

IS THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY A PRECONDITION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ETHICAL COMMUNITY?¹

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There is a complementary relation between ethical community and political community in *Religion* that is commonly explored as follows: it is quite advantageous for states that their citizens also come together in an ethical community. By doing so, citizens would become more virtuous and follow certain laws not only because of their legality, but also because of their morality. Consequently, citizens would have a stronger and deeper motivation to follow laws. For instance, in his comment on the state of nature and the civil condition on both ethics and right, Stefano Lo Re suggests that exact relation in terms of a “political function” of the ethico-civil condition.³ Interpretations of this kind are generally reinforced by the following passage, found at the beginning of the Third Part of Kant’s *Religion*: “Every political community may indeed wish to have available a dominion over minds as well, according to the laws of virtue; for where its means of coercion do not reach, since a human judge cannot penetrate into the depths of other human beings, there the dispositions to virtue would bring about the required result.” (RGV 6: 95).

The deeper disposition to follow rules is also a central point in Bernd Dörflinger’s article about the relation between the state and religion in Kant’s thought. Given the difference between juridical laws and moral laws, Dörflinger raises the question: why does the state, being based only in juridical laws, must pay attention to the efficacy of moral laws?⁴ Even though the State cannot actively promote the morality of actions, it is still in the state’s interest that morality is somehow taught to the citizens. On Dörflinger’s interpretation, the morality of the citizens within the state is important because when “individuals accept the principle of right

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not for the external reason of the threat of the use of coercion, but impose this principle by an autonomous act of self-commitment, when, therefore, they turn it into a moral-practical law, the validity of the principle is guaranteed by a reason more reliable and stronger than the threat of the use of coercion” (Dörflinger 2009, p. 11).

Such commentaries show not only that there should not be a conflict between ethical community and political community, but also that the ethical community can support the political community in achieving its ends, for the ethical community consists in a union around merely laws of virtue - and therefore of virtuous agents. The establishment of an ethical community leads to a change in the motivation of the actions in such a way that agents end up following laws not only due to the presence of external coercion, but because this is the virtuous way to behave.

There is one aspect of the relation between the ethical and the political communities that points to a role of the political community in relation to the ethical one, and it seems to remain unexplored. It concerns the question of whether the political community is as a precondition for the possibility of an ethical community.⁵ This subject is briefly introduced by Kant also at the very beginning of the Third Part of *Religion*, in the following passage: “It [the ethical community] can exist in the midst of a political community and even be made up of all the members of the latter (**indeed, if the political community did not lie at the basis [zum Grunde liegt], it could never be brought into existence by human beings**).” (RGV 6: 94, emphasis added, translation amended). One can see that Kant introduces in the parenthesis what seems to be an essential aspect of the necessary conditions for the establishment of an ethical community among human beings: it needs to have a political community at its base.

In this article, I intend to analyze Kant’s claim that the political community presents itself as a precondition (a necessary but *per se* insufficient condition) for the existence of an ethical community. I believe that there is an important connection to be explored between the conditions created by the political community and a change in the way that agents choose their maxims of action. It is almost as if it were necessary for the political community to guarantee a minimum of conditions so that agents could make a change in their *way of thinking*, a change that is necessary to choose the right maxim consistently. It is only due to the conditions guaranteed by the state that one can become aware of moral duty and think collectively.

To argue for this reading, I will first analyze the debate concerning the role of the ethical community on the progress of history. Through that analysis, I intend to show that Kant argues, since the 1780’s, that there is a precedence of the political-legal development in history but that the aim of this progress is to turn society into a moral whole. Second, I respond to a possible counter argument regarding my general hypothesis, which is that perhaps I am subordinating the possibility of a moral *action* to the existence of a political community. To respond to this objection, I will distinguish an individual moral action from the realization of morality as a whole. Third, I show how Kant, in *Religion*, conceives the pair of concepts *state of nature* and *civil condition* not only on the juridical level, but also on the ethical one. Finally, I return to the question of the precedence of the political-legal progress to analyze Kant’s claim

regarding the ethical community. On this last section, I recur to *Toward Perpetual Peace* to investigate why political progress must precede moral progress.

