

AUTHOR MEETS CRITICS

# Why Did Kant Conceive of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a Critique? Comments on Gabriele Gava's *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and the Method of Metaphysics*

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## Abstract

My response to Gabriele Gava's *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and the Method of Metaphysics* (2023) focuses on Kant's conception of the role of critique in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. On my account, Gava's emphasis on the constructive elements of the *Critique* downplays the critique of former metaphysics elaborated in all three parts of the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements. After some comments on Kant's conception of the *Critique* as a doctrine of method, I support this view by discussing the relation between transcendental philosophy and transcendental critique, Kant's analysis of the faculties, and his transcendental deduction of space.

**Keywords:** Kant; *Critique of Pure Reason*; critique; faculty analysis; transcendental deduction of space

## I. Introduction

Questions raised in and by Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* continue to animate philosophy in many different ways. Most likely, Kant himself would not have been interested in all of them, and a number of the questions his work invite have led to deeply entrenched positions he could not have foreseen, let alone appreciated.

One of the great assets of Gabriele Gava's *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and the Method of Metaphysics* is that it foregrounds a set of questions that stem directly from the *Critique* itself yet have attracted remarkably little attention. Rather than offering detailed accounts of much-debated issues such as Kant's idealism, realism, conceptualism, and the thing in itself, Gava focuses on the question as to why Kant proceeded the way he did and, more specifically, on the role of the *Critique* in its capacity as doctrine of method of metaphysics. In so doing, Gava rightly gives pride of place to metaphilosophical concerns that most interpretations tend to marginalize. His monograph offers a holistic interpretation that presents core aspects of the *Critique* in a new light. Moreover, he rightly shifts the focus of attention from Kant's investigation into the a priori elements of experience to the question as to how metaphysics can be developed in a scientific manner.

In this regard, Gava's book is aligned with two recent publications on Kant and German idealism: Jelscha Schmid's monograph *The Methods of Metaphilosophy: Kant, Maimon, and Schelling on how to Philosophize about Philosophy* (Schmid 2022) and a volume edited by Dunphy and Lovat titled *Metaphysics as a Science in Classical German Philosophy* (Dunphy and Lovat 2023). It is also aligned with my own *Kant's Reform of Metaphysics: The Critique of Pure Reason Reconsidered* (De Boer 2020). As regards its focus on the task of a doctrine of method, however, Gava's contribution breaks completely new ground and invites us to reconsider many of the ways in which the *Critique's* questions have been framed and answered by Kant's contemporaries and successors as well as later commentators.

Evidently, the new direction that Gava's monograph explores leads to new questions and further reflections. The questions I address in what follows concern in particular the tasks he considers Kant to assign to, respectively, transcendental philosophy and critique. I agree with Gava that Kant ultimately conceived of his critique of metaphysics as a means toward the end of establishing metaphysics as a science. As I see it, however, Gava's emphasis on the constructive elements of the *Critique* risks to downplay the role of the critique of former metaphysics elaborated in all three parts of the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements. While Gava does devote two chapters to the critical strand of the *Critique*, he in my view does not sufficiently account for Kant's assertion that this work as a whole seeks to establish 'the touchstone of the worth or worthlessness of all cognitions a priori' (A12/B26) and, thus, for the normative dimension of the *Critique* as a whole. In short, his account invites the question as to why Kant decided to call his work a *critique* of pure reason.

After some comments on Kant's conception of the *Critique* as a doctrine of method (section 2), I challenge Gava's interpretation of Kant's account of the relation between transcendental philosophy and transcendental critique (section 3). In my opinion, the difference between our approaches is not merely a matter of terminology. I seek to support this view by discussing the critical aspects of Kant's analysis of the faculties (section 4) and his transcendental deduction of space (section 5).

