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LORENZO L. PIZZICHEMI, *L'uso di sé. Il concetto di 'uso' in Kant e la questione del fondamento della filosofia trascendentale*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2020, pp. 192 (ISBN: 9788815291516).

What did Kant mean with the term *Gebrauch* in his 'critical' writings? In the wake of recent Italian studies conducted by Giorgio Agamben and Paolo Virno, this research by Lorenzo Pizzichemi aims to show how deeply the notion of *Gebrauch* is embedded in core fields of Kantian 'critical' thought, beyond its understanding of being bound to purpose.

In traditional commentary practice, it was common to evaluate the work under examination by concentrating on four specific characteristics, which would have justified the work's *raison d'être*. Each work, in fact, to be called such, had to have: (1) an explicit object or topic of inquiry; it had to (2) pursue an intention or goal, and (3) indicate the audience it refers to. Finally, (4) the work was to clarify the relationship between the object which is inquired, and the method applied to do so.

We will follow this traditional hermeneutic principle to review Lorenzo Pizzichemi's recently published *L'uso di sé*, which fits quite well into the ancient framework mentioned above. In fact, its object consists of (1) the analysis of the term *Gebrauch* (Pizzichemi translates in Italian as *uso*), which permeates all of Kant's 'critical' period. The term has been translated in English with *use*, as found in the Cambridge edition by Guyer and Wood. However, in this review we will stick to the original *Gebrauch* as to avoid any etymological inconsistency. By undertaking this analysis, the work very explicitly states its purpose (2): to show not only how the notion of *Gebrauch* constitutes the logical structure of the most relevant concepts of Kant's philosophical system, but also how the notion of *Gebrauch* – due to its central role – is capable of refuting any claim of «lack of foundation» of Kant's transcendental philosophy. The work is addressed (3) – in a particular way but not exclusively – to the *Kant-Forscher*, meaning the totality of people involved in philosophical – and non philosophical – studies on Kant. The urge to speak and communicate the results of this research to fellows around the world is one of the reasons for this review being written in English. Ultimately, the method of inquiry (4) in *L'uso di sé* regarding its object is of a 'logical-critical' nature: it is starting from a 'philological' attention to the texts that the formulation of theoretical problems arises – and vice versa: the texts are always interrogated through theoretical instances.

The other reason for writing this review in English is the work's originality, which deserves to be spread beyond an Italian readership: The essay's subject, indeed, is a novelty in the field of Kant studies (see pp. XVII-XX). Pizzichemi states that «Kant has never explicitly referred to the notion of 'use' in the texts of his published works or in any posthumous material» (p. XVIII). It is nonetheless undoubtable that Kant employed the term in a technical sense (*terminus technicus*) in many key passages written during his 'critical' period. Proof of this are the numerous occurrences in technical expressions of theoretical significance such as: «transcendental use», «immanent use», «empirical use» and many, many others:

Nel recente *Kant-Lexikon* (2015), infatti, [...] figura di nuovo l'entrata *Gebrauch*. [...] Il nuovo *Kant-Lexikon*, tuttavia, non fornisce un elenco completo delle locuzioni in cui compare «uso» [...] né spunti per interpretare la filosofia critica facendo perno su questa nozione [...]. Eppure, un tale elenco sarebbe stato già sufficiente per poter iniziare a intravedere una leggera silhouette del fitto reticolo di relazioni che questa nozione fuggevole e capricciosa intesse con gli snodi fondamentali della 'filosofia critica' (p. XIX)¹.

To sum up, it is from this contrast – between the persuasive use of a notion in its technical sense and its having remained up to now of no or little importance – that Pizzichemi's research gains legitimacy and is of great interest for the field of Kant studies.

Since the beginning of his research, the author faced an interpretational problem which cannot be underestimated: since Kant never spoke explicitly about *Gebrauch*, how can this notion possibly be defined? Pizzichemi tackles this problem with logic and argumentative

¹ «In the recent *Kant-Lexikon* (2015), in fact, [...] appears again the entrance of *Gebrauch*. [...] The new *Kant-Lexikon*, however, does not provide a complete list of the phrases in which *use* appears [...] nor suggestions for interpreting critical philosophy by hinging on this notion [...]. Yet such a list would have already been sufficient to glimpse a slight silhouette of the dense network of relationships that this fleeting and capricious notion interweaves with the fundamental links of 'critical' philosophy». All citations have been translated by the author.

rigour along with an accurate and respectful analysis of numerous text passages. Bypassing the risk of getting caught in a somewhat 'overinterpreting' view of Kantian texts, the author states that with *Gebrauch* Kant indicates a transformative activity, which in the first place is referred to one's own faculties: that is *l'uso di sé*, as the book title suggests. It is from this activity, the *use of one's self*, that the «perceptible and imperceptible structures» (p. XL), which our cognitive life is embedded in, sprout.

