevention	3
Data and Regulation	4
The Anomaly of the Supersensible	5
The Limits of Knowledge	6
The Leibnizian Background	7
Kant and DGM	10
A Summary of Things to Come	12
CHAPTER I/METAPHYSICAL EXPLANATION IN LEIBNIZ: THE MONADS	16
The Monadology	16
Perception and Perspective	17
Results to be Noted	20
The Received View of the Origins of the Monadology	22
Stress Yield Points and Pain Thresholds	24
A New Reading of Leibniz	26
The Monads Again	27
Leibniz' Gnostic Background	29
The Transition to DGM	33
Some High Stress Yield Points of Leibniz	36
From the Monads to Kant	41
CHAPTER II/LEIBNIZ ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS	44
The Methodological Angel	44
Angelic Explanation	45
Galileo and Plato	46
The God's-eye View	47
Empirical Adequacy	50
Mechanical Methodism	52
Angelic Alchemy	54
Angelic Logic	57
A Metaphysical Problem	59
A Speculative Postscript	61

CHAPTER III/KANT, ESP, AND THE INAUGURAL DISSERTATION	63
Kant's Departure from Leibniz: First Stage	63
Kant's Interest in the Paranormal	63
Departure from Leibniz: Second Stage	67
Swedenborg, the Ghostseer	70
Why did Kant Write <i>Träume</i> ?	71
Broad's Sociological Explanation	73
The Question of Anonymity	74
The Second Letter to Mendelssohn	77
Can Spirits be Located?	78
Spiritualism in the Lectures on Metaphysics	82
Supersensibility and the Inaugural Dissertation	88
The <i>Corpus Mysticum</i>	94
Sceptical Conclusions	96
Afternote to This Chapter	98
APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III/A TRANSLATION OF THOUGHTS ON THE TRUE ESTIMATION OF LIVING FORCES (SECT. 4)	99
How the Origin of Motion in Active Force can be Explicated in General	99
The Argument Restated and Applied to the Problem of Soul/Body Connection	100
CHAPTER IV/SOEMMERING AND EULER: SPACE AND THE SOUL	103
Space and the Paralogisms	103
Sömmering and the <i>sensorium commune</i>	104
Euler and the <i>corpus callosum</i>	106
Transition to the Critical Philosophy	115
CHAPTER V/KANT: SPACE AND THE SOUL	117
Kant's Space	117
The Soul Paralogized	127
The Presumed Idealism/Realism Tension in Kant	139
CHAPTER VI/RULES, IMAGES AND CONSTRUCTIONS: KANT'S CONSTRUCTIVE IDEALISM	146
Preliminaries	146
Kant's Schemata as Semantical Rules	151
An Example of Schematization	157
Schemata and the <i>Schwärmerei</i>	158

Je commence à entrevoir ce que j'appellerais le "sujet profond" de mon livre. C'est, ce sera sans doute la rivalité du monde réel et de la représentation que nous nous en faisons. La manière dont le monde des apparences s'impose à nous et dont nous tentons d'imposer au monde extérieur notre interprétation particulière, fait le drame de notre vie. La résistance des faits nous invite à transporter notre construction idéale dans le rêve, l'espérance, la vie future, en laquelle notre croyance s'alimente de tous nos déboires dans celle-ci. Les réalistes partent des faits, accommodent aux faits leurs idées. Bernard est un réaliste. Je crains de ne pouvoir m'entendre avec lui.

André Gide, *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* [1926]

PREFACE

This is a book about dreaming and knowing, and about thinking that one can ascertain the difference. It is a book about the Bernards of the world who would have us believe that there is a humanly uncreated world existing *en soi* that freely discloses its forever fixed ontology, even though they too must accept that many of the worlds we make as we try to understand ourselves are counterfeit. It is a book about the real estate of the human mind. The book is about Leibniz and Kant, and about methods of science. It is also about what is now called pseudo-science. It tries to show how Kant struggled to mark the limits of the humanly knowable, and how this struggle involved him in trying to answer questions of importance then and now. Some are philosophers' questions: the epistemological status of mathematics, the rôle of space and time in knowing, the nature of the conceptual constraints on our efforts to hypothesize the possible. Some are questions of perennial human interest: Can spirits exist? How is the soul related to the body? How can we legitimately talk about God, if at all? Finally, Kant teaches that these are all questions bearing on our entitlements in claiming to know.