I. MORAL AND THE IDEA OF A PROGRESS IN HISTORY

In *Religion*, Kant's claim of the necessity of a political community to the establishment of an ethical community seems to be grounded on his philosophy of history. Therefore, understanding the idea of progress in Kant's philosophy of history is my first step to comment on this passage. A debate that partially addresses this aspect of the relation between ethical and political communities is based on different readings of Kant's philosophy of history. On their extensive commentaries on *Religion*, James DiCenso's (2012) and Stephen Palmquist's (2015) remarks on RGV 6: 94 (the passage above) raise the question of what role the ethical community can have in the idea of progress in history.

DiCenso claims that Kant's ethical and political vision "involves the gradual approximation of juridico-civil laws to a greater correspondence with ethico-civil ones. Rather than dichotomizing them, Kant brings moral and positive law into dynamic interrelation." (DiCenso 2012, p.134). He also claims that "the capacity to realize moral laws collectively is affected by political conditions" (DiCenso 2012, p. 134). On the other side, Stephen Palmquist locates in DiCenso's interpretation an example of a "common approach whereby *Religion* is assumed to portray religious reformation as another step on the path to this political goal" (Palmquist 2015, p. 254). For Palmquist, Kant radically separates religious and political organizations, and according to him "even in *Idea*, political progress is taken as the means to essentially 'inward' end or purpose" (Palmquist 2015, p. 254).

Differently from Palmquist, I believe that moral and political progress can be related since the *Idea*, as Kant conceives the aim of progress in history as the full development of all human predispositions (which includes the moral ones)⁶. Already in 1784, Kant presents the idea of a natural destination of reason.⁷ He also underlines there that this progress follows steps in direction of the realization of a "moral whole", as one can clearly see on the following passage:

Thus happen the first true steps from crudity toward culture, which really consists in the social worth of the human being; thus all talents come bit by bit to be developed, taste is formed, and even, through progress in enlightenment, a beginning is made toward the foundation of a mode of thought which can with time transform the rude natural predisposition to make moral distinctions into determinate practical principles and hence transform a *pathologically* compelled agreement to form a society finally into a *moral* whole. (IaG 8: 21).

Two aspects can be seen from this passage. First, the aim of history is to turn society into a moral whole. Hence, moral and politics are articulated through historical progress. Second, the juridical-political level develops first, and this development can lead to a realization of morality. Culture and enlightenment (and therefore, a political society that encourages them) seems to be the key to the passage from "a *pathologically* compelled agreement to form a society"

to a “moral whole”.⁸ The idea of a political progress that can lead to a moral one appears also on the essay *What is Enlightenment?* through the idea of a changing in the way of thinking that slowly takes place with the use of freedom – in this case, freedom to make *public use* of reason (WA 8: 36).

Thus, one can affirm that political progress can lead to a moral progress without compromising to any subordination of the ethical community to the ends of politics. It is true that Kant distinguishes religious and political communities in *Religion*, but this distinction does not mean that they are not articulated. In this paper, I argue that the passage in *Religion* on which Kant claims that a state must be at the basis of an ethical community offers an interesting approach on how to articulate both ethical and political communities through the idea of a progress in history, given that Kant conceives it as having the full development of all human dispositions as its *telos*.⁹

II. IS MORAL ACTION CONDITIONED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLITICAL COMMUNITY?

It is surprising that Kant dedicates no more than a parenthesis to the need of a political community for the establishment of ethical community, since that short passage alone can lead to misinterpretations. A possible misreading of this statement would be that Kant is claiming that the *moral action* individually performed is subordinated to the existence of a political community. That is not the case. From the standpoint of the principles of virtue, the political community of which the agent is part is irrelevant to what is morally right. The moral law is rationally binding, and a moral action should be by its definition possible regardless of the context. For instance, it is possible (or it even *needs* to be possible) to act in a moral way in a nation of devils or in the state of nature.