## 2. Kant's conception of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a doctrine of method

As Gava points out, Kant's assertion that the *Critique* as a whole is a doctrine of method (A82-3/B108-9, cf. Bxxii) is a conundrum, not in the least because the second main part of the work is also called a Transcendental Doctrine of Method. I agree with his suggestion that Kant took the *Critique* as a whole to carry out the task of a doctrine of method in the sense that it treats the conditions under which metaphysics can be turned into a science. This investigation concerns not primarily the method to be employed in metaphysics but is motivated by the attempt to show how metaphysics can overcome the controversies that dominate its history and, hence, assume a systematic form (Gava 2023: 2, 6, 59).<sup>1</sup> Seen in this way, it is plausible to regard the *Critique* as a whole as the doctrine of method of metaphysics in a broad sense, whereas the Transcendental Doctrine of Method that complements the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements deals with the question as to how metaphysics can be turned into a science in a stricter sense.

However, I was not satisfied with Gava's proposed solution to the puzzle in all regards. As he points out, Kant accepted the view that a doctrine of method can only

be elaborated *after* the discipline at hand has already been developed (Gava 2023: 2, cf. A52/B76-7). Gava takes this to be the case insofar as the Transcendental Doctrine of Method follows on the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements, which contains a preliminary and limited version of the first-order metaphysics Kant calls transcendental philosophy (58–60). Yet Gava does not seem to specify in which sense the *Critique* as a whole, considered as a doctrine of method, can be said to follow the actual development of metaphysics. It seems to me that the *Critique* does so in the sense that it ensues from a long history of attempts to develop metaphysics in a scientific manner. Seen from Kant's perspective, these attempts had to fail precisely because they lacked a proper guiding thread, i.e., a schema. As he puts it in the Architectonic:

No one attempts to establish a science without relying on an idea. But in its elaboration, the schema, indeed even the definition of the science which he gives right at the outset, seldom corresponds to his idea; for the latter [definition] lies in reason like a seed whose parts are as yet fully undeveloped and hidden from view. . . . For this reason, sciences . . . must not be explained and determined according to the description provided by their founder, but rather according to the idea of which one discovers the ground in reason itself by considering the natural unity of the parts he had brought together. For we see that the founder and often even his most recent successors grope with an idea that they have not been able to make clear to themselves and therefore cannot determine the specific content, the articulation (systematic unity), and boundaries of the science. (A834/B862, translation modified; cf. A835/B863)

Kant's comments can certainly be applied to the history of metaphysics. Seen from a historical vantage point, Aristotle, Leibniz, and Wolff grasped the very idea of metaphysics but were unable to elaborate their metaphysical doctrines according to a plan derived from this idea. An adequate elaboration of metaphysics requires that the metaphysician interrupt the building process so as to inquire into the very possibility of the science as well as to design an adequate building plan. According to the 1781 Introduction, earlier metaphysicians considered it natural to erect 'an edifice with cognitions that one possesses without knowing whence, and on the credit of principles whose origin one does not know, without having first assured oneself of its foundation through careful investigations' and raising the question as to 'how the understanding could come to all these cognitions a priori and what domain, validity, and value they might have' (A3-4/B7).

If Kant's understanding of the history of metaphysics is taken into account, it is possible to regard the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a hinge between, on the one hand, a history of failed elaborations of the idea of metaphysics (cf. A835/B863) and, on the other hand, a properly scientific elaboration of the discipline. In the former respect, the *Critique* can provide metaphysics with a doctrine of method that could not have been developed at an earlier stage. In the latter respect, it can serve as a propaedeutic to the scientific metaphysical system outlined in the Architectonic. While this view does not contradict Gava's, it seems to me that Kant's account is easier to understand if we take into account the role of the *Critique* in relation to the history of metaphysics. Gava, by contrast, gives more weight to Kant's first-order elaboration of transcendental philosophy within the *Critique* itself.

