

Kant, Nature, Freedom

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Immanuel Kant has many things in common with *Nature & Freedom*. The journal was launched in 2012 to address two main lines of research. The first of these covers the philosophy of nature, with a special emphasis on determining the place occupied by human beings in the universe. This is also a constant in Kant's work: his interest in Nature, its ontology and its processes, from his pre-critical work—in which this constituted a guiding thread—to the transcendental modulation in his critical period and the rethinking of all this in the writings of his mature years.

The second of the journal's main interests is philosophical anthropology, paying particular attention to those disciplines that study human beings as part of nature, ranging from biology, biochemistry and neuroscience to artificial intelligence and the sciences of complexity. Kant was unable to witness the emergence of these disciplines, the result of a scientific acceleration that from the mid-19th century onwards brought specialization—initiated by the Galilean revolution in physics—to the levels we know today. And yet he nurtured a growing interest in the approaches and tools of the new natural science, ranging from the theoretical and technical advances of physics to the new ways of understanding the life sciences and the paradigm-shattering new chemistry.

The importance that *Nature & Freedom* attaches to interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity—a useful tool for trying to overcome the centuries-old separation between the sciences and the humanities—can thus also be ascribed to Kant. All of this establishes links between the journal's approach and the work of the philosopher of Königsberg; in some ways, they reflect each other. Hence, the tercentenary of Immanuel Kant's birth provides an excellent occasion for a special issue that takes this game of mirrors into account.

This special issue appears just as the Kant-Jahr has ended, as an epilogue and a recapitulation. Its articles section is made up of contributions aimed at unravelling some of the implications of Kant's work for understanding the link between nature and freedom.

In her article «Person and Thinking Self in the Third Paralogism: Between Nature and Freedom», Ana M. Andaluz Romanillos (Salamanca) analyses one of the key pages in this respect in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: the third paralogism, «of personality». Her aim is to study the Kantian position on personal identity and the thinking self from the point of view of the conflict between nature and freedom. That involves, first of all, the question of whether the third paralogism situates the thinking self in an order other than the natural mechanical one: here lies one of Kant's main contributions to our understanding of human beings. Indeed, Andaluz points out the issue of whether this discourse contributes to the concept of a person, and therefore provides a *pars construens* with philosophical and anthropological results.

Another way to grasp Kant's understanding of the relation between nature and freedom is provided in the *Critique of Judgement*. Paula Órdenes Azúa (Heidelberg) devotes her paper «Absolute, Non Comparative *Magnum*: The Connotation of the Mathematical in the Kantian Sublime» to this issue. In the analytic of the sublime of the third Critique appears the connection between pure aesthetic judgements and mathematics. This characterization of the sublime in terms of the mathematical and the dynamic lacks historical precedent, as Órdenes puts it. She focuses on the nexus between the mathematical and the sublime in search of a potential resolution of this particular aspect of the relation between human beings and nature, modulated by the aesthetic experience of the sublime.

Both the first and the third Critique lie in the background of the contribution from Stephen Howard (Leuven): «Kant on the Philosophical Significance of the Telescope». In a footnote in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, it is pointed out what Kant considers two fundamental lessons of critical philosophy: about the limits of theoretical cognition, on the

one hand, and about the human need to shift to practical philosophy, on the other. This, therefore, is another of those junctures where nature and freedom intersect. Howard's aim is to clarify the sense of this statement, which leads him to some larger and somewhat surprising conclusions about Kant's understanding of the scope of the natural sciences in the field of knowledge.

This issue—the field of knowledge and its conditions—provides the starting point to my own paper: «The Final Synthesis: The Implications of the Natural Philosophy Contained in the *Opus Postumum* for the Question 'What is a Human Being?'». Kant's final efforts lead him to his thesis on the physical correlate of transcendental matter: proto-matter, cosmic matter, ether. This is consistent with his mature approaches to the nurturing of human dispositions, of which I highlight three: Kant's strictly physiological treatment of mental illnesses, his statements on philosophy as exercise for the body, and his notion of dietetics. This constitutes a systematic attempt to overcome dualism in a more complex perspective on human beings.

The final contribution in the articles section is by Patrícia Kauark-Leite. The author presents a perspective that projects us into the future: «Could Kant Shed Light on the Ontological Indeterminacy in Quantum Theory?». As she puts it in the abstract, the concepts of indeterminacy and superposition require from philosophers of science a profound revision and a complete redefinition of the foundations of the understanding of representation. In this context, her aim is to explore the notion of analogical schematism –that taught in Kant's *Progress of Metaphysics* and in *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*– for evaluating the content of extra-empirical concepts in contemporary physical theories, where intuition turns out to be intrinsically indeterminate.

This is followed by an extensive review section, which includes four works published in recent years. Two of them are written by authors participating in this issue: Paula Órdenes's monograph *Teleológica Erhabenheit der Vernunft bei Kant* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023) is

reviewed by Giulia Milli; and Stephen Howard's book *Kant's Late Philosophy of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023) is reviewed by Lara Scaglia. A work by Gerhard Stamer is also discussed: *Kritik des lebendigen Verstandes. Erkenntnistheoretischer Entwurf zu einer Theorie der Einheit von Geist und Leben* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2021), reviewed by Uwe Voigt. The fourth title is a global guide to the different aspects of Kant's thought: a collection edited by Gustavo Leyva, *Guía Comares de Immanuel Kant* (Granada: Comares, 2023), reviewed here by Eduardo Charpenel.

The issue is rounded off by a retrospective on the Kant-Jahr: «Twelve Months for Kant's Tercentenary». This is both a report and a chronicle. Signed by myself, this contribution is conceived as a review of the events around the world that have brought the Königsberg philosopher to the fore in a grandiose choral tribute.

That retrospective brings to an end this issue of *Nature & Freedom*. Thus the journal looks at some features of the 300-year-old philosopher's image; he looks back at it from the milestones of his intellectual itinerary. This game of mirrors reflects some of the themes that have shaped our conceptual universe with its achievements, its problems and its search. And we join in this search: a joyful endeavour and a never-ending task.

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On the 221th anniversary of Immanuel Kant's death