Leibniz fashioned a way of talking about nature and super-nature that I call the Double Government Methodology. He thought that we can talk meaningfully about the machines of the earth and also about the reason and the will of God, and that these two ways of talking are complementary and mutually justified. Kant agreed that the methodology entailed by this double emphasis was the way of wisdom, but for many reasons he could not follow the lead of Leibniz in erecting a metaphysical system to account for this wise way. Kant was concerned as a philosopher about a phenomenon referred to as the *Schwärmerei*, an unnatural enthusiasm that corrupted religion and ethics, and promoted spiritualist and other fantasies. He thought of this fanaticism as being much like mental illness in its forms of operation. As a professional philosopher he was concerned about rational school metaphysical systems that pretended to be able to tell us about the universe and God by reasoned argument rather than by appeal to facts. Kant's critical philosophy is presented in this book as a response

to both fanaticism and metaphysics, to both Swedenborg the spiritualist and Leibniz the rationalist.

The book investigates prominent themes of this critical philosophy in order to establish the background for Kant's philosophy of science. Unlike other recent treatments of Kant's philosophy of science, the book looks closely at the medico-philosophical interests of Kant, interests that took expression in his lifelong preoccupation with the mind/body problem, his two attempts to classify mental illnesses, his conversion of classical rational psychology into psychopathology. There is discussion of a number of Kant's lesser known works, and neglected works in the Kant literature, including notes on his lectures. [In all of this I am dealing with some aspects of what the brothers Böhme (1983) refer to as *das Andere der Vernunft*, a realm of natural inclinations, desires, feelings, dreams, apparitions, fantasies. Unfortunately I learned of their fascinating book too late to make use of it in my own work.] These investigations set the stage for discussion of Kant's more technical philosophy, what I call his constructive idealism. The treatment of this idealism merges with my interpretation of Kant's philosophy of science, and leads on to a discussion of methodology in Kant, especially in the context of his views on teleology. The importance of teleology has not been emphasized enough in recent technical discussions of his philosophy of science.

My work on Kant has been helped in countless ways by continuing encouragement from many colleagues and from those of my students who have forced me to come to a better understanding of Kant. Paul Schrecker's extensive and deep knowledge of both Kant and Leibniz set me on my way. Howard Duncan read the book as it emerged from the word processor; he has prevented many mistakes, and has given me the considerable benefit of his own great knowledge of Kant. Andrew Lugg also read many parts of the book in early stages of preparation, and made valuable suggestions. Thomas Lennon, Magus of historical studies in philosophy in my department, set me straight on many points. I have benefitted from William Harper's enthusiastic interest in Kant. If the language of the book is technically apt, it is because Peggy Dragisic made it come out so. Lapses in style and imperfections in clarity of expression are not her fault, but mine. She also prepared the excellent index. Rob Hill, of Olivetti Canada, introduced me to the wonders of word processing. If there is anything of hope and grace in the book, if there are indications of some-

thing worthwhile stemming from its conditions of origin, all this is traceable to Mary's patience and to her love.

It is impossible for me to express in simple words my appreciation for the many contributions of *meiner Konstanzer Kollegen*: Klaus Mainzer, Hubert Schleichert, Peter Schroeder-Heister, Fritz Kambartel, Rolf Zimmermann, Gereon Wolters and Jürgen Mittelstrass. I met with most of the members of this group once a week during a delightful term as *Gastprofessur* in Universität Konstanz in the Spring and Summer of 1983. We discussed together the penultimate draft of the book. My good friend Jürgen Mittelstrass has had input of various kinds into many parts of the book. His support and cooperation over the years have made me understand how much one depends upon philosophical colleagues. This is a sentiment that applies with equal aptness to Gereon Wolters, whose tireless efforts on behalf of this work made for better and more accurate translations, disclosed literature unknown to me, and smoothed the work on the final draft in many ways. I am especially grateful to both Mittelstrass and Wolters for directing my attention to the career of Johann Jakob Feinhals (1702-1769). It is too soon to assess how well his subtle use of the *argumentum in distans* and his botanical work accord with other elements of the *Aufklärung*. [See *Enzyklopädie Philosophie und Wissenschaftstheorie*, I for appropriate references.]

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Robert E. Butts
London/Canada
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TO THE PAPERBACK EDITION

The publication of this edition has given me an opportunity to correct typographical errors in the original edition, and to make small changes in both style and substance. I am indebted to Lewis White Beck and William Shea for calling relevant but uncited Kantian texts to my attention (see Supplement to Bibliography, page 326). My colleague William Demopoulos offered an important correction (the reference to the theorem of Banach and Tarski on page 27). Paul Forster noted some mistakes in composition. I realized while writing the book that my interpretation of Kant's form of rejection of Leibniz would have been greatly strengthened by discussion of the exchange between Kant and Eberhard. So to proceed would have added another chapter to a book already too long. The relevant documents are translated by, and splendidly commented upon, by Henry E. Allison: *The Kant-Eberhard Controversy*. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press (1973). If I had written the chapter, I would have argued that the position Kant took in the controversy only rendered my interpretation of his departure from Leibniz more compelling. I now think this book will never be finished. I hope that this is one mark of a worthy book.

London/Canada
1 August 1986