



# Reading Kant's Geography (SUNY series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy)

*Stuart Elden*

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**Reading Kant's Geography (SUNY series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy)** Stuart Elden  
*Perspectives on Kant's teachings on geography and how they relate his understanding of the world.*

For almost forty years, German enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant gave lectures on geography, more than almost any other subject. Kant believed that geography and anthropology together provided knowledge of the world, an empirical ground for his thought. Above all, he thought that knowledge of the world was indispensable to the development of an informed cosmopolitan citizenry that would be self-ruling. While these lectures have received very little attention compared to his work on other subjects, they are an indispensable source of material and insight for understanding his work, specifically his thinking and contributions to anthropology, race theory, space and time, history, the environment and the emergence of a mature public. This indispensable volume brings together world-renowned scholars of geography, philosophy and related disciplines to offer a broad discussion of the importance of Kant's work on this topic for contemporary philosophical and geographical work.

"...a timely collection of eighteen essays woven into a coherent matrix by the two editors Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta. A splendid job, by its nature an inherently interdisciplinary endeavour, at the same time a window to the past and a gate-opener to the future." —Geografiska Annaler

"One of the great strengths of Reading Kant's Geography is that it brings together geographers and philosophers to engage with the nexus between Kant and geography." — Journal of Historical Geography

"A moment of Kantian enlightenment! In a splendid, interdisciplinary set of interrogations, the nature and significance of Immanuel Kant's geography is brought into full light for the very first time. This remarkable work of retrieval thus enlightens, at once, Kant's own Enlightenment project, and geography's place in the project of Enlightenment. Whether dealing with racial geography, philosophical topography, or cosmopolitan politics, Reading Kant's Geography constantly illuminates and instructs. If, as is sometimes said, geography is too important to be left to geographers, it's no less true that it's too important to be left to philosophers." — David N. Livingstone, author of *Adam's Ancestors: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Human Origins*


"This volume of impeccable scholarship and sustained critical inquiry performs an invaluable service. It is a major contribution to writings on the history of geography, but it also shows that Kant's geography was far from incidental to the whole outworking of his philosophy, nor to what he claimed about the potentialities and pitfalls in shared human occupation of the planet. As such, this volume needs to be read by anyone concerned with enlightenment, modernity, and issues such as cosmopolitanism and transnationalism." — Chris Philo, editor of *Theory and Methods: Critical Essays in Human Geography*

Stuart Elden is Professor of Political Geography at Durham University. He is the author of *Terror and Territory: The Spatial Extent of Sovereignty* and *Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible*.

Eduardo Mendieta is Professor of Philosophy at Stony Brook University, State University of New York. He is the author of *Global Fragments: Globalizations, Latinamericanisms, and Critical Theory*, also published by SUNY Press, and *The Adventures of Transcendental Philosophy: Karl-Otto Apel's Semiotics and Discourse*

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