

In all, the book is a refreshing, illuminating and balanced overview of Leibniz's philosophical thought. It is the best of its kind and would make an excellent textbook or supplement for upper level undergraduate or survey graduate courses.

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Kant and the Metaphysics of Causality

By ERIC WATKINS

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The declared aim of *Kant and the Metaphysics of Causality (KMC)* is to interpret the Kantian concept of causality in its proper historical context by considering the development of Kant's theory of causality in connection with the theories presented by his predecessors. Watkins's claim is to provide a fundamentally new approach to the idea of causality in modern philosophy as it applies to Kant. Arguing that the Kantian theory of causality is not based on events but on substances, specifically on substances that are equipped with causal powers, Watkins intends his approach to shed new light on Kant's relation to Hume.

As Watkins argues in Chapter 1 of *KMC*, it was Leibniz who influenced the metaphysical thinking of modern philosophers perhaps more than any other figure; and the examination of the 'Leibniz-Wolfian Philosophy' therefore has to provide the starting point for an adequate understanding of Kant. Watkins concentrates primarily on the development of the theory of pre-established harmony, which he presents as a result of Leibniz's criticisms of Cartesian and occasionalist views on the communication of substances. The author examines the three causal theories (occasionalism, *influxus physicus* and pre-established harmony) which are crucial to understanding the metaphysical landscape of modern philosophy during the first half of the eighteenth century. According to Watkins, special attention must be paid to the dispute between the supporters of *influxus physicus* and those who favoured pre-established harmony in the historical development of the Leibnizian and Wolfian tradition during this period.

Against this background, Watkins examines Kant's pre-critical philosophy in Chapter 2 of his study. He holds that the question of causality must be regarded as the central theme of Kant's thought before the 1770s. After a brief treatment of Kant's *Essay on Living Forces* and the *Monadologia physica*, Watkins turns to the *Nova dilucidatio*. It is in the *Nova dilucidatio's* treatment of the *principium successionis* and the *principium coexistentiae* that we are to find Kant's most detailed discussion of the notion of causality. Kant grounds both of these principles with reference to the causal activity of God. But he also insists on the notion of physical influence between substances. Kant thus constructs a theory of the universal causal nexus of substances based on the claim that the Leibnizian account of pre-established harmony can explain neither change occurring within substances nor furnish a coherent account of how one substance can be causally connected with change occurring in

another substance. Despite Kant's repudiation of the Leibnizian account of the grounds of causation, however, the Leibnizian idea of the community of all substances remains the thematic centrepiece of Kant's metaphysics of causality. Hume's influence on Kant's pre-critical philosophy must therefore be assessed in view of Kant's continuing focus on the Leibnizian cosmological conception of the universal harmony of substances.

The theoretical focus of the *Nova dilucidatio*, represents a crucial element of continuity throughout the later development of Kant's metaphysics. Watkins underscores exactly this element in his examination of Kant's critical metaphysics. In Chapter 3 of *KMC*, Watkins provides an interpretation of the Second and Third Analogies of Experience in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, emphasizing the importance of the long neglected Third Analogy of Experience for an adequate understanding of the Kantian notion of causality. Despite the fact that the theological dimension of the *Nova Dilucidatio's* theory of the causal connection of substances is not presupposed in the first *Critique*, Watkins maintains that the Third Analogy's account of how one substance can be causally connected with change occurring in another substance is in essential respects identical to that of the pre-critical work.

In Chapter 4, Watkins introduces his new assessment of the Kantian concept of causality. "The decisive clue to understanding Kant's model comes from appreciating how he draws on several basic aspects of his pre-Critical notion of a ground" (p. 231). Just as in his pre-critical works, Kant confirms the connection between substance and causality when accounting for the grounds of change. Especially in view of the arguments that Kant gives in the Third Analogy, Watkins shows that Kant does not accept any concept of event-causality in the Humean sense. Instead, he must be considered a proponent of a theory of the causal powers of substantial particulars.

Watkins supports this interpretation by considering, in Chapter 5, Kant's treatment of transcendental freedom in the first *Critique's* Third Antinomy. The discussion of Kant's conception of freedom and determinism in the Third Antinomy involves critical assessment of contemporary 'epistemological' and 'ontological' approaches to the relationship between things in themselves and appearances. Rejecting central aspects of both of these approaches, Watkins uses his interpretation of Kant's theory of causal powers, as deriving from the *Nova dilucidatio*, to show how it is that we are to understand the sense in which appearances are ultimately grounded in things in themselves.

Chapter 6 deals systematically with the question whether the Kantian theory of the causal powers of substances in fact offers a response to the problem of causality as it was understood by Hume. Watkins holds that the Kantian theory does not provide a direct answer to this problem since Kant and Hume were addressing very different sets of causal issues. The Kantian and Humean accounts of causality are not necessarily inconsistent with each other because their crucial assumptions are not shared; and Kant should therefore be interpreted as offering an alternative to Hume's position on causality instead of a refutation of it. It is in view of the alternative options furnished by the two accounts that Watkins concludes by discussing the relevance of

Kant and Hume for recent debates concerning the question of physical law and the metaphysics of causality.

Watkins includes an extensive range of historical material in his study. The first 100 pages offer a good summary of the development of the problem of causality in eighteenth-century Germany. In this regard, there is no work that is comparable to Watkins's in the secondary literature on Kant. The treatment of Kant's pre-critical philosophy is exceptionally competent and lucid. It is an extraordinarily important contribution to the literature even if Watkins does suppress the expressions that Kant gives of his own pre-critical doubts concerning the nature of *influxus physicus*—expressions that in fact tend to weaken Watkins's position that Kant must be considered a straightforward proponent of the theory of physical influence. Given the central role that the Kantian concept of substance plays in Watkins's overall argument, one would expect a distinct treatment of the different problems of substantiality that underlie the development of Kant's theory of causality. In particular, one would expect to be provided with an in-depth analysis of Kant's arguments in the First Analogy of Experience. It is in the First Analogy that Kant furnishes the treatment of substance as *appearance* (*Substanz als Erscheinung*) that is fundamental to his critical account of causal relations between substantial particulars in space. And arguably, the analysis of the First Analogy's proof makes it evident that the essential features of the concept of substance as appearance cannot simply be drawn from the concept of substance operative in the *Nova dilucidatio*. Even if Watkins is right to stress the developmental continuity of Kantian thought, the fundamental differences between Kant's pre-critical account of substance and theory of substance at issue in the Analogies of Experience may not plausibly be neglected. These reservations aside, however, it must be stated emphatically that Watkins has written a work of great significance for research on Kant and the history of eighteenth-century German philosophy in general.

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Rousseau

By NICHOLAS DENT

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A thinker as well known as Rousseau wouldn't seem to stand in need of an introduction. Still less *another* introduction: there are already a fair number of books purporting to provide access to Rousseau's thought. Yet Rousseau, though widely known, is not well known. And the existing volumes aimed at explicating the outlines of his thought, though several of them are useful in a variety of ways, tend either to require that the reader already have considerable familiarity with Rousseau (making these books something other than introductions) or to omit treatment of important themes, so wide ranging and idiosyncratic is Rousseau's corpus. Which is all to say that a good introduction would be of real value. With his *Rousseau*, part of the Routledge Philosophers series, the accomplished Rousseau scholar Nicholas Dent (*Rousseau*, 1988; *A Rousseau Dictionary*, 1992) has provided just this.