Consequentially, the problem that rises from that parenthesis does not concern the possibility of individual moral action, but rather the constitution of an ethical *community*. Put simply, an ethical community is conceived by Kant as the relation of human beings to each other under the laws of virtue alone (RGV 6: 95). The consequence of this definition is the total absence of external coercion to support the observance of these laws. Since the *Religion* is a text brimming with empirical elements, Kant presents the emergency of an ethical community by tracing a narrative that strongly stresses how the mere coexistence with other human beings can bring out turbulent passions related to self-love.¹⁰ One can see on that characterization the picture of what Kant calls an *ethical* state of nature, a state of insecurity that humankind needs to overcome.

Kant relies on collectivity itself as the way out of this mutual, recurrent, and collective moral corruption. Thus, the ethical community has a trait of supporting the development of moral dispositions. On this topic, Kant mentions, for example, the need of “a union which has for its end the prevention of this evil and the promotion of the good in the human” (RGV 6: 94) or a society “solely designed for the preservation of morality by counteracting evil with united forces” (RGV 6: 94).

The establishment of an ethical community does not have the power to extirpate evil, only to constantly support the agent to choose better maxims. Because of the impossibility of totally overcoming evil, reference to a society designed to the “preservation of morality” seems appropriate. While Kant is clear about the role of the ethical community as creating this supportive environment for morality, he is rather vague on specifying how it would be possible to do so or whether if it would extend to a role of moral education.¹¹

Nonetheless, the main issue of that passage is not individual moral action, rather the constitution of a moral whole – on that case, an ethical community. And it is that constitution that should have the existence of a political community at its basis. If the ethical community bears any relation to individual action, it is not that of *condition*, but of *support*. The collective does not determine the individual moral action, but one can conceive the ethical community as an environment where individuals support each other to choose good maxims to their actions.

When Kant assumes the state as a precondition to the establishment of an ethical community, one can wonder whether he is discussing *idea* of an ethical community or the possibility of its *empirical realization*. On that parenthesis, Kant uses the term “ethical community”, which suggests he refers to the ideal of an ethical community. That distinction is important because I base my argument on the exit of the state of nature, which is for Kant a mere idea. When Kant sets the entrance into the civil state as a precondition to the ethical community, it is not a matter of one promoting the other, but of the political community facilitating the moral action and the realization of the duties of virtue. Thus, I concur with DiCenso’s former referred claim that for Kant the political conditions can affect the capacity to realize moral laws collectively.

III. THE PARALLEL BETWEEN ETHICS AND RIGHT: THE DOUBLE PAIR ‘STATE OF NATURE – CIVIL CONDITION’

When introducing the concept of an ethical community on the Third Part of *Religion*, Kant recurs to a parallel between the ethical level and the political one, taking the political community as a starting point for building his concept of an ethical community. He transposes the general structure from one to the other and further on he presents them also in analogy, in terms of an “ethical state” or a “kingdom of virtue” (RGV 6: 95). He proceeds with this parallel relying on the idea that if there is an ethical community (conceived as an ethico-civil condition), there must be something preceding it, as a state of nature (RGV 6: 95). The result of this argument is a duplicate of the opposition state of nature and civil condition, which was already known on the political level but appears now in the domain of ethics.

The parallel between the juridical and the ethical level faces its limits when it comes to the constitution and the legislation of the ethical community, since in the political level Kant defends the idea of a self-legislation of the people, while in the ethical community he defends the need of an external legislator (God) (RGV 6: 98). In *Religion*, Kant neither emphasizes nor explains the idea of an original contract, although this idea is already present in his political

thought at least since the 1780's. Neither does he mention anything similar to an original contract in the ethical level.

