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Valerio Rohden

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PALAVRA DA EDITORIA

2024 é um ano especial para nossa revista *Estudos Kantianos*, pois assinala o tricentenário do nascimento de Kant, com muitos eventos em todo o mundo a homenagear sua obra, que continua a ter grande influência nos dias de hoje. A natureza abrangente de sua filosofia, que abarca todos os campos filosóficos, e, em particular, o carácter visionário de seu pensamento filosófico continuam a ser admirados, encorajando quem o lê a aprofundar sua obra e estimulando nossa época atual. Este fascículo homenageia Immanuel Kant como um dos mais importantes filósofos do mundo. Também relembra os 10 anos do falecimento de Clélia Aparecida Martins, estudiosa e tradutora brasileira da obra de Kant. Além disso, em 2024 comemora-se o vigésimo aniversário de criação dos *Colóquios Kant "Clélia Martins"* cujo nome é uma homenagem póstuma a ela. Neste ano, a décima primeira edição destes eventos ocorrerá de 19 a 22 de novembro na Faculdade de Filosofia e Ciências da Universidade Estadual Paulista, *campus* de Marília, e abordará o tema "Sentido da Vida, Sabedoria do Mundo, Destinação do Homem".

Esta edição de *Estudos Kantianos* reúne especialistas de todo o mundo. Os vários temas abrangem um vasto espectro, refletindo, assim, a amplitude e a diversidade da filosofia de Kant. Em seu ensaio "*Practical and empirical cognition of the cognitive self*", Patricia Kitcher investiga a obra do filósofo para nela identificar as várias formas nas quais o conhecimento de nós próprios como seres cognitivos depende da unidade transcendental da apercepção. O ensaio de Günter Zöllner "*Republicity. Kant's late extension of transcendentalism to politics and right*" analisa a extensão do pensamento transcendental-filosófico incluído na *Crítica da Razão Pura* para abranger também a filosofia jurídica e política de Kant. Em seu ensaio "*Out of time*", Robert Loudon parte de Kant para explorar questões relativas à justiça internacional, à guerra e à paz, aos direitos humanos, ao ambiente humano, à inteligência artificial e à ética global. Explora também a razão por que se registraram tão poucos progressos na resolução destes problemas. Loudon considera que ainda hoje podemos aprender muito com a perspectiva de Kant sobre a ética global. O artigo de Helga Varden "*Toward a Karendtian theory of political evil - connecting Kant and Arendt on political wrongdoing*" procura combinar as teorias de Kant e de Arendt sobre o mal político numa única teoria karendtiana. O ensaio "*La belleza de la naturaleza en perspectiva teleológica*" de Silvia del Luján Di Sanza analisa a relação entre a reflexão estética e a teleológica, tomando como base a preocupação de Kant em integrar a beleza na ideia de natureza como um sistema de fins. Em seu ensaio "*Kant and Hegel: how an objection becomes proof*", Angelo Cicatello investiga como a crítica de Kant ao argumento ontológico conduz a Hegel. O artigo de Claudia Jáuregui, "*Traspassando los límites: Kant y la contribución indirecta de las ideas estéticas a la ampliación del conocimiento*" pretende demonstrar que a experiência do belo abre uma dimensão que, sem ser cognitiva, permite moldar limites mais flexíveis à nossa capacidade de

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compreensão. O artigo “Sexo em Kant”, de Maria Borges, discute a questão da objetificação do outro no contexto da sexualidade, argumentando que a relação jurídica entre duas pessoas casadas cria uma base ética na obra de Kant para o uso mútuo dos órgãos sexuais de cada um, mesmo que ambos sejam usados como meio e não por si mesmos. Em seu ensaio “O realismo idealista de Kant”, Sílvia Altmann demonstra que, para Kant, o dualismo dos objetos empíricos constitui um fundamento suficiente para o diferenciar de um idealista materialista. Tomando como ponto de partida o último capítulo da *Crítica da Razão Pura*, Joel T. Klein afirma no ensaio “*Kant and the project of a philosophical history of philosophy*” que a história filosófica tem um estatuto regulador. O ensaio de Emanuele Tredanaro, “*Purposiveness, transcendental ideas, and philosophical history. Notes on the Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim, in light of the Transcendental Dialectic of the Critique of Pure Reason*” ilustra a relação entre a dialética transcendental da *Crítica da Razão Pura* e o ideal de uma história universal com propósito cosmopolita. Em seu artigo “Como são possíveis juízos jurídicos sintéticos *a priori*?”, Aylton Barbieri Durão mostra como Kant extrai juízos jurídicos sintéticos *a priori*. O ensaio de Márcio Suzuki “*On logic and language in the Kantian thought: A critical approach*” explora a plenitude da tabela de juízos lógicos de Kant, centrando-se na relação entre lógica e linguagem. Em seu ensaio “*Kant and the Other of Necessity – Chance*”, Violetta Waibel argumenta que, para Kant, a validade *a priori* dos juízos sintéticos *a priori* puros, ou principalmente não puros, que garantem necessidade, é inconcebível no contexto da experiência sem seu outro, o empirismo e a contingência. Em seu ensaio “*The moral psychology of individual-level adherence to symbolic green narratives: a Kantian theoretical approach*”, Eugênia Zanchet recorre à filosofia moral de Kant como quadro argumentativo para a análise das narrativas verdes, relacionando-a com o estado atual da psicologia social. O artigo de Klaus Denecke Rabello, “*The hidden influence on Kant: Pope’s presence in Kant’s life and oeuvre*” mostra a influência do ensaio de Alexander Pope *Essay on Man* e de sua poesia no conjunto da obra de Kant, com base em seu projeto de combate ao orgulho humano. Gabriele Tomasi afirma no ensaio “*Kant on the cognitive value of poetry*” que, para Kant, as ideias estéticas que a poesia exprime podem também ser a fonte de possíveis conteúdos cognitivos, o que contribui para o valor da obra enquanto arte, na medida que demonstra um envolvimento mais pleno na atividade da mente.

Todos estes artigos mostram claramente que o debate sobre a obra kantiana continua a ser um projeto em curso que nos pede um envolvimento com sua filosofia e a consideração dela tanto com Kant, quanto para além dele. Sua filosofia oferece ideias e respostas para os principais impulsos e problemas que caracterizam nossa vida atual, e, de acordo com sua visão cosmopolita, também no contexto global. Nós, editores da revista *Estudos Kantianos*, temos muito orgulho em apresentar esta edição, desejando que todos desfrutem de uma leitura proveitosa dela.

Paulo Jesus
Gualtiero Lorini
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EDITORS' WORD

2024 is a special year for our Kantian journal. It marks the 300th anniversary of Kant's birth, with many events around the world honouring Immanuel Kant's work, which is still highly influential today. The all-embracing nature of his philosophy, which covers all philosophical fields, and, in particular, the visionary character of his philosophical thinking, are still admired, encouraging Kant's readers to consider his work in more detail and providing stimuli for our current era. This edition pays tribute to Immanuel Kant as one of the world's most important philosophers. Furthermore, it evokes the memory of Clélia Aparecida Martins, Brazilian Kant scholar and translator who died 10 years ago this year. In addition to this, 2024 commemorates the 20th anniversary since the inception of the *Colóquios Kant 'Clélia Martins'*, which bears her name. This year, the *XI Colóquio Kant* will be taking place from the 19th to the 22nd of November at the São Paulo State University, Campus Marília and will address the topic 'Meaning in Life, Philosophy, and the Vocation of the Human Being'.

This edition of *Estudos Kantianos* brings together Kant specialists from all over the world. The various topics cover a wide spectrum thus reflecting the broadness and diversity of Kant's philosophy. In her essay 'Practical and empirical cognition of the cognitive self' Patricia Kitcher investigates Kant's work to identify the various ways in which the knowledge of ourselves as cognitive beings depends on the transcendental unity of apperception. Günter Zöllner's essay 'Republicity. Kant's late extension of transcendentalism to politics and right' analyses the breadth of the transcendental-philosophical thinking included in the *Critique of Pure Reason* to also encompass Kant's legal and political philosophy. In his essay 'Out of time' Robert Loudon departs from Kant to explore questions concerning international justice; war and peace; human rights; the human environment; artificial intelligence and global ethics. He also explores why so little progress has been made in solving these problems. Loudon believes that we can still learn a great deal from Kant's perspective on global ethics. Helga Varden's article 'Toward a Karendtian theory of political evil — connecting Kant and Arendt on political wrongdoing' attempts to combine Kant's and Arendt's theories on political evil into one single Karendtian theory. The essay 'La belleza de la naturaleza en perspectiva teleológica' [The beauty of nature in a teleological perspective] by Silvia del Luján Di Sanza delves into the relationship between aesthetic and teleological reflection, taking Kant's concern to integrate beauty into the idea of nature as a system of purposes as its basis. In his essay 'Kant and Hegel: how an objection becomes proof' Angelo Cicatello investigates how Kant's criticism of the ontological argument leads to Hegel. Claudia Jáuregui's article 'Traspassando los límites: Kant y la contribución indirecta de las ideas estéticas a la ampliación del conocimiento' [Pushing the boundaries: Kant and the indirect contribution of aesthetic ideas to the broadening of knowledge] wishes to demonstrate that experiencing beauty opens up a dimension which, without being cognitive,

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makes it possible to establish more flexible boundaries to our ability to comprehend. The article ‘Sexo em Kant’ [Sex in Kant] by Maria Borges discusses the question of the objectification of the other in the context of sexuality, arguing that the legal relationship between two people who are married creates an ethical basis in Kant’s work for the mutual use of each other’s sexual organs, even if both are used as a means and not for their own sake. In her essay ‘O realismo idealista de Kant’ [Kant’s idealist realism] Sílvia Altmann demonstrates that for Kant the dualism of empirical objects provides a sufficient foundation to differentiate him? from a materialist idealist. Taking the last chapter of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as his starting point, Joel T. Klein asserts in his essay ‘Kant and the project of a philosophical history of philosophy’ that philosophical history has a regulative status. Emanuele Tredanaro’s essay ‘Purposiveness, transcendental ideas, and philosophical history. Notes on the *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, in light of the *Transcendental Dialectic* of the *Critique of Pure Reason*’ illustrates the relationship between the transcendental dialectic of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the ideal of a universal history with a cosmopolitan aim. In his article ‘Como são possíveis juízos jurídicos sintéticos *a priori*?’ [How are synthetic *a priori* juridical judgments possible?], Aylton Barbieri Durão shows how Kant derives synthetic juridical judgements in an *a priori* fashion. Márcio Suzuki’s essay ‘On logic and language in the Kantian thought: A critical approach’ explores the completeness of Kant’s table of logical judgements by focusing on the relationship between logic and language. In her essay ‘Kant and the Other of Necessity – Chance’, Violetta Waibel argues that for Kant the *a priori* validity of pure or mostly non-pure synthetic judgements *a priori*, which guarantees necessity, is inconceivable in the context of experience without its other, empiricism and contingency. In her essay ‘The moral psychology of individual-level adherence to symbolic green narratives: a Kantian theoretical approach’, Eugênia Zanchet draws on Kant’s moral philosophy as an argumentative framework towards analysing green narratives and relates it to the current state of social psychology. Klaus Denecke Rabello’s paper ‘The hidden influence on Kant: Pope’s presence in Kant’s life and oeuvre’ shows the influence of Alexander Pope’s *Essay on Man* and his poetry on Kant’s entire work based on his plan to combat human pride. Gabriele Tomasi, in the essay ‘Kant on the cognitive value of poetry’, claims that for Kant the aesthetic ideas poetry expresses, may also be the source of possible cognitive content. This contributes to the value of the work *qua art* as it demonstrates a fuller engagement in the activity of the mind.

All of these articles clearly demonstrate that the debate on Kant’s work is still an ongoing project which asks us to engage with his philosophy and also to consider it, both with Kant and also beyond him. Kant’s philosophy offers ideas and answers for the key impulses and problems which characterise our lives today and, in line with his cosmopolitan focus, also in a global context. We, the editors of the journal *Estudos Kantianos*, are very proud to present this edition to our readers and wish you a fruitful reading. We also hope that this edition will promote future Kantian dialogue in our journal and elsewhere.

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PRACTICAL AND EMPIRICAL COGNITION OF THE COGNITIVE SELF

Patricia KITCHER¹

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1. TRANSCENDENTAL APPERCEPTION AND EMPIRICAL COGNITION OF THE COGNITIVE SELF

Self-knowledge is a complicated issue. Kant addresses it in various contexts, but I am not going to try to be comprehensive. I consider only one piece of the puzzle: how empirical cognition of cognitive selves is possible. By restricting my treatment to cognitive selves—empirical selves insofar as they are cognizers—I believe that I am following the correct order of exposition. Empirical selves have feelings and engage in action, but Kant maintains that in creatures with ‘higher powers,’ the employment of all powers, and so also the powers of desire and feeling, is based on the cognitive power (20. 245).² Cognitive selves are embodied, but Kant sees no special problems in explaining either human physiology or individual cognition of bodily states. What he finds puzzling and tries to explain is how it is possible for cognizers to know themselves as objects, that is, to know their mental states, and how it is possible for psychology to be a science of mind.

Since Kant maintains that all empirical cognition presupposes the transcendental unity of apperception, he must assume that is true for empirical self-knowledge. My central claim in the paper is that he maintains that the transcendental unity of self-consciousness plays two further key roles in making empirical self-knowledge possible. One role is indicated when Kant raises the issue of empirical self-consciousness briefly in the Transcendental Deduction and asserts that its unity is “derived from ... the original unity [of apperception] under given conditions **in concreto**” (B140).³ To appreciate his point, consider the contrast case. The unity of an object of outer sense depends on the rule for the object concept that applies to it. Although cognizing such objects requires the transcendental unity of apperception, their unity as objects does not derive from that unity.

A second role comes into view in the Architectonic. Here, the focus is not individual self-knowledge, but empirical psychology. Kant asks how it is possible to have *a priori* cognition

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of objects that are given *a posteriori* to the senses. Because cognizers have both outer and inner sense, there are two cases.

We take from experience nothing more than what is needed to **give** us an object either of outer or inner sense. The object of outer sense is given through the mere concept of matter (impenetrable, inanimate extension); the object [*Objekt*] of inner sense is given through the concept of a thinking being (in the empirical representation I think). (A848/B876)

That is, *a priori* principles can be applied to objects of outer sense, just so long as outer sense supplies material for a representation that can be brought under the concept of matter. *A priori* principles can be applied to the object of inner sense, just so long as representations available to inner sense include a representation that can be brought under the concept of a thinking being. Kant characterizes that representation as ‘an empirical representation I think.’ If we look back to the Paralogisms chapter, however, we see that this characterization requires clarification. In a note Kant explains that

When I called the proposition **I think** an empirical proposition, I did not mean that the **I** in this proposition is an empirical representation. Rather this representation is purely intellectual, because it belongs to thought as such. Yet without some empirical representation that provides the material for thought, the act **I think** would not take place; and the empirical [element] is only the condition of the application or use of the pure intellectual power. (B423a).

Although the note is an explication of an earlier discussion, it seems clear and emphatic enough that it should also be used to understand what Kant is saying in the Architectonic. An empirical representation, e.g., ‘I think bodies are heavy,’ is given to inner sense when an act of thinking enables the combination of the pure intellectual concept ‘I-think’ with materials related to objects that are distinct from the self. Empirical psychology acquires an object, because the act of uniting representations that come from the senses is real and its effect, the thought, is reportable through inner sense. Although the representation is empirical, because its non-I portion comes from the senses and because it is reportable by inner sense, the ‘I’ or perhaps ‘I-think’ portion of the representation contains nothing empirical. It is a purely intellectual representation—because it represents intellectual activity (see also B1-2).

In sum, the transcendental unity of apperception appears to enable the empirical cognition of selves in three different ways:

1. The transcendental unity of apperception is a necessary condition for all empirical cognition.
2. In the case of cognition of an empirical self (mind), the unity of the object of cognition derives from the unity of the transcendental subject, the transcendental unity of apperception.
3. The transcendental unity of apperception supplies the object for empirical psychology, because empirical representations of thoughts are instances of the pure intellectual concept, ‘I think.’

Later I will add a fourth contribution. As noted, it is uncontroversial that Kant maintains the first contribution of the transcendental unity of apperception to individual self-knowledge and to empirical psychology.⁴ In the rest of the paper, I spell out and defend Kant's reasons for holding that it must also make three further contributions to the possibility of empirical cognition of the self.

2. HOW DO WE REPRESENT COGNITIVE SELVES?

Kant prefaces his critique of Rational Psychology in the Paralogisms by explaining how it is possible to think about a cognitive self, an I that thinks.

It must, however, seem strange at the very outset that the condition under which I think at all, and which is therefore merely a characteristic of myself as subject, is to be valid also for everything that thinks; and that upon a proposition that seems empirical we can presume to base an apodictic and universal judgment, *viz.* that *everything that thinks is of such a character as the pronouncement of self-consciousness asserts of me.* The cause of this, however, lies in the fact that we must necessarily ascribe to things a priori all of the properties that make up the conditions under which alone we think them. Now through no outer experience, but solely through self-consciousness, can I have the least representation of a thinking being. Hence *objects of that sort are nothing more than the transfer of this consciousness of mine to other things, which thereby alone are represented as thinking beings.* (A346-47/B404-405 (A346/B404-405, my italics).

This is a striking claim, for two reasons. First, it raises two important questions. What does the pronouncement of self-consciousness assert of me? What do I transfer from myself to others in order to represent them as thinking beings? Second, it seems inconsistent with the signature doctrine of the Paralogisms chapter that the representation 'I' is completely empty. If the representation 'I' is empty, then how can there be anything to transfer from myself to others to represent them as thinking beings?

One place to look for an answer to the question of what the pronouncement of self-consciousness asserts of me is a well-known note in the Anthropology. There Kant distinguishes two kinds of consciousness of oneself, the consciousness of reflection and the consciousness of receptiveness.

If we consciously represent two acts: inner activity (spontaneity), by means of which a **concept** (a thought) becomes possible, of **reflection**; and receptiveness (receptivity), by means of which a **perception** (*perceptio*), i.e., empirical **intuition**, becomes possible, or **apprehension**; then consciousness of oneself (*apperceptio*) can be divided into that of reflection and apprehension. The first is a consciousness of understanding, **pure apperception**, the second a consciousness of inner sense, **empirical apperception**. ...In psychology we investigate ourselves according to our ideas of inner sense; in logic according to what intellectual consciousness suggests. Now here the "I" appears to be doubled (which would be contradictory): 1) the "I" as subject of thinking (in logic), which means pure apperception (the merely reflecting "I"), and of which there is nothing more to say except that it is a very simple idea; 2) the "I" as **object** of perception, therefore of inner sense, which contains a manifold of determination that make an inner **experience** possible.

... The human "I" is indeed twofold according to form (manner of representation), but not according to matter (content) (7.135a)⁵

Since the topic is consciousness of oneself, the perceptions would involve apprehending a perception of an external object, e.g., ‘I am conscious that I am perceiving a tree,’ or apprehending a feeling or desire, I am conscious of feeling joyful or of wanting to get away for a trip. It is clear from the Architectonic, that subjects are also conscious of their thoughts, e.g., ‘I think bodies are heavy.’ If the consciousness to be transferred to others is that of receptivity, then there would be no conflict with the doctrine of the ‘empty’ I-representation. As Kant notes, this type of self-consciousness involves a manifold of qualitative determinations. Still, it seems implausible that receptive self-consciousness is at issue in the Paralogisms passage, since the focus of the chapter is on the I that thinks. The remaining alternative is that what gets transferred from myself to others in order to represent them as thinkers is consciousness of inner spontaneity, specifically of the activities that makes concepts possible, which we know from Kant’s *Logic* includes reflecting, comparing, and abstracting (9.94).

Before leaving the note, we can use it, along with the Architectonic passage, and the Paralogism passage about ‘I think’ being an empirical representation only in a Pickwickian sense, to make some progress on the relation between the I of thinking and the I whose states are apprehended by inner sense. There seem to be two I’s, that of the subject of thinking and that of the object of inner sense. Kant is clear, however, that two I’s would be a contradiction. Since the I-representation that occurs in an empirical thought, ‘I think bodies are heavy,’ is an instance of the pure intellectual concept of a thinking being, and it can be that only because the spontaneous act of thinking has occurred, the I whose state is an object of inner sense can only be the I whose activity produced the state, the thought. At least this would be the case when the mental state is a thought. As Kant explains, the I differs in the way that it is represented, as determined under the concept of a thinking being in the representation reported by inner sense, and as determining, reflecting, comparing, and abstracting in (active) thinking, but the matter or content is the same. The content is that which thinks, i.e., that which reflects, compares, abstracts, and determines and thereby has determinate thoughts, as opposed to that which is merely determined.

The Anthropology note offers evidence that what consciousness asserts of a thinker are these inner activities. A discussion in the B Deduction, where Kant distinguishes cognition of the subject of thought (which is impossible) from consciousness of the subject, confirms this interpretation.

In the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am not conscious of myself as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but am conscious only that I am. This **representation** is a **thinking**, not an **intuition**. Now **cognition** of ourselves requires not only the act of thought that brings the manifold of every possible intuition to the unity of apperception, but requires in addition a definite kind of intuition. (B157)

After concluding that consciousness of oneself is thus far from being cognition of oneself, however, Kant asserts

I exist as an intelligence. This intelligence is conscious solely of its power of combination. (B158)

That is, what self-consciousness makes conscious to her, asserts of a subject to her, is her activity of combining and so her power of combination. Since ‘combining’ is just a more general description of the four inner activities presented above, this piece of the Deduction confirms the account offered in the Anthropology note.

In a note to the Deduction passage, Kant tries to prevent misunderstanding consciousness of activity.

unless I have in addition a different self-intuition that gives, prior to the act of determination, the determinative in me (only of its spontaneity am I in fact conscious) ... then I cannot determine my existence as that of a self-active being; instead I represent only the spontaneity of my thought ... But it is on account of this spontaneity that I call myself an **intelligence**. (B157-58a)

Kant’s theme in both the passage and the note is that cognizers know themselves only as appearances (in inner sense), not as they are in themselves. But he is also explaining why apperceptive self-consciousness cannot be understood on the model of inner sense. There is no additional sense through which cognizers are conscious of their spontaneous acts of thought (and thereby of their power of combination). How then are we to understand apperceptive or reflective consciousness? In a slightly earlier B Deduction passage aimed at clarifying the distinction between apperceptive self-consciousness and inner sense, Kant claims that the understanding is conscious of its act of combining “even apart from sensibility” (B153). On its own, this remark might suggest that inner sense is still the model, but with understanding somehow playing the role of a faculty that senses. In the immediately preceding sentence, however, Kant emphasized that understanding is not a faculty of intuitions; it is not a receptive faculty.

Given Kant’s emphasis on conscious combination in both Deductions (A103-104, B133 and see below), one way of understanding his position is that the subject of thought is not conscious of combining, but conscious in combining and thereby conscious that she is thinking, even though she has no insight into how she is doing it. As God requires no senses to know the world, because he has produced it, the cognizer knows that she is thinking, e.g., that she is making a judgment, because she is conscious in making it. She must be conscious in making it, because, unlike God, she needs to know the reason for the judgment and to be able to catch and correct deviations from the norms involved. Since the judgment, e.g., ‘I think bodies are heavy,’ is, however, then available to inner sense as a thought, it would be easy to confuse the source of her self-knowledge. The inner sense model that assimilates apperception to inner sense takes inner sense to be the source of the subject’s consciousness that she is thinking. Kant’s argument is that the inner sense theorist has things backwards: Inner sense depends on conscious thinking in order to have a thought to report. It can report a thought only because conscious combining makes it possible for the subject to think ‘bodies are heavy,’ and conscious combining just is conscious thinking. By the time that inner sense has a thought available to report, the thinking is over. On this point, Kant would agree with the psychologist, Johann Nicolaus Tetens, who argued that Descartes erred in claiming, ‘I think, therefore I am,’ because all that (introspective) inner sense can enable the subject to

know for certain is ‘I have thought’ (1777/1979, 1.47). Reports from inner sense are always ‘one-step behind’ the thinking.

Since, as the prefatory remarks to the Paralogisms explain, the only way that thinking can be understood is through self-consciousness, Kant has only one way to establish his claim that thinking is conscious combining. He must follow in the tradition of Descartes and tacitly invite the reader to think along with him as he investigates the necessary conditions for empirical cognition. So, in the A Deduction, he takes the reader through the case of counting:

If, in counting, I forget that the units that now float before my mind or senses [*Sinnen*] were added together by me one after another, I should never cognize ... number. For this number’s concept consists solely in the consciousness of this unity of synthesis.

... this one consciousness is what unites in one representation what is manifold, intuited little by little, and then also reproduced. Often this consciousness may be only faint, so that we do not [notice it] in the act itself, i.e., do not connect it directly with the representation’s production, but [notice it] only in the act’s effect. Yet, despite these differences, a consciousness must always be encountered, even if it lacks striking clarity; without this consciousness, concepts, and along with them cognition of objects, are quite impossible (A 103-104, amended translation).

Kant is not using one case to prove that cognition requires conscious combining, but only to illustrate it. Unless the subject is conscious at some level of the counting rule and conscious of applying it to the items to be counted, then she could not apply the concept, e.g., ‘four’ to them. Since the reader can see that there is nothing special about the illustrative case, Kant can offer his strong general conclusion that “without consciousness ... cognition of object [is] ... impossible.”

By employing the example Kant is also making vivid to readers what thinking involves and that they think in the manner that he claims they do. Demonstrating to readers or reminding readers how they think or that they are thinkers may seem otiose, or even silly. Recall, however, that he is arguing against rival theories of cognition and of self-knowledge, *viz.*, associationism and Rationalism. At one level, he argues that neither associationism nor Rationalism can provide satisfactory accounts of empirical cognition, as we understand cognition. But he is also trying to limit cognition and not eliminate it, so he needs to show that humans are capable of empirical cognition, as we understand it. In taking readers through the example Kant is inviting them to join him in the kind of legitimate self-observation that he discusses in the Anthropology. Although eavesdropping on the course of one’s involuntary thoughts and feelings is a recipe for madness, it is a different matter

[t]o observe the various acts of the representative power in myself, **when I summon them**, and is indeed worth reflection; it is necessary and useful for logic and metaphysics. (7.134)

This is the text to which the note about two types of self-consciousness is appended, where he explains that apperceptive self-consciousness is importantly different from perception (or ‘observation’). In summoning his and his reader’s power of understanding in the counting example, Kant is showing them, in the only way possible, that applying the concept ‘four’ or any concept is not a matter of receiving some representation from one knows not where—as in blind association—but of consciously bringing together varied representations and thereby

producing—actively creating—a further representation, the judgment ‘four.’ The counting example involves more conscious mental activity than, e.g., simply applying the concept ‘apple’ to an item in the grocery store and so may seem unhelpfully atypical. Presumably, however, Kant’s strategy is to use a clear case and leave it to readers to recognize that other less thought-intensive judgments, judgments that have become routine—but not rote—also involve the mental act of applying a concept rather than simply being aware of a thought running through one’s mind.

Although the issue is treated more extensively in the B Deduction, Kant’s summoning of his and his reader’s power of understanding also enables him to demonstrate that making the judgment ‘four’ does not involve any consciousness of the I. In carrying out the exercise, readers can appreciate the paradoxical situation that they can make a judgment about the number of items and a judgment about their state, ‘I think the number is four,’ without having either an external or an internal perception of themselves. Thus, they can understand that philosophers such as Christian Wolff are wrong in asserting that the existence of the self/soul is established empirically through “consciousness of ourselves and other things” (1751/1983, §1.1). In exercising their power of thinking, cognizers consciously combine, but they are conscious only of other things and combining. With this understanding of one role of Kant’s A Deduction example, we can see that his claim in the run-up to the Paralogisms that “everything that thinks is of the same character as the pronouncement of self-consciousness asserts of *me*” (my emphasis), is not an unexpected turn to solipsism. By this point the reader has been reminded that what self-consciousness asserts of *her* in thinking is that she actively combines representations thereby creating a further representation.

I characterize the type of cognition that Kant makes available to his readers by summoning their thinking powers as ‘practical’ in my title, because it arises from the activity of thinking and includes no theory of how the activity happens. In this respect, the demonstration that humans are Kantian cognizers (as opposed to Humean or Wolffian cognizers) resembles the demonstration that humans are moral agents in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. The latter demonstration is also practical in the more familiar sense that it involves action, not cognition. Consider, however, Kant’s description in the Preface of how the *Second Critique* demonstration will be carried out:

If as pure reason it is actually practical, then it proves its reality ... through the act [*durch der Tat*], and all subtle reasoning against the possibility of its being practical is futile. (5.3)⁶

We know from the *Groundwork* that the act in question cannot be external, because it is impossible to know in any actual case that an action was produced through moral motivation. So, it must be an internal act, a thinking. As such, reader’s only access to it will be through practical deliberation. Kant summons the reader’s practical deliberating by offering what Marcus Willaschek has aptly characterized as a ‘*Gedankenexperiment*’ (1992, 186-87). The reader is to imagine herself in the place of someone who is commanded to testify falsely on pain of immediate hanging upon refusal and the reader judges that she ought not to bear false witness. With that internal act—the judgment—she cognizes that reason can determine her

will through the moral law. Or that is what Kant thinks that he has shown. The fact of reason demonstration is extremely controversial.

Although the urgency of demonstrating that humans are free, because they can act on the moral law, is greater, there are parallels between Kant's epistemological and ethical projects. Most simply, the analyses of the necessary conditions for the possibility of cognition and of morality must be relevant to humans. So, in both cases, after analyzing the requirements of morality, and while analyzing the requirements of cognition, Kant offers a demonstration that humans have the capacity for morality and for cognition, by the only method available for exploring thinking—summoning his readers' practical and theoretical thinking. In this way, he can show readers that they are the sort of moral and cognitive agents that he describes. The suggestion that Kant tries to establish his theory of cognition in a way that is analogous to the fact of reason demonstration is not new. Owen Ware reports that Karl Leonhard Reinhold claimed that there were 'facts of reason' in the realm of cognition as well as that of ethics. He called these 'facts of consciousness' (2014, 5).

3. TRANSCENDENTAL AND EMPIRICAL SELVES

As noted, in addition to arguing that cognition requires conscious synthesizing, the B Deduction brings the use of the 'I' or 'I think' representation into sharper focus than the earlier version. So far, I have moved back and forth between judgments such as 'bodies are heavy' and judgments such as 'I think bodies are heavy.' Treating these judgments as equivalent is justified in the Kantian context, because he maintains that it must be possible to attach the 'I-think' to any representation. Now, however, I want to retrospectively justify my practice by considering the argument for this "supreme" principle (B136). Doing so will also permit a retrospective justification of my invocation of the transcendental 'unity' of apperception when I have only been considering his arguments for spontaneity.

The B Deduction addresses the issue of the identity or unity of the apperceptive I, the I that thinks, through what appears to be a criticism of Locke. Although no example is used, Kant again invites the reader to think along with him.

[T]he empirical consciousness that accompanies different representations is intrinsically sporadic and without any reference to the subject's identity. Hence this reference comes about not through my merely accompanying each representation with consciousness, but through my **adding** one representation to the other and being conscious of their synthesis [or combination]. Hence only because I can combine a manifold of given representations **in one consciousness** is it possible for me to represent the **identity itself of the consciousness in these representations**. (B133)

Again, the reader will appreciate that in thinking she has no consciousness of any subject of consciousness in her representations, let alone consciousness of the same subject across them. Yet she will also grasp that what it means for different representations to belong to a common self is that they are or can be consciously combined in a further representation. Having understood this relation for the easy case of conscious combination, the reader can appreciate that insofar as a representation can be combined with others—and so, play a role in cognition—it must

belong with others to a single consciousness. This result establishes Kant's doctrine that it must be possible to attach 'I-think' to any representation through two additional steps provided in the previous section, §15, and in further remarks in §16 ("combination does not lie in objects, and can by no means be borrowed from them by perception" [B134]). In these discussions, Kant argues that all representations, intuitions and judgments, are combinations and that combination can be brought about only by the active power of understanding or apperception. Here are the basic steps of the argument:

- i. All representations are combinations.
- ii. Combination is possible only through the spontaneous power of understanding/apperception.
- iii. Combination is possible if and only if the representations belong to a single consciousness, an I-think.
- iv. Therefore, it is possible to attach the I-think to any representation, because any representation must belong with others to a single consciousness.

Since any judgment is a combination, it is legitimate to move directly from 'bodies are heavy' to 'I think bodies are heavy.' Although the I-think doctrine of the B Deduction is more explicit, both Deductions remind the reader of what self-consciousness asserts of her when she engages in thinking. Thinking is a spontaneous act and the representations that can be combined in thinking must belong to a single thinker. It is controversial how many representations belong to the same I-think—how widely the unity of apperception extends. Katharina Kraus argues that the unity is limited to single judgments. Without arguing this interpretive point in detail, I just note that Kant's remarks after the passage about how the identity of consciousness comes into view through combining suggest a more capacious unity.