### 3. Critique and transcendental philosophy

Another asset of Gava's reading is his emphasis on Kant's assertion in the Introduction that the *Critique* itself contains both a critique and a preliminary elaboration of transcendental philosophy (63). Unlike many other accounts, Gava's does justice to the layered nature of the work. However, I am not convinced that the various aspects of what Kant is actually doing in the *Critique* map onto Kant's division of labour between transcendental philosophy and transcendental critique as understood by Gava. In order to tackle this problem, it is useful to start from Kant's well-known definition of transcendental philosophy in the Introduction:

I call all cognition transcendental that is occupied not so much with objects but rather with our a priori concepts of objects as such. A system of such concepts would be called transcendental philosophy. (A12, cf. B25)

The remainder of the passage suggests that Kant here uses the term 'transcendental philosophy' to refer to his projected metaphysical system, since the *Critique* itself does not actualize the idea of such a system in a comprehensive manner (A12/B26). Yet I agree with Gava that Kant's accounts of space and time, the categories and the ideas of pure reason represent a preliminary elaboration of transcendental philosophy qua first-order metaphysical discipline (69–72).<sup>2</sup>

According to Kant, this properly systematic strand of the *Critique* can be limited to an account of the 'entire scope' of the principles of the pure understanding (A12/B25–6) and, I add, of their elements, because the *Critique* is intended to determine the warranted use of these principles alone. As was mentioned in the introduction, Kant refers to this normative task as transcendental critique:

This investigation, which we can properly call not doctrine but only transcendental critique, . . . does not aim at the amplification of cognitions themselves but only at their correction, and is to supply the touchstone of the worth or worthlessness of all cognitions a priori. (A12/B26)

While Kant's various definitions of transcendental philosophy and transcendental critique are hard to square, he here unambiguously associates the former with systematicity and the latter with the normative limitation of a priori cognitions to possible objects of experience.

According to Gava, however, Kant's actual division of labour is more complicated than this passage suggests. On his account,

there are two disciplines that are established within the pages of the *Critique*: transcendental philosophy, as one part of metaphysics, and the critique of pure reason, as that discipline within the *Critique* that achieves the latter's aim as the doctrine of method of metaphysics. (5)

Gava further takes transcendental philosophy, for its part, to achieve 'two main tasks', namely, identifying the relevant root concepts by tracing them to their origin in a particular cognitive activity (which occurs in the metaphysical deductions) and establishing their validity (which occurs in the transcendental deductions) (5). More

specifically, he claims that the transcendental deductions examine the valid use of pure concepts with the aim of ‘establishing positive results’ rather than setting limits to what can be known a priori (5–6, cf. 12, 74).

Gava’s contention that one strand of Kant’s second-order investigation into the valid use of pure concepts belongs to transcendental philosophy rather than transcendental critique might be considered to chime in with the very first paragraph of the Transcendental Analytic. Kant here writes:

I understand by an analytic of concepts . . . the as yet rarely attempted analysis of the faculty of understanding itself, in order to inquire into the possibility of a priori concepts by seeking them only in the understanding as their birthplace and analyzing the latter’s pure use as such; for this is the proper business of a transcendental philosophy. (A66/B91, translation modified; see Gava 2023: 62)

Whereas the emphasis of this passage is on the identification of the categories, Kant in fact attributes two complementary tasks to transcendental philosophy in this context, namely the *identification* of the categories and the examination of their actual use. As we know, Kant’s aim in the latter regard is to demonstrate that categories can only be used insofar as their use is geared toward possible objects of experience. Thus, the term ‘transcendental philosophy’ here seems to encompass the two disciplines that Kant at A11–13/B25–6 called, respectively, transcendental philosophy and transcendental critique. By contrast, if one takes one’s bearing from the latter passage, as I prefer to do, then transcendental philosophy in the strict sense of the term is limited to a comprehensive treatment of pure concepts, whereas the task of determining the warranted and non-warranted use of pure concepts belongs squarely to transcendental critique.

