Lively current debates about narratives of historical progress, the conditions for international justice, and the implications of globalization have prompted a renewed interest in Kant’s *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*. The essays in this volume, written by distinguished contributors, discuss the questions that are at the core of Kant’s investigations. Does the study of history convey any philosophical insight? Can it provide political guidance? How are we to understand the destructive and bloody upheavals that constitute so much of human experience? What connections, if any, can be traced between politics, economics, and morality? What is the relation between the rule of law in the nation state and the advancement of a cosmopolitan political order? These questions and others are examined and discussed in a book that will be of interest to philosophers, social and political theorists, and intellectual and cultural historians.

**Amélie Oksenberg Rorty** is Lecturer in Social Medicine, Harvard University and Visiting Professor in Philosophy, Boston University.

**James Schmidt** is Professor of History and Political Science at Boston University.
CAMBRIDGE CRITICAL GUIDES

Volumes published in the series thus far:

Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit
Edited by Dean Moyar and Michael Quante

Mill’s On Liberty: A Critical Guide
Edited by C. L. Ten

Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim
Edited by Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt
KANT’S

Idea for a Universal History
with a Cosmopolitan Aim

A Critical Guide

EDITED BY

AMÉLIE OKSENBERG RORTY
AND
JAMES SCHMIDT
Cambridge University Press
Edited by Amelie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt
Frontmatter
More information
# Contents

List of contributors  \hspace{1cm} page vii  
List of abbreviations  \hspace{1cm} x  

Introduction: history as philosophy  
**AMÉLIE OKSENBERG RORTY AND JAMES SCHMIDT**  \hspace{1cm} 1  

Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim  
**IMMANUEL KANT (TRANSLATED BY ALLEN WOOD)**  \hspace{1cm} 9  

1 Teleology and history in Kant: the critical foundations of Kant’s philosophy of history  
**HENRY E. ALLISON**  \hspace{1cm} 24  

2 The purposive development of human capacities  
**KARL AMERIKS**  \hspace{1cm} 46  

3 Reason as a species characteristic  
**MANFRED KUEHN**  \hspace{1cm} 68  

4 Good out of evil: Kant and the idea of unsocial sociability  
**J. B. SCHNEEWIND**  \hspace{1cm} 94  

5 Kant’s Fourth Proposition: the unsociable sociability of human nature  
**ALLEN WOOD**  \hspace{1cm} 112  

6 The crooked timber of mankind  
**PAUL GUYER**  \hspace{1cm} 129  

7 A habitat for humanity  
**BARBARA HERMAN**  \hspace{1cm} 150  

8 Kant’s changing cosmopolitanism  
**PAULINE KLEINGELD**  \hspace{1cm} 171
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9  The hidden plan of nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECKART FÖRSTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Providence as progress: Kant’s variations on a tale of origins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENEVIEVE LLOYD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Norms, facts, and the philosophy of history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERRY PINKARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Philosophy helps history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RÜDIGER BITTNER</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bibliography**

**Index of names and works**
Contributors

Henry Allison is Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Davis. His books include Kant’s Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense (1983), Kant’s Theory of Freedom (1990), Idealism and Freedom: Essays in Kant’s Theoretical and Practical Philosophy (1996), and Kant’s Theory of Taste: A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment (2001).


Rüdiger Bittner is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Bielefeld. He is the author of What Reason Demands (1989) and Doing Things for Reasons (2001). He is the editor of Nietzsche’s Writings from the Late Notebooks (2003).

Eckart Förster is Professor of Philosophy at Johns Hopkins University and Honorary Professor of Philosophy at the Humboldt University in Berlin. He is the author of Kant’s Transcendental Deductions: The Three ‘Critiques’ and the ‘Opus Postumum’ (1989) and Final Synthesis (2000).

List of contributors

BARBARA HERMAN is Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is the author of *The Practice of Moral Judgment* (1993) and *Moral Literacy* (2007), and the editor of John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy* (2000).

PAULINE KLEINGELD is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Leiden. She is the author of *Fortschritt und Vernunft: Zur Geschichtsphilosophie Kants* (1995) and the editor of Immanuel Kant, *‘Toward Perpetual Peace’ and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History* (2006).

MANFRED KUEHN is Professor of Philosophy at Boston University and is the author of *Scottish Common Sense in Germany* (1988) and *Immanuel Kant: A Biography* (2001).


J. B. SCHNEEWIND is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Johns Hopkins University. He is the author of *Sidgwick’s Ethics and Victorian Moral Philosophy* (1977), *Moral Philosophy from Montaigne to Kant* (1990), and *The Invention of Autonomy* (1998).

JAMES SCHMIDT is Professor of History and Political Science at Boston University. He is the author of *Maurice Merleau-Ponty: Between Phenomenology and Structuralism* (1985), and the editor of *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions* (1996) and *Theodor Adorno* (2007).
List of contributors

Allen Wood is Professor of Philosophy at Stanford University. He is the author of *Hegel’s Ethical Thought* (1990), *Kant’s Ethical Thought* (1999), *Kant* (2004), and *Unsettling Obligations: Essays on Reason, Reality and the Ethics of Belief* (2002). Along with Paul Guyer, he serves as General Editor of the Cambridge University Press edition of the works of Immanuel Kant.
Abbreviations

Kant’s works will be cited in the body of the text according to the volume and page number in *Immanuel Kants Schriften*, Ausgabe der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1902–), abbreviated in the list below as “Ak”.

The following abbreviations are used to refer to specific works by Kant.

- **EF**  Zum ewigen Frieden: Ein philosophischer Entwurf (1795), Ak 8  
  Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Project
- **G**  Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten (1785), Ak 4  
  Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals
- **Idea**  Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht (1784), Ak 8  
  Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim
- **KpV**  Kritik der praktischen Vernunft (1788), Ak 5  
  Critique of Practical Reason
- **KrV**  Kritik der reinen Vernunft (1781, 1787).  
  Critique of Pure Reason
  References to this work follow the convention of citing the pages of the first (“A”) and second (“B”) editions.
- **KU**  Kritik der Urteilskraft (1790), Ak 5  
  Critique of the Power of Judgment
- **Lec Eth**  Lectures on Ethics
- **MA**  Mutmaßlicher Anfang der Menschengeschichte (1786), Ak 8  
  Conjectural Beginning of Human History
- **MS**  Metaphysik der Sitten (1797–8), Ak 6  
  Metaphysics of Morals
- **R**  Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft (1793–4), Ak 6  
  Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason
List of abbreviations

Ref  Reflexionen, Ak 14–23. References here are to the number of the Reflection and then to the volume and page in the Akademie edition.

RH  Recensionen von J. G. Herders Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit, Teil 1–2, Ak 8
Reviews of J. G. Herder’s Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity, Parts 1–2

T&P  Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein taught aber nicht für die Praxis, Ak 8
On the Common Saying: That May be True in Theory, But it is of No Use in Practice

VA  Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht (1798), Ak 7
Anthropology from a Pragmatic Standpoint