The thought that these representations given in intuition all together belong **to me** means, accordingly, the same as that I unite them in one self-consciousness, or at least can unite them therein ... For otherwise I would have a self as multicolored, diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious. (B134)

I take the first sentence to indicate that insofar as I do or can combine a representation with others in one self-consciousness, then those representations all belong to me. They belong to the same I-think as my current judgment. Since many different representations can be so combined, representations that may span long times, Kant seems to be looking at something more like, for example, a whole human life than a momentary judgment. This reading is reinforced by the second sentence. Although uniting various representations in a single judgment would cut down on how multicolored and diverse my self is, a different I for each judgment still seems to result in too many selves.

As I understand Kant, he argues in the A Deduction and in the beginning paragraphs of the B Deduction that cognition requires an active power of apperception and the unity of a manifold of representations in single selves. The topic of §18, where he maintains that

the empirical unity of apperception is derived from the original and transcendental unity of apperception, is the ‘objective unity of self-consciousness.’ Kant characterizes the empirical unity of consciousness as ‘subjective’ and as being ‘a determination of inner sense’ (B139). Since the contents that belong to the empirical unity of apperception are supplied by inner sense, they would include apprehensions of perceivings and of thinkings (as well as of feelings and desires which I am not focusing on). Kant notes that the temporal ordering of such states is contingent, because it depends on the subject’s circumstances. By contrast, the unity of the form of inner sense, time, is not contingent, because it is subject to the necessary reference of the manifold of intuition to one self, to one I-think. Empirical syntheses of states reportable through inner sense, e.g., a perception of a ship downstream after a perception of it upstream, are possible only against a background of the form of time the understanding’s pure synthesis ...lies *a priori* at the basis of the empirical synthesis. (B140).

I use the example from the Second Analogy to draw attention to the fact that Kant is anticipating later results. He will argue in the Analogies that the unity and order of objective time is dependent on the use of the categories, whose use is required for the transcendental unity of apperception.

Because the form of time is subject to the necessary unity of transcendental apperception, transcendental apperception also lies *a priori* at the basis of all empirical syntheses that permit cognition of objects. Hence the transcendental unity of consciousness is ‘objective,’ in Kant’s distinctive sense: It is a necessary condition for the possibility of empirical cognition of objects; it is a necessary condition for something to be an object for a subject (see B138). His way of describing the relation, with the pure form generated by a pure synthesis lying “*a priori* at the basis of the empirical syntheses” may suggest a two-stage process. First the understanding creates a representation of all of time (or space) and then the empirical imagination arranges the perceptions in a temporal and spatial order within that pre-existing representation. Given Kant’s account in the Reply to Eberhard, however, it is clear that he does not believe that there is a pre-existing spatial or temporal representation in which objects and events can be located (8.221-23, see also §26). Rather, empirical cognition requires the simultaneous solution of two representational problems: Using the available sensible materials to represent an object in objective space and time, a solution which is guided by the categories and relevant acquired empirical concepts, and using the apprehension of those sensible materials to represent the empirical unity of a given subject’s consciousness. The pure form of time lies at the basis of the empirical synthesis, not because it is prior to empirical syntheses, but because it is a necessary feature of all of them and so common to all of them.

It might seem that there is only one problem to be solved, *viz.*, connecting sensible representations in the concept of an object in objective time and space. But §18 is also about the unity of empirical consciousness. I take one of Kant’s goals to be clarifying the argument just made in §§s 16 and 17. Kant’s *analysanda* in the Transcendental Deduction are empirical judgments made by empirical subjects. From the illustrative examples, he concludes and expects the reader to conclude that the activity and unity of the subject are necessary conditions for the possibility of any cognition. Although episodes of empirical cognition have been

used to present its necessary conditions, it is important to distinguish the sort of abstraction involved in demonstrating the requirements of cognition from generalization. The unity of self-consciousness is not an empirical generalization from the unity encountered in the cases presented, e.g., in the case of drawing a line just discussed in §17. Nor is the representation of time an extrapolation from the temporal unity of human consciousness. Rather, the original unity of consciousness is a transcendental condition and so “objective,” because it is non-empirical and necessary for any cognition of objects and even for the unity of objective time.

After rejecting the empirical unity of consciousness as a candidate for an objective unity, because it is contingent, Kant adds that it is subjectively valid and “moreover” that the empirical unity can be derived from the transcendental. By adding the point about derivability, he forecloses any suggestion that the relation could be the reverse—that the transcendental unity of apperception is based on or a generalization from the empirical unity. How the empirical unity of apperception can be derived from the transcendental is straightforward. Since any creature capable of empirical cognition must be a unified thinker, then a cognizer whose states are related by time must possess a unity suitable to her condition. For example, her activities required for thinking—for reflecting, comparing, and abstracting—must be so related that the abstracting comes after the reflecting and comparing, i.e., so that the temporal relations mirror the dependency relations.

The relation between transcendental and empirical apperception is also part of the explanation of why judgments about an individual subject’s empirical unity of consciousness are subjectively valid, for example, my claim that I perceived a ship downstream after I perceived it upstream. (It is only part of the explanation, because, as we learn in the Second Analogy, I must derive the order of my perceptions from the causal order of events [A193/B238]). As the moral law is a meta-maxim for evaluating maxims of action, the transcendental unity is a higher-level unity that serves as the standard for evaluating the unity of empirical cognitive subjects. The actual relations between representations of a cognizer depend on the conditions in which she cognizes, but whatever those relations are, they must be such that all representations can be understood as belonging to a single I-think. In this way, the transcendental unity of apperception is not just a necessary condition for the possibility of all cognition; it also provides a criterion for the unity of one kind of empirical object, empirical subjects of cognition.

Kant concludes §18 by reiterating that the empirical unity of apperception—as regards what is given—is not necessary and universally valid. He is not taking back either his claim that the empirical unity is subjectively valid or that it can be derived from the transcendental, which is necessary. His point is that different subjects have different empirical unities, different paths through life, and no one path is universal or necessary for the cognition of objects. Thus, no subjective unity of consciousness is objective. Each path is nonetheless subjectively valid—true of the subject—and some such unified path is necessary for a creature to be an empirical cognizer.

4. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF RATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND THE POSSIBILITY OF EMPIRICAL PSYCHOLOGY

I have argued that in an early passage common to both versions of the Paralogisms chapter Kant reminds readers of what has already been made vivid to them in the Transcendental Deduction. In thinking, their self-consciousness asserts of them that they are active thinkers whose states must belong to a single consciousness. If we look closely at why Kant maintains that the I-representation is empty, we can now see that there is no inconsistency between that claim and what cognizers would transfer to others in order to represent them as thinkers. Indeed, we will see that the discussions complement each other. In support of his claim that the I-representation is quite empty, Kant observes that

Consciousness is not so much a representation distinguishing a particular object, as rather a form of representation in so far as this representation is to be called cognition (A4346/B404)

He is drawing, in part, on the standard view that consciousness has no qualities—and hence nothing to distinguish it from other things. The Deduction has also reminded readers of the absence of any intuition of the thinking I. The absence of qualities means that a putative I-concept would have no marks. With no intuitive content and no conceptual content, the I-representation is empty of content. But Kant continues: the I-think must be understood as the form of a representation insofar as this representation can be called ‘cognition’. He thereby raises a pressing question: What is this form?

Since this passage is immediately followed by Kant’s argument about the need to model other ‘I’s’ on one’s own thinking, I take that discussion to be addressing the question of form. The form of a representation that can be called ‘cognition’ is what is asserted by self-consciousness to a thinker in her thinking. As the reader has learned in the Transcendental Deduction, what self-consciousness asserts of her is that she combines diverse representations with each other to produce new representations that, for that reason, all belong to the same consciousness, the same thinking I. Like other Kantian forms, the form of a representation that can be called ‘cognition’ is relational: As one location in space has that status only in relation to all other spatial locations, a representation can be part of cognition only in relation to other representations that can be combined with it. Absent self-consciousness asserting something of cognizers, they would not have the least representation of a thinking being, including themselves. I take that to mean that a cognizer could attach no sense to the expression, ‘I think.’ With self-consciousness, she can understand herself to be a combiner of representations in other representations.

Although I have stressed the importance of the prefatory remarks to the Paralogisms, I am not going to engage with the complexities of Kant’s arguments in the chapter. I will make just two points about the First Paralogism, which is both the most important in the chapter and the most relevant to empirical psychology. One way to think about the treatment of psychology in the Dialectic is that Kant criticizes the Rational Psychologists for inflating what can be established about thinking—for hypostasizing the form thinking into an object that is thought (A395, 402). Then, having deflated these concoctions in the Paralogisms chapter, in

the Appendix to the Dialectic, he reinflates the necessary form of thinking into an idea that can be used to advance the project of empirical psychology. This would be a fourth contribution of the I that thinks to empirical psychology: It provides the basis for the Psychological Idea.

In the case of the First Paralogism (in A), Kant's first point is that Rational Psychologists rest their case for the substantiality of the soul on the correct observation that the 'I' is in all thoughts (A350). Second, he objects that they then move illegitimately from the doctrine that all representations must *belong* to a common I to the claim that they inhere in a common subject. Because they have done so

the first syllogism of transcendental psychology foists on us what is only a supposed new insight. For the constant logical subject of thought is passed off by it as the cognition of the real subject of the inherence of thought. (A350)

That is, in the First Paralogism, the Rational Psychologists begin with a sound claim, but then try to go beyond it with no grounds for doing so.

On the other hand, their starting place, the doctrine of the thinking I that can be extracted from an analysis of the requirements of cognition, is correct and can be put to good use. Although it is not possible to discover the properties of the I that thinks, and although reason's natural quest for an ultimate substance after all accidents are removed is doomed, the idea that the quest succeeds in the case of the I that thinks (4.333-34) can play a useful role in the pursuit of empirical psychology. Specifically, empirical psychology should proceed according to four principles:

1. Regard all determinations as determinations of a single subject.
2. Regard all powers as derived from a single basic power.
3. Regard all variation as belonging to the states of a permanent being.
4. Regard all actions in space as entirely different from all actions of thought. (A682-3/B710-11)

I take the regulative idea of the soul to be an inflation or re-inflation of the I think of the Deduction for three reasons. First, the four principles correspond to the principles offered by Rational Psychology and Kant is clear that that project is an illegitimate inflation—hypostatization—of what can correctly be asserted about the thinking I required for cognition. Second, the object to be studied in accord with these principles is "I myself regarded merely as thinking nature" (A682/B710). Third, at least in the case of the first principle, the 'I-think' doctrine provides the rationale for the principle. Why should mental states be regarded as determinations of a single subject? The answer must be that when considering the 'I' merely as thinking nature, the 'I' must be understood as the common subject of diverse representations.

The first principle does, however, go beyond the principle that all representations that can play a role in cognition must belong to a single consciousness. As noted earlier, insofar as we are dealing with 'higher' feelings and desires, these would come under the basic principles

of cognition, but with the lower faculties, there would be an expansion. In an earlier paper I contrasted my position with Kraus's on the grounds that she took the practice of empirical psychology to be guided by the principles given by the regulative Idea, whereas I thought it must include the constitutive 'I-think.'⁷ For reasons I have provided, I still think that the 'I-think' of the Deduction is essential to the practice of empirical psychology. It provides a standard for claims of knowledge about the mental states of individuals and it provides an object for empirical psychology, both through acts of thinking and as the source of the idea. But I want to modify my position in the direction of Kraus's.

Since the Psychological Idea is supposed to guide all psychological research, including research into lower desires and feelings, it can only be a regulative principle. There can be no argument that the possibility of cognition requires that these states belong to a single I-think. Further, since empirical psychology is an applied discipline, it would resemble applied logic in studying less than perfectly functioning cognizers. There can be lapses and so gaps in the unity of an empirical cognizer. As exhausted or temporarily enfeebled humans make simple logical errors, so too they may occasionally be unable, even while awake, to make any sense of a current mental state—it might be “less than a dream” (A112)—unsynthesizable with any other states. Such states could still be attributed to the same I-think by the person and others *via* criteria of bodily identity. That the objects of empirical psychology might suffer occasional bouts of disunity brought on by countervailing factors does not, however, alter the fact that they are fundamentally cognizers and so must enjoy a basic unity of thought.

Abstract: This paper explores the different ways in which knowledge of ourselves as cognizers depends on the transcendental unity of apperception. First, since all cognition requires the transcendental unity of apperception, so does empirical knowledge of ourselves as cognizers. Second, since empirical cognizers are cognizers, they must possess the unity of self-consciousness required for cognition. Third, empirical psychology needs an object and the transcendental unity of apperception makes it possible to attach 'I-think' to representations of the empirical world, thereby supplying psychological states, such as 'I think that bodies are heavy,' to be studied. Finally, the Psychological Idea through which psychology is made systematic gets its first principle from the necessary unity of apperception.

Keywords: transcendental unity of apperception, subjective unity of consciousness, empirical psychology, Psychological Idea.

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² References to Kant's works will be to Kant (1900-) by volume and page number, except for references to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which will be by the usual A/B pagination.

³ Translations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* are from Pluhar (1996).

⁴ Kraus (2020) interprets Kant's claim that the subjective or empirical unity of consciousness derives from the transcendental to indicate just that transcendental unity is a necessary condition for all unity, see diagram, p. 92.

⁵ Translation from Zöllner and Louden (2007).

⁶ Translation from Puhar (2002).

⁷ An early version of "What is Necessary and What is Contingent in Kant's Empirical Self" that I presented at the Central Division of the APA in February of 2020.

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REPUBLICITY. KANT'S LATE EXTENSION OF TRANSCENDENTALISM TO POLITICS AND RIGHT

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“The laws must be publicized.”²

The contribution examines Kant's systematic extension of the transcendental-philosophical thinking which he inaugurated and which was originally limited to the enterprise of a critique of purely theoretical, entirely speculative reason. In particular, the contribution explores the extension of the transcendental-philosophical project in Kant's late juridico-political philosophy, as contained in *Toward Perpetual Peace* (1795) and *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797). The focus of the contribution lies on the transcendental ingredients of Kant's juridico-political thinking in general and on the status and function of the “transcendental concept” of publicity and the allied “transcendental principle” of publicity in particular.

The contribution maintains the conceptually and methodologically strict distinction between transcendental philosophy, which in Kant remains restricted to the principal grounding of *theoretical* philosophy, on the one hand, and critically grounded practical philosophy (*philosophia practica*) qua bipartite moral philosophy (*philosophia moralis*), composed of juridical right (*ius*) and ethics (*ethica*), on the other hand. Viewed against the background of the theoretico-practical double structure of critically revised philosophy, the pointed extension of transcendental features (“transcendental concept,” “transcendental principle”) to political and legal philosophy in late Kant is seen as not amounting to a complete transcendentalization of practical philosophy in the manner of a *philosophia transcendentalis practica*, but to the systematic grounding of practically (or “morally”) possible right and practically (or “morally”) possible politics in logically prior, enabling (“transcendental”) structures and functions in the manner of a *philosophia practica transcendentalis*.

The contribution tracks the transcendental grounding qua rendering possible of (juridical) right and politics in four steps and as many sections. The first section sketches the original project of transcendental philosophy in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The second section

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presents the introduction of transcendental-philosophical features outside of transcendental philosophy proper beginning with the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. The third section is devoted to the status and function of publicity as the “transcendental principle” of any politics that is in conformity with (juridical) right in *Toward Perpetual Peace*. The fourth section presents the distinction between private right and public right in the *Metaphysics of Morals* with regard to the key function of civil society of rendering public and permanent any property claims based on prior natural right.³

1. THE IDEA OF TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY

At the first appearance of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1781, no second *Critique*, which would appear under the title *Critique of Practical Reason* in 1788, was planned, much less a third *Critique*, which eventually appeared under the title *Critique of the Power of Judgment* in 1790. Considered retrospectively from the second and third *Critique*, the previously sole and subsequently first *Critique*, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, becomes a critique of “pure merely speculative reason.”⁴ The three *Critiques* are distinguished from one another by their respective focus: on theoretical reason, especially the theoretical understanding; on practical reason, especially moral-practical reason; and on the power of judgment, specifically the reflective power of judgment. In addition, each of the three *Critiques* deals with the reason-theoretical founding of a human mental key capacity each: the faculty of cognition in the *Critique of Pure Reason*; the faculty of desire in the *Critique of Practical Reason*; and the capacity for feeling (“feeling of pleasure and displeasure”) in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Finally, the first two *Critiques* refer to correlated subject areas under the guise of the doctrinal systems of nature and freedom, respectively (“metaphysics of nature,” “metaphysics of freedom”), while the third *Critique* in its two parts, which are concerned with aesthetic and logical purposiveness, respectively, knows no corresponding doctrine proper.⁵

The successive extension of the first *Critique*, first by a second *Critique* and finally by a third *Critique*, combined with the essentially analogous architectonic disposition and execution of all three *Critiques* (Doctrine of Elements – Doctrine of Method, Aesthetics – Logic, Analytic – Dialectic, Antimony – Solution), does not go together with a parallel extension of the program and project of transcendental philosophy, the latter being originally introduced in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Logically speaking, the actually provided critique of pure (speculative) reason and the merely projected transcendental philosophy are intensionally identical, while in extensional terms the *Critique of Pure Reason* offers only the, in itself complete, rational concept (“idea”) of the transcendental philosophy yet to be elaborated in its entirety. Notoriously, Kant never provided the *system* of transcendental philosophy corresponding to the latter’s initial *idea*, as detailed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. To be sure, he also regarded the actual execution of the system of transcendental philosophy a relatively easy to accomplish undertaking—a scientific task deemed not really essential for his oeuvre, but merely meritorious. Kant’s unfinished final work from the last years of his life (*Opus postumum*; 1796-1803) contains, especially in the so-called First Convolute,⁶ the vestiges of his

equally insisting and failing attempts at achieving the architectonic completion of his critical philosophy through the crowning system of transcendental philosophy.⁷

In the *Opus postumum* then the emphatic extension of transcendental philosophy from its originally limited horizon in the *Critique of Pure Reason* to a fully integrated system of transcendental philosophy is more evoked than accomplished. Yet almost simultaneously with the first drafts of the *Opus postumum*, in two late publications of Kant's from the mid-to late 1790s, there is to be found, if not a formal extension of transcendental philosophy beyond the horizon of the first *Critique*, at least the systematic inclusion of transcendental elements ("transcendental concept," "transcendental principle") into practical or moral philosophy. The extended transcendentalism is to be found first in the Appendix of the occasional publication *Toward Perpetual Peace* from the year of the Basel peace accord between France and Prussia as well as between France and Spain from 1795 and subsequently in the first, originally separately published part (on legal philosophy) of Kant's two-part main work in moral philosophy, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, from 1797.⁸ The transcendental perspective on practical philosophy in the late Kant thus does not affect his entire moral philosophy, but exclusively the latter's juridical part ("doctrine of right"), at the exclusion of its ethics part ("doctrine of virtue"), and, moreover, only concerns the former's doctrine of principles ("metaphysical first principles of the doctrine of right"), together with the basic application of those principles to politics conceived as "applied doctrine of right."⁹

The pointed exclusion of ethics and the exclusive focus on right and politics in Kant's late transcendental grounding of practical philosophy has substantial reasons based on the strict system-architectonic conception of transcendental philosophy, as featured at the beginning and at the end of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and resulting from the general concept of the transcendental, as formally featured in the Introductions to the first and second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. A closer look at the definitional determination of the double concept of transcendentalism and transcendental philosophy in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, 1787) and in the systematically associated and chronologically contiguous *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (1783) reveals the reasons both for the exclusion of ethics and the inclusion of right (along with politics) in Kant's late project of a widened scope of transcendental-philosophical thinking.

At the historical origin and the systematic center of Kant's conception of transcendental philosophy stands the definition of the key term "transcendental" in the Introduction to the *Critique of Pure Reason*. In the slightly changed version of the second edition of the work, Kant's conceptual determination of this core concept of his mature philosophy reads:

"I call all cognition transcendental that is occupied in general not so much with objects but rather with our mode of the cognition of objects insofar as the latter is to be possible a priori. A system of such concepts would be called transcendental philosophy."¹⁰

Five things deserve to be highlighted in Kant's definition: the epistemic character of the transcendental ("cognition"), the objective character of transcendental cognition ("cognition of objects"), the non-empirical character of the transcendental kind of cognition ("a priori"),

the meta-theoretical character of the apriori-transcendental cognition of objects (“not so much with objects but rather with our mode of the cognition of objects”) and finally the possibilizing function of transcendental second-order cognition for the a priori first-order cognition of objects (“is to be possible”).

Rendered in post-Kantian— more precisely, neo-Kantian—terms, the conception of transcendental philosophy thus indicated involves an epistemology of a special kind: the a priori theory of the principal possibility of the a priori cognition of objects. Put in terms of the typology of judgments cultivated by Kant since the *Prologomena* from 1783 and subsequently introduced into the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (“analytic”—“synthetic”; “a priori” —“a posteriori”), transcendental philosophy consists of a doctrine of synthetic a priori judgments concerning the conditions of the very possibility of (discursive) synthetic a priori judgments of all kinds. The meta-cognition of a priori objective cognition is transcendental in Kant’s technical sense of the term due to this meta-cognition exceeding (“transcending”) all the categorial divisions obtaining at the level of ordinary a priori objective cognition, in favor of the universal functional conditions of any possible (categorially differentiated) a priori judgments about objects.¹¹

Against the background of Kant’s subsequent exploration, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, of the essential role of the forms of sensibility and the functions of the understanding for objective cognition (Transcendental Aesthetic and Transcendental Analytic, respectively), as well as the insufficiency of mere concepts of reason for objectively valid a priori cognition (Transcendental Dialectic), one may wonder about the absence of sensory and intuitive defining features and the lack of recourse to possible experience in Kant’s introductory definition of “transcendental.” But the comparatively abstract and neutral casting of the transcendental in the Introduction to the *Critique of Pure Reason* reflects the initially entirely generic conception of the yet to be created discipline of transcendental philosophy.

The point of Kant’s generic conception of the transcendental is the prior grounding of all a priori cognition of objects undertaken in the manner and functionality, if not the identical shape and substance, of ancient first philosophy (*prote philosophia, prima philosophia*). In Kant transcendental philosophy sets out to succeed, under specifically critical condition, traditional metaphysics. To be sure, over the further course of the *Critique of Pure Reason* it becomes clear that the a priori cognition of objects of all kinds to be warranted as to its very possibility by the new discipline of transcendental philosophy remains extensionally limited to objects of possible experience, at the exclusion of the trans-empirical (“transcendent”) objects of classical metaphysics (God, soul, world). Accordingly, the cognition grounded by transcendental meta-cognition may involve a priori objective determinations in the manner of traditional metaphysics. But those a priori objective determinations only pertain to empirically given, or at least giveable, objects located in space and time.¹² The a priori theory of objects, developed in the *Critique of Pure Reason* under the systematic conception (“idea”) of transcendental philosophy, thus is a metaphysics only in an attenuated, radically revised sense—a “metaphysics of experience” (H. J. Paton) or a “non-empirical theory of the empirical” (G. Prauss).¹³ To be sure, the manifold reminiscences of the metaphysical tradition in general and of Leibnizo-

Wolffian school philosophy in particular to be found throughout Kant's critical philosophy can create the impression of a substantial, rather than only functional, continuity, or even identity, between the pre-Kantian and the Kantian forms of first philosophy.¹⁴

The subsequently manifest implications of the concept of the transcendental first introduced at the beginning of the *Critique of Pure Reason* comprise not only the anti-metaphysical restriction of a priori-objective cognition to possible objects of experience *qua* transcendently constituted beings-for-us ("appearances"). Among the systematic consequences of the allied apriorism and objectivism that lies at the root of Kant's basic understanding of the transcendental is also the principal restriction of a priori objective reference to the *cognitive* reference to objects, at the exclusion of the voluntative reference to objects. To be sure, Kant recognizes a twofold kind of reference that a cognition may have to "its" object—"either merely *determining* the object and its concept" (the case of theoretical cognition), or "also *making* the object *actual*" (the case of practical cognition).¹⁵ But the activist and actualizing reference to objects brings in the mental capacity of willing, under the guise of the faculty of desire, and along with the latter affective factors and functions that, so Kant, prevent the supplementation of the apriorism of purely cognitive objective reference with an analogous apriorism of will-based cognitive objective reference ("practical cognition").

It is true that Kant concedes already in the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* from 1781 (in particular, in the Canon of Pure Reason) and then maintains explicitly in his foundational works in moral philosophy from 1785 (*Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals*) and from 1788 (*Critique of Practical Reason*) the possibility of a purely rational determination of human willing and acting, independent of any inclination and sensory desire. But even where inclination and desire, along with the empirical motivation they entail, do not enter into the reasons for willing and acting—namely, in moral willing and acting according to an unconditional ought ("categorical imperative")—inclinations and desires, along with the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, are involved, so Kant, as possible obstacles to purely moral willing and acting, which require to be overcome and which thereby, at least indirectly and negatively enter into the game. According to Kant, the indirect, albeit merely negative involvement of inclinations and desires even in moral willing and acting disqualifies critical moral philosophy, in spite of its apriorism and objectivism, which assures its metaphysical status ("metaphysics of morals"),¹⁶ from formal inclusion into transcendental philosophy:

"Hence, although the supreme principles of morality and the fundamental concepts of it are a priori cognitions, they still do not belong in transcendental philosophy, since the concepts of pleasure and displeasure, of desires and inclinations, of choice, etc., which are all of empirical origin, must there be presupposed."¹⁷

2. THE IDEA OF A PHILOSOPHIA PRACTICA TRANSCENDENTALIS

Kant adheres to the principal separation between transcendental philosophy, restricted to critical *theoretical* philosophy, and critical *practical* philosophy, identified as moral philosophy, well beyond his publications in critical philosophy from the 1780s and right up into his late print publications and the drafts of what was to become his *Opus postumum*

from the second half of the 1790s. But from the early 1790s on, there is to be found a more differentiated treatment of the term and concept of the transcendental, the affirmative use of which outside of transcendental philosophy proper occurs beginning with the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. This change in terminological practice holds first of all for the systematic introduction of the “transcendental principle” of the (formal) purposiveness of nature for the power of (reflective) judgment in the Introduction to the third *Critique*.¹⁸ It then holds for the systematic introduction of the “transcendental concept” of public right in the Appendix to *Toward Perpetual Peace*.¹⁹ And it finally holds for the “transcendental deduction” of the contractual acquisition of property in the *Metaphysical First Principles of the Doctrine of Right* from the *Metaphysics of Morals*.²⁰

In these later writings Kant’s designation of a concept, principle or proof as “transcendental” takes up key features of the formal definition of “transcendental” in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in particular the restriction to the a priori cognition of objects and the orientation toward the principal enabling of such a priori objective cognition. In addition, the extended usage of “transcendental” draws on the contrast, equally already employed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, between a “transcendental” principle, which operates entirely a priori, and a “metaphysical” principle, which applies a priori determination to something given a posteriori.²¹ The paradigm case for specifically metaphysical (as opposed to transcendental) concepts, principles and proofs is the system of the principles of external nature (objects in space and time) with its recourse to the empirical base concept of matter as the movable in space, to be found in the *Metaphysical First Principles of Natural Science* from 1786.²²

In the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* Kant introduces a “transcendental principle” specifically for the constitution of nature in its basic suitability (“purposiveness”) for the human cognitive faculty, even and especially with regard to nature’s contingent particular lawfulness. As Kant argues in the third *Critique*, it is only by means of such a presupposed particular purposiveness of nature for human cognition that a cumulative cognition of natural things in their systematic connectedness becomes possible. Kant conveys the difference in status and function between a transcendental and a metaphysical principle for the cognition of objects as follows:

A transcendental principle is one through which the universal a priori condition under which alone things can become objects of our cognition at all is represented. By contrast, a principle is called metaphysical if it represents the a priori condition under which alone objects whose concept must be given empirically can be further determined a priori.²³

As regards the exclusion of extra-cognitive factors and functions, especially those involving desire, pleasure and displeasure, from the strict concept of the transcendental, as defined in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* faces a principal problem though. As a cognitive capacity constitutively connected with the capacity for affectively undergoing states of pleasure and displeasure (“feeling of pleasure and displeasure”), the reflective power of judgment, at least in the first of its two manifestations, viz., the power of judgment reflecting in the medium of aesthetic feeling (“aesthetic power of judgment”), is essentially immersed in extra-cognitive capacities. Kant circumvents the empiricization and

psychologization thus threatening the third *Critique* in general and the critique of the faculty of taste in particular by means of the formalization and generalization of the relations between the various capacities involved. On the one hand, Kant focuses in the third *Critique*, rather than on particular manifestations of feeling (“feelings”), on the conditioning of cognitions at the level of the overall principles of the power of aesthetically reflecting judgment, thus solely concerning himself with the generally purposive interplay of the power of the imagination and the faculty of the understanding in the coming about of cognition in the first place (“cognition in general”).²⁴ On the other hand, Kant stresses, with regard to the power of logically reflecting judgment (“teleological power of judgment”) the latter’s strictly cognitive mode of operation, which systematically supplements the general function of the determinative power of judgment in making possible experience as such and in general (“transcendental power of judgment”).²⁵

Kant’s strategy of artificially isolating the transcendental dimension of cognitive functional processes from their surrounding non-cognitive (affective) horizon—by means of concerted formalization and generalization—becomes especially clear in his revised understanding of what a specifically “transcendental” definition involves. In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant had placed the presentation of definitions in transcendental philosophy at the very end of the latter’s systematic conceptual labor—as complete determination of a concept with respect to all its essential marks.²⁶ In the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, by contrast, the conceptual determination marked explicitly as “transcendental” (“transcendental definition”) is introduced as an intentionally underdetermined and, to that extent, preliminary definition of a general kind that makes all subsequent pertinent differentiation possible, without though already anticipating, much less effectuating, such differentiation.

Kant illustrates the abstaining from the complete determination of a concept in favor of a definition deemed sufficient for purposes of identifying an object as falling under the concept in question—a procedure characteristic of a “transcendental definition”—with a comparison from mathematics. In arithmetic the value of a number in an equation may be intentionally left “undetermined,” in order to calculate the solution of the equation for all possible values of the unknown quantity and hence “in general.” Analogously, so Kant, a transcendental definition intentionally leaves “empirical data [...] undetermined,” whereby the definitional determination is “rendered general.”²⁷ As Kant further explains in the Introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, the generalized, specifically transcendental definition of a concept operates “through pure categories,” hence still independent of the latter’s subsequent further determination by means of added temporal qualifications (“schemata”), “insofar as these [sc. pure categories] by themselves alone already sufficiently indicate the difference of the present concept from others.”²⁸

By way of example for a transcendental definition, Kant cites, in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, the conceptual determination provided two years earlier, in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, of the faculty of desire, which, however, at that point had not yet been formally labeled a “transcendental definition.” The minimalist definition of the faculty of desire from the *Critique of Practical Reason*, referred to as “transcendental” in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, identifies the faculty of desire as a “faculty to become, by means of its

representations, the cause of actuality of the objects of these representations.”²⁹ The definition in the transcendental mode of pointed formalization and generalization leaves it open, on principal grounds, whether the object-causative capacity of the respective representations is empirically mediated (“inclination”) or is owed to an entirely rational ground of action (“pure practical reason”). Strictly speaking, the transcendental definition of the faculty of desire should not even refer to a “cause” as a temporally specific, schematized relational category (rule-governed temporal succession), but only of an extra-temporal, purely logical relation of ground and consequent.³⁰

The concepts, principles and definitions introduced by Kant into practical philosophy on the basis of an extended conception of the transcendental, when considered in their entirety, constitute a foundational layer within a discipline, viz., moral philosophy, otherwise still strictly separated from transcendental philosophy as such. Rather than incorporating practical philosophy in its entirety into the transcendental project in the manner of a *practical transcendental philosophy* or *philosophia transcendentalis practica*, the newly identified transcendental features of practical philosophy amount to a *transcendental practical philosophy* or *philosophia practica transcendentalis* that provides the conceptual, principal and definitional basis of practical philosophy.

The transcendental grounding of practical philosophy by means of transcendental concepts, principles and proofs also is not to be confused with the traditional school-philosophical project of a “universal practical philosophy” or *philosophia practica universalis*.³¹ While the latter exhibits the most general features of each and every willing and acting, including empirical willing and acting, transcendental practical philosophy or *philosophia practica transcendentalis*, as intended by Kant, aims at the conditions of the possibility of an a priori determination of the will—of rendering possible pure (moral) willing. Kant hints at the parallel between the project of a priori foundations of morals and that of transcendental philosophy already in *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* from 1785, though still without applying the designation “transcendental” to the founding of moral philosophy.³² By contrast, Kant’s eventual update of traditional *philosophia practica universalis*, undertaken in the “Preliminary Concepts for the Metaphysics of Morals” at the beginning of the *Metaphysics of Morals* from 1797,³³ which provides generic conceptual determinations of obligation, law, etc., does not satisfy the specific requirements of his late transcendental grounding project of ascertaining the basic concept and principles of the very possibility of a priori practico-moral cognitions in the manner of a *philosophia practica transcendentalis*.