Since Gava regards one strand of Kant’s second-order investigation into the valid use of pure concepts as part of transcendental philosophy, it follows that he considers the critical strand of the *Critique* to be concerned with the negative strand of this second-order investigation alone, that is, with the limitation of a priori cognition to the realm of possible objects of experience (7). However, Gava also assigns a *positive* task to the discipline he calls ‘critique of pure reason’, namely ‘to show that a body of cognitions . . . can form a whole with a proper unity that bestows the status of science to metaphysics’ (7). This description is in agreement with Gava’s claim that critique in this sense aims to provide metaphysics with its doctrine of method, which he moreover takes to be its main task. In this regard, he can draw on Kant’s claim that

[the] critique of pure speculative reason . . . is a treatise on the method . . . [that] catalogs the entire outline of the science of metaphysics, both in respect of its boundaries and in respect of its entire internal structure. (Bxxii; cf. Gava 2023: 59)

Yet this passage does not specify how the architectonic and critical tasks of the *Critique* map onto the disciplines Kant calls ‘transcendental philosophy’ and ‘transcendental critique’ in the Introduction. If my account above is correct, Gava contends that transcendental philosophy and transcendental critique both pursue

two ends, namely a systematic and a normative one. On my reading, by contrast, transcendental philosophy, qua first-order metaphysics, pursues a systematic end, whereas transcendental critique, qua second-order investigation into the warranted use of nonempirical concepts, pursues a normative end.<sup>3</sup> It seems to me that the elaboration of these two strands in tandem allows Kant to provide metaphysics with a doctrine of method of sorts.

The difference between Gava's reading and my own might at least partly be traced to a passage from the Introduction that can be interpreted in various ways:

Transcendental philosophy is the idea of a science for which the critique of pure reason is to outline the entire plan architectonically, i.e., from principles. . . . That this critique is not itself already called transcendental philosophy rests solely on the fact that in order to be a complete system it would also have to contain an exhaustive analysis of all of human cognition a priori. To be sure: our critique must present a complete enumeration of all of the root concepts that comprise the pure cognition in question. Yet it properly refrains from the exhaustive analysis of these concepts themselves as well as from the complete review of all of those derived from them . . . because this analysis would not be purposeful. (A13-14/B27-8, translation modified, cf. A80-2/B106-7)

Since the formatting does not indicate whether the clause 'critique of pure reason' in the first sentence refers to a book title or not, it might be taken to refer to a particular discipline carried out in the *Critique*. As was mentioned above, Gava associates critique with the architectonic aim of the *Critique*, so this is clearly how he would read the clause. In the following two sentences, Kant likewise uses the term 'critique' in relation to this architectonic aim, and he is silent about the properly critical task of critique.

However, this silence can be explained by the fact that Kant discussed critique in the preceding section, in particular at A10-13/B24-6. In the passage quoted above, he abstracts from his earlier distinction between the systematic and critical strands of the *Critique* because this is irrelevant to the issue at hand, namely, the overall *division* of the work. For this reason, I submit that the term 'critique of pure reason' refers to the *Critique of Pure Reason* rather than a particular discipline carried out in this work. I take Kant's subsequent references to 'this critique' and 'our critique' likewise to denote the book.

Seen in this way, the passage at hand does not associate critique with the architectonic aim of the work. This leaves more room for the conception of critique I advocated above, that is, for the view that critique is aimed at the 'correction' of our a priori cognitions (A12/B26) and, thus, is only indirectly involved in demonstrating how metaphysics can attain architectonic unity. On this reading, transcendental philosophy – in the strict sense – is not concerned with assessing the validity of our use of the concepts of space and time, the categories, and the ideas of pure reason but merely seeks to establish the sum total of these concepts. By doing so, transcendental philosophy contributes in a direct manner to the plan according to which a complete metaphysical system ought to be elaborated.

In short, my approach mainly departs from Gava by giving more weight to the critical strand of the *Critique*. To illustrate this, the next section considers one effect of Gava's interpretative decision, namely, his account of Kant's analysis of the faculties.