A valid objection which the author himself advances is the following: what can possibly be the logic proof that the notion of *Gebrauch* carries out a theoretic function in Kant's philosophy? How can one be sure that by *Gebrauch* Kant does not just mean a mere and banal use, not worthy of any philosophical attention? Probably, the most convincing answer he gives is this: *Gebrauch* in Kant exceeds the boundary of a mere instrumental use because it always creates a «permanent, disciplinary condition», a regulated atmosphere. According to the author, this tendency is not in line with the temporal modality of an instrumental use. Instead, it sets the framework for the use of one's «higher faculties» (*obere Vermögen*), that is «reason» and «understanding». As a matter of fact, we normally make use of something in an instrumental sense exclusively in case of need, thus in a determinate, not permanent time frame. Whereas in Kant the *Gebrauch* of one's faculties results as a «regulated dimension which is constantly exposed to its own violation» (p. 33).

Drawing the attention of the *Kant-Forschung* to a central, but very little explored notion as *Gebrauch* is surely one of the main achievements of this research. Nevertheless, the author also stresses another aspect of *Gebrauch*: he postulates that its central role in Kant's philosophy is pivotal in the discussion on the *vexata quaestio* about the «foundation of transcendental philosophy». Pizzichemi states (pp. XXXVII-XXXVIII):

In una celeberrima lettera a Hegel (6 gen. 1795), Schelling scriveva: «Kant ci ha dato i risultati. Le premesse mancano ancora. E chi può capire i risultati senza le premesse?». [...] Tuttavia è proprio questo presupposto che deve venir messo in discussione. Il fondamento della filosofia trascendentale risiede probabilmente in una nozione umile e sempre sottomano, senza che vi sia perciò il bisogno di andarla a cercare in chissà quali

altezze; che procede senza troppi clamori al seguito, articolando in certa e inequivocabile guisa tutto ciò che afferra².

The logic justification for the position of *Gebrauch* as an activity at the foundation of the entire architecture of transcendental philosophy occurs several times during the course of the discussion on the basis of the following method: selecting the main notions of transcendental philosophy (e.g. *category*, *idea*, *sublime*, etc.) it is shown through numerous text references how it is above all their *Gebrauch* that ensures them an unavoidable founding role. Precisely for this reason the author proposes to «read the entire *Critical Work* as a *Treatise on use*» (p. 54).

The volume is divided into an introduction, three chapters and several addenda.

The first chapter, *Uso e significato (Gebrauch and meaning)*, shows how «ideas» and «categories» find their significance exclusively by reason of a determinate *Gebrauch*. Both do not hold meaning in and by themselves, for it is a determinate *Gebrauch* (namely a «regulative» or «constitutive» use) that confers them their role and importance. It is also worth mentioning the paragraphs which – in light of recent studies by Paolo Virno on infinite regression – refer to the «transcendental ideas» and the argumentation for the «existential value of reason's logical-linguistic resources» (see pp. 44-46).

The second chapter, *L'immaginazione e il suo uso (Imagination and its Gebrauch)*, investigates *ex novo* the nature of imagination and of its products. Re-reading Kant's pages, paying particular attention to the notion of *Gebrauch* and through the 'lenses' of Sigmund Freud's studies (mainly on the «joke» and the famous «Freudian slip»), the author concludes that: *schematism* is the repertoire of «jokes» (*Witze*) of the imagination through which it performs the tasks of its own *Gebrauch* (applying a supposed general rule in a concrete situation); *lapsus iudicii* are the «Freudian slips» by which the use of the imagination is inevitably afflicted; *taste* is the name

² «In a famous letter to Hegel (January 6, 1795), Schelling wrote: 'Kant gave us the results. The premises are still missing. And who can understand the results without the premises?' [...] However, it is precisely this assumption that must be questioned. The foundation of transcendental philosophy probably lies in a humble notion that is always at hand, without therefore the need to look for it to who knows what lengths; which proceeds without too much clamor in its wake, articulating in a certain and unequivocal way everything that it grasps.

of the idle spin of the use of the imagination; the observation of the double failure of the use of the imagination is *sublime*; *genius* is the effect of the free use of imagination (see pp. 107-135).