The key to understanding the Kantian claim that the establishment of an ethical community cannot be accomplished by human beings if there is no political community at its base seems to lie on what he describes as the state of nature. For two reasons. First, for Kant presents a novelty in *Religion* regarding the state of nature, conceiving it on a duplicated form: on the one side, there is a juridical state of nature, and on the other there is an ethical state of nature. Second, the entrance on the civil state is the only way to guarantee the peace needed for the full development of human predispositions. Kant builds the idea of an ethical state of nature as a copy of the structure and the main aspects of the juridical state of nature.

Kant describes the state of nature through the allusion to the Hobbesian image of a war of every human being against every other (RGV 6: 97). In *Religion*, Kant mentions Hobbes explicitly, because his aim is to underline the insecurity of the state of nature. There, despite agreeing with the image created by Hobbes, Kant is keen to change the emphasis: there is no need to conceive that on the state of nature there are actual hostilities between men, but rather to note the absence of legal guarantees.¹² The image echoes on Kant's text as a *possible* war of every human being against every other, since there is no regulating instance to mediate conflicts. As one can see on the Doctrine of Right, it is imprecise to oppose the state of nature to any sort of sociability.¹³ The juridical state of nature is described as the absence of an instance able to regulate conflicts, which makes it a state of private right only. In the Doctrine of Right, Kant maintains the idea of an instability that comes from the state of nature, but he seems to change the focus. There, he suppresses the mention to Hobbes and describes the state of nature as "a condition that is not rightful" (MS 6: 306).

In *Religion*, Kant transposes the Hobbesian-inspired framework of the juridical state of nature without mediation to ethics, creating what he calls an *ethical* state of nature. Even Kant's vocabulary in his description of the state of nature leads one to believe that he takes the idea of a juridical state of nature and transposes it into the ethical domain: he states that in both states of nature "each individual is his own judge" and that there is no "effective public authority with power to determine legitimately, according to laws, what is in given cases the duty of each individual, and to bring about the universal execution of those laws." (RGV 6: 95). There is no collective recognition of the moral law.

But what can an *ethical* state of nature be like? First, it is a state prior to the establishment of the ethical community. So, the narrative Kant constructs to introduce the concept of ethical community at the very beginning of the Third Part can lead us to a picture of the ethical state of nature. The description he gives in this excerpt points conclusively to the thesis that human beings corrupt themselves collectively: "it suffices that they are there, that they surround him, and that they are human beings, and they will mutually corrupt each other's moral disposition and make one another evil" (RGV 6: 94). Moral corruption arises in the context of the ethical state of nature simply because of the coexistence among humans. The simple presence of another brings up feelings of envy, desire for domination, and hostility. It is a search for recognition of one regarding the other that, if at first it seeks equality, quickly degenerates into

rivalry.¹⁴ Second, as a consequence, the ethical state of nature seems to be an environment in which agents are less inclined to act with the moral law as a maxim and more inclined to take self-love as the maxim for one's action.¹⁵ Third, aligned with the results of previous parts of *Religion*, the ethical state of nature is characterized by him as a state of permanent combat to the good principle.

Kant conceives the exit of the ethical state of nature as a duty, analogous to the duty to leave the juridical state of nature. He characterizes the duty to leave the ethical state of nature as “a duty *sui generis*, not of human beings toward human beings but of the human race toward itself.” (RGV 6: 97). It cannot be an individual duty since it is the duty to promote “the highest good as a good common to all” (RGV 6: 97). This collective moral highest good cannot be brought about merely by the effort of one singular individual on his own moral perfection but it requires a union of persons into a whole that has as an end the promotion of the highest good common to all. Kant highlights the uniqueness of the duty to exit the state of nature and promote a collective form of the highest good on the following passage:

(...) yet the idea of such a whole, as a universal republic based on the laws of virtue, differs entirely from all moral laws (which concern what we know to reside within our power), for it is the idea of working toward a whole of which we cannot know whether as a whole it is also in our power: so the duty in question differs from all others in kind and in principle. (RGV 6: 98)

The exit of the ethical state of nature is a duty one cannot fulfill alone. It requires a collective effort that might only be possible in a community that has already exited the juridical state of nature.