#### 4. Kant's analysis of the faculties

Seen from Gava's perspective, Kant's analyses of pure sensibility, the pure understanding, and pure reason belong to transcendental philosophy rather than transcendental critique, since he associates the latter discipline primarily with the task of 'demonstrating that metaphysics can attain architectonic unity' (63, cf. 5). As Gava puts it, faculty analysis has

little to do with showing that metaphysics can attain architectonic unity. . . . [W]hile the *Critique* certainly contains analyses of our faculties, this is not what characterizes its project. Rather, the *Critique* contains these analyses insofar as it contains parts of transcendental philosophy. What characterizes the critique of pure reason . . . is that it provides the doctrine of method of metaphysics. (62)

In this context, Gava does not clarify why the transcendental philosophy elaborated in the *Critique* requires an analysis of the faculties, but the answer seems clear: Kant analyses the various cognitive capacities the human mind exerts a priori in order to identify the concepts of space and time, the categories, and the ideas of reason. In this regard, Kant's analysis of the faculties indeed serves the purpose of first-order transcendental philosophy.

Yet, as I see it, Kant analyses these faculties also in the context of his second-order investigation into the conditions under which metaphysics can be turned into a science, that is, in the context of the critical strand of the *Critique*.

On my reading, this analysis is key to Kant's critique of metaphysics. More specifically, I take Kant to analyse pure sensibility and the pure understanding in order to demonstrate, in the *Transcendental Analytic*, that any cognition of objects results from the act of unifying a manifold of successive representations according to rules. Absent this unifying activity, the human mind cannot produce objects of cognition, since the latter are nothing but consciously established unities of representations.<sup>4</sup> This result immediately entails that metaphysics can treat the a priori concepts and principles that determine how the human mind can unify representations but cannot obtain a priori cognitions of objects such as the soul and God.

Seen in this way, transcendental critique aims to limit the realm within which the human mind can obtain a priori cognitions of objects to that of possible experience. It is true that this limitation does not contribute to the aim of demonstrating that metaphysics can attain architectonic unity in a direct manner. Yet this is not a reason to deny, as Gava seems to do, that Kant considered his analyses of the faculties to be part and parcel of critique.<sup>5</sup> In my view, these analyses constitute a crucial step toward the realization of metaphysics as a science, for without it metaphysics would continue to produce contrary assertions and fall prey to transcendental illusion. For this reason, I am puzzled by Gava's marginalization of Kant's analyses of the cognitive



activities carried out by the human mind and, more generally, by his concomitant marginalization of what Kant calls transcendental critique.

This marginalization also has an impact on his understanding of Kant's various transcendental deductions, which I take to belong to transcendental critique rather than transcendental philosophy in the strict sense of the term. To clarify this, the next section zooms in on Gava's account of Kant's transcendental deduction of the concept of space in the *Transcendental Aesthetic*.

### 5. Kant's transcendental deduction of space

As was mentioned above, I agree with Gava that the three parts of the *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements* contain accounts of the elements of our a priori cognition of objects as well as assessments of their warranted and unwarranted use. I also agree with his related claim that Kant provides metaphysical and transcendental deductions in all three parts of the *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements*, even if they are not clearly presented in all cases and provide arguments adjusted to the specific cases (166–7). Gava's decision to treat the various metaphysical and transcendental deductions in separate chapters is fortunate, and his actual interpretations are illuminating in many respects.

What I see as problematic in Gava's reading is that it pushes the properly critical strand of the *Critique of Pure Reason* to the margins of the various transcendental deductions and, in this way, makes it hard to locate its proper conceptual space.