The author proposes a distinction between what is called a «rhythmic» and a «schematic» imagination, regarding the «deduction» of categories, which is nothing less than the legitimacy of their *Gebrauch*. According to Pizzichemi, in Kant imagination would have both an aspect that we could define as «rhythmic», which would be at the basis of the «synthesis of apprehension», and an aspect that we could call «schematic» or linguistic, which instead would be to form the basis of the «figurative synthesis».

The third chapter, *Usò pubblico e uso privato (Public Gebrauch and Private Gebrauch)*, is dedicated to the political and anthropological issues that the notion of *Gebrauch* reveals in Kant's work. The guiding term of this part is the word *Bestimmung*, which, following the linguistic and conceptual history of the word, has the dual meaning of «determination» and «destination (of use)». Starting from the distinction of «public *Gebrauch*» and «private *Gebrauch*» (*hapax legomenon* in the Kantian work), the author proposes an agreement between the two «intended uses of man», as an 'individual' and as 'species', which in the Kantian corpus seem to be placed in contrast. According to Pizzichemi, while the «intended use» of man as an individual would be subject to a «constitutive» *Gebrauch* of himself, the «intended» *Gebrauch* of man as a species would take place through a «regulatory» *Gebrauch* of one's life. Therefore, the activity of *Gebrauch* is also the foundation of the Kantian anthropological-political project.

In conclusion, one can ask whether a new manner of understanding Kant's philosophy could emerge in light of the different theses that emerge from this research. In this regard, there are two very suggestive images in the introduction, which are paradigmatic of the change in perspective obtained by the analysis of *Gebrauch* in transcendental philosophy (p. X):

La «rivoluzione copernicana» di Kant ha – come la Luna – un lato in ombra, una faccia irregolare e accidentata che mai ci si mostra. Come le 'macchie' lunari trapelano persino dai suoi raggi più luminosi, così anche nei tratti logici dei prodotti più genuini e raffinati della speculazione umana [...] si

intravedono complicate tecniche di omissione, concertazione e controllo: gli esiti incerti e a volte fallimentari di determinate «tecniche di sé». Nell'albero dell'umano sapere, i rami della conoscenza pura e *a priori* sono piantati al terreno, mentre le sue coriacee radici puntano al cielo. Se è vero che la conoscenza pura non rappresenta più un problema quando la si rapporti a un'attività che la pone come tale, allora bisogna rinvenirne il fondamento dove solitamente non lo si cercherebbe: in ciò che la teoria della conoscenza ha rimosso³.

It is now up to the *Leserwelt* to decide whether this research's outcome will shine a new light on our way of understanding and studying Kant.

(Mateja Lara Schmidt)

SOFIE MØLLER, *Kant's Tribunal of Reason: Legal Metaphor and Normativity in the Critique of Pure Reason*, Cambridge-New York, Cambridge University Press, 2020, pp. 198 (ISBN: 9781108498494).

Kant's Tribunal of Reason: Legal Metaphor and Normativity in the Critique of Pure Reason è il primo libro in inglese esclusivamente dedicato alla funzione delle metafore giuridiche presenti nella *Critica della ragion pura*.

Le immagini di ambito giuridico, numerose e note agli studiosi kantiani, riguardano, per esempio, non solo la deduzione trascendentale intesa come una giustificazione in senso legale (*quid juris*) e la critica della

³ «Just as the moon, Kant's Copernican revolution has a dark side, an irregular and bumpy face which never shows itself. Just as the lunar 'spots' are visible even from its most luminous rays, so in the logical features of the most genuine and refined products of human speculation [...] complicated techniques of omission, cooperation and control can be glimpsed: the uncertain and sometimes unsuccessful outcomes of certain techniques of the self. In the tree of human knowledge, the branches of pure and a priori knowledge are planted on the ground, while its leathery roots point to the sky. If it is true that pure knowledge no longer represents a problem when it is related to an activity that places it as such, then it is necessary to find its foundation where it is usually not sought: that is, in what the theory of knowledge has removed».