

KANT'S *CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON* AND
THE METHOD OF METAPHYSICS

In two often neglected passages of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant submits that the *Critique* is a 'treatise' or a 'doctrine of method'. These passages are puzzling because the *Critique* is only cursorily concerned with identifying adequate procedures of argument for philosophy. In this book, Gabriele Gava argues that these passages point out that the *Critique* is the doctrine of method of metaphysics. Doctrines of method have the task of showing that a given science is indeed a science because it possesses 'architectonic unity' – which happens when it realizes the 'idea' of a science. According to Gava's novel approach, the *Critique* establishes that metaphysics is capable of this unity, and his reading of the *Critique* from this perspective not only illuminates the central role of the Transcendental Doctrine of Method within it, but also clarifies the relationship between the different parts of the work.

GABRIELE GAVA is Associate Professor of Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Turin. He is the author of *Peirce's Account of Purposefulness: A Kantian Perspective* (2014).

KANT'S *CRITIQUE OF*
PURE REASON AND THE
METHOD OF METAPHYSICS

GABRIELE GAVA

University of Turin



Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-009-17210-3 — Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and the Method of Metaphysics

Gabriele Gava

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009172103

DOI: 10.1017/9781009172127

© Gabriele Gava 2023

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions
of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Gava, Gabriele, 1981– author.

TITLE: Kant's critique of pure reason and the method of metaphysics /
Gabriele Gava, University of Turin.

OTHER TITLES: Critique of pure reason and the method of metaphysics

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, USA : Cambridge
University Press, 2023. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2022055873 (print) | LCCN 2022055874 (ebook)

| ISBN 9781009172103 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009172127 (ebook)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Kant, Immanuel, 1724–1804. Kritik der reinen Vernunft.
| Metaphysics. | Knowledge, Theory of.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC B2779 .G36 2023 (print) | LCC B2779 (ebook)

| DDC 110–dc23/eng/20230324

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022055873>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022055874>

ISBN 978-1-009-17210-3 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will
remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-009-17210-3 — Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and the Method of Metaphysics

Gabriele Gava

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

To Laura, Maddalena, and Greta

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Citations of Kant's Works</i>	xi
Introduction	I
PART I METAPHYSICS AS A SCIENCE AND THE ROLE OF THE <i>CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON</i>	15
Introduction to Part I	15
1 The Worldly Concept of Philosophy and the Possibility of Metaphysics as a Science	17
2 The <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> as the Doctrine of Method of Metaphysics	41
PART II THE METHOD OF TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY	65
Introduction to Part II	65
3 Metaphysical Deductions	75
4 Transcendental Deductions	122
PART III THE METHOD OF THE CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON	169
Introduction to Part III	169
5 The Negative Side of the Critique of Pure Reason	174

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
6	Transcendental Philosophy and the Critique of Pure Reason in the B-Deduction	194
7	The Positive Side of the Critique of Pure Reason	207
	PART IV KANT ON DOGMATISM AND SCEPTICISM	229
	Introduction to Part IV	229
8	Kant on Wolff and Dogmatism	231
9	Kant on Hume and Scepticism	251
	Conclusion	267
	<i>Bibliography</i>	270
	<i>Index</i>	282

Acknowledgements

Working on this book has been a long journey. The idea of writing a book dedicated to Kant's 'method' had been in my mind at least since I moved to Germany in 2012 to pursue a post-doc in Frankfurt. The present work and the way in which it addresses the question of 'method' is quite different from that initial idea. However, using an image dear to Kant, that idea can be considered its 'seed'. My time in Frankfurt, which from the initially planned two years became an eight-year period, was essential to making that seed grow. In Frankfurt, I met many interesting philosophers, some of whom are now my friends. I am especially grateful to Marcus Willaschek, who has been and continues to be not only a constant source of insight and useful feedback but also a wonderful mentor and friend.

While my time in Frankfurt has had an enormous effect on the theses defended in this book and how I argue for them, there is also a sense in which the view I develop here finds its roots in the Italian tradition of Kant scholarship in which I made my first steps as a scholar. What is distinctive in this tradition is that it emphasizes the importance of the Transcendental Doctrine of Method of the first *Critique* for understanding Kant's project. In this respect, I am indebted to Alfredo Ferrarin, my PhD advisor, and Claudio La Rocca, both of whom greatly influenced my view.¹ When I think of my time in Frankfurt and this Italian tradition, I see this book as a way of bringing together these two sources of influence.