3. THE TRANSCENDENTAL PRINCIPLE OF PUBLIC RIGHT

The extended employment of the concept “transcendental” beyond the narrow limitations of critically executed transcendental philosophy, which is first manifest in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, mainly shows in Kant’s two late print publications in practical philosophy from the mid-1790s. *Toward Perpetual Peace*, in an extensive two-part appendix on the relation of politic and morals, discusses the “transcendental concept of public right,” provides the

“transcendental formula of public right” and presents the “transcendental principle of public right.”³⁴ The *Metaphysics of Morals* in the first of its two parts, the *Metaphysical First Principles of the Doctrine of Right*, continues this development by introducing the principal requirement of publicity in the civil state (*status civilis*) defined by the institution of “public right” (*ius publicum*).³⁵ In addition, Kant’s late Doctrine of Right provides a “transcendental deduction” of the work’s central concept of contractual property acquisition situated at the architectonic and systematic transition from private right according to natural law to public right according to civil law.³⁶

The coalition of publicity and transcendentalism in Kant’s two writings in practical philosophy from the mid-1790s has its prehistory in the discussion of the public use of reason and the publicity of right in two of Kant’s texts from the mid-1780s: the journal article “Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?” from 1784³⁷ and the *Natural Right Feyerabend*, which is the sole preserved transcript of Kant’s repeatedly presented lectures on natural right and was published for the first time only in 1979.³⁸ To be sure, neither the Enlightenment essay nor the lectures on natural right resort to the conceptuality of the transcendental. But both texts discuss the indispensable, outright enabling function of publicity—under the guise of the “public use” of reason, the writing and reading “public” and “public right”—for the coming about and the functionality of a commonwealth or *res publica*.³⁹

In particular, in the Enlightenment essay Kant specifies as the sole, at once necessary and sufficient principal condition for the spread of enlightenment the “freedom [...] to make public use of one’s reason in all its parts.”⁴⁰ The free publicity of reason, reminiscent of Spinoza’s *libertas philosophandi* in the *Tractatus theologico-politicus*,⁴¹ for Kant consists in the untutored-free employment that the individual human being as a “scholar” makes of his (or her) reason “in front of the entire public of the reading world.”⁴² The identification of the primary agent of enlightenment as a “scholar” and of the public involved as a “reading world” might seem to reduce the public use of reason propagated by Kant to a quantitatively small and qualitatively minor circle of academically trained persons. But the radical character and provocative stand of the learned public, declared by Kant to be the proper forum of enlightenment, is apparent from two circumstances both of which link Kant’s learned republic (*res publica doctorum*) to his conception of civil society in its basic juridico-political character (*res publica*).

For one Kant foresees enlightened discourse to ascend from its origins in the learned citizenry into the upper reaches of government and thereby, in the long run and mediately, become politically and juridically effective.⁴³ In addition, Kant understands the propagated public-free use of reason, which a person is entitled and even encouraged to exercise as a scholar, by contrast with the restrictions to which that same person might be subjected in his (or her) professional function within civil society (“private [in the sense of private] use of reason”).⁴⁴ In his (or her) capacity as a scholar, the otherwise juridico-politically regimented citizen is, according to Kant, free to critique state and society, under the explicit inclusion of “religious matters.”⁴⁵ Rather than involving the restriction to a small circle of scholars separated from broader society, Kant’s delegation of enlightenment to the “scholars” and to the “public in the proper sense” amounts to a maximal extension of the communicative process of mutual

enlightenment, in which every untutored-free citizen is to be regarded as a “member of an entire commonwealth, even of cosmopolitan society.”⁴⁶

The etymologically manifest close connection between the commonwealth *qua* republic in the broader sense (*res publica*) and publicity *qua* public sphere established in Kant’s Enlightenment essay receives its systematic deepening in his reflections on the relation between morals, right and politics in his late *opusculum* on long-lasting (“perpetual”) peace. Already in the *Natural Right Feyerabend* and in another preserved lecture transcript on moral philosophy from the same time period (*Moral Philosophy Mrongovius II*),⁴⁷ Kant had distinguished between the specifically different legislations of right (*ius*) and ethics (*ethica*) by assigning to ethics the formation and cultivation of an inward moral mind-set and to (juridical) right the outward regulation of conduct by means of lawful threats and through the exercise of legal sanctions.⁴⁸

In *Toward Perpetual Peace* Kant sharpens the separation of ethics *qua* ethics of moral consciousness from (juridical) right *qua* coercive right by explicitly subsuming the specifically different normative systems and functional modalities of right and ethics under a broad concept of morals and by further subsuming politics, not under ethics (as in traditional natural right), but under (juridical) right as the latter’s prudential application (“applied doctrine of right”).⁴⁹ Accordingly, a “moral politician”⁵⁰ for Kant is not an ethically conscientious statesman, but someone who employs the “principles of political prudence” in such a way that they agree with that part of morals which comprises the a priori doctrine of right.

In addition, *Toward Perpetual Peace* deepens the systematic connection between publicity and politics by stressing the eminently public character of the republicanly constituted polity (*res publica*)—a move that invites the coinage “republicity” for the thorough linkage of the publicity of right and the publicity of politics in Kant.⁵¹ For Kant in *Toward Perpetual Peace*, a specifically republican political set-up is not a distinct form of statehood (such as the “mixed constitution” traditionally attributed to republics ancient and modern) but a “mode of government” or a „*forma regiminis*“ that is defined by the personal and institutional separation of legislative and executive powers in a state.⁵² As a modality of government (rather than a state constitution), “republicanism,”⁵³ on Kant’s understanding, is not restricted to formal, self-declared republics in antiquity and modern times. More yet, for Kant (as for Montesquieu before him and for Hegel after him), a republican mode of government (“republicanism”) is even more likely to be realized in modern, “moderate” monarchies than in a classical republic (“free-state”),⁵⁴ in which the legislative and executive powers rest in the same hands, amounting to an outright unfree mode of government (“despotism”).⁵⁵

In *Toward Perpetual Peace*, the republicanly oriented juridico-political considerations of a principal kind are integrated into the sketch of a fictitious peace-political treatise. In addition to the preliminary and definitive articles for a *pax perpetua*, the work contains a substantial appendix in two parts (Appendix I, Appendix II),⁵⁶ in which Kant undertakes the systematic inclusion of publicity into politics in general and republican politics in particular. While the first part of the appendix treats “of the disagreement between morals and politics with a view to perpetual peace,” the second part treats “of the agreement of politics with morals in accord with

the transcendental concept of public right,” supplemented by the indication that this politico-moral harmony is to be established “according to the transcendental concept of public right.”⁵⁷

The subject of the Appendix of *Toward Perpetual Peace* is thus the relation between morals and politics in its essential ambiguity between rivalry and coalition. As Kant's parenthetical supplementation—“morals (as doctrine of right)”⁵⁸—indicates, “morals” here refers not to the ethical but to the juridical part of moral philosophy broadly conceived. In the Appendix, the principles of politics are placed in relation to the a priori principles of right (*ius*). It is the thesis of the Appendix that first and only the publicity of right (“public right”) renders possible the general as well as particular agreement between politics and morals *qua* right under the guise of a possibilizing (“transcendental”) principle. In the Appendix the principally required publicity of right is tied to the publicizing of the general conduct norms (“maxims”) of politics as actually practiced, rather than merely professed, by politicians. Those who have to shy away from publicizing their principles of political action for fear of undercutting their own plans, thereby alone establish that they act contrary to the a priori norms of (juridical) right. Those who, by contrast, require to publicize their political principles of action, in order to assure their implementation, act in principle in conformity to (juridical) right.

In the Appendix Kant presents the function of publicity as at once necessary and sufficient condition of the rightfulness of politics by means of two “transcendental formula[s] of public right.”⁵⁹ First Kant formulates the negative version of the transcendental principle of publicity, which excludes from the domain of legally permitted political measures all political maxims concerning the (external) right of human beings that cannot be publicized without undermining themselves: “All actions relating to the rights of others are wrong if their maxim is incompatible with publicity.”⁶⁰

Kant explicitly identifies the negative principle of rightful politics as “juridical” and understands the criterion of the publicity of political maxims (“capability of publicity”) as a testing procedure for the self-suspension of all principles of political action that involve a violation of rights (“injustice”) with reference to other persons.⁶¹ The testing procedure takes the form of the factual or fictional publicizing of the unrightful political principles to those persons who would be affected by the actions according to the political maxims in question. In *Toward Perpetual Peace* Kant illustrates the functioning of publicity as a negative criterion for the rightfulness of political principles through its exemplary application to state right, peoples' right and cosmopolitan right.⁶²

The second, positive formula of the transcendental principle of the publicity of right presented in the Appendix concerns those principles of political action that not only permit publicity, but also require it for their efficacy: “All maxims which need publicity (in order not to fail in their end) agree with right and politics combined.”⁶³

Just like the negative formula of the transcendental principle of the publicity of right previously presented, the positive formula is directed at general principles of action (“maxims”). Accordingly, the agreement of politics and (juridical) right to be assured by the two transcendental principles considered jointly does not provide a guarantee in each and

every case but only an overall assurance for political rightfulness in general. The specific transcendental principle of publicity claimed by Kant can be said to consist in the circumstance that the possible publicity of political principles provides the necessary as well as sufficient condition for the very possibility of politics coexisting with (juridical) right.

4. THE PUBLICITY OF CIVIL RIGHT

In *Toward Perpetual Peace* (1797) Kant places the rightful restriction of politics under the transcendental principle of publicity. Two years later, in the *Metaphysical First Principles of the Doctrine of Right* of his monumental *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), he subsumes the entire institution of right (*ius*) in civil society (*societas civilis*) to principal publicity. Practically at the same time, in his short occasional publication “On an Supposed Right to Lie From Philanthropy” (1797), Kant interprets the general relationship between specifically juridical and specifically political principles as a relation of application between the a priori doctrine of right (“metaphysics of right”)⁶⁴ and rightfully regulated politics. At the center of Kant’s juridico-political considerations stands a categorical meta-rule: “Right must never be accommodated to politics, but politics must always be accommodated to right.”⁶⁵

In a reverse perspective—which runs, not from a priori right to its empirical application through politics, but from possible politics to the latter’s principal presuppositions in (juridical) right—the *Metaphysics of Morals*, following the pertinent reflections in *Toward Perpetual Peace*, treats the principles of right in general and those of public right in particular as conditions of the possibility for the political functionality of civil society under the latter’s basic guise as a juridical community constituted as statehood. Kant’s highly original reflections on the general publicity of right in the polity are based on the distinction between right in the pre-civil state, understood as “private right,” and right in the civil state, understood as “public right.”⁶⁶

Departing from the customary distinction in jurisprudential dogmatics between private right, essentially property right, and public right, essentially state right, Kant understands public right as being nothing but pre-civil, private right *qua* “natural right” having been brought under the juridico-political necessary condition of state-based publicity: “The sum of the laws which need a general publication in order to bring about a rightful condition is public right.”⁶⁷

In terms of content, public right in Kant is identical with the private right of natural law, to which, however, its add the political form of state-based and sanction-endowed publicity.⁶⁸ Still the substantial section labeled “Public Right” in the Doctrine of Right of the *Metaphysics of Morals*,⁶⁹ which follows the equally extensive section entitled “Private Right,” offers not a material repetition of the previously dealt with private right, but details the institutional and constitutional system of arrangements for the principal transposition of the rules and regulations of private, “natural” right into the publicity of juridically ruled statehood.

The contemporary context of Kant’s innovative distinction between the generic publicity of (juridical) right in the state (“public laws”)⁷⁰ and specifically public right (“state right”)⁷¹ is the construct of the social contract (*pactum sociale*) in early modern natural right theories, together with Kant’s critique of the latter. The natural right tradition up through Achenwall, on whose

textbook Kant based his regularly offered lecture course in natural right,⁷² had distinguished the state of nature (*status naturalis*) from the civil state (*status civilis*) and immediately identified the civil state with the social state.⁷³ Departing from this automatic identification, Kant considers the state of nature to be not essentially solitary, but entirely social and also already rightfully regulated, viz., by natural right. Accordingly, Kant replaces the traditional distinction between the state of nature and the social state with the alternative distinction between the natural state and the civil state.⁷⁴ For Kant the civil state, along with the civil society correlated with it, are defined by a special, juridico-political form of sociality—above all by the institution of publically propagated and coercively sanctioned right under the guise of “public justice.”⁷⁵

The eminently social character of the state of nature recognized by Kant further conditions the extensional identification of natural right with right in the natural state. Far from being a lawless state of fighting and warfare, the state of nature for Kant is the naturally existing state of a priori rights (“natural right”). To be sure, according to Kant’s diagnosis, the state of nature ruled by natural right essentially lacks an omnilaterally recognized arbitration authority for the adjudication and solution of conflicting rights claims. To that extent, natural right *qua* right in the state of nature is merely “private” right, with the deficient essential characteristic of juridical uncertainty in particular and the associated insecurity of social life in general.⁷⁶ First and only the civil state, with its introduction of a state-based and state-protected juridico-political community, ensures the public recognition of the pre-civil, already entirely valid (though merely private) right.⁷⁷

Kant casts the formal—more precisely, the modal— difference (combined with the material identity) between the social norms already prevailing in the state of nature under the guise of private right, on the one hand, and the juridical rules established in the civil state by means of public right, on the other hand, in temporally dimensioned terms: private right as such functions only for the time being and in a preliminary manner (“provisionally”), while public—publicized—right functions reliably and lastingly (“peremptorily”).⁷⁸ For Kant the formal relation between the necessary framing conditions for peremptory laws by means of public right, viz., a state constitution and a system of (public, rather than private) justice, on the one hand, and the pre-civil provisional regulations of private (natural) right, on the other hand, is one of principal or (quasi-)transcendental enabling. It is only through the public institutions of civil society that the a priori norms of naturally given private right receive lasting and omnilateral recognition, thus rendering possible a genuinely just societal order.

Kant illustrates the indispensable functionality of public right for private right by establishing the principal requirements for the very possibility of lasting and generally recognized contractually based property in an explicitly so termed “transcendental deduction.”⁷⁹ In it Kant moves beyond the general relationship of public right enabling lasting possession by tying the transcendentalism of publically rightful property to the transition from empirically manifest declarations of intent and consent of the contracting partners to the purely formal consideration of a communal formation of the will (“issuing from one unitary common will”).⁸⁰ When Kant explicitly identifies the rightful relation of contractual property acquisition as non-empirical (“purely intellectual,” “*possessio noumenon*”) and equally explicitly details the principal exclusion

of any empirical considerations (“under abstraction of [...] empirical conditions”),⁸¹ then the transcendently deduced a priori concept of possession entirely satisfies the formal criteria of a “transcendental definition,” as stipulated seven years earlier in the Introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.⁸²

But even outside of the particular undertaking of “a transcendental deduction of the concept of acquisition through contract,”⁸³ Kant stresses the overall inclusion of the core arguments of his “pure doctrine of right” in the *Metaphysics of Morals* into the orbit of transcendently operating philosophy. In particular, on the occasion of defining a free human being capable of exercising rights (“person”) and in the context of the moral-philosophical concept of atemporal causality (“pure category [...] without an underlying schema”), Kant declares it an unconditional necessity that the “philosophical jurist” has to advance to the “first elements of transcendental philosophy in a metaphysics of morals.”⁸⁴ Kant’s pointed recourse to the formal features of a “transcendental principle” in the case of the publicity of right and to a “transcendental definition” in the case of the acquisition of property in *Toward Perpetual Peace* and the *Metaphysics of Morals* thus proves to be part of a more general enterprise to deepen political and legal philosophy to its ultimate foundations—foundations that are to be characterized as “transcendental” in a technical sense, even though the late Kant does not thereby attempt, much less accomplish, to extend transcendental philosophy to the point of including into it practical philosophy in its entirety.

Abstract: The contribution investigates Kant’s extension of transcendental-philosophical thinking from the critique of purely theoretical reason to his late political and legal philosophy. The focus lies on the transcendental ingredients of Kant’s juridico-political thinking in general and on the “transcendental concept” and the “transcendental principle” of publicity in particular. The first section outlines the original project of transcendental philosophy in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The second section tracks the introduction of transcendental features outside of transcendental philosophy proper beginning in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. The third section is devoted to the role of publicity as the “transcendental principle” for a politics conforming to juridical right in *Toward Perpetual Peace*. The fourth section presents the distinction between private right and public right in the *Metaphysics of Morals* under the quasi-transcendental perspective of rendering permanent the previously provisional claims of private right by means of the institution of public right.

Key words: Kant, transcendental philosophy, publicity, right, politics

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² Kant, V-NR/Feyerabend, AA, 28: 1384; Kant, Immanuel: *Lectures and Drafts on Political Philosophy*, ed. Frederick Rauscher and transl. Frederick Rauscher and Kenneth R. Westphal. Cambridge (Cambridge University Press), 2016, p. 167 (translation modified). In what follows, only quoted longer phrases or entire sentences by Kant are provided with references to modern English translations, while the translations of terms and short phrases cited from Kant are my own.

³ A German version of this article, under the title “*Philosophia practica transcendentalis*. Die Publizität der Politik und die Öffentlichkeit des Rechts beim späten Kant,” is forthcoming in *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scholastica*.

⁴ Kant, KrV, B 29.

⁵ On Kant’s retrospectively established comprehensive system architectonics, see Kant, KU, AA 5: 174-179 (Introduction, II. und III.). On Kant’s system idea within the horizon of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, see Kant, KrV A 840/B 868-A 849/B 877.

⁶ Kant, OP, AA 21: 3-158 (First Convolute).

⁷ For an audacious attempt at rehabilitating the *Opus postumum* in this regard, see Schepelmann, Maja: *Der senile Kant? Zur Widerlegung einer populären These*. Paderborn (mentis), 2018.

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⁹ On the older and the more recent controversy over the systematic status (whether critical, whether transcendental, whether neither) of Kant’s doctrine of right, see Ritter, Christian: *Der Rechtsgedanke Kants nach den frühen Quellen*. Frankfurt/M. (Klostermann), 1971; Busch, Werner: *Die Entstehung der kritischen Rechtsphilosophie Kants 1762-1780*. Berlin/New York (de Gruyter), 1979; Hüning, Dieter; Stefan Klingner; Gianluca Sadun Bordoni (Ed.): *Auf dem Weg zur kritischen Rechtslehre. Naturrecht, Moralphilosophie und Eigentumstheorie in Kants „Naturrecht Feyerabend“*. Leiden (Brill), 2021.

¹⁰ Kant, KrV, B 25 (in the original emphasis); Kant, Immanuel: *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge (Cambridge University Press), 1998, p. 149 (translation modified). See also Kant, KrV, A 11f.

¹¹ On the status and function of transcendental philosophy in and after Kant, see Günter Zöllner, “Conditions of Objectivity. Kant’s Critical Conception of Transcendental Logic.” *Yearbook of German Idealism/Jahrbuch des deutschen Idealismus*, 12 (2017), p. 3-28 and Günter Zöllner, “Weder Methode noch Disziplin. Zum historisch-systematischen Ort transzendentalen Philosophierens.” In: Marco Ivaldo; Hans Georg von Manz; Ives Radrizzani (Ed.): *Vergegenwärtigung der Transzendentalphilosophie. Das philosophische Vermächtnis Reinhard Lauths*. Würzburg (Königshausen & Neumann), 2017, p. 167-183.

¹² On the status and function of experience qua “possible experience” and the “empirical in general” in Kant, see Günter Zöller, “Possibiliser l’expérience. Kant sur la relation entre le transcendantal et l’empirique.” In: Antoine Grandjean (Ed.): *Kant et les empirismes*. Paris (Garnier Classiques), 2017, p. 99-112.

¹³ For a systematic reconstruction of Kant’s critical transcendental philosophy as a theory of a priori cognitive objective reference, see Günter Zöller, *Theoretische Gegenstandsbeziehung bei Kant. Zur systematischen Bedeutung der Termini „objektive Realität“ und „objektive Gültigkeit“ in der „Kritik der reinen Vernunft“*. Berlin/New York (de Gruyter), 1984.

¹⁴ See de Boer, Karin: *Kant's Reform of Metaphysics. The Critique of Pure Reason Reconsidered*. Cambridge (Cambridge University Press), 2020.

¹⁵ Kant, KrV, BIXf. (original emphases).

¹⁶ On the practico-moral extension of originally purely theoretical metaphysics, see Günter Zöller, “Metaphysik von der Metaphysik.’ Kants über theoretische, praktische und praktisch-theoretische Metaphysik.” In: François Calori; Raphaël Ehram; Antoine Grandjean; Inga Römer (Ed.): *Métaphysique et philosophie pratique chez Kant. Metaphysik und praktische Philosophie bei Kant*. Hamburg (Meiner), 2023, p. 205-227.

¹⁷ Kant, KrV, A 14f.; Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 134f. (translation modified). See also the slightly changed version of this passage in Kant, KrV, B 28f. and the corresponding pronouncements in the Canon of Pure Reason of the *Critique of Pure Reason*: “All practical concepts pertain to objects of satisfaction or dissatisfaction [...]. [...] the elements of our judgments, insofar as they are related to pleasure or displeasure, thus belong to practical philosophy, and not to the sum total of transcendental philosophy [...].” (Kant, KrV, A 801 note/B 828 note; Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 675 note).

¹⁸ Kant, KU, AA 5: 181-186 (Introduction, V).

¹⁹ Kant, ZeF, AA 8: 381-386 (Appendix, II.).

²⁰ Kant, RL, AA 6: 272f. (§ 19).

²¹ See also the juxtaposition of “metaphysical elucidation” and “transcendental elucidation” in Kant, KrV, B 38 and B 40.

²² See Kant, MAdN, AA 4: 472-479 (Preface).

²³ Kant, KU, AA 5: 181 (Introduction, V.); Kant, Immanuel: *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, transl. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews. Cambridge (Cambridge University Press), 2000, p. 68.

²⁴ See Kant, KU, AA 5: 217 (§ 9).

²⁵ See Kant, KrV, A 132/B 171.

²⁶ See Kant, KrV, A 727/B 755-A 731/B 759. On Kant’s conception of definition as “real definition,” see Kant, KrV, A 241f. note.

²⁷ Kant, KU, AA 5: 177, note (Introduction, III.).

²⁸ Kant, KU, AA 5: 177, note (Introduction, III.); on the concept of “pure category,” see Kant, KrV, A 245-248.

²⁹ Kant, KpV, AA 5: 9, note (Preface) (in the original emphasis); quoted in Kant, KU, AA 5: 177 note (Introduction, III.).

³⁰ On the “schema of cause” as lawfully regulated temporal sequence, see Kant, KrV, A 144/ B 183.

³¹ See Christian Wolff, *Philosophia practica universalis methodo scientifica pertractata*, 2 vols. Verona (Ramanzini), 1738–1739.

³² See Kant, GMS, AA 4: 390 (Preface).

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- ⁴⁰ Kant, WA, AA 8: 36 (in the original emphasis).
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- ⁴⁷ Kant, V-Mo/Mron II, AA 29: 595-642.
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- ⁵⁵ Kant, ZeF, AA 8: 352 (First Definitive Article) (in the original emphasis).
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- ⁵⁹ Kant, ZeF, AA 8: 381 and 386 (Appendix, II.) (in the original emphasis).
- ⁶⁰ Kant, ZeF, AA 8: 381 (Appendix, II.); Kant, Immanuel: *Practical Philosophy*, transl. and ed. Mary J. Gregor. General Introduction by Allen Wood. Cambridge (Cambridge University Press), 1996, p. 347.
- ⁶¹ Kant, ZeF, AA 8: 381 (Appendix, II.).
- ⁶² Kant, ZeF, AA 8: 382-384 (Appendix, II.)
- ⁶³ Kant, ZeF, AA 8: 386 (Appendix, II.) (in the original emphasis); Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, p. 351 (translation modified).
- ⁶⁴ Kant, VRML, AA 8: 429 (in the original emphasis).
- ⁶⁵ Kant, VRML, AA 8: 429; Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, p. 614.

⁶⁶ See Kant, RL, AA 6: 306 (§ 41). For a detailed commentary of the systematic transition from private right to public right in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, see Byrd, B. Sharon and Joachim Hruschka: *Kant's Doctrine of Right. A Commentary*. Cambridge (Cambridge University Press), 2010, p. 23-43.

⁶⁷ Kant, RL, AA 6: 311 (§ 43) (in the original emphasis); Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, p. 455 (translation modified). See also Kant, RL, AA 6: 242 (Introduction).

⁶⁸ See Kant, RL, AA 6: 306 (§ 41).

⁶⁹ Kant, RL, AA 6: 309-355 (§§ 41-62).

⁷⁰ Kant, RL, AA 6: 242 (Introduction).

⁷¹ Kant, RL, AA 6: 311-342 (§§ 43-52).

⁷² See the partial reprint of Achenwall's *Ius naturalis*, along with Kant's critical marginalia (*Reflexionen*) entered into his personal copy of the compendium, in Kant, HN, AA 19: 323-613. For an English translation of these materials, see Immanuel Kant, *Lectures and Drafts on Political Philosophy* sowie Achenwall, Gottfried: *Natural Law. A Translation of the Textbook for Kant's Lectures on Legal and Political Philosophy*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld and transl. Corinna Vermeulen. With an Introduction by Paul Guyer. London/New York/Oxford/New Delhi/Sydney (Bloomsbury), 2020.

⁷³ See Kant, RL, AA 6: 242 and 306 (Introduction and § 41).

⁷⁴ See Kant, RL, AA 6: 242 and 306 (Introduction and § 41).

⁷⁵ Kant, RL, AA 6: 306 (§ 41).

⁷⁶ See Kant, RL, AA 6: 256f., 264, 307f. und 312 (§§ 9, 15, 42 and 44).

⁷⁷ Kant, RL, AA 6: 306 (§ 41).

⁷⁸ Kant, RL, AA 6: 264 (§ 15) (in the original emphasis); see also Kant, RL, AA 6: 341 (§ 52).

⁷⁹ Kant, RL, AA 6: 272f. (§ 19).

⁸⁰ Kant, RL, AA 6: 273 (§ 19) (in the original emphasis).

⁸¹ Kant, RL, AA 6: 273 (§ 19).

⁸² See Kant, KU, AA 5: 177, note (Introduction, III.).

⁸³ Kant, RL, AA 6: 272 (§ 19).

⁸⁴ Kant, RL, AA 6: 280, note (§ 28).

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OUT OF TIME

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The spirit that breathes in the Kantian essay *Perpetual Peace* must benefit every friend of justice, and even the most distant progeny will admire in this monument the elevated frame of mind of the venerable sage.

– Friedrich Schlegel, *Essay on the Concept of Republicanism Occasioned by the Kantian Tract “Perpetual Peace”* (1796)

Everybody’s cryin’ peace on earth, just as soon as we win this war.

– Mose Allison, *Everybody Cryin’ Mercy* (1968)

Dejà Vu

When I first became interested in Kant’s practical writings slightly over fifty years ago, not-so-surprisingly similar versions of several of the very same concerns that are on many people’s minds at present weighed heavily on my mind. The United States was involved in a protracted war in Vietnam that growing numbers of US citizens felt was unjust,² the environmental movement was gaining a solid foothold in the US and elsewhere (I remember participating in the first Earth Day at my high school in 1970), concerns about the increased capabilities of computers were growing, particularly in Silicon Valley where I grew up (and where my father worked at IBM),³ ever more frequent demonstrations demanding civil rights for women⁴ and racial minorities were revealing an underlying lack of consensus on justice, and, for all of the above reasons and more, skepticism about humanity’s future was on the rise. Isn’t there a more reasonable and just way to deal with these issues? my younger and slightly more idealistic self asked. Although I believed then as now that it is wildly imprudent to suppose that a theory constructed over two centuries ago should serve as a precise blueprint for contemporary policy, I continue to hold today that we can still learn a great deal from a Kantian perspective on issues relating to global ethics.⁵ In what follows I wish first to briefly articulate and comment on Kant’s views on several of these global ethics issues, but to also offer some Kantian reflections on why we have unfortunately made so little progress in resolving them.

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HUMANITY'S MOST PRESSING ETHICAL CHALLENGE?

Judging from the continuous outpouring of articles in the popular press, there is now a nearly universal consensus that humanity's most pressing ethical challenge at present is climate change. And here critics of Kant and Enlightenment thought might seem to have an easy point to score, for it is often said that we find a "lack of attention to the environment in the (Kantian) Western analytic philosophical tradition,"⁶ and, more damningly, that Kant's ethics "inevitably produces a hostile posture toward nature in general."⁷

The "hostile posture" charge is said to follow from Kant's well-known companion claims that "every rational being exists as an end in itself" (GMS 4: 428) and that nonrational beings – a category under which he subsumes all nonhuman terrestrial animals and plants – "have only a relative worth, as means, and are therefore called things" (GMS 4: 428). Rational beings are ends in themselves, but nonrational beings are only means or instruments.⁸ So, what are the members of the vegetable and (nonhuman) animal kingdoms good for? Kant asks pointedly in his third Critique. "For the human being, for the diverse uses which his understanding teaches him to make use of all these creatures; . . . he is the ultimate end of the creation here on earth . . . (KU 5: 426; cf. MAM 8: 114, V-NR/Feyerabend 27: 1319). On this point the enlightened philosopher does not appear to have moved beyond the ancient "dominion theory" of the Old Testament: "and God said to them: be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Genesis 1: 26).

However, the "hostile posture" charge fails to take into account another famous claim of Kant's, viz., his remark in the *Metaphysics of Morals* that human beings have a duty not only to "refrain from" "violent and cruel treatment of animals" but also "to love something (e.g., beautiful crystal formations, the indescribable beauty of plants) even apart from any intention to use it" (MS 6: 443; cf. V-MS/Vigil 27: 710). The latter point is put more simply and directly in one of his ethics lectures: "No human being ought to destroy the beauty of nature" (V-Mo/Collins 27: 459-60). Clearly, if more humans since Kant's day had followed his counsel to love nature and refrain from mistreating animals the natural environment would not be its present catastrophic condition. Granted, not all friends of the environment are satisfied with Kant's articulation and defense of a duty to respect nature, for on closer inspection this duty itself rests on merely instrumental grounds. Mistreating animals is morally wrong because it "weakens and gradually uproots a natural predisposition that is very serviceable to morality in one's relations to other people" (MS 6: 443) – viz., empathy for the suffering of other humans, and we are to love nature because doing so promotes "a feeling . . . which, though not of itself moral, is still a disposition that greatly promotes morality or at least prepares the way for it" (MS 6: 443) – viz., the aesthetic experience of loving what is beautiful for its own sake. In short, nature is to be valued not for its own sake but rather "for its moral serviceability"⁹ – that is, its capacity to serve the moral growth of human beings. Nevertheless, even this admittedly "anthropocentric approach to environmental preservation"¹⁰ is more than enough to acquit Kant of the "hostile posture toward nature" charge. The attitude toward non-human nature

that humans should adopt, on Kant's view, is not one of dominion and mastery, but rather one of critical and responsible stewardship.

However, matters stand differently with regard to the weaker "lack of attention to the environment" charge. Here Kant and Enlightenment intellectuals generally (indeed, the entire Western philosophical tradition) stand guilty as charged. Although Kant presciently warns readers in his *Physical Geography* that human beings "change the climate of countries considerably" when they "drain swamps, fell forests," and "build dams" (PG 9: 298), he of course does not mention the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas, nor does he advise humans to alter their climate-changing practices. Enlightenment intellectuals were not hostile toward nature, but they did not give much thought as to how to protect it simply because nature did not yet seem to need much protecting – the tremendous extent of the damage that humans have caused to the environment was not yet visible. But now an additional problem arises. Kant's famous proposal for a *Völkerbund*¹¹ – an idea which is often said to have inspired later institutions such as the League of Nations, the United Nations, and the European Union – was conceived with one purpose in mind; viz., putting an end to war. As he writes in *Toward Perpetual Peace*: "there must be a Bund of a special kind, which can be called a *Friedensbund* (*foedus pacificum*), . . . [one which] seeks to end all wars forever" (ZeF 8: 356). This *Völkerbund*, Kant notes in one of his ethics lectures, is designed solely "to make possible a universal peace" (V-MS/Vigil 27: 591). And the reason why the Kantian *Völkerbund* was intended as a *Friedensbund* is simply that Kant regards war as mankind's single greatest enemy. As he states in his *Conjectural Beginnings of Human History*: "the greatest evil [Übel] that oppresses civilized peoples stems from war, yet to be sure less from one that actually is or has been than from the ever relenting and even ceaselessly increasing preparation for future war" (MAM 8: 121; cf. SF 7: 86).