IV. THE EXIT FROM THE JURIDICAL STATE OF NATURE *MUST PRECEDE* THE EXIT FROM THE ETHICAL STATE OF NATURE

There are two passages in *Religion* to which I would like to refer to argue that not only the exit from the juridical state of nature occurs **before** the exit from the ethical state of nature, but also that the exit from the juridical state of nature is a precondition for the foundation of an ethical community. Since Kant only addresses this question indirectly, these two passages allow me to conceive the hypothesis that there is a necessary order for the exit of the states of nature. From the first passage it is possible to infer that the formation of the civil state of law happens independently of the exit from the ethical state of nature and that it is possible for there to be a civil state of right in which the citizens are still in the ethical state of nature. Whereas from the second quote, one can see that the foundation of an ethical community depends on there being a political community already established. Let us take closer a look at those passages.

The first quote is as follows. In approaching this double state of nature, Kant states that “in an already existing political community all the political citizens are, as such, still in the ethical state of nature, and have the right to remain in” (RGV 6: 95). He points out that to

force the citizens of a certain political community to form an ethical community would result in a contradiction, since the ethical community itself has in its concept freedom from any kind of coercion. What interests me in this first passage is that Kant states here that it is perfectly possible for there to exist a civil state of law in which all members are still in the ethical state of nature. Therefore, there is no need for the existence of an ethical community within the political community even though a state can benefit from the fact that there is an ethical community within it.

The fact that one has the right to remain on the ethical state of nature does not mean that one does not have the duty to exit the ethical state of nature. The parallel of the ethical level with the juridical level continues insofar as Kant attests that just as it is a duty to leave the juridical state of nature and enter a civil state of law, it is also a duty to leave the ethical state of nature.

It appears to be a necessary order for these exits: first in the political juridical level, then in the ethical one. However, if the content of moral law is independent of the context and if it is recognizable by reason, why can people not bind together on a church without the need of the state? Two possible explanations. First, the articulation between the individual and the collective. It is necessary that agents go through a change in the way of thinking, which is facilitated by the political community. So, I return to the claim that the capacity to recognize laws collectively is affected by political conditions. Second, one may think that the good constitution of a political community can give an example of how to build an ethical community. This hypothesis arises because development on the political level is independent of the moral one, and also because not every political community will present the conditions to the establishment of an ethical community. Freedom and equality are important pillars on the constitution of both communities, even because they are analogous to each other.¹⁶

The second passage I would like to refer to is the one I quoted on the introduction, but which is now possible to retake with more elements for the analysis: “It [the ethical community] can exist in the midst of a political community and even be made up of all the members of the latter (**indeed, if the political community did not lie at the basis [zum Grunde liegt], it could never be brought into existence by human beings**).” (RGV 6: 94, emphasis added, translation amended). The sense of a political community being at the foundation of an ethical community can in absolutely no case be of a political community forcing its members to form an ethical community. Nor can it be the sense that a political community can be created for the purpose of forming an ethical community. Kant is decisive in dismissing those ideas: “But woe to the legislator who would want to bring about through coercion a polity directed to ethical ends! For he would thereby not only achieve the very opposite of ethical ends, but also undermine his political ends and render them insecure.” (RGV 6: 96)

Thereby the meaning of “foundation of a political community” must be a different one. What is at stake is not the existence of a political community that forces its citizens out of the ethical state of nature. The existence of a political community seems to be necessary for the development of an ethical community because it could then guarantee a set of minimal conditions for the ethical community to exist. This is not to put a cause-and-effect relation on

it, since one must think that it would not be any political community that would provide such conditions and that even once the conditions are secured there is no guarantee that the citizens will really get out of the ethical state of nature.

