

shows, is the background against which we make sense of our moral lives, including what is ours to give, and what counts as generosity. Taking injustice seriously raises many questions about how we should understand our duties – questions which this brilliant book gives us a lot of resources for thinking through.

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## Note

1 I have previously argued that, on Kant's account, under conditions of injustice we cannot fully make sense of our lives and our obligations, and that this gives an explanation of why, on Kant's account, we should expect all actual humans in the actual human condition to be radically structurally flawed agents and radically prone to moralizing self-deception (see Allais 2018, 2021).

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Gualtiero Lorini (2023) *Die anthropologische Normativität bei Kant*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann. pp. 151. ISBN 9783826072932 (pbk) 28.00€

Kant's anthropological works have attracted a great deal of attention in recent years, due in no small part to the multiple contested issues that these texts have generated. Does Kant's pragmatic anthropology also contain or at least imply a '*philosophia moralis applicata*, moral anthropology, to which the empirical principles belong' (V-Mo/Mron II 29:599)? Does it shed any light on his cryptic but alluring appeal to 'the self-cognition of understanding and reason. *Anthropologia transscendentalis*' (Refl 903, 15:395)? And, last but not least, how exactly do Kant's anthropological works relate to his better-known Critical philosophy? Do they constitute simply 'a sideline to his main work in Critical philosophy' and 'a mere diversion from it' (Zöller 2011:136)? Or does 'a mutually supplementary relation' (Zöller 2011:131) exist between the anthropological Kant and the Critical Kant (the details of which themselves are also

contested)? Or can we go further still and show that ‘anthropology is the true eye of philosophy’ (Louden 2021:46; cf. Refl 903, 15:395, Log 9:45)?

In *Die anthropologische Normativität bei Kant*, Gualtiero Lorini attempts to offer readers a new approach to Kant’s anthropology, according to which anthropology does not play a merely extrinsic role to the Critical philosophy but rather is intrinsic to it. As alluded to in the book’s title, the core of this new approach revolves around the concept of *normativity*. As Lorini states in his Introduction: ‘We aim primarily to achieve full recognition of the role of anthropology in the economy of Kant’s philosophy by adopting normativity as the key concept of all of this thought as a whole’ (p. 17). While other contemporary Kant scholars have also stressed the central role of normativity in Kant’s thought (see, e.g., Pollok 2017), in doing so they have focused exclusively on a priori norms associated with his Critical philosophy. However, what Lorini is trying to uncover is a specifically human normativity, one with an ‘anthropological dimension whose domain is by definition a posteriori’ (p. 17).

But how can mere a posteriori norms lay claim to being intrinsic to Kant’s Critical philosophy? How strong can such norms be, and how much guidance can one truly expect from them? To his credit, Lorini does not shy away from these questions, but the answers he offers remain somewhat incomplete. If a form of anthropological normativity can be found, he notes, ‘it must be defined as “weak”, that is, as a normativity that does not establish a priori facts and binding conditions in either the theoretical or practical domains’ (p. 123). And where if at all are such weak norms to be found in Kant’s anthropological works? Does he explicitly refer to them anywhere? The answer to this fundamental query seems a bit cloudy, but one hint is that many of Lorini’s citations are taken from Kant’s discussion of the progress of the human species in his philosophy of history writings, a part of his oeuvre that several scholars view as ‘a component of the anthropology’ (Brandt and Stark 1977: liii; cf. Sturm 2009: 355). Perhaps the most telling quotation is the following, taken from Kant’s second review of Herder’s *Ideas*, where he stresses that ‘the materials for an anthropology and [...] the method of their use in attempting a history of humanity in the whole of its vocation [...] must be sought neither in metaphysics nor in the cabinet of natural history [...] but solely in his [viz., the human being’s] actions, which reveal his character’ (RezHerder 8:56; cf. Lorini, p. 111). Lorini glosses this passage in part as follows: ‘In other words, anthropology allows us to find sufficient elements in the empirical course of human existence to believe that our actions can be traced back to an a priori normativity and thus foster a legitimate hope of achieving our final purpose’ (p. 111). But while the norms implied by this process certainly qualify as weak and a posteriori, they seem at best to be ‘necessary for’ rather than ‘intrinsic to’ the Critical philosophy.

*Die anthropologische Normativität bei Kant* is divided into four chapters, plus an Introduction, some brief Concluding Remarks, an Index of names mentioned in the text, and a Bibliography. In the Introduction, Lorini sets the stage for the ensuing treatment by discussing earlier trends in the scholarship on Kant’s anthropology, introducing the key concept of normativity, and offering readers a brief summary of each chapter. In Chapter 1 (‘Kant versus Baumgarten: The Root of Anthropological Normativity’), Lorini focuses on both Kant’s debt to and departure from Alexander Baumgarten’s discussion of empirical psychology in his *Metaphysics* (see Baumgarten 2013). In the *Anthropology Mrongovius*, Kant himself announces that

'Baumgarten's empirical psychology is the best guide' to anthropology, while adding that 'his book only concerns what is scholastic' (V-Anth/Mron 25:1214). Of particular interest in Chapter 1 is Lorini's discussion of 'the development of Kant's concept of the I' (p. 18), which is where he claims we first find 'traces of normativity in Kant's conception of anthropology' (see pp. 51–54). In Chapter 2 ('Objectivity and Normativity from an Anthropological Point of View'), this focus on the development of Kant's 'I' continues, understood now as an 'I in the World', access to which 'can only be understood as an entry to a dimension of norms that makes possible relations with other beings, also endowed with reason' (p. 19).

