KANT’S EARLY CRITICS

This book offers first-time translations of the initial (1781–89) critical reactions to Kant’s philosophy. Also included is a selection of writings by Kant’s contemporaries who took on the task of defending the critical philosophy against early attacks.

Kant’s first critics took an empiricist stance toward his philosophy and articulated concerns that are still with us in current interpretations of Kant. The first aim of this collection is to show in detail how Kant was understood and misunderstood by his contemporaries. The second aim is to reveal the sorts of arguments that Kant and his first disciples mounted in their defense of the theoretical philosophy. A third overriding aim of the book is to contribute to an understanding of the development of Kant’s critical philosophy after its initial formulation in the Critique of Pure Reason, and in particular why Kant made the changes he did in the second edition of the work in 1787.

This collection, which includes a glossary of key terms and biographical sketches of the critics on both sides of the debate, is a major addition to Kant scholarship and should be seen as a companion volume to the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant.

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Frequently Cited Texts and Abbreviations

AdB  Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek

Ak  Immanuel Kant, Gesammelte Schriften, 27+ vols. Berlin: de Gruyter and predecessors, 1900–.

ALZ  Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung


FGr  Feder/Garve review

KdrV A  Immanuel Kant, Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Riga: Hartknoch, 1781. Unless otherwise noted, the references to the Kritik Kant’s critics provide are to this edition of the Critique.


KEC  Kant’s Early Critics

NAdB  Neue Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek

Prolegomena  Immanuel Kant, Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können. Benno Erdmann, ed. Ak. IV, 253–83. Unlike the pagination of the Critique, that of the Prolegomena was not standard at the time. References that Kant’s contemporaries provide have been supplemented by references to this standard edition.