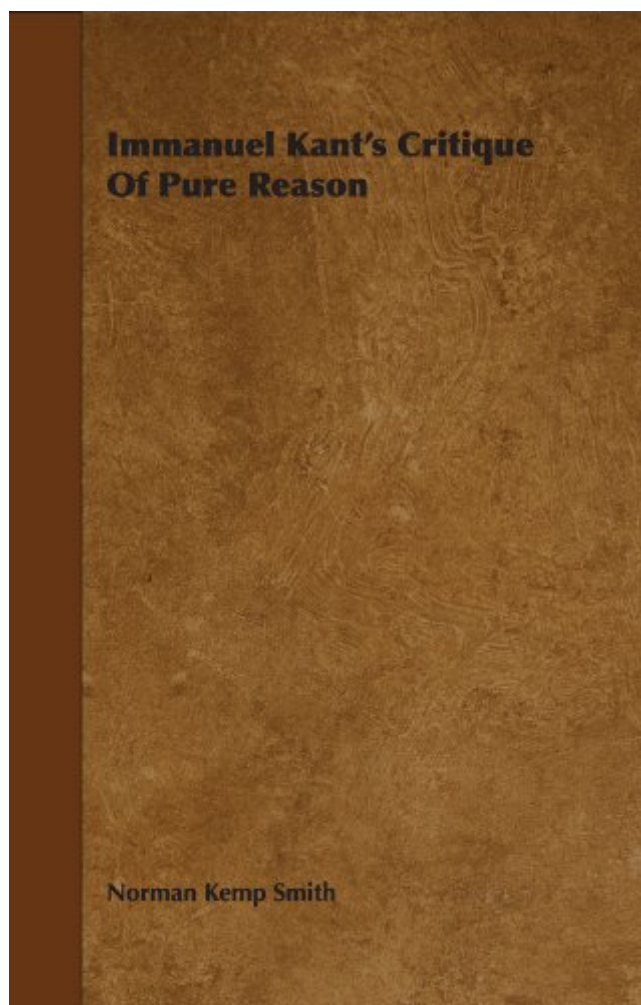


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Immanuel Kant's Critique Of Pure Reason



Synopsis

Originally published in 1929. PREFACE: THE present translation was begun in 1913, when I was completing my Commentary to Kants 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 Muller. Meiklejohn's work, a translation of the second edition of the Critique was published in 1855. Max Mullers translation, which is based on the first edition of the Critique, with the second edition passages in appendices, was published in 1881. 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 Mullers 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 Muller 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. Schmidts restoration of the original texts of the first and second editions of the Critique, and especially of Kants 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 Kants 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 paging's 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.

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Customer Reviews

Setting aside the question of translation for a moment, Critique of Pure Reason is THE most important and most profound philosophical work I have ever studied, and arguably one of the most important philosophical treatise ever written by anyone. It is simply astounding that a single mind, brilliant as it was, could come up with these ideas given their far-reaching, profound and essential implications. And I am not a student of philosophy mind you, but a chemist. I think this must be required reading for every scientist and any student of humanity. This original and revealing book is so important to that it sets apart the brilliant Kant from apart from all other philosophers, by far. As for this translation by Norman Kemp Smith, I must say that it is excellent, and at least to me, it is more clear in parts and more accessible than the original German work. It is difficult to translate Kant due to his rather technical style and the terms he used unconventionally, and Norman Kemp Smith does an admirable job. There are a couple of other, older translations which I have read and compared to

the present translation. They are good, but not as good as Kemp Smith's. One last word: if you are going to study Kant, and specially this work, and you decide for some reason not to go with Norman Kemp Smith's translation, do yourself a favor and pick a translator who understands this work and is sympathetic to it. Don't pick a translation by someone, say Guyer, who neither thoroughly understands this work (or at best has critical misconceptions about it), nor is sympathetic to Kant's positions and ideas set forth in Critique of Pure Reason. Be certain that you are reading an honest translation which you can trust.

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