When I refer to the guarantee of minimum conditions, it is not only the fact that the exit from the juridical state of nature tends to soften the conflicts between human beings. Moreover, the exit from the state of nature is more than the guarantee of private property and the fulfillment of contracts. The exit from the state of nature is a *duty*, just as the self-improvement of human beings is also a duty.¹⁷ And they are deeply related. It is necessary to leave the state of general insecurity that prevails in the juridical state of nature, so a development of moral dispositions can then be thought of. Perhaps it would be the case to put it in terms of securing external freedom so that the development of internal freedom can follow. It is a matter of considering the conditions under which agents willing to act according to good maxims are followed. And as I see, this question is inseparable from certain conditions related to political life.

The passages I have quoted so far set up the general picture of the problem as it appears in *Religion*. They place the exit from the juridical state of nature as necessarily previous to the exit from the ethical state of nature. However, in *Religion* Kant only mentions this problem without elaborating on it. There he provides no further explanation on why that order is necessary, and as much as we may infer that the state guarantees minimal conditions for the establishment of an ethical community, it is still impossible to be clear what these conditions are in a positive way.

A note written by Kant in the 1790's addresses this matter from a different perspective:

A firmly established peace, combined with the greater interaction among humans, is the idea through which alone is made possible the transition from the duties of right to the duties of virtue. Since when the laws secure freedom externally, the maxims to also govern oneself internally in accordance with laws can live up [*aufleben*]; and conversely, the latter in turn make it easier through their dispositions for lawful coercion to have an influence, so that peaceable behavior [*friedliches Verhalten*] under public laws and pacific dispositions [*friedfertige Gesinnungen*] (to also end the inner war between principles and inclinations), i.e., legality and morality find in the concept of peace the point of support for the transition from the Doctrine of Right to the Doctrine of Virtue. (R 23: 353–54)

The way Kant raises the question on that unpublished note is remarkable for my purpose since he uses the terms of a transition from right to virtue, placing the right necessarily before. On his published texts Kant never claimed to be a transition from the Doctrine of Right to the Doctrine of Virtue. I assume that he changed his presentation to clarify that the Doctrine of Virtue is not submitted to any empirical condition and is valid by itself. But the main idea remains valid. The transition to morality is only possible through these two elements: “a firmly established peace” and “the greater interaction among humans”.

Both elements are possible only by the exit of the juridical state of nature. The first one, a firmly established peace, is notable when referring to the idea of the state of nature with the image of a possible war. The second one, the greater interaction among humans, appears

on the idea of the original contract, through which Kant understands the entrance of a civil condition. It is only because every individual gives up external freedom that they become members of a community. For this, the original contract also represents the idea of people building something together (MS 6: 315).

Along with the results of section I, in which I discuss how politics develops first than moral in history, my proposal to solve the lack of justification from Kant on why it is necessary to have a political community at the basis of the ethical one is refers to the framework provided by Kant in *Toward Perpetual Peace*, where one can find textual evidence for the precedence of the political constitution over morality. As on the following passage from the First Supplement:

It can be seen even in actually existing states, still very imperfectly organized, that they are already closely approaching in external conduct what the idea of right prescribes, though the cause of this is surely not inner morality (for it is not the case that a good state constitution is to be expected from inner morality; on the contrary, the good moral education of a people is to be expected from a good state constitution), and thus that reason can use the mechanism of nature, through self-seeking inclinations that naturally counteract one another externally as well, as a means to make room for its own end, the rule of right, and in so doing also to promote and secure peace within as well as without, so far as a state itself can do so. (ZcF 8: 366-67)