Thus, Gava takes his account of the transcendental deductions (Chapter 4) to show 'that transcendental philosophy only establishes positive results and is not concerned with setting limits to our cognition' (124, cf. 129, 166). Given his earlier definition of the term 'transcendental philosophy', this aim is easy to achieve. But the real issue, in my view, is whether Kant's three transcendental deductions can be considered to be first and foremost devoted to the task of demonstrating the valid use of pure concepts and, thus, whether the task of setting limits to this use is a separate and merely subordinate aim. At least, I take this view to be implied by Gava's claim that the former task is carried out by transcendental philosophy (cf. 122) and the latter by critique (cf. 174). As he puts it in relation to the transcendental deduction of the categories, his aim is

to show that an argument that only establishes positive results regarding the validity of the categories can be singled out in the chapter dedicated to the transcendental deduction. It is *this positive argument that constitutes the transcendental deduction of the categories belonging to transcendental philosophy*. (138, emphasis mine)

Whereas the first claim in this passage is not contentious, I take the second claim to be hard to substantiate. On my reading, the main aim of Kant's transcendental deductions of pure concepts rather consists in establishing that the human mind cannot generate cognitions of objects unless the latter are possible objects of experience. Moreover, as said, I do not quite see why Gava considers the transcendental deductions to belong to transcendental philosophy in the first place.



In the remainder of this section, I will elaborate on this issue by focusing on the transcendental deduction of the concept of space, a theme also highlighted by Gava.

Gava locates Kant's transcendental deduction of space in the transcendental exposition of the same and takes it to establish that the concept of space is objectively valid insofar as it is by dint of space, qua form of intuition, that the human mind can cognize objects (129). On Gava's reading, Kant's transcendental deduction of space

establishes that our concept of space and the pure intuition on which it depends are objectively valid with respect to appearances. It also establishes that the spatial properties of objects we do cognize are properties that objects have only as they are intuited by us. This means that in cognizing these spatial properties, we are not cognizing those spatial properties that the objects might still have independently of our intuition – properties that may nevertheless somehow agree with the spatial properties we do cognize. (136)

I hold, by contrast, that the assumption that objects could possess spatial properties independently of the way they are being intuited by us is ruled out by the very notion of a form of intuition. Accordingly, I take the transcendental deduction of space to concern the positive and negative strands of Kant's account *at once*. I take this view to be supported by Kant's assertion that his expositions of space

teach the reality (i.e., objective validity) of space in regard to everything that can come before us externally as an object, but *at the same time* the ideality of space in regard to things when they are considered in themselves through reason, i.e., without taking account of the constitution of our sensibility. (A28/B44, emphasis mine)

Referring back to the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant writes in the Transcendental Analytic that this part of the work, by means of a 'transcendental deduction', traced 'the concepts of space and time to their sources . . . and determined their a priori objective validity' (A87/B119–20, cf. Gava 2023: 175–8).<sup>6</sup> This deduction was not undertaken on behalf of geometry, he adds, since this discipline follows its 'secure course' at any rate. The transcendental deduction of space and time rather had to be undertaken because of the way in which *metaphysics* tends to use pure concepts such as substance and causality. Since, Kant writes, pure concepts of the understanding

are not grounded in experience and cannot exhibit any object in a priori intuition on which to ground their synthesis prior to any experience, they not only arouse suspicion about the objective validity and limits of their use *but, by their tendency to use the latter beyond the conditions of sensible intuition, also make the concept of space ambiguous, on which account a transcendental deduction of it was also needed above*. (A88/B120, emphasis mine, translation modified)

In this context, Kant takes the transcendental deduction of space essentially to concern the limitation of the valid use of the concept of space to the realm of appearances. Seen in this way, the act of identifying space and time as forms of intuition is only a preliminary step in the transcendental deduction, the single aim

of which consists in determining to what extent, or under which conditions, the use of the concept of space in metaphysics is justified or not.

