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978-0-521-87801-2 - Kant's Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals: A Critical Guide

Edited by Jens Timmermann

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KANT'S *GROUNDWORK OF THE
METAPHYSICS OF MORALS*

In his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Immanuel Kant portrays the supreme moral principle as an unconditional imperative that applies to all of us because we freely choose to impose upon ourselves a law of pure practical reason. Morality is revealed to be a matter of autonomy. Today, this approach to ethical theory is as perplexing, controversial and inspiring as it was in 1785, when the *Groundwork* was first published. The essays in this volume, by international Kant scholars and moral philosophers, discuss Kant's philosophical development and his rejection of earlier moral theories, the role of happiness and inclination in the *Groundwork*, Kant's moral metaphysics and theory of value, and his attempt to justify the categorical imperative as a principle of freedom. They reflect the approach of several schools of interpretation and illustrate the lively diversity of Kantian ethics today.

JENS TIMMERMANN is Senior Lecturer in Moral Philosophy at the University of St Andrews. He is the author of *Kant's 'Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals': A Commentary* (Cambridge, 2007) and *Sittengesetz und Freiheit* (2003) as well as the editor of *Immanuel Kant, Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* (1998) and *Immanuel Kant, Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (2004).

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Why the Ideals of the Enlightenment Still Elude Us (2007), *Kant's Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings* (2000), and *Morality and Moral Theory: A Reappraisal and Reaffirmation* (1992); co-editor and translator of Kant's *Anthropology, History, and Education* (2007); editor and translator of Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (2006); editor of Schleiermacher's *Lectures on the Philosophical Ethics* (2002); and co-editor of *The Greeks and Us* (1996).

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Citations of Kant's works refer to the volume and page number in the Academy Edition of Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter and predecessors, 1900–); the exception are references to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which cite the page numbers of the first (A) and second (B) editions. Quotations have been adapted from the following translations:

- G* *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Mary J. Gregor (trans.), in Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- CpV* *Critique of Practical Reason*, Mary J. Gregor (trans.), in Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- CrV* *Critique of Pure Reason*, Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (trans.) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
- CU* *Critique of Judgment*, Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (trans.) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- MdS* *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Mary J. Gregor (trans.), in Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Collins* *Moral Philosophy: Collins*, Peter Heath (trans.), in Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics* (Peter Heath and J. B. Schneewind (eds.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997)
- Religion* *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, George di Giovanni (trans.), in Immanuel Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology* (Allen Wood and George di Giovanni (eds.), New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- VRL* 'On a Supposed Right to Lie from Philanthropy', Mary J. Gregor (trans.), in Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996)