



Felt Meanings of the World: A Metaphysics of Feeling

Quentin Smith

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In a critical dialogue with the metaphysical tradition from Plato to Hegel to contemporary schools of thought, the author convincingly argues that traditional rationalist metaphysics has failed to accomplish its goal of demonstrating the existence of a divine cause and moral purpose of the world. To replace the defective rationalist metaphysics, the author builds a new metaphysics on the idea that moods and affects make manifest the world's felt meanings; he argues that each feature of the world is a felt meaning in the sense that each feature is a source of a feeling-response, if and when it appears. The author asserts that we must synthesize our two ways of knowing-poetic evocations and exact analyses-in order to decide which mood or affect is the appropriate appreciation of any given feature of the world. Smith gives evocative and exact explications of such features as the world's temporality, appearance, and mind-independency, as these features appear in the appropriate recitations.

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