

IMMANUEL KANT

**CRITIQUE  
OF  
PURE REASON**

TRANSLATED BY  
NORMAN KEMP SMITH

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梁小民

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE present translation was begun in 1913, when I was completing my *Commentary to Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason.'* Owing, however, to various causes, I was unable at that time to do more than prepare a rough translation of about a third of the whole; and it was not until 1927 that I found leisure to revise and continue it. In this task I have greatly profited by the work of my two predecessors, J. M. D. Meiklejohn and Max Müller. Meiklejohn's work, a translation of the second edition of the *Critique*, was published in 1855. Max Müller's translation, which is based on the first edition of the *Critique*, with the second edition passages in appendices, was published in 1831. Meiklejohn has a happy gift—which only those who attempt to follow in his steps can, I think, fully appreciate—of making Kant speak in language that reasonably approximates to English idiom. Max Müller's main merit, as he has very justly claimed, is his greater accuracy in rendering passages in which a specially exact appreciation of the niceties of German idiom happens to be important for the sense. Both Meiklejohn and Max Müller laboured, however, under the disadvantage of not having made any very thorough study of the Critical Philosophy; and the shortcomings in their translations can usually be traced to this cause.

In the past fifty years, also, much has been done in the study and interpretation of the text. In particular, my task has been facilitated by the quite invaluable edition of the *Critique* edited by Dr. Raymund Schmidt. Indeed, the appearance of this edition in 1926 was the immediate occasion of my resuming the work of translation. Dr Schmidt's restora-

tion of the original texts of the first and second editions of the *Critique*, and especially of Kant's own punctuation—so very helpful in many difficult and doubtful passages—and his citation of alternative readings, have largely relieved me of the time-consuming task of collating texts, and of assembling the emendations suggested by Kantian scholars in their editions of the *Critique* or in their writings upon it.

The text which I have followed is that of the second edition (1787); and I have in all cases indicated any departure from it. I have also given a translation of all first edition passages which in the second edition have been either altered or omitted. Wherever possible, this original first edition text is given in the lower part of the page. In the two sections, however, which Kant completely recast in the second edition—*The Transcendental Deduction of the Categories* and *The Paralogisms of Pure Reason*—this cannot conveniently be done; and I have therefore given the two versions in immediate succession, in the main text. For this somewhat unusual procedure there is a twofold justification; first, that the *Critique* is already, in itself, a composite work, the different parts of which record the successive stages in the development of Kant's views; and secondly, that the first edition versions are, as a matter of fact, indispensable for an adequate understanding of the versions which were substituted for them. The pagings of both the first and the second edition are given throughout, on the margins—the first edition being referred to as A, the second edition as B.

Kant's German, even when judged by German standards, makes difficult reading. The difficulties are not due merely to the abstruseness of the doctrines which Kant is endeavouring to expound, or to his frequent alternation between conflicting points of view. Many of the difficulties are due simply to his manner of writing. He crowds so much into each sentence, that he is constrained to make undue use of parentheses, and, what is still more troublesome to the reader, to rely upon particles, pronouns and genders to indicate the connections

between the parts of the sentence. Sometimes, when our main clue is a gender, we find more than one preceding substantive with which it may agree. Sometimes, also, Kant uses terms in a gender which is obsolete. Certain terms, indeed, he uses in more than one gender. Thus, even in regard to so important a philosophical term as *Verhältniss*, he alternates between the feminine and the neuter. But even when these and other difficulties, inherent in the original German, have been overcome, there remains for the translator the task, from which there is no escape, of restating the content of each of the more complex sentences in a number of separate sentences. To do this without distortion of meaning is probably in most cases possible; and indeed I have found that, by patient and careful handling, even the most cumbrous sentences can generally be satisfactorily resolved.

Certain sentences, however, occurring not infrequently, present the translator with another type of problem: how far he ought to sacrifice part of what is said, or at least suggested, to gain smoothness in the translation. There are sentences which, to judge by their irregular structure and by the character of their constituents, must have owed their origin to the combination of passages independently written and later combined. In the "four to five months" in which Kant prepared the *Critique* for publication, utilising, in the final version, manuscripts written at various dates throughout the period 1769-1780, he had, it would seem, in collating different statements of the same argument, inserted clauses into sentences that were by no means suited for their reception. In such cases I have not attempted to translate the sentences just as they stand. Were the irregularities retained, they would hinder, not aid, the reader in the understanding of Kant's argument. The reader would not, indeed, be able to distinguish between them and possible faultiness in the translator's English. Nor would it be practicable to retain them, with the addition of explanatory notes; the notes would have to be too numerous, and would be concerned with quite trivial points. The irregularities

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that are thus smoothed out may, it is true, be of considerable importance in the detailed study of the composite origins of the *Critique*, and of the stages in the development of Kant's views. But even in this connection, they are valueless save when studied in the *ipsissima verba* of the original German. In the translation itself nothing is being sacrificed that is materially worth retaining.

My chief personal obligations are to Dr. A. C. Ewing. In 1927, while I was still hesitating whether I could find time and energy to complete the translation single-handed, he kindly consented, upon my appealing to him, to try the experiment of collaborating in a joint-translation. We soon found, however, that to arrive at a uniform translation involved so much mutual consultation as hardly to be practicable. But though I am alone responsible for this translation, Dr. Ewing has very generously given me assistance at every stage in the work. He has read the whole translation both in manuscript and in proof; and I have greatly benefited by his comments and criticisms. I am also indebted to him for preparing the index.

My friends Dr. R. A. Lillie, Mr. R. D. MacLennan, and Mr. W. G. Maclagan have done me the service of reading the proofs. To Dr. Lillie I am especially indebted for the kindly rigour with which he has refused to accept excuses when my sentences would seem to be needlessly cumbrous.

In a careful final revision of the translation I have found a number of errors, major and minor; and I fear that others must have remained undetected. Should students of the *Critique*, in using this translation, discover any, I shall be grateful if they will report them to me.

NORMAN KEMP SMITH.

EDINBURGH, October 1929.

In revising the translation for this impression I have been aided by some very helpful criticisms from Professor H. H. Joachim and Professor H. J. Paton. N. K. S.

EDINBURGH, March 1933.



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<sup>1</sup> [This table of contents, with a few additions referring to Sections omitted, altered, or added in B, is the table given in B. The briefer table of A is given below on p. 39.]

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# Critik der reinen Vernunft



von  
Immanuel Kant  
Professor in Königsberg.



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K i t a,  
verlegt Johann Friedrich Hartnoch  
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Kritik  
der  
reinen Vernunft

von

Immanuel Kant

Professor in Königsberg  
der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin Mitglied

Zweite hin und wieder verbesserte Auflage

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Riga  
bei Johann Friedrich Hartknoch  
1787