But is war in fact the greatest evil that oppresses civilized peoples at present? Ritchie Robertson, in his most recent work on the Enlightenment, writes: "although war shows no sign of vanishing, it has changed its character."¹² The reasons behind the changed character of war are numerous and not always obvious, but one result is that – much to Kant's horror – many people today, rather than vigilantly pursuing their duty to promote peace,¹³ have learned to live with war. And in the meantime, new and seemingly greater evils have replaced war in the minds of growing numbers of people. But doesn't this mean that Kant's league of nations, conceived as a *Friedensbund*, is now obsolete? No, because part of what makes war evil in Kant's and others' minds is that it destroys the quality and ultimately the possibility of human life. So, if and when other forces also reveal this same life-destroying potential, humans should also unite to constrain them. Additionally, climate change, like war and other evils that currently threaten humanity's future such as artificial intelligence and bioterrorism, is clearly a collective problem that requires international cooperation, and Kant's *Völkerbund* was designed to combat collective problems that threaten humanity's future. As Anthony Pagden notes, for Kant

any type of international association among peoples will ultimately be more than a merely practical arrangement for suppressing warfare, much as that was to be applauded. It would also, for Kant, be the instantiation of what he calls humanity's "cosmopolitan right." This is not, he insists, a philanthropic principle. It is a right. And if there was any single "systematic thing in the history of human behavior," it was that "one idea led all the others, that is, the idea of their right." It is the

right that each people has to enjoy a peaceful relationship and to communicate with all others, for the desire for communication with one's fellow beings was for Kant, as it was for most of the writers of the Enlightenment, a primal human drive. Because humanity, he wrote, "means on the one hand the universal feeling of participation, and on the other the capacity for being able to communicate one's innermost self universally, which properties, taken together, constitute the sociability that is appropriate to humankind, by means of which it distinguishes itself from the limitations of animals."¹⁴

In short, a proper Kantian international association is one that is ultimately intended to respond to all collective problems that pose fundamental threats to humanity in order to protect human beings' cosmopolitan right. And climate change clearly falls under this purview.¹⁵

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Contrary to what one might reasonably infer from the recent wave of articles about artificial intelligence in the popular press, it is by no means a new topic. Many Enlightenment philosophers discussed AI in detail,¹⁶ with La Mettrie's *Man a Machine* (1748) being perhaps the most famous example. "Let us conclude boldly then that man is a machine, and that in the whole universe there is but a single substance with various modifications,"¹⁷ he declares on the final page of his radical work. Leibniz's unrealized plan of devising a calculator "being used to mechanize all reasoning processes, once all possible thoughts had been given a number through his projected 'Universal Characteristic'"¹⁸ is a second pioneering Enlightenment discussion relevant to AI. Instead of breaking their heads in fruitless argumentation, Leibniz predicted, people in the future could simply set the dials and crank the handle of a machine and then announce, "Let us calculate, Sir,"¹⁹ thereby resolving the matter.

Kant, however, as I have argued elsewhere,

is not a fan of AI. In his view, all natural organisms possess a "formative power" that cannot be replicated in machines. As he remarks in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*: "An organized being is . . . not a mere machine, for that has only a **motive** power, while the organized being possesses in itself a formative power, and indeed one that it communicates to the matter, which does not have it (it organizes the latter): thus it has a self-propagating **formative** power, which cannot be explained through the capacity for movement alone (that is, mechanism)" (KU 5: 374). As a result, Kant believes that humans cannot be replicated (much less improved on) via inorganic means. As he declares at the conclusion of his essay, *An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?* "the human being . . . is . . . more than a machine" (WA 8: 42).²⁰

But while Kant remained adamantly skeptical on the philosophical issue of whether human cognitive and developmental capacities will ever be fully replicated in machines, the potential destruction of human life that AI poses now and in the future is another story. This is an empirical issue, and one that is easily verifiable. And – like climate change – it is also a problem that by its nature requires collective action and international cooperation. In July 2023 the UN Security Council held its first meeting to discuss the threat of AI, and at this meeting UN Secretary General António Guterres "called for a global watchdog to oversee a new technology that has raised at least as many fears as hopes."²¹ Here as well, a properly

designed Kantian Völkerbund would respond to the evidence that AI constitutes yet another major threat to humanity's future and demand that its members take action.²²

BIOSECURITY CONCERNS

Biosecurity concerns (e.g., new pandemics, bioterrorism) are another contemporary threat to humanity that Kant and other Enlightenment intellectuals have relatively little to say about. The closest analogy would be repeated governmental employment of quarantines as a safeguard against the plague, “which afflicted Europe intermittently from the Black Death in 1348 to the 1720s.”²³ However, all these quarantines were merely local efforts, and did not involve international cooperation. The first vaccines for smallpox were also developed during the Enlightenment, and in several texts Kant discusses the morality of the new and not-yet-well-understood practice of inoculation. For instance, in the “Casuistical Questions” following his discussion of suicide in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, he writes: “Anyone who decides to be vaccinated against smallpox puts his life in danger, even though he does it in order to preserve his life. . . Is smallpox inoculation, then, permitted?” (MS 6: 424; cf. Refl. 1550-51, 15: 971-72; OP 22: 302-04). Although Kant does not directly answer his question here (his “Casuistical Questions” are intentionally open-ended, and are designed to encourage readers to exercise their own power of judgment), elsewhere he does assert that smallpox vaccination amounts to “moral recklessness” [*moralische Waghälsigkeit*] (OP 22: 302), which suggests to some that he was an anti-vaxxer *avant la lettre*.²⁴ Finally, some contemporary theorists have argued that we should turn to Kant's moral theory for help in making decisions regarding vaccine distribution, although opinion remains divided on how much solid advice he really has to offer here.²⁵

But current biosecurity threats, like climate change and AI, clearly require strong collective action and international cooperation if they are to be dealt with successfully. Pandemics don't respect national borders, and neither does climate change or AI. These are all threats to the right of human beings to enjoy a peaceful relationship and to communicate with all others – viz., they all constitute a violation of what Kant called humanity's cosmopolitan right. Unless and until all human beings are seriously regarded as “citizens in a single all-encompassing juridical realm”²⁶ or what Kant called “a universal state of humans [*allgemeiner Menschenstaat*] (*ius cosmopolitanum*)” (ZeF 8 349 n.),²⁷ these current threats to humanity's future may soon overwhelm us.

Why, then, despite the fact that the United Nations has been in existence since 1945, does there continue to be so little effective international cooperation on these matters? I turn now to a somewhat complicated Kantian response to this question, one which highlights different and at times conflicting aspects of his position.

TIME

Kant does not often address the question, “How long will it take for humanity to establish a *Völkerbund*?” but when he does, he is exasperatingly vague. For instance, in his discussion of the establishment of a *Völkerbund* in the *Anthropology Friedländer*, he asks:

But how can we contribute something to this and accelerate it? The philosopher must make his concepts of it known, and present them for closer examination. Teachers must form character, so that rulers will understand it and bring it about. In this way, such a state of affairs would exist, which we have no hope of experiencing. This contemplation is very pleasant, because it is an idea that is possible, but for which thousands of years will still be required” (V-Anth/Fried 25: 696).²⁸

Similarly, in his brief discussion of Saint-Pierre’s senate of nations at the end of the *Collins Moral Philosophy* lectures, he concludes by noting: “This is the destined final end, and the highest moral perfection, to which the human race can attain, which is to be hoped for after the course of many centuries” (V-Mo/Collins 27: 491). However, one obvious problem with this “many centuries” scenario is simply that we may not have enough time left on earth to carry it out. Harvard astrophysics professor Avi Loeb, for instance, in his recent piece “How Much Time Does Humanity Have Left?” writes: “we are likely to survive a few centuries but not much longer.”²⁹ Nevertheless, the Kantian perspective on the matter appears to be that humanity is not yet ready for a true *Völkerbund*. We need more time.

A COSMOPOLITICAL DISPOSITION?

A second aspect of Kant’s theory of humanity’s future draws on speculative biology, and is more optimistic in tone. In a marginal note to his *Handschrift* for *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, he writes: “there is a cosmopolitical disposition [*eine cosmopolitische Anlage*] in the human species, even with all the wars, which gradually in the course of political matters wins the upper hand over the selfish predispositions of people” (Anth 7: 412).³⁰ In Kant’s view, all natural organisms, humans included, are born with built-in goals and purposes. Nothing in nature “is in vain, purposeless, or to be ascribed to a blind mechanism of nature” (KU 5: 376, cf. 379). “Every creature reaches its destiny [*Bestimmung*] in the world, i.e. reaches the time in which all of its natural predispositions are developed and come to maturity” (V-Anth/Mron 25: 1417-18, cf. Anth 7: 329). However, in the case of non-human organisms, each individual member of the species normally attains the complete *Bestimmung* implied in its predisposition, whereas in the case of humans, only the species as a whole reaches it. As Kant remarks in the *Anthropology*: “with all other animals left to themselves, each individual reaches its complete *Bestimmung*; however, with the human being only the *species*, at best, reaches it; so that the human race can work its way up to its *Bestimmung* only through *progress* in a series of immeasurably many generations” (Anth 7: 324; cf. V-Anth/Mron 25: 1196, Refl 1499, 15: 781, *Päd* 9: 445)

Kant’s theory of natural predispositions, particularly when it is applied to humans, has both a descriptive as well as a prescriptive side. On the one hand, it points to natural, developmental structures within biological organisms. On the other, it tells us what *ought*

to be the case in the future. As Kant states at the beginning of his *Lectures on Pedagogy*: “the human species is supposed to bring out, little by little, humanity’s entire natural predisposition [*Naturanlage*] by means of its own effort” (Päd 9: 441). The prescriptive side also takes into account a role for human freedom in attaining the species’ destiny, for this itself is part of our species’ biology: “nature does not proceed without a plan or final aim even in the play of human freedom” (IaG 8: 29).

But what are we today to make of such claims? Although biology has certainly made great strides since Kant’s day, the strongly teleological style of biology presupposed by his theory of predispositions has lost favor. And while the science of genetics, which didn’t yet exist during Kant’s pre-Mendelian era, has also made great advances, contemporary geneticists have yet to locate a cosmopolitical predisposition in humanity’s gene pool.

CONSTITUTIVE/REGULATIVE

Kant also occasionally employs his famous distinction between regulative and constitutive principles in discussing humanity’s future, and here the net result is a softer, more cautious conclusion than we encountered in his remarks on biological dispositions. In his brief discussion of the development of a cosmopolitan society toward the end of the *Anthropology*, he writes: “however, this idea, unattainable in itself, is not a constitutive principle (the principle of anticipating lasting peace amid the most vigorous actions and reactions of human beings), rather it is only a regulative principle: to pursue it diligently as the vocation of the human race, not without a grounded assumption of a natural tendency toward it” (Anth 7: 331). Kant’s reference to “a grounded assumption of a natural tendency” toward a cosmopolitan society at the end of this quotation is probably an intimation of the *cosmopolitische Anlage* discussed in the previous section. But let us return to his distinction between constitutive and regulative principles. Regulative principles help orient human understanding (they amount to what nowadays might be called “heuristic aids to research” – cf. KU 5: 411), but unlike constitutive principles they do not determine the objective reality of events or contribute directly to our knowledge of them. Regulative principles, on the other hand, “demand that we seek something [as Kant puts it, they direct “the understanding to a certain goal” (KrV A 644/B 675)], – but they do not guarantee that what we are looking for can be found” (cf. KrV A 179-81/B 221-23).³¹ Kant himself puts the point perhaps even more negatively in his first *Critique* when he remarks that “even though one may never concede them [viz., regulative principles] objective reality (existence), [they] are nevertheless not to be regarded as mere figments of the brain, rather they provide an indispensable standard for reason” (KrV A 569/B 597). In other words, as I have argued elsewhere, calling the idea of a cosmopolitan society a regulative rather than a constitutive principle in the end amounts only to an inspirational hint “that something may happen – not that it will or must.”³²

HISTORICAL PROGRESS

Yet another dimension of Kant's discussion of humanity's future comes out in his frequent references to historical progress. This particular dimension falls somewhere between the biological confidence of a predisposition or natural tendency toward a cosmopolitan society and the more cautious proclamation that something may but not necessarily will happen implied by the language of regulative principles. In his *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, for instance, Kant begins confidently by predicting that he will be able to discover "an *aim of nature* in this nonsensical course of things human" (MAM 8: 118), and later in the same essay key aspects of the aim are revealed when he refers to humanity's "first true steps from crudity toward culture, thus all talents come bit by bit to be developed, taste is formed, and . . . 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" (MAM 8: 121).

Granted, this Kantian narrative about humanity's historical progress is part of a much larger Enlightenment story. Turgot, for instance, in his lecture "On the Successive Advances of the Human Mind" (1750), speaks for many of his contemporaries when he announces assuredly that the study of world history reveals how "manners are gradually softened, the human mind takes enlightenment, separate nations draw nearer to each other, commerce and policy connect at last to all parts of the globe, and the total mass of the human race, by the alternations of calm and agitation, of good conditions and of bad, marches always, though slowly, towards still higher perfection."³³

At the same time, however, Kant's faith in humanity's historical progress is not as naïve or dogmatic as that of many of his Enlightenment brethren, largely because he acknowledges a strong role for free will in his conception of human nature. Whether humans progress or not ultimately depends on what they choose to do. Their historical progress is not preordained or causally determined. As Kant states in the *Conflict of the Faculties*: "No one can guarantee that now, this very moment, with regard to the physical disposition of our species, the epoch of its decline would not be liable to occur. . . . For we are dealing with beings that act freely, to whom, it is true, what they *ought* to do may be *dictated* in advance, but of whom it may not be *predicted* what they *will* do" (SF 7: 83).

But even for those of us who favor Kant's more sober faith in historical progress over Turgot's dogmatic proclamation that history "marches always . . . towards still higher perfection," the problem at present is that fewer and fewer people are inclined to subscribe to *any* doctrine of historical progress. As Tyson Retz notes at the beginning of his recent book, *Progress and the Scale of History* (2022), progress has "lost its luster:"

After reaching its high point in the nineteenth century, the new century quickly demonstrated humankind's ability to put its achievements to devastating ends. The word increasingly appeared in sardonic scare quotes, studies on the history of the idea abounded, and progress's critics were lauded as frequently as earlier generations had celebrated its prophets. A quarter way into the twenty-first century, there is no sign that progress is set to regain its former renown. Optimists prosper in certain circles, but pessimism is in vogue, crisis talk more pervasive than progress talk. There now seems to be a widespread attitude that our current day may not be the newest phase in the movement towards a better future.³⁴

Or, as Nietzsche remarked earlier and a bit more succinctly: “interpreting history . . . as a continual testimony of a moral world order and ultimate moral purposes . . . that is *over* now; that has conscience against it.”³⁵

EXTERNAL, INTERNAL, IN-BETWEEN

One longstanding and perhaps interminable debate among Kant scholars is whether his philosophy of history concerns only external (legal, political) progress or, additionally, internal (moral) progress.³⁶ Otfried Höffe is a clear representative of the former position. He writes: “Kant limits progress to political justice, including both national and international law. And law, as such, involves the authority to use force. Since history has to do with outer events, it is not at all possible that its ultimate meaning lies in an “inner” progress, in a development of the moral disposition.”³⁷ Pauline Kleingeld, on the other hand, reveals her commitment to the latter position when she writes: “neither of these two kinds of legal progress can be called the final purpose of history, rather both are themselves means to a further end. The true final purpose is the complete development of the ‘predispositions of humanity’, which culminates in moralization, that is to say, in the transformation of human living-together into a ‘moral whole’.”³⁸

Granted, for those who side with Nietzsche in holding that *all* talk of historical progress is “*over* now,” this debate between externalists and internalists may be a moot point. Nevertheless, there is an often-overlooked middle position in this debate which I wish to explore briefly now, both because its textual basis in Kant’s writings is much easier to establish and because its aftermath in the world at present offers us one clue as to why effective international cooperation, despite the increasing need for it, has yet to be realized.

In several texts Kant points to what he calls “moral veneers” (cf. Zef 8: 375 n.) in modern life – developments which “are not themselves wholly moral but are morally important, morality’s instruments.”³⁹ For instance, in a footnote to *Toward Perpetual Peace* he refers to the modern state and its legal apparatus as one such veneer, since “by its checking the outbreak of unlawful inclinations, the development of the moral disposition to immediate respect for right is greatly facilitated” (Zef 8: 375-76 n.). By curbing citizens’ inclinations toward violence and encouraging their respect for law, “a great step *toward* morality (though it is not yet a moral step)” is taken (Zef 8: 376 n.). Similarly, in the third *Critique* he writes: “Fine arts and the sciences, which by means of a universally communicable pleasure and an elegance and refinement make human beings, if not morally better, at least better mannered for society, very much reduce the tyranny of sensible tendencies, and prepare humans for a sovereignty in which reason alone shall have power” (KU 5: 433). And in one of his anthropology lectures he echoes this sentiment about art as means to morality when he states: “Although the fine arts do not make the human being better, they nevertheless do refine him, and make it easy for him to become morally good” (V-Anth/Mensch 25: 1102). Similarly, in Kant’s earlier-cited discussion of the achievement of a *Völkerbund* in the *Collins Moral Philosophy* lectures, he asserts that we can hope for this “great step toward perfection” “from nowhere else but education” and that

“the Basedowian institutes of education⁴⁰ create a small but fervent hope in this regard” (V-Mo/ Collins 27: 470-71; cf. Päd 9: 444). Finally, in the *Anthropology Mrongovius* Kant refers to still more steps to morality: “what are the means of improving civil society and the constitution? 1. Education 2. Legislation 3. Religion” (V-Anth/Mron 25: 1427; cf. V-Anth/Mensch 25: 1198).

But there are several serious problems with Kant’s moral veneers thesis. First, if these veneers are assumed to be necessary and/or sufficient means of moral improvement, counterexamples easily come to mind. Some graduates of the world’s finest universities still manage to become violent criminals, not all humans who experience the beautiful succeed in becoming morally good agents, some children born in the world’s most just societies still become outlaws by the time they reach adulthood, some of the most fervent religious believers are quite familiar with sin, etc. So, these veneers are certainly not sufficient means. Nor are they necessary. There are many morally good agents who have not received any formal education, exposure to the arts, religious training, or the luck of having been born into a just society.

Although Kant’s language is admittedly ambiguous, I don’t think he is best interpreted as implying that these veneers are necessary and/or sufficient means to moral improvement. A somewhat milder interpretation, which I favor, is that the *kinds* of art, education, religion, and civics that many countries still favor at present are unfortunately not conducive to bringing our species closer to “a system that is cosmopolitically united” (Anth 7: 333). [As Kant himself remarks in one of his anthropology lectures, “We have already come far in culture, in civilization we have not done much, and in moralization we have done almost nothing” (V-Anth/Mensch 25: 1198).] All too often, these moral instruments are employed in the service of nationalistic goals. A better educational system, for instance, “might foster the ability of all citizens to engage in and to imagine ideal deliberations”⁴¹ and what Kant called “an interest in the best for the world” (Päd 9: 499), but few educational systems at present do this. However, even the best education (or art, or religion, or government) is no guarantee of moral virtue.

So, where does this leave us? Not in a good place. Insufficient numbers of individuals and governments have yet to convince themselves that they need to alter their self-interested behavior, and at any rate we may soon be out of time.⁴² There are certainly no guarantees that humans will become cosmopolitically united, and ultimately it’s up to us: “For we are dealing with beings that act freely, to whom, it is true, what they *ought* to do may be *dictated* in advance, but of whom it may not be *predicted* what they *will* do” (SF 7: 83).⁴³

Abstract: Versions of many of the same global ethics issues currently on people’s minds sparked my initial interest in Kant’s practical philosophy half a century ago -- e.g., international justice, war and peace, the natural environment, artificial intelligence, and human rights. Although it would be wildly imprudent to suppose that Kantian theory should serve as a precise blueprint for contemporary policy, I do believe that we today can still learn a great deal from Kant’s perspective on global ethics. In this essay, after briefly articulating his own views on these global ethics issues, I offer some Kantian reflections on why we have unfortunately made so little progress in resolving them.

Keywords: Kant, Progress, League of Nations, Cosmopolitan, Right, Global Ethics, War and Peace

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NOTAS / NOTES

¹ Robert Louden is a recently retired Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern Maine. He received an Undergraduate degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz, in 1975, and completed his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 1981 with a Dissertation entitled "The Elements of Ethics: Toward a Topography of the Moral Field." His areas of interest in philosophy are Ethical Theory, History of Ethics, and the history of Philosophy. He is a member of the American Philosophical Association, The North American Kant Society, and the American Society for 18th Century Studies. Before teaching at USM, he taught at Iowa State University, Indiana University Northwest, and at Barat College in Illinois. His favorite philosopher is Immanuel Kant. For example, he published "Johann Bernhard Basedow and the Transformation of Modern Education: Educational Reform in the German Enlightenment" (Bloomsbury, 2021; paperback, 2022); "Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View". (Cambridge University Press, paperback, 2021) and "Kant's Human Being: Essays on His Theory of Human Nature". (Oxford University Press, 2011; paperback, 2014)

² During my freshman year of college, I participated in a demonstration in front of Fort Ord, California, at which we tried to stop traffic by sitting together with our arms locked on the highway. We were subsequently maced by the police.

³ My father used to have a placard on his desk that read: "To Err is Human, to Really Foul Things Up Requires a Computer." Although the origin of this maxim is not certain, it first appeared in 1969.

⁴ My mother flew out to Chicago during my first year of graduate school and invited me to attend a demonstration in support of the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) with her and several of her friends. The ERA was never ratified by Congress.

⁵ See Robert B. Louden, *The World We Want: How and Why the Ideals of the Enlightenment Still Elude Us* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) for a defense of this position.

⁶ Helga Varden, "Kant and the Environment," *Studi Kantiani* 35 (2022): 27-48, at 27.

⁷ Scott M. Roulrier, *Kantian Virtue at the Intersection of Politics and Nature: The Virtue of Soul-Making* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 129. Roulrier himself goes on to argue against this popular view.

⁸ Christine Korsgaard defends "the claim that we human beings are obligated to treat all sentient animals . . . as what Kant called 'ends in themselves', at least in one sense of that notion" [*Fellow Creatures: Our Obligations to the Other Animals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), xi]. She argues later that "there are two slightly different senses of 'end in itself'" (141) – viz., an active and a passive sense – and accuses of Kant of conflating the two. I think what Kant had in mind is closer to her "active sense," and I think he would reject her conflation charge.

⁹ Roulrier, *Kantian Virtue at the Intersection of Politics and Nature*, 130.

¹⁰ Roulrier, *Kantian Virtue at the Intersection of Politics and Nature*, 141.

¹¹ Usually rendered in English as a “league of nations.” But I will leave it mostly untranslated in what follows, partly in order to underscore some key differences between Kant’s original idea and subsequent international federations. In the Kantian *Völkerbund*, for instance, there are no “great power vetoes” – each member state, regardless of size or the extent of its political power, has one vote. Also, member states are required to sign nonaggression treaties with all other member states as a condition of membership. Third, member states are expected to abolish standing armies and to stop incessantly threatening other states “with war by readiness to appear always prepared for war” (ZeF 8: 345). And, last but not least, “the civil constitution in every [member] state shall be republican” (ZeF 8: 349).

¹² Ritchie Roberston, *The Enlightenment: The Pursuit of Happiness 1680-1790* (New York: Harper, 2021), 761

¹³ “reason . . . delivers an absolute condemnation of war . . . and . . . makes a condition of peace . . . a direct duty” (ZeF 8: 356).

¹⁴ Anthony Pagden, *The Enlightenment: And Why It Still Matters* (New York: Random House, 2013), 361. In this passage Pagden cites first from Refl 1420, 15: 618 and then from KU 5: 355.

¹⁵ For additional discussion of Kant and climate change, see Zachary Vereb, “Sustaining the Individual in the Collective: A Kantian Perspective for a Sustainable World,” *Kantian Review* 27 (2022): 405-420. Vereb argues that Kant’s philosophy “has untapped potential for the climate crisis” (405).

¹⁶ See, e.g., Margaret A. Boden, *Mind as Machine: A History of Cognitive Science*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), esp. 1: 51-130.

¹⁷ Julien Offray de La Mettrie, “Man A Machine,” in *The Portable Enlightenment Readers*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 202-09, at 208.

¹⁸ G. MacDonald Ross, *Leibniz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 12-13.

¹⁹ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, “Preface to the General Science” (1677), in *Leibniz: Selections*, ed. Philip P. Wiener (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1951), 12-17 at 15. This is one of several Leibnizian schemes later satirized by Jonathan Swift in Part III of his *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726).

²⁰ Robert B. Loudon, “Humans-Only Norms: An Unexpected Kantian Story,” in *Kant on Morality, Humanity, and Legality: Practical Dimensions of Normativity*, ed. Ansgar Lyssy and Christopher Yeomans (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 131-147, at 131-32 n. 2. I believe that Kant is alluding to La Mettrie in the citation from WA 8: 42.

²¹ Franz Fassihi, “U.N. Officials Urge Regulation of Artificial Intelligence,” *New York Times*, July 18, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/18/un-security-council-ai.html>. Fassihi also reports that at this meeting “China’s ambassador to the United Nations, Zhang Jun, pushed back against the creation of a set of global laws and said that international regulatory bodies must be flexible enough to allow countries to develop their own rules.” Pushback (on the part of many sovereign states) against the creation of global laws continues to be one of the major obstacles to effective international cooperation. For instance, at a subsequent news conference held on September 8, 2023, Guterres emphasized that “the climate crisis is worsening dramatically – but the collective response is lacking in ambition, credibility, and urgency” (Sibi Arasu, “U.N. chief urges G-20 to convey urgency on climate,” *Portland Press Herald* September 9, 2023, pp. C1-2, at C1).

²² For further discussion of Kant and AI, see *Kant and Artificial Intelligence*, ed. Hyeongjoo Kim and Dieter Schönecker (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022).

²³ Robertson, *the Enlightenment*, 430. See also Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), an historical account of the London plague in 1665 based on extensive research. The journal is undersigned by the initials “H.F.” (p. 212), which suggests that Defoe’s uncle Henry Foe was the primary source of information. Defoe himself was only five years old when the plague began. The journal ends with the following “coarse but sincere stanza: *A dreadful Plague in London was, / In the Year Sixty Five, / Which swept an Hundred Thousand Souls / Away; yet I alive*” (212).

²⁴ See Dennis Schulting, “Vaccination, Autonomy, and ‘Moral Recklessness,’” *Kritik’s Newsletter*, February 14, 2022 (<https://kritik.substack.com>).

²⁵ For discussion and references, see M. C. Altman, “Kant in the Time of Covid,” *Kantian Journal* 41 (2022): 89-117.

²⁶ Pauline Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism: The Philosophical Ideal of World Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 7; cf. 72-91.

²⁷ However, as Kleingeld emphasizes, Kant’s use of this term “should not be taken to imply that Kant advocates the establishment of a world state that would absorb existing states” (*Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 74 n. 2).

²⁸ Japanese philosopher Nishi Amane, who introduced European theories of international law to Japan in the late nineteenth century, once remarked that Kant’s perpetual peace would not arrive until “10,00 years in the future at the earliest” [quoted in Oona J. Hathaway and Scott J. Shapiro, *The Internationalists* (London, 2017), 148]. He was not far off.

- ²⁹ Avi Loeb, “How Much Time Does Humanity Have Left?” *Scientific American*, May 12, 2021 (<https://www.scientificamerican.com>). However, as Yogi Berra is said to have remarked, “predictions are very hard, especially about the future.” In a recent *New York Times Magazine* article, Loeb is variously described as “the most famous practicing astronomer in the country,” someone who is considered “a pariah” by “many in his own field,” and one who, “as a kid growing up on a farm in Israel,” “wanted to be a philosopher or a writer, but compulsory military service led him to science” [Seth Fletcher, “Galaxy Quest,” *The New York Times Magazine*, August 27, 2023, 30-35, 46-47, at 33.
- ³⁰ For more on this issue, see my “Cosmopolitical Unity: The Final Destiny of the Human Species,” in Alix Cohen (ed.), *Kant’s Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 211-229.
- ³¹ Lucas Thorpe, “Constitutive Principle,” in *The Kant Dictionary* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 51-52, at 52.
- ³² Louden, *The World We Want*, 219.
- ³³ Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, “On the Successive Advances of the Human Mind,” in Isaac Kramnick (ed.), *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* (New York: Penguin, 1995), 361-63, at 362. See also the readings in Chapter 7 (“Progress”) of L. G. Crocker, *The Age of Enlightenment* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 287-320.
- ³⁴ Tyson Retz, *Progress and the Scale of History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 1.
- ³⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, ed. Bernard Williams and trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), § 357.
- ³⁶ For discussion see my “External Progress and Internal Progress,” in *Kant’s Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 144-52.
- ³⁷ Otfried Höffe, *Immanuel Kant*, trans. Marshall Ferrier (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 198. (Translation modified slightly.)
- ³⁸ Pauline Kleingeld, *Fortschritt und Vernunft: Zur Geschichtsphilosophie Kants* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1995), 14.
- ³⁹ Patrick Riley, *Kant’s Political Philosophy* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), 80.
- ⁴⁰ For discussion of Basedow, see my intellectual biography, *Johann Bernhard Basedow and the Transformation of Modern Education: Educational Reform in the German Enlightenment* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021). Basedow opened his experimental school, the Philanthropinum, in Dessau in 1776, and Kant was a fervent supporter. Although the school closed in 1793 (due in part to Basedow’s lack of administrative skill), by 1790 sixty-three Basedowian schools had been founded in Germany alone. Basedow, like Kant, was born in 1724. But he died in 1790 – fourteen years before Kant.
- ⁴¹ Philip Kitcher, *Moral Progress*, with Commentaries by Amia Srinivasan, Susan Neiman, Rahel Jaeggi, edited and introduced by Jan-Christoph Heilinger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 98.
- ⁴² Cf. Kitcher: “Unless the human population radically changes its ways during the immediate future, our descendants are highly likely to inhabit a world so harsh and inhospitable as to challenge and confine their lives” (*Moral Progress*, 100).
- ⁴³ An earlier version of this paper was prepared as an invited lecture for the inaugural session of the International Forum on Global Ethics, held at Fudan University in September 2023. Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain a visa from the Chinese government, and thus was not allowed to travel to Shanghai. Nevertheless, I would like to thank Kang Qian and Sun Xiangchen for their invitation to present the paper at their conference. Thanks also to Roey Reichert, Richard Eldridge, and William Harper for their comments on an earlier draft of the essay. A revised version of the paper was presented at the inaugural session of the online lecture series KANT300 in April 2024. Many thanks to Klaus Denecke Rabello for this invitation.

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TOWARD A KARENDTIAN THEORY OF POLITICAL EVIL — CONNECTING KANT AND ARENDT ON POLITICAL WRONGDOING

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INTRODUCTION²

This paper combines, transforms, and integrates Kant’s and Arendt’s thinking on evil into a unified “Karendtian” theory of political evil. For both, human evil is parasitic, feeding on human being so as to destroy it and make it suffer—analogue to how cancer operates on living organs—and the worse we lose our morally and emotionally healthy ways, the further we are detached from reality and engage not only in patterns of (self- and other) destruction but also in profound rationalizing and self-aggrandizing self-deception. Hence, to bring ourselves to partake in horrific wrongdoing, we self-deceptively destroy human being in the name of the good, be it morality, religion (“God”), our nation or people, or flourishing human nature. Political evil, correspondingly, is a type of self- and other destructive and self-aggrandizing action that we do together in the political sphere—what Arendt calls the sphere of action and Kant calls the public sphere—and in its worst forms, political evil involves establishing state practices of continuous self- and other destruction in the name of law and justice. Although Arendt engaged closely with neither Kant’s legal-political philosophy nor his account of human nature, this paper joins the spirit of those—from Ronald Beiner, Seyla Benhabib, and Howard Williams onwards—who argue that Kant’s deep influence on Arendt and Arendt’s incredible ingenuity with regard to thinking anew and deeply about politics, makes bringing the two of them into conversation on the topic of political evil a particularly fruitful enterprise.³

Because human evil, for Kant and Arendt, necessarily is parasitic on human being, to understand both it is useful to understand their general accounts of human life on planet Earth—what Arendt calls “the human condition” and Kant calls “the predisposition to good” and the “propensity to evil” in human nature (“moral anthropology”). In addition, we need to understand their theories of how we realize ourselves well, as free and emotionally healthy and morally responsible beings, and doing this brings us to Kant’s account of the highest

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(personal or political) good and Arendt's theory of action, solitude, and living as "somebody" rather than "nobody." Together, these theories critique how we realize ourselves as embodied, social, and free and creative beings in morally responsible ways—individually, as cultures, and by establishing public (legal and political) institutions. Once we have this conception of the human condition in view, we can explain why we do not always do this or why we have a temptation to do bad things—indeed, why we can become tempted to destroy ourselves, each other, our cultures, and our public institutions.

The first part below focuses on Kant. I sketch his ideas about the highest (personal and political) good; the predisposition to good in human nature; the propensity to evil; and the legal-political conditions of the republic, despotism, anarchy, and barbarism, including their related principles of law, freedom, and violence. Human evil for Kant, we see here, is destruction aimed at oneself or others, a kind of destruction that makes the highest good—whether personal or political—impossible for those subjected to it. Section 2 focuses on related, key proposals of Arendt's theory of the human condition—including her theories of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*—before outlining her theories regarding human evil, including her theories of power vs. strength vs. force vs. violence; tyranny vs. totalitarianism; the mob vs. the elite vs. the totalitarian movement (masses and totalitarian leader); modernity; and the Pariah vs. the Parvenue. Section 3 takes a few further steps towards a Karendtian theory of political evil by weaving together some of Kant's ideas on the propensity to evil and Arendt's ideas on totalitarianism, whereas in the final section, I briefly explore what Arendt calls "a theory of judgment" and Kant refers to as "the principle of politics." I conclude the paper by linking core ideas to Arendt's and Kant's theories of *sensus communis* and of the perspectives of the spectator vs. the actor.