Here, Kant makes it clear that a good political constitution cannot be conceived as the product of inner morality. Rather, the development of morality can be expected to be a product of a “good state constitution”. Consequently, it is not every political constitution that leads to development of morality, but the ones that can be considered good.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper, I recurred to Kant’s philosophy of history to analyze his claim in *Religion*, that an established political community needs to be at the base to make possible an ethical community among human beings. This appeal to his texts on history had two main motivations. First, I intended to show that since the 1780’s moral progress is at issue in Kant’s philosophy of history and appears articulated to political progress. Also, that there is textual evidence to show that the political-legal progress precedes the moral one. Second, I used *Toward Perpetual Peace* as a complementary text regarding Kant’s *Religion*, in a way that it could fill the gap left on the explanation of the reasons why he claims that a political community must be at the base of the ethical community. In *Toward Perpetual Peace* Kant not only retakes the thesis that the political progress is prior to the moral one, but also seeks to determine the positive conditions to this moral progress to occur.

Abstract: In *Religion*, Kant claims that the ethical community cannot be brought into existence if there is not a political community at its basis (RGV 6: 94). My aim in this paper is to understand the origins and the consequences of this claim. My hypothesis is that the political community is a precondition to the establishment of an ethical community because the passage to a civil state can guarantee the minimal conditions for the ethical community to exist.

Keywords: ethical community, political community, religion

Resumo: Na *Religião*, Kant estabelece que uma comunidade ética não pode ser formada sem que haja uma comunidade política em sua base (RGV 6: 94). Meu objetivo nesse artigo é entender a origem e as consequências dessa afirmação. Minha hipótese é a de que a comunidade política é uma condição necessária, mas não suficiente para o estabelecimento de uma comunidade ética pois apenas a passagem a um estado civil de direito pode garantir condições mínimas para que a comunidade ética venha existir.

Palavras-chave: comunidade ética, comunidade política, religião

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NOTES

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³ Lo Re 2020, p. 69

⁴ Dörflinger 2009, p. 10

⁵ This point is mentioned by Macarena Marey in her latest book (Marey 2021, chapter 7). Although, the aim of her analysis is not exactly to discuss the necessity of a political community for the establishment of an ethical community, but to discuss the possibility of an exit of the ethical state of nature present within political communities. As she makes an interpretive move of relating radical evil and social inequalities, her interest in thinking the way out of the ethical state of nature is to present a solution to the existence of social inequalities.

⁶ IaG 8: 18; also see Kleingeld 1999 and 2011, especially chapter 6.

⁷ Monique Hulshof (2021) summarizes the debate around the idea of purposiveness of nature and destination of reason in Kant's writings from 1784.

⁸ In commenting the relation between the theory of radical evil and the unsociable sociability as the engine of history, Bruno Nadai (2013) discusses the need of a change in the way of thinking in order to make the political progress also a moral one. He claims that Kantian morality cannot from the mere search of selfish interest, but rather requires a change on the maxim.

⁹ To a general view on the relation between realm of ends, highest good, and ethical community, see Guyer 2011.

¹⁰ Many readings directly link sociability and evil because of this emphasis. This idea appears in different ways in Allison (1990), Wood (1999 and 2020), Rossi (2005) and Marey (2021).

¹¹ However, Kant indicates an important relation between religion and the creation of a moral conscience. (See also Ruffing 2015, p. 348)

¹² See RGV 6: 97n

¹³ See MS 6: 242; MS 6: 306

¹⁴ See also RGV 6: 26

¹⁵ Self-love when adopted as the principle of all maxims is the source of all evil. (Cf. RGV 6: 45)

¹⁶ On *Religion*, Kant states "relation under the principle of freedom" as one of the requisites of a true church. (RGV 6: 102). On *On the common saying*, Kant states freedom, equity, and independence as the a priori principles of the civil condition (TP 8: 290).

¹⁷ On the Doctrine of Virtue, when exposing the duties of virtue, the first one Kant states is the following: "*One's own perfection as an end that is also a duty*". The second item of this duty is precisely the cultivation of morality in us. (MS 6: 391-93)

