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Alfredo Ferrarin: *The Powers of Pure Reason: Kant and the Idea of Cosmic Philosophy*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015, 325 p., ISBN 9780226243153.

Besprochen von **Prof. Dr. Riccardo Pozzo**, Cattedra di Storia della Filosofia, Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Università degli Studi di Verona, via San Francesco 22, I-37129 Verona; riccardo.pozzo@cnr.it

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While agreeing that “Kant’s revolution in thinking is utterly pivotal in the history of philosophy,” Alfredo Ferrarin doubts “that full justice has been done to it.” He thinks the best way to pay tribute to Kant’s depth is “to take seriously and address the philosophical problems that threaten its unity” (2). This is what the book is about, especially given that “some of the more notable readings” of critical philosophy “are one-sided precisely insofar as they are reductive” (4). Ferrarin aims instead to read “Kant’s philosophy as a developing whole.” The key to and premise of his interpretation is the architectonic description of reason in the “Doctrine of Method” and of “the ideas as a result of reason’s totalizing need” (5).

Special attention is given to the role of metaphysics and to the KrV’s propaedeutic function with regard to metaphysics. Throughout the book, Ferrarin provides careful consideration of the “many shifts, hesitations, and subtle changes expressed by Kant” in order to understand how and why, as early as the *Prolegomena* and throughout the 1780s and 1790s, Kant continuously modified and indeed began to abandon the standpoint of the KrV as regards “the positive role of ideas, the function of sensibility, the definition and internal articulation of pure reason, and the relation among faculties” (23). It is a fact that “Kant never tired of exploring, recasting, returning afresh to and shifting positions on his basic theses.” Metaphysics, critical philosophy, and transcendental philosophy or philosophy “relentlessly shift their function and relative position [...] As Kant’s work progressed over the years, they hardly ever referred to the same object” (235). The sixteen tables reconstructed by Giorgio Tonelli, presenting diagrams with different classifications of the sciences, philosophy, and knowledge, provide the best evidence for these continuous transformations (*Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason within the Tradition of Modern Logic*, Berlin 1994, 325–341). When it comes to the kind of discipline Kant wished to write on when he began work on the KrV, Ferrarin points out that Kant had tried to show that “metaphysics is a science and a system because its source – pure reason – is an organism and a subjective system of a priori syntheses guided by ideas” (237).

On the basis of its length, its objective, propaedeutic argumentation level, and the fact that it was “externally tacked on” to the “Transcendental Analytic” (as first noted by Norman Kemp-Smith), the opening pages of the Transcendental

Logic in the KrV, titled “Introduction: Idea of a Transcendental Logic” (KrV, A 50–64/B 74–88), meet the requirements of being an academic program (*Philosophical Academic Programs of the German Enlightenment*, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2012, p. xv). This attribution provides us with essential information on the process by which Kant composed the KrV (as a set of layers), in addition to the quite substantial disclosure that in the seventies Kant had indeed thought of lecturing at the *Alma Albertina* – the University of Königsberg – on the book he was then composing (*Vorlesungsverzeichnisse der Universität Königsberg 1720–1804*, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1999, xxxvii, 458, 466, 472, 496) following the format of circulating textbooks on logic and metaphysics, e. g. Johann Georg Heinrich Feder’s *Logik und Metaphysik* (Göttingen 1769) – a text Kant knew well because he had chosen Feder’s *Grundriss der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (Göttingen 1769) as the basis of his lectures on philosophical encycloepdia”. Things eventually did not take this course, and the “Idea of a Transcendental Logic” was not first published as an academic program. It is nonetheless important to keep in mind that for a certain period of time Kant’s intention had been to offer the KrV as a logic and metaphysics textbook for students.