1. KANT ON THE HIGHEST GOOD AND ON POLITICAL EVIL

Kant argues that from the first-personal point of view of virtue (first-personal ethics), the highest good is "the union and harmony of human morality ... and human happiness" (TP 8: 279), with "virtue ... [being] the condition ... [since it] is always the supreme [unconditional] good ... whereas happiness is something that ... is not of itself absolutely and in all respects good but always presupposes morally lawful conduct as its condition" (CPrR 5: 110–11).⁴ The highest first-personal good, then, is to pursue happiness within the bounds of morality, which means to pursue it within the bounds of virtue ("Tugend") and right ("Recht"). The highest political good, in turn, is "perpetual peace" (MM 6: 355), which is only possible if we together develop good cultures and public political institutions within rightful legal frameworks of domestic, international, and cosmopolitan public right ("Recht"); only in this way is justice ("Gerecht") established. Insofar as we strive to live in morally responsible ways, therefore, we strive to realize these first-personal personal and political highest goods. Instead of pursuing the highest (political) good, however, we often fail and participate in wrongdoing and we can find ourselves in situations from which there are no morally good ways out, where being subjected to or engaging in violence against others is unavoidable. To understand all of this, we need to acquaint ourselves with Kant's accounts of what he calls the predisposition to good, the

four legal-political conditions, the propensity to evil, and the distinction between formal and material wrongdoing.⁵

Kant's theory of the predisposition to good in human nature is useful to understand both his conception of human happiness and some common ways in which we tend to engage in wrongdoing, whether as individuals or as societies. Kant views the predisposition to good as constituted by three other predispositions: to "animality" (which makes us a "living being"), to "humanity" (which makes us a "rational being"), and to "personality" (which makes us a "responsible being") (R 6: 26). Breaking these predispositions down further, Kant holds that our distinctly animalistic, earthly nature is enabled by three reflexively self-conscious drives, namely to self-preservation, to sex, and to affectionate community; our predisposition to humanity is enabled by our reflective social sense of self and drive to freedom (to set ends of our own); and, finally, our predisposition to personality is enabled by the reflectively self-conscious "I" and our practical reason, and it is characterized by moral feeling (the "ought").

Importantly too, Kant thinks that we develop this predisposition to good in human nature as a whole by means of our imagination—since "happiness is not an ideal of reason but of imagination" (GW 4: 418)—and we do so by means also of five further kinds of thought: abstract conceptual (theoretical and practical), associative, teleological, aesthetic, and judging. Moreover, to do all of this well—if we really do pursue the highest good by integrating, transforming, and unifying our animality, humanity, and personality into a unified, harmonious whole by means of our various capacities for thought—we must also learn realize them in ways attuned to what Kant calls our "natural" and "moral" vital forces; only then can we morally own what we are all about and go about our lives wisely.⁶ If we combine this with Kant's ideas of the highest (first-personal and political) good(s), we must pursue happiness within the parameters set by morality—understood as comprising both our first-personal (im/perfect) duties constitutive of virtuous internal freedom and the enforceable principles of right constitutive of rightful external freedom—in a republic that secures perpetual peace in the domestic, international, and cosmopolitan spheres.⁷ Our personal home, then, is ideally a foundation upon which we ground and constitute our animalistically embodied, social, and free and creative beings in morally responsible ways as who we are and who we strive to become, while our countries are the legal, political, and cultural homes that ground our shared projects in various geographical locations for realizing who we are and who we strive to become. In these ways, morality (virtue and right) sets the framework within which we establish our grounding, personal homes ("my home") and our grounding, shared political homes ("my country").

To understand the highest political good as perpetual peace, it is also useful first to delineate Kant's account of the ideal legal-political condition ("the republic") as well as the other three possible legal-political conditions ("anarchy," "despotism," and "barbarism"). Kant's argument is as follows: Law ("Gesetz"), freedom ("Freiheit"), and violence ("Gewalt")⁸ can be combined in four different ways, resulting in four legal-political conditions: "the republic," "despotism," "barbarism," and "anarchy" (A 7: 330–31). Anarchy is a free condition, but it is "devoid of justice" (MM 6: 312) because it lacks rightful coercion (it has "freedom" and provisional "law," but no "violence"); barbarism is an unfree condition of only "violence" (and

no “freedom” and no “law”); despotism is an unfree condition of “law” that aims to impose specific conceptions of happiness (it has “law” and “violence,” but no “freedom”); and, finally, the republic is the ideal condition we should strive toward because it realizes a condition of rightful external freedom that can exist in perpetuity (“law,” “freedom,” and “violence”). Therefore, although only anarchy is without violence, the republic is the only legal-political condition in which laws of freedom set the coercive (“Zwang”) framework within which everyone must interact, and though this condition is backed up by the threat of violence, insofar as people act rightfully, no violence is used against anyone residing in the territory. In this sense, only the republic has a coercive framework that puts the threat of violence in the hands of a public authority that represents every citizen but no one citizen in particular. Only the republic can, therefore, in theory sustain itself as a rightful reality in perpetuity since only it is consistent with each person’s right to freedom, understood as the right to interact with others in such a way that they are coercively subjected only to laws of freedom and not to one another’s arbitrary choices (MM 6: 237). Finally, since actual historical states begin in very non-ideal societal circumstances—with various social groups being oppressed—they always participate (actively or passively) in wrongdoing involving groups of citizens (A 7: 327–28).

According to Kant, all human evil (wrongdoing) aims at the destruction of a truly free world by undermining or attacking oneself or another.⁹ Kant’s theory of virtue maintains that we have perfect and imperfect duties: Perfect duties are duties not to act destructively against ourselves or others (personally or politically); to act only on universalizable maxims and thus, to use Arendt’s formulation, not “make yourself an exception ... [and thereby] contradict yourself” (1978: 188). Imperfect duties, in turn, are duties to work toward a more fully free world by perfecting our own ability to both set (personal and political) ends of our own (in line with what makes us flourish as the kinds of persons we are) and assist others in their (personal and political) end-setting (their pursuit of happiness). If we pursue our conception of happiness within the boundaries set by these duties, we are pursuing the highest personal and political good and we deserve to be happy; if we do not, we are engaging in wrongdoing and participate in self- or other destruction (evil). Kant’s account of right, in turn, shows us why we interact rightfully with others only insofar as we do not violate their innate, private, or public rights to freedom, which is only possible if we establish a public authority (a state) with a republican form. The public authority acts on behalf of the citizens—it is inherently representative—by positing, applying, and enforcing laws grounded on the principles of innate, private, and public right. This is why and how establishing the public authority is a moral precondition for living together peacefully as free and equal beings under laws of freedom in perpetuity.

Historically, however, as individuals and as cultures, we do not start from the moral point of view, but the finite point of view of “animality” and “humanity” (pursue happiness) and strive to develop “personality” (morality). For example, with regard to the challenges of developing moral cultures, Kant argues that “nature within the human being strives to lead him from culture to morality, and not (as reason prescribes) beginning with morality and its law, to lead him to a culture designed to be appropriate to morality” (A 7: 327–28). Kant also (in) famously argues that the project of developing public legal and political institutions of freedom is not dependent on individuals and cultures first becoming virtuous; he proposes that the

problem of establishing a rightful state can be solved by a “nation of devils ... if only they have understanding”—and, so, as not hell-bent on self- or other destruction (PP 8: 366). The idea here, I believe, is that as long as people are at least rationally self-interested (use their intellect or understanding—“*Verstand*”—to pursue their interests), they will seek peace, which is only possible if we establish public legal and political institutions.¹⁰

Consistent with the above, Kant thinks we have a perfect duty of virtue not to undermine and, as Barbara Herman recently (2022) has shown us so clearly, an imperfect juridical duty of virtue to support, uphold, and continue to develop and improve our legal-political institutional framework.¹¹ In addition, we engage in punishable wrongdoing if we coercively refuse to interact with others as delineated by public laws of freedom or if we corrupt a public office we are entrusted with by treating it as if it is our private sphere of dominance. Finally, Kant argues that because we are animalistically embodied, social beings—and, so, we are always located, and, so, can be trapped, in space and time—we can find ourselves in situations from which there are no morally good ways out. In these situations, our options are either to let formal and material wrongdoing happen (to us or to others) or to commit a formal wrong. Kant’s most famous example of this kind is found in his account of lying to the murderer at the door. By lying, one does not wrong the murderer materially (as the murderer is irrationally trying to damage us), but one does commit a formal wrong (lying, even to protect ourselves, is inconsistent with treating the wrongdoer with dignity).¹²

For our purposes here, we do not need to go into any further detail on the above points. Instead, we can turn directly to Kant’s account of the propensity to evil, which he divides into three degrees: “frailty,” “impurity,” and “depravity” (R 6: 29–32). On my favored interpretation, frailty is an instance of self-deceived or non-self-deceived wrongdoing; impurity is a pattern of wrongdoing that also may or may not involve self-deception; and depravity is a self- and other destructive way of going about life that is always self-deceived. To be tempted in this way is to simply do what we want to do instead of making sure that we always act within the boundaries of what we are morally obligated to do. To use Kant’s terms, we act out of mere “self-love” and not “moral love;” our natural and moral vital forces are not harmonious. Because it is unpleasant to be in disharmony, we are tempted to misdescribe what we are doing—or engage in self-deception. Moreover, acting in self-deceived ways—doing bad in the name of, or under the guise of, the good—is always worse than not since ridding oneself of self-deception adds its own layer of difficulty insofar as one strives to live better. Similarly, an instance of wrongdoing is generally better than having made the wrongdoing in question into a pattern or, even worse, part of a generally self- and other destructive way of living. To illustrate, stealing only once is less bad than if I make a habit of it, which in turn is less bad than if I generally try to live life such that I take as much as possible from what belongs to others. All evil, in turn, involves bad conscience for a morally conscientious or responsible person—someone who has “personality” or is susceptible to “moral feeling”—where bad conscience is “practical reason holding the human being’s duty before [them] for [their] acquittal or condemnation in every case that comes under a law” (MM 6: 400).¹³

On this latter point, Arendt comes close to Kant in that she also views evil as involving an inability to be a person: to be “somebody” rather than “nobody” (1965–66/2003: 111). To be somebody is to have “personality,” Arendt argues, which “is the simple, almost automatic result of thoughtfulness” (95). In “Some Questions of Moral Philosophy,” Arendt draws on Socrates’s conception of wrongdoing by saying that it “is whatever I cannot bear to have done, and the wrongdoer would be somebody unfit for intercourse, especially for the thinking intercourse of him with himself” (124). Interestingly too, Arendt argues that “the mode of existence present in this silent dialogue of myself with myself, I ... call solitude ... [which] means that I’m two-in-one” (98). Arendt continues by arguing that thoughts and memory are constitutive of solitude (understood as “two-in-one”) and that people who refuse to do this are the most dangerous of individuals because they are unrooted and limitless in their possible evil. Risking drawing the analogy to illness too far: most illnesses will not kill you (but can even make you stronger); cancer, if not stopped, will kill you and thereby also itself. There are no boundaries.

To illustrate, in *Life of the Mind*, Arendt explains that one way to capture what made Eichmann’s evil “banal” was not its “stupidity” but its “thoughtlessness” (1978: 4).¹⁴ Correspondingly, in “Some Questions of Moral Philosophy,” Arendt argues that “the greatest evil is not radical, it has no roots, and because it has no roots it has no limitations, it can go to unthinkable extremes and sweep over the whole world.... [I]n rootless evil there is no person left whom one could ever forgive” (1965–66/2003: 95). Later, she writes:

If he is a thinking being, rooted in his thoughts and remembrances, and hence knowing that he has to live with himself, there will be limits to what he can permit himself to do, and these limits will not be imposed on him from the outside, but will be self-set;... but limitless, extreme evil is possible only where these self-grown roots, which automatically limit the possibilities, are entirely absent.... [T]he loss of [the capacity of] solitude ... [and] with it the loss of creativity ... [is] the loss of the self that constitutes the person. (101)

And later:

The greatest evil perpetrated is the evil committed by nobodies, that is, by human beings who refuse to be persons.... [W]rongdoers who refuse to think by themselves what they are doing and who also refuse in retrospect to think about it, that is, go back and remember what they did ... have actually failed to constitute themselves into somebodies. By stubbornly remaining nobodies they prove themselves unfit for intercourse with others who, good, bad, or indifferent, are at the very least persons. (111–12)

Note that if we read Kant and Socrates in this two-in-one way, which in important ways I agree we should, then if we do bad things and do not morally own them by assuming responsibility for them, we are unable to be with ourselves and are thus emotionally unable to use our conscience as the incredible resource it is. Instead, we try to stay away from or block what we have done by avoiding solitude where we can remember and think about what we have done—or be with ourselves. Consistent with this, in “Personal Responsibility under Dictatorship,” Arendt argues that not only was “respectable society ... the first to yield” to the Nazis and “the doubters and skeptics” much more reliable because “they are used to examine [sic] things and to make up their own minds,” but “best of all” are “those who know only one thing for certain: that whatever else happens, as long as we live we shall have to live together

with ourselves” (1964/2003: 44–45). In section 3 below, I argue that we can develop these ideas of Kant and Arendt by arguing that insofar as we fail to be morally responsible, we fail to constitute ourselves as not only “two-in-one” but also “three-in-one”; we stop being able to not only reflect functionally but also feel. Correspondingly, as we will see in the next section, totalitarian evil aims not only to make it impossible for people to set and pursue ends (their own and political ones), but also to totally numb them—to force them into a condition of living death.

2. ARENDT ON THE HUMAN CONDITION AND ON POLITICAL EVIL

Arendt’s original interest in philosophy was not in political philosophy. However, the realities of Nazism in Germany—Arendt was 26 years old when Hitler was elected to office in 1933—made political realities in general and political evil in particular the most important topics for her throughout her life. Also important were two extraordinary facts: first, that academic philosophers were generally unable to recognize the problem of totalitarianism—a fact that deeply unsettled and scared her; and second, that the philosophical canon did not have the necessary theoretical resources for understanding this reality, including, of course, the resources that would assist those who were either trying to protect themselves against it or to stop it. In line with her analysis of the elite in *Origins* (see below), her 1964 “Zur Person” interview with Günter Gaus also draws attention to how it profoundly shook her that all her non-Jewish academic friends—at least for a moment—were excited when Hitler came to power in 1933.¹⁵ The problem of academics’ (including philosophers’) bad judgment and lack of comprehension of political evil were, in other words, major theoretical drivers throughout her life and work. Like the section on Kant above, this section also starts by outlining ideas about human good—what Arendt calls the human condition—before proceeding to her account of political evil in general as well as in modernity and in totalitarian regimes specifically. I also indicate, briefly, why she thinks the so-called Western¹⁶ philosophical tradition was ill-equipped to analyze politics; indeed, why she proposes that the unprecedented evil unleashed by modern totalitarianism made it evident that we need a new way of thinking about politics on planet Earth, one that allows us to transform our way of living on the planet into a new and better version.

The Human Condition divides human life into two parts: *vita activa* (the active life) and *vita contemplativa* (the philosophical or scholarly life). *Vita activa* (the main focus of *The Human Condition*), Arendt posits, is constituted by three types of activity: “labor,” “work,” and “action.” Labor, Arendt argues, produces what is needed for the self-sustaining activities of biological life (eating, drinking, resting). As animal laborans, we labor so that we can consume the products of labor, which, in turn, enables us to labor more. This continuous, repetitive cycle of reproductive activity “is prescribed by the biological process of the living organism,” and though the activity of all human animal laborans sustains the human species, the end of the “toil and trouble” of each individual animal laborans is “death” (Arendt 1958/1998: 98). Labor is also fundamentally a “worldless” activity, a fact we realize radically when we are in great physical pain since our human body is then “thrown back upon itself” by being

forced to “concentrate ... [only on staying] alive, and [it] remains imprisoned in its metabolism with nature without ever transcending or freeing itself from the recurring cycle of its own functioning” (115). This feature of labor, in turn, is why it is tempting for humans to commit the “violent injustices” involved in “forcing one part of humanity” to pay the “enormous ... price for the elimination of life’s burden from the shoulders of” the rest via slavery and servitude (119). Paradoxically, however, even though it is tempting for humans to try to rid themselves of animal laborans’ necessity,

the price for absolute freedom from necessity is, in a sense, life itself, or rather the substitution for vicarious life for real life.... [Because] the necessities of life are so closely bound together in the biological life cycle ... the perfect elimination of the pain and effort of labor would not only rob biological life of its most natural pleasures but deprive the specifically human life of its very liveliness and vitality.... For mortals, the “easy life of the gods” would be a lifeless life. (119–20)

Although this worldless aspect of us is such that being forced only to focus on it is not to live a full human life, it is also the case that a “philosophy of life that does not arrive ... at the affirmation of ‘eternal recurrence’ (ewige Wiederkehr) as the highest principle of all being, simply does not know what it is talking about” (97). Animal laborans—our animalistically embodied being—is an ineliminable, valuable aspect of earthly human life.

“Work,” in turn, refers to our ability as *homo faber* to create a world by fabricating artifacts that last through time, such as tools, roads, houses, and buildings. Although these artifacts can be used up—they are not eternally durable in the way substances of natural, biological things are—we do not consume them to stay alive. And because the worlds we create have durability, they have objectivity: “Against the subjectivity of men stands the objectivity of the man-made world rather than the sublime indifference of an untouched nature.... Without a world between men and nature, there is eternal [biological, physical] movement, but no objectivity” (Arendt 1958/1998: 137). And as nature (through labor and consumption) is “the condition of human life,” work is “the condition under which this specifically human life can be at home on earth” (135). Importantly too, both labor and work involve violence; we consume (via labor) or make durable artifacts (via work) by destroying something natural. The necessary violence involved in work is why, Arendt suggests, “human productivity was by definition bound to result in a Promethean revolt because it could erect a man-made world only after destroying part of God-created nature” (135).

Whereas labor is private or worldless, work is world-making and public via “the exchange market,” where *homo faber* can showcase and be praised for their great products (Arendt 1958/1998: 160). This does not mean that work is fully public, however, because *homo faber* requires isolation to produce artifacts: “Isolation from others is the necessary life condition of every mastership which consists in being alone with the ‘idea,’ the mental image of the thing to be” (161). And via work, *homo faber*, unlike animal laborans, endures beyond death by means of the durability of its products, including works of art. In fact, Arendt thinks that “their outstanding permanence ... [makes] ... works of art ... the most intensely worldly of all tangible things; their durability is almost untouched by the corroding effect of natural processes, since they are not subject to the use of living creatures, a use which ... can only

destroy them” (167). Inspired by religious or mythological stories, great art reveals “this thing-world ... spectacularly as the non-mortal home for mortal beings ... [W]orldly stability ... [becomes] transparent in the permanence of art, so that ... something immortal achieved by mortal hands, has become tangibly present, to shine and to be seen, to sound and to be heard, to speak and to be read” (168).

The source of art, Arendt continues, is “the human capacity for thought” and “art works ... are thought things” (1958/1998: 168). Moreover, art does not merely transform; it transfigures material objects through thought before reifying and materializing them through making tangible things, “such as books, paintings, sculptures, and compositions” (168). The price for this reification and materialization “is life itself: it is always the ‘dead letter’ in which the ‘living spirit’ must survive, a deadness from which it can be rescued only when the dead letter comes again into contact with a life willing to resurrect it, although this resurrection of the dead shares with all living things that it, too, will die again” (169). Moreover, though thought is the source of art, Arendt maintains differences between art, science, and philosophy:

Thought and cognition are not the same. Thought, the source of art works, is manifest without transformation or transfiguration in all great philosophy, whereas the chief manifestation of the cognitive processes, by which we acquire and store up knowledge, is the sciences. Cognition always pursues a definite aim.... Thought ... has neither an end nor an aim outside itself, and it does not even produce results. (170)¹⁷

Great philosophy simply manifests thought without transformation, science uses our cognitive powers to acquire and store knowledge, while art transforms and transfigures thought—and in this way makes human life on planet Earth an incredible home in the fullest sense. Importantly too, the language of modern science differs from common language, which is one reason why a scientist does not (as such) have the required language or knowledge to do politics (action) well. Common language is that through which action can be done, which requires that we use technology and science to further our purposes (rather than the other way around). Moreover, “thought ... is ... possible ... and actual ... whenever men live under the conditions of political freedom ... [and u]nfortunately ... no other human capacity is so vulnerable” (324). Free thought is, in other words, a great achievement for a society because it is both tremendously vulnerable and only possible under conditions of political freedom. Indeed, in her “Some Questions of Moral Philosophy,” Arendt argues that people who abandon their own project of being morally responsible persons—of living life with “integrity”—are unable to produce great works of art because, regardless of how artistically gifted they are, they are no longer capable of “thoughtfulness” (thought and remembrance) (1965–66/2003: 97).¹⁸ As we will see in sections 2.1 and 3 below, these ideas on art, science, and philosophy are tremendously useful as we try to understand political evil.

Through “action” we create the inherently “public part of the world,” the polis or that public space where free thought can exist; it “is the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose” (Arendt 1958/1998: 198). While labor pushes us into the human world out of “necessity” and work pushes us there for “utility,” it is our freedom—that each of us comes

into the world with the innate capacity to begin “something new on our own initiative” and where the “I” that comes into the world is actually not just “the beginning of something but of somebody”—that pushes us into the human world through speech and action (177). Through action and deeds, humans

show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world, while their physical identities appear without any activity of their own in the unique shape of the body and sound of the voice. This disclosure of “who” in contradistinction to “what” somebody is—[their] qualities, gifts, talents, and shortcomings, which [they] may display or hide—is implicit in everything somebody says and does. It can be hidden only in complete silence and perfect passivity, but its disclosure can almost never be achieved as a willful purpose, as though one possessed and could dispose of this “who” in the same manner he has and can dispose of qualities. On the contrary, it is more than likely that the “who,” which appears so clearly and unmistakably to others, remains hidden from the person himself, like the *daimon* in Greek religion which accompanies each [hu]man [being] throughout [their] life, always looking over ... [their] shoulder from behind and thus visible only to those ... [they] encounter. (179–80)

We each have a way of being spontaneous, of going about things, a way that is much more obvious to others than to ourselves. Also, with each human being there is an absolute new beginning. In fact, new human life (“natality”) has “the closest connection” to action (9), because it is in it that “the faculty of action is ontologically rooted” (247). And because each human being is different from every other—we live “as a distinct and unique being among equals” (178)—humankind is inherently characterized by “plurality” (175). Importantly too, it is here, in natality and plurality, Arendt thinks, that hope for a better future lies. Relatedly, she thinks that because action is “the infinite improbability which occurs regularly,” it is “the one miracle-working faculty of man ... [as was proposed by] Jesus of Nazareth, whose insights into this faculty can be compared in their originality and unprecedentedness with Socrates’s insights into the possibility of thought contribution” (247). Indeed, she thinks that this is why Jesus of Nazareth “likened the power to forgive to the more general power of performing miracles, putting both on the same level and within the reach of man” (247). Forgiveness can reach the roots and help us heal after we have done wrong.

Insofar as people live together in this public way—as free and equal—they become powerful: “Human power corresponds to the condition of plurality” (Arendt 1958/1998: 201).¹⁹ Hence, in contrast to “strength,” which is “the natural quality of an individual seen in isolation, power springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse” (200). “Power,” consequently exists “only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities” (200). Relatedly, and importantly,

the only alternative to power is not strength—which is helpless against power—but force, which indeed one [hu]man [being] alone can exert against ... [their] fellow ... [people] and of which one of a few can possess a monopoly by acquiring the means of violence. But while violence can destroy power, it can never become a substitute for it. From this results the by no means infrequent political combination of force and powerlessness.... [T]yranny, and the time-honored fear of this form of government is not exclusively inspired by its cruelty ... but by the impotence and futility to which it condemns the rulers as well as the ruled.... Tyranny prevents the development of power, not only in a particular segment of the public realm but in its entirety. (202)

Consequently too, Arendt proposes, the beginning of the end of “political communities is loss of power” (200).

Before we move on, notice also how Kant’s analysis of despotism and republic is compatible with this analysis. A tyranny is a despotic rule that has replaced power (free self-governance) with law-governed force backed up with the threat of violence, whereas a republic is a condition of power in which the people rule themselves through laws suited for free and equal persons. The main difference between the two is that Arendt does not propose a priori principles of innate, private, or public right as constitutive of “power” (the republic) and thus, in this regard, has a different theory of the highest political good than Kant. I regard this feature of Kant’s theory as a strength that should be incorporated into a new Karendtian theory of political evil. If we do, then we can distinguish between “power” simpliciter and “rightful power” or “rightful authority,” where we let the latter refer to power that is grounded on a priori principles of freedom.

To illustrate this, notice Patrick Riley’s (1982) claim that Hannah Arendt’s reading of Kant takes insufficient account of Kant’s fundamental claim that “true politics can [not] ... take a step without having already paid homage to morals” (PP 8: 380, cf. 355). It follows from the above that I do not agree with this; I think Arendt does take this into account, even though, as we see below, Arendt argues—and Kant and I agree—that what Kant calls depraved or barbaric political evil and Arendt calls totalitarian evil does not pay homage to morals; instead, it self-deceptively uses morals to disguise its destruction. Indeed, in my view, we can get this argument regarding the importance of Kant’s a priori account of right into view if we pay attention to Arendt’s (formidable) original preface to *Origins*. She argues:

Antisemitism (not merely the hatred of Jews), imperialism (not merely conquest), totalitarianism (not merely dictatorship)—one after the other, one more brutally than the other—have demonstrated that human dignity needs a new guarantee which can be found only in a new political principle, in a new law on earth, whose validity this time must comprehend the whole of humanity while its power must remain strictly limited, rooted in and controlled by newly defined territorial entities. (1951/1985: ix)

My suggestion is that Kant’s theory of a priori right contains the argument she is looking for here. The new political principle to be contained in the law on earth is the right to freedom and the new laws of freedom are, correspondingly, the laws positing innate, private, and public right. And Kant agrees with Arendt, the Doctrine of Right shows, that these laws must have domestic, international, and cosmopolitan instantiations to them. I return to these topics in section 3 below.

Turning back to Arendt, she argues that in order to create a sustainable home that partakes in an ongoing and evolving history of the plurality of people living together in societies on planet Earth, labor, work, and action must be integrated in the right way—and this is what good politics does:

If the *animal laborans* needs the help of *homo faber* to ease ... [their] labor and remove ... [their] pain, and if mortals need the help of *homo faber* in ... [their] highest capacity, that is, the help of the artist, of poets and the historiographers, of monument-builders or writers, because without them the only product of their activity, the story they enact and tell, would not survive at all. In order to be what the world is always meant to be, a home for ... [human beings] during their life on earth, the

human artifice must be a place fit for action and speech, for activities not only entirely useless for the necessities of life but of an entirely different nature from the manifold activities of fabrication by which the world itself and all things in it are produced. (1958/1998: 173–74)

This brings us to the question of why are we (still) not better at politics? Or as Arendt says this, there is an “irritating incompatibility between the actual power of modern ... [people] ... (greater than ever before, great to the point where ... [they] might challenge the very existence of ... [their] own universe) and the impotence of modern ... [people] to live in, and understand the sense of, a world which their own strength had established” (1951/1985: viii). One reason is already given by the above. Both animal laborans and homo faber are inherently unpolitical; animal laborans identify life itself as the meaning of life, while homo faber identifies the created world as what gives life meaning. In this way, both activities are drawn “to denounce action and speech as idleness, idle busybodyness and idle talk, and generally will judge public activities in terms of their usefulness to supposedly higher ends—to make the world more useful and more beautiful in the case of homo faber, to make life easier and longer in the case of the animal laborans” (208).

Another reason, Arendt suggests, is the mind-blowing discrepancy between modern scientific advances and our inability to understand, let alone govern, the world we live in. To illustrate this, consider how social media and AI today are matched by vastly increased mental health problems and impotent politics. Moreover, it seems clear that around the world, instead of mobilizing increasingly sophisticated legal and political systems to deal with the radical technological and environmental challenges facing us, we are liable to turn to political movements whose visions can be described somewhere along the spectrum of fascist or despotic tyrannies (as understood above), which are often detached from reality in their descriptions of the world and include a hateful, barbaric, and violent targeting of minorities (also as understood above).

A third general reason we are not better at politics is, Arendt proposes, that the political sphere is messy and unruly given the plurality of the human condition, which makes it very tempting “for [humans] of action no less than for [humans] of thought, to find a substitute for action in the hope that the realm of human affairs may escape the haphazardness and moral irresponsibility inherent in the plurality of agents... [Yet] the attempt to do away with this plurality is always tantamount to the abolition of the public realm itself” (1958/1998: 220). With each human being, there is a new beginning, and as each enters the public space through action and speech, the public space will change a little. Moreover, we do not know the consequences of our actions, and, so, the public space is continuously evolving and profoundly and irreducibly muddled; although perfection is to be strived for also here, perfection is never reached. It is thus tempting for those drawn to it as public leaders as well as those who analyze it theoretically (as spectators) to try to impose an order on it that, in effect, will limit people’s influence and engagement with it. It is tempting, in other words, to strive to establish a dictatorship of various kinds rather than a free society, as was, for example, Plato’s suggestion with his “philosopher kings.”

Let us for a moment accept all of the above, including that modernity is not the first to denounce the idle uselessness of action and speech in particular and of politics in general. Even if we do, however, it still remains important to explore why Arendt proposes that although modernity revolutionized by developing theories of human dignity and human rights to freedom as well as scientific theories that took humankind to the moon, it is also characterized by a subterranean undercurrent that became expressed in new levels of human evil, horrific dehumanization, and the destruction of the conditions of healthy biological life on Earth (1951/1985: ix).

There are several reasons, Arendt thinks, why modernity was unable to live up to its promise of “Enlightenment”: “Western” philosophy’s low opinion of politics and earthly life; the fall of the Roman Empire; the influence and devaluing of our earthly home by Christianity; the successes of modern science; the Industrial Revolution’s and capitalism’s reshuffling of property and power relations; public bureaucracy’s replacement of politicians. In his landmark introduction to Arendt’s Lectures, Ronald Beiner relatedly says that, for Arendt, “the real danger in contemporary societies is that the bureaucratic, technocratic, and depoliticized structures of modern life encourage indifference and increasingly render men less discriminating, less capable of critical thinking, and less inclined to assume responsibility” (1982/1989: 113). Internally related, though devastatingly worse, modernity saw the rise of totalitarian regimes. All of these facts also yielded reasons for Arendt to turn to Kant’s 3rd Critique—with its focus on judgment and earthly life—for philosophical resources to envision a better future, though as we will see in the next section, they also give us good reasons to think that Kant’s 3rd Critique and the related ideas and proposed solutions found in Arendt’s political writings are insufficient for a complete Karendtian theory of political evil.

A major problem in the traditional European philosophical theories of human nature—traceable back to ancient Greece—is, Arendt argues, that they rank the various kinds of human activity in a hierarchy. This is evident in Aristotle’s account of humans’ unique rational soul as reigning supreme over the sensitive soul (which all animals have), which itself is superior to the nutritive soul (which plants also have). Even Arendt’s distinctions could (wrongly) be read this way, with the *vita contemplativa* above *vita activa* and action above work and work above labor. Such theorizing diminishes the value and importance of our earthly home, and it often has involved expressing contempt for politicians relative to the ideal, contemplative life of the philosopher (scholar) as well as, of course, a lowering of the life- and world-sustaining activities of labor and work (Arendt 1958/1998: 195). Arendt argues—and I agree—that this worry does not directly apply to Kant—as he explicitly rejects the idea that the life of the philosopher is higher than any other kind of life—but we find a variant of this worry in the Kantian tradition too. For example, it is not uncommon to find Kantians who argue something along analogous lines: we should rank personality above humanity above animality in the sense that only personality (autonomy) matters while the rest—what we want to do, our social sense of self, and our animality (heteronomy)—is viewed as at best instrumentally valuable means to realize morality (and at worst as temptations that hinder us from becoming virtuous). Indeed, some even go so far as to argue that we should strive to live as infinite, disembodied, perfectly rational angel-like beings (or holy in this sense of the word). If we argue in this way, then, it

seems fair to say, Arendt's argument applies to us too; we end up with a dangerous and radically alienating view of the highest good, whether personal and political—and we end up very far away from the ideas of the Kantian conception of personal and political homes above.

Turning back to Arendt, she furthermore argues that although the Greek philosophers did rank public legal and political leadership above other earthly activities, they were fundamentally “against politics”; it was “as though they had said that if [human beings] only renounce their capacity for action, with its futility, boundlessness, and uncertainty of outcome, there could be a remedy for the frailty of human affairs” (1958/1998: 195). The extreme solution to this is, again, seen in Plato's philosopher kings, who would be in charge of the public sphere in virtue of their supreme philosophical knowledge of the good—or dictatorship. The ancient exception to this trend, Arendt thinks, is the “the political genius of Rome,” where the emphasis was on “legislation and foundation” (195). Arendt proposes that instead of ranking these different types of activities hierarchically, they should be seen as integrated spheres of activity enabling different types of value. Moreover, she argues that the tendency of philosophers to rank *vita contemplativa* over *vita activa* and then to rank the activities internal to *vita activa* is one reason why we are currently so unable to distinguish the value of the different activities. Philosophers tend to stay focused on *vita contemplativa* and deal with all activities of *vita activa* as fundamentally unimportant philosophically and, so, easily grouped together as, for example, heteronomy (Kantian philosophy) or lower pleasures (Millian philosophy).