I would like to express my gratitude to numerous people who have read drafts of parts of this book and have provided useful feedback, as well as those who posed challenging questions during conferences and talks. Let me mention the following people in particular: Stefano Bacin, Stefano Berteà, Henny Blomme, Claudia Blöser, Karin de Boer, Luigi Filieri, Cord Friebe, Luis Garcia, Stephen Howard, Thomas Höwing, Colin

¹ Other Italian scholars have dedicated important studies to the Transcendental Doctrine of Method, for example Massimo Barale and Giorgio Tonelli. Even though I have not collaborated directly with them, the approach I develop in this book inherits some of their insights.

McQuillan, Sofie Møller, Luciano Perulli, Pavel Reichl, Elke Schmidt, Matthé Scholten, Dieter Schönecker, Thomas Sturm, Achim Vesper, Owen Ware and Lea Ypi. I also wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press, who pushed me to make clearer how the different parts of the book hang together.

I am extremely thankful to Eric Watkins, who organized a manuscript workshop on a previous draft of this book in the summer of 2021. The feedback I received from him and from the other participants, Lucy Allais, Andrew Chignell, Huaping Lu-Adler, Clinton Tolley and Marcus Willaschek, has been immensely helpful in making my view clearer and, hopefully, stronger.

Special thanks also go to Marcello Garibbo, Mario Pati and Lorenzo Sala, who read the penultimate draft of the book and proposed various improvements, to Carolyn Benson, who corrected my English, and to Hilary Gaskin, who provided many valuable suggestions along the way. Needless to say, the remaining mistakes and inaccuracies are my responsibility.

During the time I was working on this book, many things happened in my life. I married my wife, Laura, with whom I have been together since I was an undergraduate in Venice. She moved in Frankfurt with me, where our two daughters, Maddalena and Greta, were born. They have certainly made the process of writing this book less stressful than it would otherwise have been. This is also why I will always connect that process and Frankfurt to happy memories. It is to them that this book is dedicated.

The research at the basis of this book has been partially supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, to which I am grateful. A paragraph of Chapter 1 re-elaborates a passage from the chapter 'The Doctrine of Method', in *The Kantian Mind*, ed. by S. Baiasu and M. Timmons, London: Routledge, forthcoming. A small section from Chapter 7 appeared in 'Kant and Crusius on Belief and Practical Justification', *Kantian Review*, 24:53–75, 2019. A shorter version of Chapter 8 was published as 'Kant on Wolff and Dogmatism', in *Proceedings of the 13th International Kant Congress 'The Court of Reason'*, edited by C. Serck-Hanssen and B. Himmelmann, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2021, pp. 299–308. A paragraph of Chapter 8 re-elaborates a passage from 'Kant, Wolff and the Method of Philosophy', *Oxford Studies in Early Modern Philosophy*, 8:271–303, 2018. I thank the editors and publishers of these publications for permission to use these materials.

Citations of Kant's Works

Throughout the book, I have tried to keep abbreviations to a minimum and have adopted a simple system for citations of Kant's works. Citations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* refer to its first and second editions by only using A and B, respectively (for example: A834/B862). Citations from the *Akademie Ausgabe* of Kant's writings (*Kants gesammelte Schriften*, edited by the Berlin-Brandenburgischen – formerly Preussischen – Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin: Reimer, De Gruyter, 1900–) only indicate volume and page number (for example: 9:70). Citations of Kant's *Reflexionen* additionally include their number, preceded by the abbreviation *Refl.* and followed by the volume and page number in the *Akademie Ausgabe* (for example: *Refl.* 1656, 16:68). I cite one work, the *Heschel Logic*, that is not contained in this edition and instead appears in the volume *Logik-Vorlesungen: Unveröffentlichte Nachschriften*, Vol. 2, edited by T. Pinder, Hamburg: Meiner, 1998. When citing this work, I indicate the page number in Pinder's edition, followed by the page in the English translation by M. Young (*Lectures on Logic*, ed. and tr. by M. Young, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) (for example: *Heschel Logic*, 488, Eng. tr. 416). English translations are from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* (edited by P. Guyer and A. Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992–), adapted to British spelling. I specify in brackets or in notes when my translations deviate from this edition.