Chapter 3, 'Normativity in the World: The Cosmopolitan "Calling" in Anthropology', extends the search for a posteriori norms by examining Kant's cosmopolitan project, the endpoint of which is described by Kant in the final sentence of the *Anthropology* as 'a progressive organization of citizens of the earth into and toward a system that is cosmopolitically united' (Anth 7:333). However, even if these anthropological norms are consistently adhered to, they offer no guarantee that humans will actually become cosmopolitically united: 'anthropology can provide clues for the realization of this progress that, while necessary, are nevertheless insufficient, proving the structural weakness of anthropological normativity' (p. 20; cf. pp. 86–93).

Chapter 4 ('The Anthropological Boundary of the Order of Providence in History') continues along the social-historical path of the previous chapter and ends at 'the boundary of anthropology' (p. 116): viz., moralization, the final stage of human progress after culture and civilization. Even though this final stage 'is still far away' (p. 118) – in part because, as Kant pointedly notes in the *Menschenkunde*, 'we have done almost nothing' to get there (V-Anth/Mensch 25:1198) – 'and above all cannot be reached at the anthropological level, morality is a summit to be glimpsed even at this level' (p. 118). As Lorini notes (see p. 97), Kant's conviction that 'there must be something *moral*' (SF 7:87) in the French Revolution is one such glimpse of the summit.

Finally, in his Concluding Remarks Lorini begins by taking readers briefly down an unexpected path, namely Michel Foucault's 'provocative reading of Kant's anthropology and its relation to' Kant's first *Critique* (p. 21; see 'Foucault and the Path of Repetition', pp. 124–30). But the main point of the Concluding Remarks is to reinforce the book's central theme of normativity as a way of linking anthropology to the Critical philosophy: 'The crucial element that allows us to see anthropology in fact as a strengthening of the Critical-transcendental system – and not as a mere line of research seemingly independent of it – lies precisely in the fact that normativity, arising from the specific critical idea of objectivity, experiences an extension of its scope in the anthropological field' (p. 21).

Each chapter includes extensive and illustrative references not only to Kant's own writings but also to the growing secondary literature on Kant's anthropology. And the latter include citations not just from the usual suspects writing in English and German but also to a number of contemporary scholars writing in Italian, French, and Spanish. One concluding criticism: Lorini's heavy emphasis on the 'I' as the root of anthropological normativity, while raising the philosophical stakes of this part of the Kantian corpus, at the same time shuts out much of the actual content of Kant's anthropology. While he recognizes (see pp. 41–2) that it is in fact only the first part of the anthropology lectures (viz., the *Didaktik*) that takes off from Baumgarten's empirical psychology, the second part (viz., the *Charakteristik*) – where

one finds Kant's discussions of the character of the person, the human sexes, peoples, races, and the species as a whole – receives no attention in this book. The result is a somewhat sanitized anthropology, albeit one that may well be of more interest to a traditional philosophical readership.

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Susan Meld Shell (2022) *The Politics of Beauty: A Study of Kant's Critique of Taste*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 75. ISBN 9781009011808 (pbk) \$22.00

Susan Meld Shell's *The Politics of Beauty* is a wonderful and erudite contribution to the rapidly growing body of literature on Kant's *Critique of Judgement*. It is one in a relatively new series of books called Cambridge Elements. The list of titles under the 'Philosophy of Immanuel Kant' division of the series is fast becoming impressive. The series consists of shorter texts – too short for a traditional manuscript but too long for a journal article or book chapter – and is billed to readers as offering 'original, succinct, authoritative' books that 'provide a dynamic reference resource'. This book does not disappoint, and the format of the series is perfect for Shell's topic: the Critique of Aesthetic Judgement (or, as she designates it, the Critique of Taste). Shell is the author already of three books on Kant, in addition to a trove of articles and book chapters. Her two principal works – *The Embodiment of Reason: Kant on Spirit, Generation and Community* (University of Chicago Press, 1996), and *Kant and the Limits of Autonomy* (Harvard University Press, 2009) – were both texts that, at the time, challenged the prevailing approaches to Kant's Critical works. These books did not start from received scholarly debates, but with what Shell has consistently observed in Kant throughout her own writing on him: a deep tension constituting the being of the human being as a rational animal. Shell's work has long recognised Kant's complicated humanistic core, and likewise disavowed caricatures of his thought, particularly in his practical philosophy. While much of the literature has caught up to her insights about the nuanced and complex relation between the various sites of human finitude and reason in Kant, this book once again will likely set the curve