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Editorial Note

Kant's Philosophy in the 21st Century

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The 21st century is a turning point for humankind. Its principal existential challenges or threats include disastrous climate change; addicted and uncontrolled use of digital technology, and the hegemony of what I have called *the myth of artificial intelligence*; the return of fascist politics and war mongering; and the ongoing threat of nuclear annihilation. If humankind is to survive and flourish, then it must have an overarching plan that is guided by an adequate, fundamental, and synoptic philosophy. What sort of philosophy? It is arguable that only an updated version or versions of the 18th century Critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant can do the job. Correspondingly and to that end, this issue of the *Journal of Philosophical Investigations* is devoted to the special topic "Kant's Philosophy in the 21st Century."

The core of Kant's Critical philosophy is *transcendental idealism*: the thesis that necessarily, the manifestly real world structurally conforms to our innately specified cognitive (intellectual and sensible), affective, and practical powers, and not the converse. If transcendental idealism is true, then the the natural universe is our metaphysical, epistemic, and practical home, and it cannot be adequately explained without reference to the real possibility of rational human animals.

Against that backdrop, the articles in this collection amply testify to the intrinsic significance of Kant's Critical philosophy, and above all to its contemporary and future relevance. There are articles on Kant's metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of science (articles 2-9); on his ethics and practical philosophy (articles 10-12); and on his social and political theory (article 13-14). Taken collectively, they demonstrate that Kant's Critical philosophy still has defensible and original things to say about the principle of sufficient reason and the thing-in-itself, cognitive

semantics and consciousness, free will and quantum mechanics, the nature of the self, the nature of human love, practical reasons, meta-ethics, the nature of shame, and enlightenment. Indeed, perhaps surprisingly, Kant's 18th century Critical philosophy is uniquely suited to be *the philosophy of the future* (article 1).

This is because *all* Anglo-American-&-European philosophy since Kant—i.e., since the end of the 18th century—is *post-Kantian*, in the substantive sense that all Anglo-American-&-European philosophy since the end of the 18th century falls within a single comprehensive *Ur*-framework, according to which Kant's philosophy is either (1) wholly accepted without revision-or-updating, (2) at least partially accepted but also significantly revised-&-updated, or (3) outright rejected. However, whether Kant's philosophy is wholly accepted, partially accepted, or outright rejected, *it is inescapable*. This is simply because Kant's philosophy determines the total logical space of relevant philosophical options for all post-Kantian Anglo-American-&-European philosophy. In this sense, all post-Kantian Anglo-American-&-European philosophy, including of course all contemporary philosophy up to 6am this morning, *has come out from under Kant's wig*, whether positively (pro-) or negatively (anti-). Therefore, all foreseeably future philosophy Anglo-American-&-European philosophy will be a series of positive or negative footnotes to Kant, and the articles in this special topics collection provide fourteen different previews of that philosophy.