This passage, which Gava cites and discusses, seems to pose a problem for his separation of the positive and negative strands and concomitant attribution of the former to transcendental philosophy and the latter to critique. On his understanding,

What makes a transcendental deduction ‘unavoidably necessary’ is that it can *contribute* to setting limits to the use of a concept in ways that prevent its illegitimate application. . . . [T]ranscendental deductions are essential parts of transcendental philosophy, and, as such, their arguments do not *directly* establish limits to the valid use of concepts. Therefore, I submit that when Kant says that transcendental deductions are ‘unavoidably necessary’ for setting those limits, this should be read as stating that transcendental deductions are instrumental to identifying those limits within the critique of pure reason. (177, emphasis mine, original emphasis removed)

Gava treats the negative aspect under the heading of a ‘critique of pure reason’ in Chapters 5 and 6. In this context, he rightly argues that the act of setting limits to the use of pure concepts builds on the act of demonstrating their objective validity (cf. 174, 182). I disagree with his account of the three transcendental deductions, however, to the extent that I take their overall aim to consist in limiting our capacity to generate a priori cognitions of objects to the realm of possible experience.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, I take the positive strand of the transcendental deductions to be a means to the end pursued by transcendental critique rather than the other way around and, moreover, to be itself part of this critique.

## 6. Conclusion

Gava’s monograph rightly challenges the prevailing assumption that the *Critique of Pure Reason* leaves metaphysics *per se* in ruins. Seen from my perspective, however, his interpretation of the role of critique errs on the opposite side. Unlike Gava, I hold that Kant considers critique to separate the wheat from the chaff rather than to take care of the chaff alone, which means that it encompasses the two strands that Gava assigns to different disciplines. On the other hand, I do not quite see why the architectonic task carried out in the *Critique* should be assigned to the critical strand of the work.

I admit, however, that the terms ‘transcendental philosophy’ and ‘transcendental critique’ are moving targets and that different interpretations of their roles are defensible. Moreover, the way in which this issue is solved is of little consequence to other interpretative questions. I agree with Gava, for example, that Kant in each part of the Transcendental Doctrine of Method elaborates a version of first-order transcendental philosophy in tandem with a second-order reflection on the conditions under which the use of pure concepts is warranted. I also agree that this reflection serves the purpose of demonstrating how metaphysics can obtain architectonic unity and, as regards the practical realm, of providing more favourable conditions for the actualization of the highest end of humankind.

Even more importantly, finally, *Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason and the Method of Metaphysics* is a most welcome contribution because it casts doubt on a number

of answers commentators – including myself – tend to take for granted. Gava's monograph invites us to interrupt the type of research we normally engage in and to ask ourselves what it was that impelled Kant to erect the edifice called *Critique of Pure Reason*.

## Notes

1 In what follows I will refer to Gava's monograph by page numbers alone except in cases where I also refer to the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Except where noted otherwise, translations from the latter are those of Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

2 While Gava does not refer to the distinction between first-order and second-order philosophical disciplines, I take his account to be in line with this distinction. I agree with Gava's view that Kant came to consider his account of space and time and the ideas of pure reason to belong to first-order transcendental philosophy. As I see it, Kant introduced the term in the 1781 edition to denote a reformed version of former ontology qua discipline concerned with the a priori elements of our cognition of objects as such. However, one of the implications of this reform is the insight that all parts of metaphysics are directly or indirectly concerned with the ways in which the human mind generates objects of cognition and thought independently of experience. Kant's assertion that transcendental philosophy 'is the system of all principles of pure reason' was added in the second edition (B27) and arguably reflects this insight.

3 On this, see De Boer (2020: 73–100).

4 I focus on this issue in De Boer (2024).

5 Gava deals with Kant's account of the faculties in particular in Chapter 3, which deals with the metaphysical deductions elaborated in the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements, and thus, in relation to one of the tasks he assigns to transcendental philosophy.

6 I take the term 'transcendental deduction' to refer to both aspects, which means that a comma should be inserted after 'vermitteltst einer transzendentalen Deduktion'. This reading is in agreement with Kant's comprehensive use of the term 'transcendental deduction' in the 1781 Transcendental Analytic, which does not yet articulate the distinction between a metaphysical and transcendental deduction.

7 See De Boer (2020: 127–62).

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