Another set of reasons modernity became so troubled, Arendt proposes, is the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the institution of Christianity. Indeed, Arendt argues:

The eventual victory of the concern with eternity over all kinds of aspirations toward immortality is not due to philosophic thought. The fall of the Roman Empire plainly demonstrated that no work of moral hands can be immortal, and it was accompanied by the rise of the Christian gospel of an everlasting individual life to its position as the exclusive religion of Western [hu]mankind. Both together made any striving for an earthly immortality futile and unnecessary. (1958/1998: 21)

The Roman Empire demonstrated once and for all that everything humans build will eventually crumble, while powerful institutions of Christianity devalued our earthly home by presenting earthly life as justifiable because it functioned as the necessary precursor to the only real, “otherworldly” thing (34), namely “salvation of the soul” or eternal life in heaven after earthly life was (finally!) over (55; see also 313–15). While philosophers thus regard the activities internal to *vita activa* as only instrumentally valuable in that they enable *vita contemplativa* (philosophy), Christianity viewed these activities as only instrumentally valuable because they enabled the influence of God's will on planet Earth and, thereby, salvation of the individual's immaterial soul (291–93). In addition, because modern science appeared much better at coming up with plausible theories for everything in spacetime—and made amazing strides—and because modern science was not in need of (philosophical or religious) handmaidens, not only religion but also philosophy lost appeal, and philosophical contemplation was “altogether eliminated” (291). Instead of being vibrant,

philosophy came to play second or even third fiddle.... The philosophers became either epistemologists, worrying about an all-over theory of science which the scientists did not need, or they became, indeed, what Hegel wanted them to be, the organs of the *Zeitgeist*, the mouthpieces in which the general mood of the time was expressed with conceptual clarity.... In both instances ... they tried to understand and come to terms with what happened without them. (294)

Therefore, instead of all of us—through action (politics)—ensuring that our new machines serve the needs of human life on planet Earth, the scientists became increasingly in charge of all human activities—and this is plainly not their expertise.

Arendt also argues that modernity’s capitalist reorganization of our working lives—where workers were becoming handmaidens to machines (1958/1998: 147) and workmanship only goes into the construction of the machines (125)—and the enormously increased production of consumer goods entailed that we became increasingly alienated from our laboring and world-creating selves, and our sense of self thus became overly social and consumerist. The distinctions between activities associated with labor, work, action, and contemplation correspondingly became eroded; all the activities have become transformed into a perverted ideal of labor aimed at “abundance,” while everything beyond this ideal is related to as (artistic) “playfulness” or “hobbies” (127–28). In modernity, we all have jobs that we perform in exchange for money, and we treat all objects as if they are consumer goods. From working the land to being a nurse, a professor, an artist, or even a queen, a prime minister, or a president, everyone is just doing a job for which they get paid. Together with the growing dominance of modern bureaucracies (public administrations), this means that people no longer view action as a means for governing themselves through politics; being a politician is also just another job. Indeed, a major temptation for us is to incessantly strive for more wealth rather than stay focused on creating a healthy, good earthly home for us: “[If] the spare time of the animal laborans is ... [not] spent in anything but consumption ... the more time left to him, the greedier and more craving ... [their] appetites” (132; see also 134).

Although our laboring selves thus have an important and grounding value for us, the modern version of “labor” is profoundly unhealthy—in the sense of alienating—for us and it cannot be constitutive of a better future:

The rather uncomfortable truth of the matter is that the triumph the modern world has achieved over necessity is due to the emancipation of labor, that is, to the fact that the *animal laborans* was permitted to occupy the public realm; and yet, as long as the *animal laborans* remains in possession of it, there can be no true public realm, but only private activities displayed in the open. The outcome is ... mass culture, and its deep-rooted trouble is a universal unhappiness.... The universal demand for happiness and the widespread unhappiness in our society ... are among the most persuasive signs that we have begun to live in a labor society which lacks enough laboring to keep it contented. For only the *animal laborans* ... and neither the craftsman nor the ... [person] of action, has ever demanded to be “happy” or thought that mortal ... [human beings] could be happy. (Arendt 1958/1998: 134)

Labor’s ideal is to be happy; it is concerned with creating neither a world that can serve as a home for humans nor a healthy political sphere with a rich history. In other words, none of the three spheres (nor contemplation) can give us the ideal, it is only by integrating the three (or four, if we count contemplation) that we can create conditions of flourishing human life

on planet Earth. Relatedly, Arendt proposes that our challenge regarding the machines we are creating is to make sure that they are constitutive of precisely a world that can “help the human life process. The question therefore is not so much whether we are the masters or the slaves of our machines, but whether machines still serve the world and its things, or if, on the contrary, they and the automatic motion of their processes have begun to rule and even destroy world and things” (Arendt 1958/1998: 151). Arendt, furthermore, emphasizes that “the enormous changes of the industrial revolution ... and the ... atomic revolution ... will remain changes of the world, and not changes in the basic condition of human life on earth” (121). The means through which this integration of different spheres of activities is achieved is action or politics. Action is the means through which we govern ourselves together through a public sphere. And this is, as mentioned above, a main reason why Arendt turns to Kant’s 3rd Critique in her lectures on Kant’s political philosophy. The 3rd Critique is concerned exactly with life on planet Earth: with teleology (parts and wholes), aesthetics (beauty), and the imagination (synthesizing ability). Our faculty of the imagination is central to accounting for how good action (politics) involves being able to combine the parts (the right, the good, and the beautiful) into a whole of a free political society with a view to judging how we are doing and how we can move things forward in good ways. After all, Arendt argues in Lectures, “imagination, the ability to make present what is absent, transforms the objects of the objective senses into ‘sensed’ objects, as though they were objects of inner sense. This happens by reflecting not on an object but on its representation. The represented object now arouses one’s pleasure or displeasure, not direct perception of the object” (1989, 65).

2.1 TOTALITARIANISM

Central to Arendt’s analysis of modernity, we saw above, is an emphasis on how industrialization, technology, and capitalism involved both a tremendous reshuffling of people and power structures in (early) modern Europe as well as a crumbling ability to engage in action or politics. Uprooted from their feudal societies—in which life’s possibilities very much depended on what family a person was born into—people found modern society to be both more open and more uncertain as movement for work and opportunities increased tremendously. In addition, modernity saw the replacement of the aristocracy with the bourgeoisie (the new capitalist owners of the means of production), and with time, increasingly successful labor movements led to a radical rethinking of individual rights, political power, and citizenship—a re-envisioning that was carried out through the concepts of individual freedom and equality in this period. The increased mobility of people—for jobs and life opportunities—also came with increasingly distinctive and firm national borders and the institution of national citizenship. And it is in this context that historically marginalized social groups became more visible. Jewish people received special scrutiny in this regard through public and scholarly discussions of the so-called Jewish question—that is, to what extent Jewish people should have rights as full citizens. And as Jewish men started to gain entrance to public spheres—through voting rights as well as admittance to public civil service and higher education at universities—and were no longer vocationally limited to the banking sector, Arendt continues, the “old Jew hatred”

(counterintuitively) was increasingly transformed into “antisemitism.” She proposes that “old Jew hatred” was the mobilization of Jewish people’s religious-ethnic beliefs and practices to exclude them from political participation and influence in various periods and places, whereas antisemitism was the construal of the Jewish person as such as a problem, a development she saw as matched by some powerful Jewish people’s interpretations of the “chosen people” as referring to a mysterious Jewish “essence.”²⁰ Importantly too, Arendt argues that for Jewish individuals who were able to break through and enter new spaces, a “Pariah-Parvenue” logic arose: they could choose to act as a compliant Parvenue token of their social group *or* to live as a resisting outcast Pariah who works to increase the entrance of other members of their own group, as well as those of other oppressed groups and individuals, into the same spaces.²¹

Central to the emergence of totalitarianism in twentieth-century Europe, Arendt then proposes, is the fact that too many people were unable to ground themselves in the new, modern world, including, as mentioned, because they were unable to create viable public political spaces. Instead, they experienced life as isolated, lonely, and atomized—and Arendt refers to these individuals (regardless of their background, history, or social class) as the “masses.” If we combine the concepts of Kant and Arendt here, we can say that the modern individual—as a member of the masses—experienced himself as living in neither a peaceful anarchy, nor a flourishing republic, nor a forceful despotic regime, but instead in a numbing, violent, barbaric world that they felt powerless to change into something viable. This numbing and feeling of powerlessness, in turn, came from modern bureaucracies, science and technology, the legal system, and capitalist enterprises, all of which were removed from the necessary, healthy influence of politics and action. The masses, in turn, form the core of the totalitarian movement because they were precisely “mass organizations of atomized, isolated individuals” (Arendt 1951/1985: 323). The organization of the masses into such a movement happens, then, when a totalitarian leader succeeds in mobilizing the masses into political action. The totalitarian leader does this by making the masses feel like they are affectionately cared for as members of a powerful group, that they exist, and that they matter by virtue of being part of an incredible, world historical political movement—even though, of course, nothing could be further from the truth.

How do totalitarian leaders do this? Importantly, Arendt argues, they do it by identifying completely with the totalitarian movement they are channeling. There is, in other words, no Adolph—no “I”—in Hitler; all there is, is “Hitler-the-great-leader-of-the-great-Nazi-movement,” which corresponds to the lack of a personal “I” for each of the individuals comprising the masses; there is only the “us” that each and all of them identify fully with. Arendt writes:

The totalitarian leader is nothing more or less than the functionary of the masses he leads; he is not a power-hungry individual imposing a tyrannical and arbitrary will upon ... his subjects.... [H]e depends just as much on the “will” of the masses he embodies as the masses depend on him. Without him they would lack external representation and remain an amorphous horde; without the masses the leader is a nonentity. Hitler, who was fully aware of this interdependence, expressed it once in a speech addressed to the SA: “all you are, you are through me; all that I am, I am through you alone”.... Hitler ... was of the opinion that even “thinking ... [exists] only by virtue of giving or executing orders,” and thereby eliminated even theoretically the distinction between thinking and acting on the one hand, and between rulers and the ruled on the other. (1951/1985: 325–26)

The totalitarian leader, in other words, channels and transforms the existential frustrations of the masses into a political movement, which centrally requires both the leaders and the masses to have no aim beyond the movement itself. Consequently, Arendt argues, all “the manipulators of this system believe in their own superfluousness as much as in that of all others, and the totalitarian murderers are all the more dangerous because they do not care if they themselves are alive or dead, if they ever lived or never were born” (459). The totalitarian leader channels the loneliness of the masses into a sense of belonging, transforms the sense of powerlessness and isolation into a violent political movement of destruction. If we describe the creation of this belonging within a movement using Kant’s concepts, totalitarianism zooms in on the social sense of self and makes this the foundation for everything else and uses this to destroy humanity. Hence, in Nazi-Germany, the masses felt as if their animality, humanity, and personality were deeply cared for, but this was an illusion: their animalism (reflexively self-conscious drives for self-preservation, for sex, and for affectionate community) was transformed into destructive socio-political desires (for preserving, for procreating, and for affectionately loving the Aryan race); the social sense of self and freedom were madly identified with the Nazi movement; and moral personality was perverted into an identification with the will of Hitler, who, in turn, identified with the totalitarian movement. In this way, totalitarian movements also remove the distinction between the rulers and the ruled. Totalitarianism is, in other words, what we with Kant can call full-blown political depravity and barbarism. It is self- and other destruction under the guise of the good (e.g., the Aryan race) and morality (virtue and justice); it is pure violence aimed destroying flourishing humanity within the parameters of laws of freedom. It is to become a nobody through the self-deceived guise of—or feeling and thinking involved in—becoming amazing, and it involves absolute abandonment of freedom, understood as flourishing self-governance (whether personal or political).

To understand this theory of totalitarianism, it is also useful to pay attention to how Arendt distinguishes it from fascism.²² Fascist leaders want tyranny, understood as a tremendous political force that makes the leaders, their families, friends, and allies the wealth-accumulating, center of a stable, growing empire—and at the very center of this political force stands the fascist leader, who demands to be considered a demigod to be adored and obeyed absolutely. To illustrate, consider Franco’s fascist Spain. To establish his fascist system, Franco needed to work with the royal family, leading groups in the military, public administration, the Catholic church, business, and industry with the real promise that as he succeeded to replace the still fragile, emerging Spanish liberal democracy with his fascist regime, his supporters would remain or become part of the new elite. In Kant’s conceptual scheme, Franco’s Spain was despotism: law, violence, and no freedom.

Totalitarian movements, in contrast, are worse in that they have no aims of stability after the revolution is over; their revolution is envisioned as forever ongoing or a perpetual system of destructive violence. Hitler’s and Stalin’s

idea of domination was something that no state and no mere apparatus of violence can ever achieve, but only a movement that is constantly kept in motion: namely, the permanent domination of each single individual in each and every sphere of life. The seizure of power through the means of violence is never an end in itself but only the means to an end, and the seizure of power in any given country

is only a welcome transitory stage but never the end of the movement... [A] political goal that would constitute the end of the movement simply does not exist. (Arendt 1951/1985: 326, see also 311)

Totalitarian movements, then, are not grounded on or constituted by any existing, shared political experiences, political end goals, or political interests that unite the participants in realizing a good political society. What unifies them is, instead, what the leader, in responding and channeling the masses, commands at any time. In this sense, “totalitarianism is never content to rule by external means, namely, through the state and a machinery of violence; thanks to its peculiar ideology and the role assigned to it in this apparatus of coercion, totalitarianism has discovered a means of dominating and terrorizing human beings from within. In this sense, it eliminates the distance between the rulers and the ruled” (314). Because the distinction between the ruler and the ruled is eliminated, there are no private lives or thinking external to the stream of consciousness that holds the totalitarian movement together as a whole. Hence too, constitutive of a totalitarian movement is the attack and destruction of any public commitment to truthfulness and objective facts:

Before they seize power and establish a world according to their doctrines, totalitarian movements conjure up a lying world of consistency which is more adequate to the needs of the human mind than reality itself; in which, through sheer imagination, uprooted masses can feel at home and are spared the never-ending shocks which real life and real experiences deal to human beings and their expectations. (353)

This brings us back to the point above about how power requires truthful words to ground deeds aimed not at violence and destruction but at the difficult task of creating a political reality in which the people—as free and equal—govern themselves. Totalitarianism attacks this not just by attacking power and seeking to replace it with [physical] force (fascism/tyranny, or for Kant, despotism), but by attacking the connection between truthfulness, words, and deeds as such and thereby making it impossible for the political reality to be grounded on a reality external to itself and instead simply channeling destructive violence under the guise of morality and the good (for Kant, barbarism).

This last point relates to a core, unifying idea in Arendt’s analysis of totalitarianism, namely that it is a fundamental self- and other destructive flight away from human life with all its messiness, a journey no one who strives to live life to the fullest comes out of unscathed. Totalitarianism is to give in to the temptation to live as if life has simple truths, is easy, and does not involve constantly adjusting to the conditions of vulnerable earthly life, indeed, to linking the ability to be vulnerable in this way as a sign of strength and wisdom. Hence, instead of goals, facts, and relying on consistent reasoning and learning from day to day, repetition of the movement’s simple, grand unmoored narrative becomes crucial:

Modern masses ... do not believe in anything visible, in the reality of their own experience; they do not trust their eyes and ears but only their imaginations, which may be caught by anything that is at once universal and consistent in itself. What convinces masses are not facts, not even invented facts, but only the consistency of the system of which they are presumably part.... Repetition ... is important only because it convinces them of consistency in time. (Arendt 1951/1985: 351)

The repeated, simple narrative is, non-accidentally, grounded on a non-existing metaphysical fact, which in Hitler's Nazi case was (the Aryan) race, while for Stalin's Bolshevism, it was (the working) class, though "practically speaking ... it ... make[s] little difference whether totalitarian movements adopt the pattern of Nazism or Bolshevism, organize the masses in the name of race or class, pretend to follow the laws of life and nature or of dialectics and economics" (313). It is centrally important that these grand narratives are based on non-existing metaphysical facts, because otherwise there would be a possible source of correction as to how one is doing—a bringing back of the political project to the reality of earthly life—and this cannot be. One of the remarkable facts about these movements is correspondingly "the curious contradiction between the totalitarian movements' avowed cynical 'realism' and their conspicuous disdain of the whole texture of reality" (313).

Importantly too, on Arendt's analysis, Hitler's and Stalin's totalitarian movements on their own were unable to grasp political power; they needed the help of two other groups, namely the mob and the elite. The mob is "the underworld of the bourgeois class," that is, people who were relatively unsuccessful compared to their peers and thus resentful (Arendt 1951/1985: 337). Moreover, because the masses were not already powerful and also lacked political and institutional experience, the mob joined their movement on the mistaken assumption that the masses would help them become the new elite. Members of the mob could therefore be, for example, lawyers, engineers, or businessmen who used their influence to destroy the existing power structures in whatever way they could with an eye to becoming the new powerful elite. Hence, the mob pursues a fascist revolution whose "true goal [is] to seize power and establish the Fascist 'elite' as uncontested ruler over the country" (314). And in contrast to the masses, who rejected the values of the dominating groups, "the mob really believed that truth was whatever respectable society had hypocritically passed over, or covered up with corruption" (351). If we put this in Kant's terms, the mob were self-deceived in a patterned way (impurity) in that they thought they were the "true" elite of the country—whether they desired domination via brute force, access to material gains, social recognition, influence, and power, or all of the above.

Arendt also argues that the single unifying characteristic of the mob and the masses was "that both stand outside all social ramifications and normal political representation" (1951/1985: 314). In contrast, the existing elite (including the intellectual elite), in turn, not only failed, like the mob, to recognize the dangers of the totalitarian movement, but they also took "genuine delight" in how the mob attacked the establishment's hypocrisy and destroyed "respectability" (333). Finally, regarding all three groups, while the mob inherits "in a perverted form ... the standards and attitudes of the dominating class," the masses instead "reflect and somehow pervert the standards and attitudes towards public affairs of all classes" (314). The masses, therefore, had members from all classes who were unified in their deep contempt for all established society. One way to put this point is that while the mob felt slighted that they were not part of the ruling elite and members of the elite took delight in how the mob lay bare the hypocrisy of the elite in patterned ways (impurity and despotism), the masses had deep disdain for the institutions themselves and rationalized their desire for destruction in self-deceived, moralized language, such as love of the Aryan race or the working class (depravity

and barbarism). Institutions are difficult to develop, and even relatively good ones will typically have individuals who are better than the institutions themselves (which enables them to keep improving). The masses turned a generally felt deep frustration with existing institutions' dysfunctional, unfair, or unjust aspects into a violent desire to destroy them altogether in the name of the good.

None of the above is to deny that totalitarian leaders needed to appear to play the fascist game for a while; they did. Rather, the point is that the sympathetic segments of both the elite and the mob fundamentally misunderstood what the totalitarian movement was all about—they did not believe they were really going to do what they said they were going to do all along—and, so, once they had helped the totalitarian movement into power, they were genuinely surprised to be eliminated. This, however, is how it had to go, Arendt argues; after all, the

initiative ... [of] the mob strata of the population ... could only be a threat to the totalitarian domination of [hu]man [beings].... For the ruthless machines of domination and extermination, the masses ... provided much better material and were capable of even greater crimes than so-called professional criminals, provided only that these crimes were well organized and assumed the appearance of routine jobs. (1951/1985: 337)

The logic of a totalitarian movement is to go only in the direction where it becomes maximally dominant; there are, as mentioned, no external political goals or real, shared political interests that orient or moderate it. Hence, the expectation that there would be a new, stable elite replacing the old (aristocratic/bourgeoise in Nazi Germany or aristocratic/communist ones in Stalin's USSR) ones—let alone any loyalty to those who had helped along the way—was not only sheer fiction, but a type of fiction or self-deception fundamentally incompatible with the logic of totalitarian movements. Hence, as soon as a totalitarian movement obtained political control, the “whole group of sympathizers was shaken off... before the regimes proceeded toward their greatest crimes” (339).

Another characteristic of totalitarianism in power was that the real legal and political force was moved behind a “façade” of what appeared to be normal public institutions, namely to “the superefficient and super-competent services of the secret police” (Arendt 1951/1985: 420).²³ Importantly, the purpose of the secret police was “not to discover crimes, but to be on hand when the government decides to arrest a certain category of the population” (426). Correspondingly, the secret police “does not know better” than the totalitarian leader; it has simply become the leader's extremely efficient and competent “executioner” (426). Moreover, as mentioned above, the masses came from all social groups in society, and what unified them was a literal, diehard commitment to the meta-narrative of the totalitarian movement, a self-deceived meta-narrative that was fundamentally detached from reality. Hence, for such movements, knowledge, initiative, and indeed spontaneity itself are threats that must be eliminated:

Intellectual, spiritual, and artistic initiative is as dangerous to totalitarianism as the gangster initiative of the mob, and both are more dangerous than mere political opposition. The consistent persecution of every higher form of intellectual activity by the new mass leaders springs from more than their natural resentment against everything they cannot understand. Total domination does not allow for free initiative in any field of life, for any activity that is not entirely predictable. Totalitarianism in power invariably replaces all first-rate talents, regardless of their sympathies, with those crackpots and fools whose lack of intelligence and creativity is still the best guarantee of their loyalty. (339)

Indeed, instead of knowledge, initiative, and spontaneity, the striving of totalitarianism is “total domination ... abolishing freedom, even ... eliminating human spontaneity in general” (405). Hence, “wherever ... [totalitarianism] has ruled, it has begun to destroy the essence of [hu]man [being]” (viii).

All of this also meant that these totalitarian regimes were less materially forceful than they appeared to be because they were “completely indifferent to national interest and the well-being of ... [their] people”; for the same reason, however, they were both more efficient and lethally dangerous (419). Again, to use Kant’s concepts, totalitarianism is state organized barbarism incarnate.²⁴ Totalitarianism’s only “aim” is destruction of all spontaneity—it regards any exercise of free spontaneity as a threat to be crushed—and it necessarily trails or follows being and cannot create being. In Arendt’s language, totalitarianism (as extreme evil) is like a fungus—though, as noted above, I believe drawing an analogy to cancer is more accurate—in that it is parasitic on and inherently destructive of being; it exists only insofar as and in the sense that it destroys being. As Arendt writes in a letter to Gershom Scholem:

Evil is never “radical,” ... it is only extreme, and ... it possesses neither depth nor any demonic dimension. It can overgrow and lay waste the whole world precisely because it spreads like a fungus on the surface. It is “thought-defying ... because thought tries to reach some depth, to go to the roots, and the moment it concerns itself with evil, it is frustrated because there is nothing. That is its “banality.” Only the good has depth and can be radical. (1963/2007: 471)²⁵

Given the destructive, self-deceived pathologies constitutive of extreme evil, totalitarian revolutions do not envision the creation of a new type of stable society. Instead, the “final solution” of totalitarianism is the non-accidental creation of the concentration camp; it is the only permanent institutional element of the totalitarian regime. The concentration camp, Arendt furthermore argues, was “meant not only to exterminate people and degrade human beings, but also serve the ghastly experiment of eliminating, under scientifically controlled conditions, spontaneity itself as an expression of human behavior and of transforming the human personality into a mere thing, into something that even animals are not” (1951/1985: 438). The only feature that changes as the totalitarian regime evolves is which groups are sent there, which groups become the new state enemies. Arendt correspondingly proposes that “if it is true that in the final stages of totalitarianism an absolute evil appears (absolute because it can no longer be deduced from humanly comprehensible motives), it is also true that without it we might never have known the truly radical [extreme]²⁶ nature of Evil” (viii-ix). Totalitarian evil is absolute in that we cannot understand it from motives that are comprehensible to us; it involves total domination in a “world ... of the living dead” (441). It is a type of evil that cannot be explained in terms of the bad, yet ever so human motives we are liable have—such as selfishness, brute self-interest, revenge, pettiness, envy, etc.—because from these points of view, establishing state-organized concentration camps for some groups of the population simply does not make any sense. These points of view are points of view of the living: “Life in the concentration camps ... [with all its] horror can never be fully embraced by the imagination for the very reason that it stands outside of life and death. It can never be fully reported for the very reason that the survivor returns to the world of the living, which makes it impossible for him to believe fully in his own past experiences” (444).

Arendt sometimes illustrates some of these points by appealing to how economically inefficient these camps were (as labor camps) or from the strategic point of warfare. For example, she argues:

The incredibility of the horrors is closely bound up with their [the concentration camps'] economic uselessness. The Nazis carried this uselessness to the point of open anti-utility when in the midst of the war, despite the shortage of building material and rolling stock, they set up enormous, costly extermination factories and transported millions of people back and forth... In the eyes of a strictly utilitarian world the obvious contradiction between these acts and military expedience gave the whole enterprise an air of mad unreality.... Concentration camps can very aptly be divided into three types corresponding to three basic Western conceptions of a life after death: Hades, Purgatory, and Hell. To Hades correspond those relatively mild forms, once popular even in nontotalitarian countries, for getting undesirable elements of all sorts—refugees, stateless persons, the asocial and the unemployed—out of the way; as DP [Displaced Persons] camps, which are nothing other than camps for persons who have become superfluous and bothersome, they have survived the war. Purgatory is represented by the Soviet Union's labor camps, where neglect is combined with chaotic forced labor. Hell in the most literal sense was embodied by those types of camp perfected by the Nazis, in which the whole of life was thoroughly and systematically organized with a view to the greatest possible torment. (1951/1985: 445)

Notice that if we combine these categories with Kant's three degrees of evil and we only look to the self-deceived versions of them—which we must do with totalitarianism given its foundational detachment from reality²⁷—then according to the mad logic of (1) Hades, the prisoners in DP camps have done an alleged, great wrong (“frailty”), such as finding themselves in a place where they are not wanted because they have not produced a “useful” skill,—and, so, they are “punished”; or (2) Purgatory, the prisoners are deemed as going about their life in the wrong way (“impurity”)—such as by having the “wrong” political or religious views—and, so, they must be forced to do something useful with themselves or “cured” through forced labor; or (3) Hell, the prisoners have done the greatest wrong, namely of existing at all as who they are because so existing is perverted (“depravity”). Versions of the first two—Hades and Purgatory—can happen also in despotic states since they are effective ways to, for example, rid oneself of political opponents or become politically popular by appealing to and flattering the prejudices of powerful oppressors. This is also why these types of incarcerations survived the war, Arendt suggests. The third—Hell—can only exist in and is a permanent feature of a “totalitarian” state.

Despite its many strengths, I don't think this analysis is entirely correct. To start, I think we find strains or pockets of Hell²⁸—of what we with Kant calls “barbarism” (pure violence aimed at numbing and destroying spontaneity) in all historical societies insofar as the violence is linked to who people are. To give just a few examples, I believe strains of Hell are needed to capture European colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade (including the historically related institutions of apartheid in South Africa and Black slavery in the antebellum South), and I believe pockets of Hell are needed to capture the internment schooling of Indigenous children in twentieth-century North America and Northern Europe; some of the historical and current institutionalized discrimination against religious, ethnic, and LGBTQIA+ life around the world; and, increasingly, the incarceration of refugees and immigrants and their children, Black mass incarceration in the US, and any state that effectively subjects a (religious, ethnic,

etc.) group to terrorizing violence that they cannot escape. What makes it totalitarian, in my view, is the way in which the state not only is involved—either by facilitating or permitting it—but makes this destructive totalizing, numbing use of force constitutive of so-called public legal and political institutions themselves. For Arendt, because the mad logic of totalitarianism stipulates that the good can only exist by virtue of a continuous, never-ending fight against state enemies, concentration camps are permanent features of totalitarian regimes; the only thing that changes is which groups are identified as belonging in which camp. In my view, insofar as we have any strains or pockets of barbaric destruction within our legal and political institutional framework and cultures, they have a similar function in the public psyche, which is why when we attempt to rid our societies of them, the response from some is sometimes extreme violence. For some, being able to hold onto their own sense of self—what it is, say, to be Norwegian or American—without at the same time lowering others. Hence, their response is rage if this (perverted) sense of identity is resisted or upset.²⁹

This Karendtian reimagining of this position is, not coincidentally, also consistent with Arendt's argument that "totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political, social, or economic misery in a manner worthy of [hu]man [beings]" (1951/1985: 459). In other words, Arendt thinks that the dangers of totalitarianism were not eradicated with the fall of Hitler's and Stalin's regimes; they are dangers that persist—from modernity onward—insofar as we are unable to create powerful political societies through which grounded people govern themselves. In contrast, I contend that strains or pockets of barbarism preceded totalitarianism, that there were more of them than Arendt was able to see, and that many of them are still with us and new ones are appearing, including in countries constitutionally grounded on what Kant calls a republic: principles protecting each person's right to freedom—with corresponding public cultures officially committed to each person's dignity. Indeed, as Efrain Lazos has suggested to me (in conversation), it is entirely possible that around the world, the more apt description is that many states' basic legal and political institutions are best described as despotic or barbaric with strains or pockets of peaceful anarchical or rightful republic life within them.

Let me put some of these last points also from a different angle: Arendt identifies some ways in which totalitarian movements engage in the perpetual destruction of humanity—humanity's very essence—and maintains that these movements non-accidentally start with social groups that are already politically vulnerable because they are in the process of or have only recently gained rights. In light of this, it is important to pay attention to the analyses in *Origins* and elsewhere that reveal some of Arendt's own limitations and prejudices. To start, although Arendt fully acknowledges that Nazi concentration camps targeted disabled people, members of the LBGTQIA+ community, the Roma people, and sex workers, she does not analyze the brutalization of these groups with the same level of detail, depth, and knowledge characteristic of her study of the horror she knew first-personally, namely Nazi Germany's antisemitism. Moreover, as mentioned above, in addition to totalitarianism and antisemitism, *Origins* also critiques modern imperialism. Arendt proposes that modern imperialism, in contrast to premodern empires, was not fundamentally informed by the logic of empire building—the

Roman Empire, for instance, continuously grew by incorporating conquered peoples into its empire—but rather by a logic of world domination. Although I lack the relevant historical knowledge to comment on many historical aspects of her analysis, as indicated above, Arendt’s analysis of Black slavery and anti-Black racism in the United States—both in *Origins* and later work—as a continuation of premodern slavery is plainly implausible.³⁰

The kinds of experiments in human suffering aimed at Jews, Africans, LGBTQIA+ people, sex workers, disabled people, Roma people, Indigenous peoples, and others—where the suffering is viewed as fundamentally divorced from any comprehensible human motive—reached new levels of evil with modernity. Moreover—and importantly—they were undertaken in the name of both left (Stalin) and right (Hitler) political ideologies. Even if Kant could not have imagined the level of horror involved in Hitler’s Nazi concentration camps and was (like Arendt) unable to judge, for example, Indigenous peoples, the transatlantic slave trade, women, and LGBTQIA+ peoples minimally correctly, ideas we find in his philosophy helps us see the ways in which his incorrect judgments about many dehumanized groups were not accidental given our propensity to evil: as individuals (in historical families) and as social groups (in historical cultures), we always start in a historical setting where the good and the bad is mixed together, and the worse we lose our way in life—as individuals or as social groups—the more we will use moralizing language (and, perhaps, for academics, theories), as this is the only way we can bring ourselves to stand by or participate in such horrific things. Moreover, Kant’s theory of the predisposition to good can help us see why when we lose our way, we utilize our social self together with a mad, moralized story of our own selves and a fundamentally numbing or self-destructive engagement with our own vulnerable animality.

In my view, it is also plausible to argue that in pre-modernity, barbaric strains or pockets of suffering often were legally permitted rather than actively organized by the state and often involved viewing animality as lower and then forcing some groups of individuals to identify with their animality. In contrast, from modernity onward, it is plausible to argue that the state more often took active part in barbaric (whether totalizing or not) dehumanization of vulnerable social groups through its “public” legal and political institutions and in ways that can plausibly only be seen as going to war against our animality. Hence, rather than simply being excluded from active participation and subjected to wrongful violence without legal consequence, vulnerable groups in modernity were, for example, sent to mental hospitals (e.g., LGBTQIA+ people and women who enjoyed sex), incarcerated at extreme levels (e.g., African Americans), or forced to attend boarding schools where they were subjected to totalizing violence in the name of science, the law, virtue, or cultivated being (Indigenous peoples).³¹ Perhaps the types of violence used could be viewed in terms of degrees: from Hades to Purgatory to Hell depending on the level of resistance from those subjected to the terror. In addition, if we draw on Arendt’s analysis of art’s constitutive role in making life on planet Earth into a (personal and political) home, we can get into view how the aesthetic judgment—from being fundamentally unsuited to our needs to what we might with Kant call the horrifyingly sublime—was constitutive of making the suffering so horrendous.

Even if Arendt's inability to judge all aspects of her world well are not confined to our difficult histories, it seems fair to say that recent and contemporary political movements as well as recent legislation and political decisions around the world make one of Arendt's concluding comments in her original preface to *Origins* feel eerily relevant:

We can no longer afford to take that which was good in the past and simply call it our heritage, to discard the bad and simply think of it as a dead load which by itself time will busy in oblivion. The subterranean stream of Western history has finally come to the surface and usurped the dignity of our tradition. This is the reality in which we live. And this is why all efforts to escape the grimness of the present into nostalgia for a still intact past, or into the anticipated oblivion of a better future, are vain. (1951/1985: ix)

This point also clearly applies to philosophy: we cannot afford to choose only the elements in, say, Kant and Arendt that we like and consider the rest a dead load (simple mistakes we can simply set aside or ignore). If we do, we will not take on the challenge of understanding political evil as it exists in the past or in the present—or who we are and what we have inherited. Arendt's argument about the dangers of nostalgia, as we see in the quote above, are critical, because not only is going back not an option but doing so is also undesirable since what was in the past in, for example, the United States was a deep imbrication of the very good (freedom, human rights, scientific discoveries) and the very bad (brutal versions of the “isms”³²).

3. TOWARD A KARENDTIAN THEORY OF POLITICAL EVIL

The deep compatibility between Kant and Arendt is, we have seen, not accidental since she was greatly influenced by him. Notice too, however, that there are at least three important nuances in Kant's account that we can use to add to Arendt's account here—and thereby take a first step toward a new Karendtian account. First, we can say with Kant that in my solitude, I'm not only two-in-one but also three-in-one: I'm deliberating with myself in this moral way (two-in-one or holding my ways up against my conscience), but I also need to be present with myself (self-reflexively) in that I feel my own natural and moral vital forces harmoniously (three-in-one).³³ In other words, our challenge is not only to think and remember better but also to learn to feel and value our animalistic, social nature as in harmony with our personality—as this is required to strive to unify our natural and moral vital forces.³⁴ Notice too that this three-in-one move is one way to theorize how we can and should ground ourselves post modernity that I think Arendt's two-in-one does not quite capture (as it is still too reflective). To put the point differently, the three-in-one is one way to capture how we can be whole and grounded whether we let the “eternally recurring” aspects of us—the activity that is constitutive of maintaining the human species as an earthly species—be captured by what Kant calls our “animality” and Arendt our “animal laborans.” As Arendt argues in *The Human Condition*, even though it is tempting for humans to try to rid themselves of animal laborans' necessity, the price for doing so—choosing absolute freedom—is life itself (1958/1998: 119–20) Animal laborans—our animalistically embodied being—is an ineliminable, valuable aspect of earthly human life. Changing from two-in-one to three-in-one as our ideal to strive toward is thus a way to

think of the highest good—of morality setting the framework within which we pursue our conceptions of the good—in a full, grounded, or “rooted” way.

Second, although we can do damage to our predispositions to animality and sociality (and, so, do damage to our ability to enjoy solitude), insofar as we are capable of moral responsibility at all—that is to say, insofar as we are not medically insane or in need of moral (legal and ethical) guardians—our capacity (even if not ability) to do so remains intact. In Kant’s language, although we can use the predispositions to animality and humanity “inappropriately,” we cannot eradicate either, and the predisposition to personality is such that “nothing evil can be grafted” onto it (MM 6: 28). From another angle, we can say that our “animality” involves a fundamental, reflexively self-conscious orientation to affectionate, basic community, while “humanity” involves a fundamental, reflectively self-conscious orientation to set and pursue ends of our own and one’s social sense of self. Hence, to set ends of one’s own involves learning to master what Kant calls one’s “unsocial sociality” (IUH 8: 20): to enjoy being at one (social) with others as well as having projects of one’s own or to be at peace with oneself without others present (unsocial). How much one likes being in one’s own company (solitude) obviously varies, but learning to master this aspect of ourselves is not only important to be able to live one’s own life and not constantly compare oneself to others but also so that one can morally own the life one lives (as having “personality” commands). Notice too that insofar as I can be morally responsible at all—and, so, do not need a moral guardian—there is a path internal to me by means of which I can realize what I have done and move forward in a better way. In this sense, contrary to what Arendt says, there is also always a person there to hold morally accountable from the perspective of virtue and of right (even if, of course, this person may so far have failed to realize themselves as a somebody).³⁵

Third, if we draw on Kant’s account of the imagination and judgement as well as abstract conceptual, associative, teleological, and aesthetic thought, we have more tools with which to capture how someone who has done very bad things and “gotten away with it” is not flourishing. The reason is not only that they proceed with a broken account of reality—and so, cannot, be two-in-one in solitude, as Arendt explains so well—but also that they cannot feel themselves as internally harmonious (be three-in-one). It is impossible for such people to feel truly at peace with themselves—they cannot feel in harmony with their natural and vital forces—and they will remain liable to uncontrolled outbreaks of anger and frustration (beyond what is appropriate given the situations at hand). This is, on this approach, not only because their account of reality (by means of abstract conceptual thought) is internally incoherent—to borrow from Lucy Allais (2016)—but also because their associative, teleological, and aesthetic thought are never under abstract conceptual control. On this approach, this is also why, as Allais (2021) argues, living in societies with grave injustices involves “fractured selves”; in these situations, none of us can experience ourselves as emotionally and morally whole.

Before delving into Arendt on evil in more detail, also note that Kant’s account of the predisposition to good is useful to understand evil because it gives us a schema of ways in which we can and do wrong: we can do it for reasons ultimately grounded in animality (say, lust) or humanity (say, envy or narrow self-interest), and we can do it in ways that are triggered by or

that employ the six different kinds of thought: I associate someone's action with something hurtful that once happened to me (associative thought); someone's description does not fit into the moral story I tell myself about who I am or what I'm all about (abstract conceptual thought); I can lower someone's standing by describing their ways of being as "unnatural" or "animalistic" (teleological thought); someone can hurt me by describing my actions as lacking elegance or as disgusting (aesthetic thought); my (personal or political) judgment can be immature or twisted because I have grown up in a dysfunctional family or culture; and I can imagine new ways of harming or hurting someone by applying oppressive principles in new, intersectional ways (judgment). (Indeed, because our imagination, as Arendt repeatedly emphasizes in *Lectures*, is a capacity to represent what is absent and to synthesize, and it involves aesthetic pleasure, combining these principles of wrongdoing in new ways can not only feel pleasant, but it is ineradicably tempting for us given our nature.³⁶) In addition, if we combine this schema for wrongdoing with Kant's account of the propensity to evil, we get another layer of complexity: we can do wrong once (say something sexist in anger, for example), as a pattern (often say sexist things to boost my own sense of self), or as a way of going about life (misogyny; engage in projects and life with a central aim being at "putting women in their rightful subordinate, submissive place").

In addition, the more morally lost we get, the more we will rationalize what we do by telling (increasingly self-deceived and fantastic) stories that justify the bad things we do either by describing them as "not really that bad, after all or really" or in the name of "the good," "morality," "goodness," "God," "science," "my country," and so forth. In light of this, it is also not surprising that Kant considers truthfulness the first virtue—indeed, he thinks of it as "a sacred command of reason prescribing unconditionally" (SRL 8: 427; cf. MM 6: 420, 429), and though he does not think lying should be a legal wrong as such (to lie as such is not a crime), it is a legal wrong when acting as a public authority, and we are legally responsible for the bad consequences of our private lies. With these ideas of Kant's at hand, let us now turn to Arendt's ideas on political evil one last time.³⁷

Arendt starts *Origins* by quoting Karl Jaspers as saying "Neither succumb to the past, nor to the future. It depends on being fully present" (1951/1985: vii). One problem with Arendt, then, was that she was unable to be fully present with anti-Black racism in the US, just as she was not able to be fully present with other isms, such as sexism or heterosexism, either. Later in the *Origins*, she argues:

The conviction that everything that happens on earth must be comprehensible to [hu]man [beings] can lead to interpreting history by commonplaces. Comprehension does not mean denying the outrageous, deducing the unprecedented from precedents, or explaining phenomena by such analogies and generalities that the impact of reality and the shock of experience are no longer felt. It means, rather, examining and bearing consciously the burden which our century has placed on us—neither denying its existence nor submitting meekly to its weight. Comprehension, in short, means the unpremeditated, attentive facing up to, and resisting of, reality—whatever it may be. (viii)

Hence, Arendt's life demonstrates a remarkable ability to comprehend and resist, but this ability was also significantly limited to the reality she understood first-personally. Given that this inability to write well on topics one does not know first-personally is characteristic

not only of Arendt, but, in my view, maybe all thinkers, it is possible that we are only able to fully comprehend and resist if we actually know—directly or indirectly through loved ones—the oppressed lives in question first-personally (directly or indirectly), while intuitively we are liable to think that knowing one type of oppression is to know them all. Indeed, as Kant’s life illustrated, rather than learning to feel and manage the oppressive forces coming at oneself, it can even be tempting not to understand and resist by not owning first-personally (three-in-one) the complexity of who one is.³⁸

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by tying this last discussion to Arendt’s important discussions of Kant’s concept of “*sensus communis*” as well as the differences between the perspectives of the spectator and the actor in *Lectures*. Arendt draws inspiration from Kant’s “*sensus communis*,” and she emphasizes that in contrast to most so-called Western philosophers, Kant did not, as mentioned above, rank lives in a hierarchy and he also argued that a good philosopher must train their imagination to go visiting (in their minds) the people they live with in the world; doing so is necessary to develop an “enlarged mentality” (1989: 43), understood as a deep understanding of the lives of the many with whom philosophers live and theorize. Enlarged mentality is not to be confused with empathy or with passively accepting others’ views of reality (which Arendt follows Kant in considering mere prejudice); rather, it is to understand their point of view even if one also disagrees or engages them more critically.³⁹ In addition, Arendt proposes that the theorist is a spectator (someone who judges from afar) and who they judge are the actors (those who find themselves in the midst of the events)—and these perspectives are, importantly, not the same. In *Lectures*, Arendt uses Kant’s discussion of the French Revolution to illustrate this point: Kant argues that we find ourselves hoping the revolutionaries win in their efforts to establish a republic, but it is also the case that we do not thereby morally justify partaking in violent, revolutionary movements. That is to say, when we are observing, we can see a specific historical event as a possible move toward historical progress (as spectators), but even though this is the case, we haven’t thereby justified violently overthrowing the existing sovereign authority (as actors).

Let me illustrate this by using Kant’s infamous example of lying to the murderer at the door. In imagining this scene, most people find themselves hoping the person who opens the door lies about the presence of the murderer’s intended victim (whom the murderer intends to materially and formally wrong) in the house, thereby saving them. This is the perspective of the spectator. This, however, does not mean that we have thereby morally justified lying from the point of view of the actor. Kant argues that from this point of view, although we are not wronging the murderer materially when we lie, we are doing wrong in general, or formally, because we are performing an action (lying) whose maxim cannot be universalized. Hence, in this way too, because we are animalistic, social beings who live with others, we can find ourselves in situations from which there is no morally good way out—and that is what we have to own or learn to live with, including, as Arendt emphasizes, when we are on our own, in solitude (two-in-one).⁴⁰ Notice too that in order to check the plausibility of our theory, we

need an enlarged mind on this topic—we need to listen to those who have these experiences and make sure that our theories are such that the ones we rightly admire among them would agree with our analysis; we need to proceed from the bottom up and learn to judge well. This, in my view, is what Kant and Arendt did not do with regard to many phenomena that historically track much oppression and for which they are rightly criticized today; indeed, their own theories caution them against what they did in these instances. They did not listen to those who knew those lives before they theorized and, so, their theorizing often channeled the oppression and their own prejudices instead of resisting it. Moreover, in Kant’s case with regard to heterosexism and maybe also to some extent in Arendt’s case with regard to sexism, they did not learn to be both two- and three-in-one, namely, to make sure that they learned to feel how oppression affected them and to feel how they were themselves oppressed or oppressive in these regards. If we are only two-in-one, then we are only reflectively, and not reflexively, engaging with ourselves—and in our alienated and alienating modern lives, learning to feel also reflexively is constitutive of (re-)grounding ourselves on planet Earth; three-in-one is necessary. To put this point differently, if we combine Arendt’s account here with Kant’s account of the importance of both our natural and our moral vital forces—as ways we must ensure that we are grounded in ourselves harmoniously—and with our different kinds of thought, we are obtaining resources with which to capture not only how to heal (as individuals and as cultures, with the difficult histories we have) but also for checking ourselves as we move forward.⁴¹

Abstract: This paper shows ways to develop, integrate, and transform Kant’s and Arendt’s theories on political evil into a unified Kantian theory. Given the deep influence Kant had on Arendt’s thinking, the deep philosophical compatibility between their projects is not surprising. But the results of drawing on the resources left by both is exciting and groundbreaking with regard to both political evil in general and the challenges of modernity and totalitarianism in particular.

Keywords: The highest (political) good; the predisposition to good in human nature; the propensity to evil; despotism, anarchy, and barbarism; power vs. strength vs. force vs. violence; tyranny vs. totalitarianism; the mob vs. the elite vs. the totalitarian movement (masses and totalitarian leader); modernity; Pariah vs. Parvenue.

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² Thanks to Lucy Allais, Sven Arntzen, Zach Biondi, Jochen Bojanowski, Katerina Deligiorgi, Nick Dunn, Tamara Fakhoury, Sarah Holtman, Efrain Lazos, Olga Lenczewska, William Levine, Marita Rainsborough, Jordan Pascoe, Lara Scaglia, Susanne Sreedhar, Ashwini Vasanthakumar, James Warren, Shelley Weinberg, Elizabeth Widmer, Howard Williams, and the participants at AMINTAPHIL at Loyola University (September 2023), at the Murray Lecture at the University of Saskatchewan (November 2023), at the annual meeting of the Norwegian Society for Legal Philosophy at the University of Oslo (December 2023), and at the “What’s Left of Kant” conference at the University of Chicago (March 2024). This is not to say that these thinkers necessarily agree with what I am arguing for in this paper; we each publish in our own names. But it is to say that I am very grateful that they are who they are, including being extraordinarily generous.

³ Like most philosophers of her time, Arendt didn’t work on Kant’s “The Doctrine of Right,” which is why she—like many other Kant-inspired scholars, like John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas—tried to develop one on Kant’s behalf. She did so by drawing on his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. For more on this, see Varden (in progress).

⁴ Throughout this text, all of Kant’s works are referenced by means of the standard Prussian Academy Pagination as well as the following abbreviations: “A” for *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*; “GW” for *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*; “MM” for *The Metaphysics of Morals*; “R” for *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, “CPrR” for *Critique of Practical Reason*, and TP is “On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice.” “R” appears in Kant (1996b); “A” in Kant (2007); while the rest appear in Kant (1996a).

⁵ Since other Kantians or I have already published a good deal on the Kant ideas covered in this section, the exposition here is brief. Also, since Arendt’s ideas are not commonly known among Kantians and Kantians are the main audience for this paper, I spend more time introducing her ideas in the next sections. Also, more generally, this paper is written in the spirit of Kant’s *Sapere Aude* and Arendt’s “thinking without a bannister”) in that, like them, my aim is not to refute all other possible interpretations of the texts in question but to show what I believe can do philosophically with the ideas found there. This leaves open both the possibility of and encouragement to develop other interpretations that can do even more with the philosophical resources found in their texts.

⁶ For more on Kant on the vital forces, see, for example, CPR 5: 162 and MM 6: 400. For more on how I interpret this aspect of Kant, see Varden (2020a: 51–55). I believe Arendt, like many others, does not appreciate the importance of the natural vital force for Kant; that the natural vital force is an internal resource of ours that we need to attend to live well. Hence, Arendt says that for Kant, “Every inclination turns outward, it leans out of the self in the direction of whatever may affect me from the outside world. . . . Under no circumstances can my inclination be determined by my intercourse with myself; if I bring myself into play, if I reflect upon myself, I lose, as it were, the object of my inclination” (Arendt 1965–66/2003: 81) I agree with Arendt that my discussions with myself and my reflections are not, for Kant, the direct way to realize the non-moral aspects of myself. However, this does not mean that I do not have a duty to attend to them; it only means that I have an indirect duty to attend to—to feel—whether my realization of my non-moralizable aspects (my animality and my social sense of self) is harmonious and strong, how my ways of living affect my natural vital force. In my view, this is internally related to how Kant thinks that we have indirect, not direct, duties also with regard to other animals. For more on this last point, see Varden (2020b).

⁷ Arendt was unaware of how Kant distinguishes between right (what she calls “legality”) and virtue (which she calls “morality”). Though she notices in her *Lectures* that Kant knows his argument about virtue cannot be used to solve core problem of legal and political philosophy (Arendt 1989: 17), she thinks Kant “never quite distinguished between legality and morality” (Arendt 1965–66/2003: 108). Relatedly, although common in her time, her reading of Kant’s “Doctrine of Right” was quite poor. Finally, to the best of my knowledge, Arendt never worked on Kant’s account of human nature—both the predisposition to good and the propensity to evil—as we find it in his *Religion*. For more on all these topics, see Varden (2020a; in progress).

⁸ There is disagreement about whether we should translate “Gewalt” as “force,” “power,” or “violence.” For more on this, see Varden (2022a). For the purposes of this paper, note that I translate “Gewalt” as violence, which fits well with Arendt’s ideas of violence vs. power vs. strength vs. force in the next section—and with Kant’s claim that there is no “Gewalt” in a state of anarchy.

⁹ Arendt interprets Kant on evil as being self-destructive. For example, in her *Lectures*, she notes that for Kant, “evil by its very nature is self-destructive,” quoting Kant in “Theory and Practice” where he says that “evil . . . destroys itself” (Arendt 1989: 51). I agree that evil is necessarily self-destructive as it does not establish self-sustaining reality, but I think it is more accurate to say that it is self- and other destructive. To draw on the analogy to cancer again: cancer does destroy itself but in the process it also necessarily destroys (an) other living being(s).

¹⁰ This general idea is tremendously influential in political theory. Hobbes’s *Leviathan* represents an absolutely brilliant legal positivist instantiation of such a theory, and we also find it in the works of liberal thinkers. For example, we find this theory in the ideas of “modus vivendi” in both Anna J. Cooper (1892/1998: 128) and, much later, John Rawls (1993/2005: 147). Both Cooper and Rawls view this idea of modus vivendi as central to how the Enlightenment—understood as legal, political, ethical, and cultural principles of freedom becoming understood as fundamental to moral interactions—could happen in Europe. They both argue that, first, Europe had a long period of devastating wars that no one country was able to win. Cooper adds to this that if she is right in her judgment that the USA is a country of hope with regard to the project of freedom, then it is because internal to it, no one group can dominate all the others (Cooper 1892/1998: 127–30). And, of course, all three—Kant, Cooper, and Rawls—share the conviction that once freedom takes hold by being valued—whether for individuals, cultures, or states—the project of freedom becomes easier too. As indicated above, I agree that Kant has this argument, but that he adds an ideal argument that shows that even perfectly virtuous, happy people will want to establish public legal and political institutions since they are the means through which we can interact consistent with each person’s innate right to freedom and dignity.

¹¹ See Barbara Herman (2022) for more on our imperfect judicial duties to build and improve our inherited legal-political institutions.

¹² I return to lying toward the end of this paper.

¹³ I have changed the translation to make it gender neutral in a way that the original German is (“Denn Gewissen ist die dem Menschen in jedem Fall eines Gesetzes seine Pflicht zum Lossprechen oder Verurteilen vorhaltende praktische Vernunft”).

¹⁴ See also Arendt (1978: 179–93) for more on the idea of the “two-in-one.” In recent years, evidence has come to light that Eichmann’s antisemitism was much deeper than he claimed during his trial. This fact does not, I believe, affect the core of the argument in this paper beyond saying that maybe some of Eichmann’s terrifying ramblings were intentionally incoherent (in an effort to deceive). As we see below, in my view and in contrast to Arendt, I think that there is always a person there to hold accountable as long as the person is not simply incapable of moral responsibility at all and would need a legal guardian and mental health care.

¹⁵ For the full interview, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVSRJC4KAiE>. See also Arendt (1964/2003: 22–25). Beyond what I engage below, notice that Arendt’s proposal that an ineliminable source of moral and emotional danger for academics is their liability to make up a theory when there is something they don’t understand. To illustrate this, consider how instead of facing his racism, sexism, and heterosexism, for example, Kant came up with theories that “justified” his prejudices instead.

¹⁶ “Western” history, just like “Western” philosophy, is a complicated phrase. For example, in any true sense, the Western philosophical canon is not yet properly representative of “Western” philosophical thought.

¹⁷ For an excellent opening for further reflection on Arendt and Kant on thought and cognition—as well as on Arendt’s *The Human Condition* and *The Life of the Mind*—see Jonas (1977). Jonas also interestingly concludes his reflections by suggesting, contra Arendt, that published works of philosophy turn the “pure activity [of thinking] into a worldly deed” (43).

¹⁸ For a very different take on Arendt on this topic and her relationship to Kant, see Georg Kateb (1999). Notice also that follows from what I say above (and what is to come) that I disagree with Kateb’s take on both Kant’s and Arendt’s takes on political judgment. I find it implausible to attribute to Arendt political judgment as merely aesthetic judgement that subordinates morality to aesthetics or to Kant’s account political judgment as simply applications of abstract, universal truths (134).

¹⁹ This is not the only place where Arendt develops the account of power vs. force vs. violence vs. strength; she starts this discussion in *Origins* (1951/1985) and another useful resource is her *On Violence* (1970).

²⁰ Arendt’s full analysis of this shift—from the Dreyfus affair, the labor movements’ antisemitism, national politics in various European countries, the first Jewish British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli, academia, the banking system, and the Rothschild family—is beyond both the scope of this paper and my skillset as a political philosopher.

²¹ Arendt develops and uses this theory several times over the course of her career. For her discussion in *Origins*, see Arendt (1951/1985: 56–67); for other discussions of it, see, for example, Arendt (1943/2007 and 1944/2007).

²² For more on the differences between “normal” dictatorships and totalitarian ones, see Arendt (1964/2003: 32–35, 42–44).

²³ Arendt (1964/2003) also emphasizes that the “civil servants without whose expert knowledge the Hitler regime ... would have been able to survive” simply replace one set of social rules and mores for another” (34); they were “the members of *respectable society ... who were the first to yield [and they] merely exchanged one system of values against another*” (44).

²⁴ In Varden (2021b), I argue that we can develop Kant’s and Arendt’s thoughts on barbarism and totalitarianism by distinguishing between “active” and “passive” barbarism and between “pure” and “totalitarian” barbarism.

²⁵ Contra Arendt, I believe that this view is also Kant’s own. For more on this, see the interchange between Janelle DeWitt and me in Dewitt (2021) and Varden (2021c). It also follows from my reading above that although I find Birmingham’s “Holes of Oblivion” a terrific resource for thinking about and with Arendt on evil, I disagree with Birmingham’s interpretation of Kant when she says that “Arendt’s use of the metaphor of fungus indicates that she disagrees with Kant’s argument that radical evil has a *root* in human nature” (Birmingham 2003: 101). As indicated above, I believe Kant’s view is like Arendt’s here. Only the good has a “predisposition” for Kant; evil is a “propensity” and, so, fundamentally involves choice (see Varden 2020a and 2021c).

²⁶ As seen above, Arendt later abandons this “radical” way of describing evil in favor of describing it as “extreme,” because evil is parasitic on and cannot create being.

²⁷ This is consistent with saying that some might also be delusional. However, insofar as this is the explanation of why they do what they do, then, on the approach defended here, they are no longer culpable and have a right to legal guardians and mental health care.

²⁸ I’m very grateful to Lucy Allais and Cynthia Oliver for my coming up with the idea of drawing this distinction between “strains” and “pockets” of Hell (or barbarism).

²⁹ For more on this, see Varden (2022a, 2021b).

³⁰ See Kathryn Sophia Belle (2014) for more on this. See also the wonderful interview with Richard J. Bernstein on Hannah Arendt by Ulrich Baer in Baer’s *Think about It* Series: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOXhztwQiPI>.

³¹ For more on these topics, see Varden (2021a, 2021b, 2022b, 2022c).

³² I borrow this phrase of the isms from Anna J. Cooper (1892/1998: 131).

³³ I believe this approach is more consistent not only with Arendt’s own account of *vita activa*—the active life—but also with her account of how modernity has alienated or ungrounded us. I return to both *vita activa* and modernity below.

³⁴ In Varden (2022b), I agree with Arendt that “Western” philosophy has typically failed to value our animality, but that in modernity, we went to war on our animality. I also return to this point briefly below. In addition, as with regard to our animality, I believe that it makes most sense to understand the way we have a moral duty to attend to our natural and vital forces as indirect; our (natural and moral) vital forces are not under our direct control. Kant thinks “one knows not how” the vital forces come about (CPrR 5: 162). Rather, what we can control is to attend to them and to strive to provide conditions under which they are strengthened rather than weakened.

³⁵ This Kantian theory can therefore explain why Eichmann was responsible for his murders, which Arendt (in)famously cannot. I also believe that if one has done something as horrific as what Eichmann had done, fully owning one’s actions typically comes with the temptation to suicide—which is one reason why many who have done terrible wrongs, out of fear, refuse to go

there. For more on both these topics, see Varden (2014). For a fascinating analysis that opens up for a productive conversation with both this paper and Varden (2014), see Carmen L. Dege (2022).

³⁶ In my view—see Varden (2024)—this idea helps us explain why intersectional oppression (oppression that involves several oppressive forces) is more than the sum of each oppressive force.

³⁷ I read Kant as arguing that the increase in degree—from frailty to impurity to depravity—is fundamentally driven by the extent to which we are not able to let morality set the framework within which we pursue happiness. Moreover, because we strive to be a coherent whole—so that we can make sense of ourselves—the worse we lose our way, the more self-deceived we become.

³⁸ For more on this, see Varden (2020a).

³⁹ For more on this, see Varden (in progress).

⁴⁰ For more on how I understand this and Kant on lying, see Varden (2010, 2020a, 2021d).

⁴¹ For more on this, see Varden (2024).

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LA BELLEZA DE LA NATURALEZA EN PERSPECTIVA TELEOLÓGICA

THE BEAUTY OF NATURE IN A TELEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Desde el comienzo y a lo largo de la *Crítica de la facultad de juzgar*, Kant plantea la reflexión sobre la belleza de la naturaleza en proyección hacia la teleología, es decir que, piensa a la belleza en referencia al concepto de naturaleza como sistema de fines. Lo indica en la expresión: la naturaleza como arte o técnica de la naturaleza. En la *Crítica de la facultad de juzgar* estética encontramos el desarrollo de las condiciones formales del vínculo entre belleza y naturaleza, pero, allí aún no es posible mostrar cómo se integra la belleza al todo de la naturaleza. Esa integración se propone por la vía de la finalidad externa, de largo recorrido en la tradición de la filosofía, planteada en concomitancia con el desarrollo crítico de la idea de finalidad, una vez que se completa la exposición de la finalidad interna.

En varias oportunidades a lo largo de la *Crítica de la facultad de Juzgar* estética, Kant ha puesto a la belleza en perspectiva teleológica, en particular, cuando inquiere la razón por la cual, la naturaleza ha prodigado tanta belleza.² Allison cita el §30: “cómo explicar por qué la naturaleza ha derramado belleza tan generosamente en todas partes, incluso en los fondos oceánicos, donde sólo raramente alcanza el ojo humano (sólo para él, en efecto, es esta belleza teleológica)”.³ Düsing,⁴ señala hacia el §67: “Podemos considerar como un favor que la naturaleza nos ha hecho, al haber esparcido con tanta abundancia belleza y encanto”.⁵ Ambos textos se vinculan con el carácter no intencional de la naturaleza en la producción de formas bellas y anuncian el carácter teleológico de la belleza por su referencia al ser humano. A pesar de que la naturaleza como distribuidora de belleza (§30) pareciera dar razón de un realismo de los fines, la atención puesta por Kant en los fenómenos de cristalización (§58) mostró que no es un propósito atribuible a ella, el producir formas conformes a fin para nuestra facultad de juzgar, sino que la belleza es la recepción de algo que se manifiesta, cuando retiramos la mirada del mero mecanismo de la naturaleza y atendemos al efecto de una representación en el ánimo, es decir cuando la acogemos desde el punto de vista de un sentimiento de reflexión, el sentimiento de placer y displacer.

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En este trabajo nos concentraremos en la relación entre la reflexión estética y la reflexión teleológica a partir de la inquietud de Kant por la inclusión de la belleza en la idea de naturaleza como sistema de fines, tal como la expresa en el §67: “La belleza de la naturaleza, es decir, su concordancia con el libre juego de nuestras capacidades cognoscitivas en la aprehensión y enjuiciamiento de sus fenómenos, también puede considerarse de este modo como finalidad objetiva de la naturaleza en su conjunto.”

Admitir tal posibilidad requiere atender, al menos, a dos cuestiones: 1. La posibilidad del abordaje teleológico de los juicios estéticos. Esto nos llevará a determinar en qué medida el enjuiciamiento estético de los objetos de la naturaleza puede ser considerado, también, desde la facultad de juzgar teleológica. Aquí mostraremos a la reflexión estética como propedéutica de la reflexión teleológica; 2. La belleza en la relación externa entre los seres de la naturaleza. Abordaremos la ubicación belleza en el conjunto total de la naturaleza como sistema teleológico en el cual el ser humano es un miembro. Pondremos a la belleza en referencia a la idea de interés, fin último y fin final de la naturaleza.

1. POSIBILIDAD DEL ABORDAJE TELEOLÓGICO DEL ENJUICIAMIENTO ESTÉTICO

Vamos a partir de considerar dos textos que, puestos en relación, pueden hacer visible el interés de Kant por la consideración de la belleza de la naturaleza en proyección hacia la teleología de la naturaleza. Por lo tanto, delimitamos con esto nuestro campo de reflexión puesto que, no nos ocuparemos de la Crítica de la facultad de juzgar estética, como crítica de los principios de una teoría del arte ni tampoco de la diferencia entre la belleza natural y el arte bello, que encierra, por cierto, múltiples y fecundas discusiones, sino de las consecuencias sistemáticas de la reflexión sobre la belleza en vistas a una teleología de la naturaleza, es decir al concepto de naturaleza como sistema de fines.

El primero de los textos está ubicado en la introducción que acompaña a la obra:

Así podemos considerar la *belleza de la naturaleza como exhibición* del concepto de la finalidad formal (simplemente subjetiva) y a los *fines de la naturaleza* como la exhibición del concepto de una finalidad real (objetiva), a la primera de las cuales la enjuiciamos por medio del gusto (estéticamente, mediante el sentimiento de placer), mientras que a la segunda la enjuiciamos por medio del entendimiento y de la razón (lógicamente, según conceptos).⁶

El segundo texto se ubica en el § 23, en el primer párrafo de la Analítica de lo sublime. Allí, Kant señala, que la belleza independiente de la naturaleza nos revela un proceder de la misma concordante con el de nuestras facultades de representación. Esta cita, que en principio puede parecer enigmática por su localización en el texto, conecta con el planteo que Kant ha realizado en las introducciones y que no había retomado hasta ese momento. En ellas ha presentado y efectuado la deducción del principio trascendental de finalidad, como principio de unidad de la naturaleza en sus leyes empíricas. Ahora, en este §23 lo hace, en relación directa con la reflexión estética, en cuanto ella constituye la exposición del concepto de finalidad formal subjetiva:

La belleza independiente (*selbstständig*) de la naturaleza nos descubre una técnica de la naturaleza, que la hace representable como un sistema según leyes, cuyo principio no puede ser encontrado en toda nuestra facultad del entendimiento, a saber, el de una finalidad con respecto al uso de la facultad de juzgar en relación a los fenómenos, de modo tal que estos deben ser enjuiciados como pertenecientes no sólo a la naturaleza en su mecanismo carente de fin, sino también en analogía con el arte. Ciertamente esta analogía no amplía realmente nuestro conocimiento de los objetos de la naturaleza pero sí nuestro concepto de ella, pues conduce desde el mero mecanismo al concepto de la misma como arte; [cuestión] que invita a profundas investigaciones sobre la posibilidad de una forma semejante.⁷

Este conocido texto integra la argumentación con la que Kant se propone diferenciar el juicio estético de lo bello del juicio estético de lo sublime. El rasgo central de esa diferencia es la conformidad a fin del objeto de la naturaleza con las facultades del sujeto. El juicio acerca de lo bello se fundamenta en la percepción sentida de esa conformidad, en cambio en el segundo, la naturaleza se presenta de forma inadecuada para un fin o caótica, entonces la facultad de juzgar atribuye la conformidad a fin, al uso que la imaginación puede hacer de una representación. A su vez, esta distinción encierra una nota clave para situar la proyección teleológica de la belleza, ya que no hay objetos de la naturaleza que puedan ser considerados sublimes⁸, pero si los hay bellos. En el juicio acerca de lo bello la exterioridad de la naturaleza es un dato necesario que hace del juego de las facultades una actividad, aunque inmanente, no solo autorreferencial.⁹ La representación estética de la finalidad afirma la “conformidad de este objeto con las facultades de conocimiento que están en juego en la facultad de juzgar reflexionante y que expresan una finalidad subjetiva y formal del objeto”.¹⁰ Por eso, este objeto, es decir el objeto estimado como bello, puede significar una señal de la conformidad a fin de la naturaleza para con las facultades del sujeto y en este sentido constituir una suerte de confirmación de la presuposición sostenida en el principio transcendental de finalidad.

Si ponemos en perspectiva este texto del §23 con el planteo de las dos introducciones vemos que la búsqueda de Kant está dirigida a alcanzar un concepto de naturaleza -la naturaleza como arte- que incorpore toda la multiplicidad y diversidad empírica de los objetos de la naturaleza que se subsumen bajo leyes empíricas; leyes que en cuanto tales tienen carácter de necesidad, pero para el entendimiento resultan contingentes. El principio transcendental de finalidad le permite al entendimiento orientarse en esa multiplicidad empírica para avanzar en el conocimiento de la naturaleza, allí donde él mismo no es legislador a priori, porque él solamente puede poner las condiciones de cognoscibilidad de una naturaleza en general.¹¹ Dicho de otra manera, no es posible extraer del entendimiento aquello que nos debe mostrar la experiencia. Aunque los principios transcendentales del entendimiento brindan el único marco posible de la experiencia, la especificidad de objetos de la naturaleza y, consecuentemente, de sus leyes no son derivables de aquel. La idea de contingencia está vinculada a esa insuficiencia del entendimiento en la determinación del contenido empírico.¹² De aquí que el principio transcendental de finalidad sea denominado por Kant, en la primera Introducción como el “principio de la legalidad de lo contingente”, o tal como ha sido interpretado también, es el principio de la “apriorización de lo a posteriori”.¹³

Por esto mismo, la primera referencia al sentimiento de placer y displacer en las introducciones está vinculada a la confirmación que nos ofrece la naturaleza toda vez que

puede ser ordenada según las formas lógicas que nosotros tenemos para pensarla y eso es objeto de admiración y placer. La investigación científica presupone este principio porque avanza en su investigación con la confianza de que encontrará orden y no caos, dicho de otra manera, presupone la idoneidad de la naturaleza para conformar con las facultades de representación del sujeto. El orden racional se abre paso en la naturaleza y ella responde favorablemente. De aquí que Kant hable de una consideración (*Rücksicht*) de la naturaleza¹⁴ hacia nuestra facultad cognoscitiva o, luego, también, cuando se refiere a la belleza de la naturaleza hablará un favor o don¹⁵ (*Gunst*) que la naturaleza parece brindarnos en determinados objetos. Por eso, él puede afirmar que: “Según el principio de la adecuación de la naturaleza con el proceder de nuestras facultades de representación o finalidad ideal, la belleza es una señal que da la naturaleza de esa conformidad”.¹⁶

Un problema que surge cuando queremos considerar el lugar de la belleza en el sistema de la naturaleza es justamente, el de la relación entre la conformidad a fin de la naturaleza en sus leyes empíricas y la conformidad a fin en las formas bellas. En consonancia con la exposición de las introducciones, el § 23 afirma a la belleza como la reveladora de un proceder de la naturaleza acorde con el proceder de las facultades de conocimiento, acuerdo que no se descubriría con las solas leyes transcendentales del entendimiento y que le permite a este abrirse camino en medio de la diversidad de formas empíricas de la naturaleza. Por su parte, la belleza de la naturaleza, en su carácter empírico material, se experimenta como la presencia real de la concordancia de una forma sensible con los conceptos del entendimiento, aunque estos no se apliquen para determinar al objeto. El objeto juzgado como bello constituye la síntesis de la actividad convergente de la imaginación y el entendimiento y por ello, es huella de un acuerdo necesario entre sensibilidad y entendimiento. Pero ¿Necesario para qué? Para el conocimiento, entonces tal vez, encontraremos el nexo buscado, entre la finalidad formal lógica y la finalidad formal estética, en las distintas maneras de referencia al conocimiento en cada una de ellas.

La sistemática de la experiencia particular y el enjuiciamiento estético, requieren del principio transcendental de conformidad a fin, como principio de la reflexión de la facultad de juzgar. Sin olvidar, tal como lo ha señalado Kant, que es la belleza la que nos descubre una técnica de la naturaleza, tal como si la naturaleza se guiara por una idea en la organización de la diversidad de sus formas, y esa misma presuposición es la que orienta regulativamente la organización sistemática del conocimiento empírico. En este último caso estamos ante el diseño de un sistema formal de la naturaleza en sus leyes empíricas, que concuerda con la estructura conceptual del entendimiento y, en el primero, en el que la belleza nos descubre una técnica de la naturaleza, estamos ante determinados objetos de la naturaleza que constituyen la exposición en la sensibilidad de tal concordancia. Ahora bien, estos objetos estimados como bellos también son objetos de la naturaleza, aunque dicha estimación no busque subsumir al objeto bajo un concepto determinado. Así lo expresa Düsing:

Es un golpe de suerte que haya formas que nosotros podamos encontrar bellas. El ser dado de un tal tipo de multiplicidad peculiar, no está pues, para nuestro entendimiento determinado por conceptos y no están contenidas en el concepto de mundo fenoménico en general. Que en la variedad de lo dado también puede presentarse tal multiplicidad, cuya contemplación coloca a nuestras facultades de conocimiento en una libre concordancia y en una vivificante actividad y, que por ende, es conforme a fin con la actividad de la facultad de juzgar reflexionante, pertenece más bien a una representación

del mundo de los fenómenos que considera la infinita posible particularidad de la multiplicidad en relación con nuestras facultades de representación; pertenece al concepto de una finalidad de la naturaleza en su multiplicidad para nuestras facultades de conocimiento.¹⁷

La belleza integra la idea de una naturaleza variadamente múltiple y es un regalo que la naturaleza parece hacernos, aunque en el marco crítico de la idealidad de la finalidad, no podemos afirmar que el producir formas conforme a fin sea un propósito de la naturaleza o que no lo sea. A este respecto, tanto la intencionalidad como la no intencionalidad de la naturaleza caen fuera de nuestro conocimiento. Sin embargo, que el fundamento del juicio estético de lo bello esté puesto en el juego de las facultades de conocimiento cuando estas buscan conocer sin llegar a determinar el objeto mediante un concepto, marca en la actividad de conocer, la partida de nacimiento del juicio estético: la actividad de aprehensión de un múltiple sensible por parte de la imaginación y la búsqueda de su determinación mediante un concepto del entendimiento; aunque diverge del conocimiento en la resolución de esas acciones. Tal resolución depende de la facultad de juzgar reflexionante cuando al compararlas discierne, sobre la base del sentimiento a priori de placer y displacer, si pondrá su atención en la actividad misma o en el objeto, es decir, si referirá la representación a la actividad conjunta de una y otra facultad, o si comparará la representación con otras para subsumirla bajo un concepto determinado:

Kant utiliza frecuentemente este principio universal de la finalidad y la representación específica de la sistemática de la naturaleza en sus leyes particulares como equivalente, puesto que de él dependen, ante todo, las condiciones de posibilidad de conocimiento empírico; también [depende de él] la finalidad de lo bello [que] solo pone a las facultades de conocimiento en un juego libre, [pero] que es requerido para todo conocimiento particular.¹⁸

Si bien no acordamos exactamente con esta distinción que realiza Düsing, es cierto que la equiparación del principio transcendental de finalidad con la sistemática de la naturaleza en sus leyes empíricas, es más intensa en las introducciones que en el cuerpo del texto. Pero Kant no deja de insistir en que se trata del principio propio de la facultad de juzgar reflexionante estética, la que, por ello, es legisladora a priori. El problema es que, en la percepción de la belleza ese principio se identifica con un sentimiento a priori, que como tal, entonces, no aplicaría como principio de una finalidad formal lógica, a saber, cómo principio de la organización de los productos naturales en géneros y especies, que es otra manera de concordancia de la naturaleza con nuestras facultades de representación.¹⁹

En el §23 hemos visto que, al igual que la belleza de la naturaleza, la sistemática formal de la naturaleza en la diversidad empírica de sus leyes se basa en el principio transcendental de conformidad a fin. A nuestro parecer el mismo texto de Kant nos ofrece una solución sin multiplicar perspectivas como hace Allison²⁰, ni principios como lo hace Düsing. Al subsumir conceptos empíricos en otros también empíricos, pero más generales, la actividad de la facultad de juzgar es determinante, pero actúa bajo el presupuesto del principio de la conformidad a fin de la naturaleza con las facultades de conocimiento, principio transcendental reflexionante²¹ y el éxito de la actividad cognitiva constituye una confirmación del mismo. Sin embargo, aclara Kant, en la Primera introducción, que en este caso se trata de un principio transcendental “por su origen”, pero destinado al uso lógico de la facultad de juzgar.²² Las formas bellas, por su parte,

constituyen una señal reveladora de esa adecuación, que es percibida en la concordancia de las facultades inmanente al sujeto, esto es en un sentimiento a priori; concordancia de actividades que son constitutivas del conocimiento. Se trata, entonces, de un principio de la facultad de juzgar reflexionante estética, que se confirma en la función determinante de la facultad de juzgar como presupuesto necesario de la investigación empírica, y como fundamento del enjuiciamiento acerca de lo bello. Solo en este último caso se identifica con un sentimiento a priori: “El juicio estético de reflexión nos presentará en su análisis, el concepto de la finalidad formal pero subjetiva de los objetos, contenido en él y basado en un principio a priori, que es básicamente idéntico al sentimiento de placer”.²³ Por eso es que, esta idea de un sentimiento de placer cuyo origen es a priori, es propio de la reflexión estética y se diferencia del placer que acompaña a la investigación empírica de la naturaleza, placer que es derivado, es decir no puro, de la concordancia encontrada en la naturaleza con el proceder de las facultades de conocimiento.²⁴

Tanto en las introducciones como en la exposición de los cuatro momentos del juicio puro de gusto Kant parte de esta identidad, al denominar a la Facultad de juzgar reflexionante estética como facultad del gusto,²⁵ tal como queda expresado en la definición de lo bello a la que conduce el desarrollo del primer momento de la Analítica. Entonces, propiamente, el principio trascendental de la facultad de juzgar es el principio de la facultad de juzgar reflexionante estética que juzga en base al sentimiento de placer cuya especificidad fue presentada en las introducciones²⁶ y expuesta en la Analítica de la facultad de juzgar estética. En el uso lógico que hace la facultad de juzgar, cuando subordina conceptos empíricos en géneros y especies, hace de aquel principio un presupuesto de la actividad cognoscitiva del entendimiento, no un fundamento.²⁷ Esta diferencia entre uso del principio de conformidad a fin, en tanto presupuesto reflexionante de la actividad determinante de la facultad de juzgar y el principio como fundamento del juicio estético es señalada por Kant en el texto:

La parte que contiene la facultad de juzgar estética es esencialmente pertinente en una crítica de la facultad de juzgar, porque sólo aquella alberga un principio que la facultad de juzgar pone totalmente a priori como fundamento de su reflexión sobre la naturaleza, a saber, el principio de una finalidad formal de la naturaleza según sus leyes particulares (empíricas) para nuestra capacidad cognoscitiva, finalidad sin la cual el entendimiento no podría orientarse en ella.²⁸

Si bien en las introducciones el principio trascendental de conformidad a fin está trabajado mayormente en relación a la sistemática de la naturaleza en sus leyes particulares, y por eso, más en perspectiva a los principios regulativos de la razón, que Kant ya ha presentado en el Apéndice de la Crítica de la razón pura, y ahora ha reelaborado, no faltan pasajes de las introducciones, en los que se afirma la identidad del principio trascendental de conformidad a fin con la reflexión estética y no hay ningún otro principio más que ese. El uso lógico de dicho principio trascendental satisface lo que podríamos llamar una función heurística, dado que su aplicación está dirigida al conocimiento empírico de la naturaleza. El sentimiento de placer por esa concordancia encontrada es derivado del ejercicio cognitivo cuando este es exitoso. En cambio, el sentimiento puro de placer y displacer de lo bello, como principio de la facultad de juzgar reflexionante estética es fundamento de los juicios estéticos, como principio de heautonomía. Este último no se fundamenta en el principio de finalidad lógico formal, ni

a la inversa; ni tampoco se trata de dos principios sino de dos funciones de un único principio legislativo de la facultad de juzgar en su reflexión sobre las formas de la naturaleza.²⁹

Entonces y después de este recorrido nos preguntamos ¿Qué función cumple la belleza en relación a un sistema todavía formal de la finalidad de la naturaleza? La belleza revela que, aún aquello que en la sensibilidad queda indeterminado para el entendimiento, produce, sin embargo, una intensa actividad intelectual; por ende, las formas bellas de la naturaleza muestran que la imaginación no procede arbitrariamente en la aprehensión de la forma sino en conformidad con la actividad intelectual. La belleza es la presencia real en la naturaleza de una reunión posible entre lo sensible y lo inteligible, revelada en la forma de ciertos productos de la naturaleza. De igual manera, la belleza nos descubre un proceder de la naturaleza, que en la diversidad empírica de sus leyes parece seguir los procesos lógicos con los que es pensada, un proceder de la naturaleza en la que hallamos logos y no caos. Por eso, la belleza es presencia real de una reunión posible entre naturaleza y razón.

Finalmente, si la belleza es la exposición de la finalidad formal estética y, nos revela una técnica de la naturaleza, si la pensamos en proyección al concepto de naturaleza como sistema de fines, podemos decir que ella, tiene una función propedéutica con respecto a la representación teleológica, es decir, prepara al entendimiento para pensar fines en la naturaleza. En la reflexión estética estamos en una instancia previa a todo concepto. No es un fin de la naturaleza el producir formas bellas, pero sí sucede que las formas bellas constituyen un anuncio que hace la naturaleza acerca de su idoneidad para conformar con fines; así, ellas preparan al entendimiento para aplicar fines a la naturaleza y se constituyen en el punto de partida para una teleología de la naturaleza. Que la naturaleza pueda ser en ciertos objetos conforme a fin es el primer paso que habilita para poder pensar fines objetivos. Desde la conformidad a fin estética ya se muestra una tensión hacia la finalidad objetiva. La reflexión estética puede ser considerada como propedéutica y fundamento subjetivo para una teleología, en cuanto que desde ella la naturaleza en sus formas bellas da señales de su aptitud para conformar con fines, aún allí donde su formación es sólo posible según reglas mecánicas. Tal es el caso de los fenómenos de cristalización³⁰ y de la belleza de los seres organizados que Kant presenta en el §58.

La belleza independiente de la naturaleza se limita a determinados objetos de la naturaleza, que son estimados como bellos solo por reflejo de la actividad interna de las fuerzas de representación. El carácter negativo que define a lo bello en los tres primeros momentos de la Analítica de la facultad de juzgar estética muestra este desplazamiento del fundamento del juicio estético hacia la subjetividad. De modo que la belleza de la naturaleza queda limitada a determinados objetos de ella y tal como el mismo Kant indica, en la nota al §38, no se puede aún, es decir desde la reflexión estética de la facultad de juzgar, pensar a priori a la naturaleza como conjunto de los objetos del gusto. Sin embargo, la reflexión estética va educando al entendimiento para pensar fines en la naturaleza, y, a esto nos referimos como función propedéutica de la estética con respecto a la teleología de la naturaleza. Dado que el juicio estético³¹ señala hacia algo otro, una exterioridad, un objeto de la naturaleza considerado bello, ese carácter referencial hace factible la pregunta por la ubicación y función de la belleza, en el conjunto total de la naturaleza como sistema teleológico.

2. LA BELLEZA EN EL CONJUNTO DE LA NATURALEZA COMO SISTEMA TELEOLÓGICO

En este punto, alcanzamos, ahora, la segunda cuestión que nos habíamos planteado, a saber, la ubicación y la función que cumple la belleza de la naturaleza para que el erigir formas conforme a fin para nuestra facultad de juzgar, sea considerado como un fin de la naturaleza que depende de su concepto (§38). Articularemos la interpretación de esta parte del trabajo sobre la base de la siguiente afirmación de Kant:

La belleza de la naturaleza, es decir, su concordancia con el libre juego de nuestras capacidades cognoscitivas en la aprehensión y enjuiciamiento de sus fenómenos, también puede considerarse de este modo como finalidad objetiva de la naturaleza en su conjunto como sistema del cual el ser humano es un miembro, una vez que su enjuiciamiento teleológico, gracias a los fines naturales que nos proporcionan los seres organizados, nos autoriza a [forjar] la idea de un gran sistema de fines de la naturaleza.³²

Las condiciones que se requieren para que el enjuiciamiento estético de los objetos de la naturaleza en su carácter subjetivo formal pueda ser formulado como juicio teleológico son las siguientes: que el acto de juzgar atienda a la existencia del objeto bello, que lo haga en relación a la determinación peculiar de la existencia del sujeto que juzga y en referencia al conjunto total de la naturaleza de la cual él forma parte. Como vemos se trata de condiciones que no son propias de un juicio puro de gusto, motivo por el cual, ahora Kant considera al enjuiciamiento estético unido con el interés del sujeto que juzga,³³ en particular con el interés que tiene su fundamento en la determinación propia del ser humano, y en consonancia con un concepto de naturaleza que no es meramente mecánico sino teleológico. Siguiendo esta doble vertiente la destinación del ser humano y un concepto de naturaleza idóneo para esa determinación, tendremos que explorar, entonces, qué lugar tiene y qué función cumple la belleza en dicho sistema.

La consideración objetiva de la finalidad subjetiva se enfoca en la idea de naturaleza como sistema teleológico, al cual pertenecen todos los objetos y seres que la componen, incluido el ser humano, atendiendo de manera específica a su capacidad de proponer fines en ella y darse fines a sí mismo. De aquí que, sea necesario esclarecer la función que cumple la belleza en cuanto integra el conjunto total de la naturaleza como sistema fines, en cuya organización la naturaleza “nada hace en vano”. Este problema, no pudo ser abordado, desde el punto de vista del juicio estético puro, porque en cuanto tal, dicho juicio no se formula “en consideración al fin para el cual existen esas bellezas de la naturaleza: si es para despertar en nosotros un placer, o si es sin relación alguna con nosotros como fin”.³⁴ En el juicio estético puro no se toma en cuenta el “para qué” (*Wozu*) existe la belleza de la naturaleza, a saber, “si es en relación a nosotros o no”, sino que se experimenta la libre satisfacción de la sola contemplación sin interés ninguno.

La cuestión del “para qué” descansa en otro problema, que es el de la extensión del principio de finalidad objetiva al todo de la naturaleza,³⁵ principio que se aplica a algunos seres, los seres organizados, que son aquellos que por su estructura interna pueden ser considerados como fin de la naturaleza. Pero ahora no se trata solo de algunos objetos que por su forma o su estructura interna se ponen bajo la regla del principio de finalidad, sino que, a partir de ellos, Kant aspira a pensar a toda la naturaleza como un sistema teleológico. En un sentido, en cuanto se trata de algunos seres determinados, la belleza de la naturaleza está en la misma

posición que los seres organizados, porque solo algunos objetos –en el caso de la belleza por su forma externa– son estimados como bellos; pero el hecho de que existan seres, que por su forma interna deben ser considerados como fin de la naturaleza, le da realidad objetiva a la finalidad interna, puesto que esta tiene su confirmación en el conocimiento de los mismos, aunque sólo en cuanto es un principio para la reflexión. Para esto se debe tener en cuenta que la idea de naturaleza como sistema de fines es pensada como el marco regulativo para la investigación de la naturaleza, y el principio teleológico como el hilo conductor en ese orden de legalidad. De esta manera dicho principio cumple una función regulativa, es decir, orienta la investigación. La belleza en cambio, como no aplica para el conocimiento de la naturaleza resulta más enigmática, y desde el concepto de finalidad interna no es posible su incorporación al sistema de la naturaleza como sistema teleológico.

Sin embargo, Kant nos alienta a avanzar en esa incorporación, al señalar que el enjuiciamiento de los fenómenos bellos de la naturaleza también puede ser considerado como finalidad objetiva “una vez que su enjuiciamiento teleológico, mediante los fines naturales que nos proporcionan los seres organizados, nos autoriza a [forjar] la idea de un gran sistema de fines de la naturaleza”.³⁶ Gracias a este principio que se ve ejemplificado en los seres organizados “uno queda autorizado, incluso interpelado, a no aguardar en ella y en sus leyes nada que no sea en su totalidad conforme a fines”.³⁷ En esta conclusión final tendría su partida de nacimiento la aplicación del principio de finalidad objetiva a las relaciones externas entre los productos de la naturaleza, que es el modo de incorporar todas sus producciones, organizadas y no organizadas, al conjunto total de la naturaleza, incluida la belleza. Este sería el argumento que encontramos más plausible para basar en él, la consideración de la belleza desde el enjuiciamiento teleológico:

“una vez que hemos descubierto en la naturaleza una capacidad para generar productos que nosotros sólo podemos pensar según el concepto de las causas finales, cabe ir más lejos y también permitirnos juzgar como pertenecientes a un sistema de fines aquellos productos (o a su relación, si bien conforme a fin) que no hacen necesario indagar por encima del mecanismo de las ciegas causas eficientes ningún otro principio para su posibilidad”.³⁸

Tanto aquellos productos que exigen para su explicación un principio distinto al del mecanismo, estos son los objetos bellos y los objetos que califican para ser considerados un fin de la naturaleza, como así también los objetos físicos no organizados que no necesitan para su explicación ningún otro principio más que el del mecanismo, pueden ser juzgados como integrando todos un sistema de fines, gracias a la facultad productiva de la naturaleza, cuyo ejemplo se encuentra en los seres organizados, y justamente por ellos.

Según este enfoque la finalidad se centra ahora no en la forma interna de ciertos productos naturales sino en las relaciones externas que necesariamente se establecen entre ellos. Sin embargo, y esto es sobre lo que Kant llama la atención, la efectuación de tal enlace integral solo es posible por la existencia de seres organizados. Son ellos los que introducen en la naturaleza un conjunto de referencialidades que surge de la existencia de unos en relación con los otros en función de su supervivencia (§82), cosa que no sucedería, señala Kant, si en la naturaleza se tratara solo de agua, tierra, aire o montañas. Los organismos constituyen un ejemplo visible de una máxima regulativa: “*todo cuanto hay en el mundo es bueno para algo y*

nada en él es en vano, y, por el ejemplo que la naturaleza da en sus productos organizados uno queda autorizado, incluso interpelado, a no aguardar en ella y en sus leyes nada que no sea en su totalidad conforme a fines”.³⁹ Por eso, los seres organizados son los que habilitan a extender el principio de finalidad al conjunto total de la naturaleza y pensar a todos los productos de la misma desde esta referencialidad. Entre ellos, también, a la belleza de la naturaleza.

Los argumentos de esta idea que requiere el traspaso, desde algunos productos naturales a toda la naturaleza, se encuentran en el §67 y su análisis ha dado lugar a una amplia y variada discusión.⁴⁰ Lo cierto es que es un paso necesario para la integración de la belleza al conjunto de la naturaleza. Así como, por un lado resulta enigmática la razón de la existencia de las formas bellas, puesto que no sabemos, “cómo explicar por qué la naturaleza ha derramado tan pródigamente en todas partes belleza, incluso en los fondos oceánicos, donde sólo raramente alcanza el ojo humano”,⁴¹ en este §67, Kant parece dejar de lado ese carácter enigmático de la belleza de la naturaleza para enlazarla con los argumentos expuestos en favor de la extensión del principio de finalidad al todo de la naturaleza, motivo por el cual pondrá en juego la diferencia entre finalidad interna y finalidad externa y en esta la existencia del ser humano como un miembro de esa cadena de fines. La índole propia de lo humano, su destinación moral repercutirá en el concepto mismo de naturaleza.

A) LA BELLEZA EN LA RELACIÓN EXTERNA ENTRE LOS SERES DE LA NATURALEZA.

Consideremos nuevamente, para avanzar, la siguiente afirmación:

“La belleza de la naturaleza, o sea, su concordancia con el libre juego de nuestras facultades cognoscitivas en la aprehensión y enjuiciamiento de su fenómeno, también puede ser considerada como finalidad objetiva de la naturaleza en su conjunto como sistema, en donde el ser humano es un eslabón (*Glied*)”.⁴²

Que el ser humano sea un miembro del conjunto total de la naturaleza indica en primer lugar que, la incorporación de la belleza en ese conjunto no se hace ni por la vía de la finalidad formal estética ni por la vía de la finalidad objetiva interna, requiere otra forma de la finalidad que no atienda a la constitución formal ni a la constitución interna de esos seres, sino a la relación que se puede establecer entre ellos. La relación teleológica de las partes en función de una idea es la clave para constituir el sistema, en este caso el sistema de la naturaleza.

Al igual que el juicio puro de lo bello, el enjuiciamiento de la forma interna de los productos naturales tampoco toma en cuenta el uso que se puede hacer de los productos de la naturaleza en vistas a la función que se les atribuye. Así, el uso que las distintas especies hacen de los espacios y de los productos de la naturaleza da lugar a un enlace hipotético, que no tiene su fundamento en la forma interna de tales productos. Hay en ese modo de proceder una conformidad a fin o finalidad externa que solo hipotéticamente se puede juzgar como tal. De este modo, Kant expone su interpretación crítica de la finalidad externa, con base en la facultad de juzgar del sujeto, diferenciándola, por lo tanto, de la representación metafísica de la misma, que habilitada por el enlace entre medios y fines en virtud del uso que unos seres hacen de otros, atribuye esa finalidad a la naturaleza. “Servir para” o “ser útil para” no es

más que una especulación, que según Kant puede incluso ser entretenida y hasta instructiva (§67). Se trata de un modo de reflexionar sobre la naturaleza y de juzgarla, sin adjudicarle fines intencionados a ella, sino que la finalidad es una necesidad atribuible sólo a nuestro modo de pensarla. Por eso, la finalidad externa no afirma un realismo de los fines sino el idealismo de la finalidad, idealismo que ya se sostuvo expresamente en el §58, uno de los párrafos de cierre de la estética.

La posición crítica frente a la comprensión de la finalidad de la naturaleza nos permite destacar el contraste entre la pregunta por qué (*warum*) la naturaleza ha producido tanta belleza aun cuando nosotros no podamos verla, y la pregunta para qué (*wozu*) lo ha hecho. La primera no tiene respuesta, y así queda en el texto como una pregunta por una causa a la que no accedemos, un enigma como decíamos antes, un camino que se señala, pero no se va a transitar, porque no se puede dada la índole de nuestras facultades de conocimiento. En este sentido podríamos decir que la belleza es sin “por qué”: *Die Rose ist ohne warum; sie blühet weil sie blühet*.⁴³ Sin embargo es posible conectar este por qué incognoscible con la expresión de admiración que, según Kant, es signo de un alma bella: que la naturaleza haya producido tanta belleza (§42). Pensamiento que no es conocimiento, pero como veremos luego, alerta acerca de la idoneidad de la naturaleza para los fines de la moralidad.

El camino que toma el texto, para poder incorporar a la belleza en el sistema teleológico, es el de la referencia de la belleza al ser humano, referencia ya indicada en el §5, evocada nuevamente en el §30 y explícitamente abordada en los §§67 y de manera diferente, pero también, en el §82. Solo para para el ser humano la belleza es conforme a fin. Por ende, el problema que nos ocupa, el de la inserción de la belleza en el sistema de la naturaleza como un gran sistema de fines, solo puede plantearse en la medida en que la pregunta es “para qué” la naturaleza ha dispuesto tanta belleza, belleza que es recibida como un don por los seres humanos.

Lo interesante es que, en este sentido, Kant deja abierto un doble abordaje de la idea de favor o don –*Gunst*–, que la naturaleza nos hace al producir formas bellas. Uno es el de la contemplación gozosa, que se expresa en un juicio puro de gusto, en la cual el “para qué” no encierra en sí ninguna utilidad, sino que complace y enaltece el ánimo, como si la belleza de la naturaleza hubiera sido dispuesta con ese fin, a saber, el placer y el ennoblecimiento del ser humano, en cuyo caso ella puede ser considerada como un don que la naturaleza nos ha brindado. Pero, cuando el interrogante se dirige al fin para el cual existen formas bellas de la naturaleza, cuestión que conduce a indagar si su existencia tiene alguna referencia a nuestra existencia y, por ende, si cumple una función con respecto a nosotros o no. Esta es una inquietud que no se toma en cuenta en la formulación de un juicio puro de gusto: “Pero en un juicio teleológico atendemos también a esa relación y podemos, entonces, considerar como favor de la naturaleza el que haya querido ser para nosotros incitadora de cultura al erigir tantas formas bellas”.⁴⁴ Por esa atención, más allá de lo útil, que ha tenido la naturaleza para con nosotros “podemos amarla, contemplarla con respeto y sentirnos ennoblecidos por esa contemplación, como si ella hubiese instalado y adornado su magnífico escenario propiamente con esa intención”.⁴⁵

El abordaje teleológico de la belleza remite a este segundo sentido del término *Gunst*, y es el modo en que Kant la incorpora al concepto de naturaleza pensado como sistema teleológico. La belleza en perspectiva sistemática será considerada desde el punto de vista de las relaciones externas de medios y fines que se establece entre la diversidad de seres y productos de la naturaleza. Para ello, la noción de interés, contra la cual arremetió Kant en la delimitación del juicio estético puro, deberá ser recuperada, porque hay juicios estéticos en los que la belleza no solo place en sí misma y es valiosa por sí, sino que señalan, de manera mediata o inmediata, hacia algo otro que ella misma. Este movimiento de las fuerzas del ánimo que produce la belleza, la ubica en un lugar privilegiado, porque puede articular esferas heterogéneas –sensibilidad y razón– y promover las capacidades propiamente humanas.

B) EL JUICIO ESTÉTICO NO PURO: LO BELLO INTERESA

La incorporación de la belleza en el sistema de la naturaleza requiere recuperar la idea de interés en el juicio estético, idea que ya en el primer momento de la Analítica de la facultad de Juzgar estética ha sido separada de tales juicios, puesto que el desinterés constituye la impronta propia de un juicio estético puro, a partir del cual es posible pensar tanto el carácter de su ser “sin concepto” como el de su ser “sin fin”. El interés, por el contrario, conlleva la conciencia de la satisfacción en la existencia del objeto, así como también la admiración y el respeto hacia la naturaleza que ha producido tales formas (§42).

Como vemos desde una perspectiva teleológica objetiva, no se puede tratar de la belleza de la naturaleza en cuanto es estimada en un juicio puro de gusto, sino de la belleza a la que se le añade algún interés y Kant menciona dos: el interés empírico (§41) y el intelectual en lo bello (§42). A diferencia del primero, que se dirige a la belleza solo a través de la tendencia humana a la sociabilidad, el último es un interés inmediato en lo bello y cuando se vuelve habitual “pone de manifiesto una disposición del ánimo favorable al sentimiento moral”.⁴⁶ El interés empírico, por su parte, se refiere al rol de belleza en el proceso humano de socialización, y en este a la capacidad de comunicación de unos con otros. Pero entonces, no es la belleza de la naturaleza la que mueve al interés empírico de la belleza en ella, sino más bien el uso artificioso que el ser humano hace para deleitarse y deleitar a sus congéneres, elaborando así su tendencia a la sociabilidad. De aquí que los adornos, las bellas maneras de comportarse en sociedad, el arte de la conversación, fomentan la comunicación de los hombres entre sí. Este interés promueve la tendencia a la sociabilidad produciendo el refinamiento de las inclinaciones como la obra de la civilización. Kant señala en el §41 que el interés empírico en lo bello no produce ningún enlace con la moralidad, pero humaniza las inclinaciones porque elabora la comunicación de los sentimientos y estimula a superar la rudeza de las inclinaciones naturales. De ahí que su interés por la belleza no sea inmediato, sino mediado por la tendencia a la sociabilidad.

En cambio, el interés intelectual en lo bello, en tanto señala una complacencia directa en la belleza de la naturaleza, provoca en la contemplación de la misma, una intensa actividad intelectual que orienta el ánimo hacia las ideas de la razón. A la vez, señala Kant, le da satisfacción al interés propio de la razón en cuanto a que sus ideas alcancen realidad objetiva.

Que la belleza sea el camino para esto, no es una afirmación menor, nos lleva directamente a la teoría de la belleza como símbolo del bien moral, que Kant presenta en el §59. La aprehensión sensible del objeto estimado como bello en la intuición y en la reflexión, es la que provoca la actividad intelectual, y así, se muestra con ello que la naturaleza no es ajena a los fines de la razón, sino que más bien en la belleza se señala un tránsito posible de una esfera a la otra. El interés intelectual encuentra en la belleza una huella de la conformidad a fin de la naturaleza con respecto a la índole de nuestras facultades de representación, pero, además, también al conectar con el interés moral de la razón, le permite al ser humano tomar conciencia de su destinación moral. De aquí, que, lo bello de la naturaleza señala el parentesco existente entre el sentimiento estético y el sentimiento moral y promueve, con ello la disposición moral del ánimo que, por otra parte, siguiendo a Kant, debe estar ya dada previamente.⁴⁷

En la consideración sistemática de la belleza este interés es una marca significativa, por su rol mediador, en el camino hacia el enlace de fines en la naturaleza, enlace en el que el ser humano tiene un rol clave, justamente por su determinación moral. Sin embargo, no es el interés intelectual en la belleza de la naturaleza, el que puede habilitar una perspectiva teleológica de la naturaleza, aunque sí es cierto que, resulta ser un anuncio temprano de la proyección teleológica del “juicio estético, y, por ende, puede considerarse un antecedente y un hito relevante de su tratamiento,⁴⁸ tal como ocurre en los §§67 y §84. Por favorecer la contemplación de la naturaleza, y elevar el ánimo hacia las ideas morales, el interés intelectual en lo bello, tiene valor en sí mismo, y también, como veremos, puede ser reconsiderado y revalorado desde la perspectiva teleológica de las relaciones externas de los seres y productos que componen el conjunto total de la naturaleza, “en la que el ser humano es un miembro”.

Por un lado, se produce una suerte de rescate de la idea de interés asociada al juicio estético, que conectaremos con la finalidad externa, particularmente con la idea de fin final, cuyo anticipo podemos ver en el interés intelectual en lo bello, aunque este interés no defina la posición sistemática de la belleza en el conjunto de la naturaleza. Pero, sí es cierto, y esto es necesario remarcarlo, que el juicio puro de gusto podrá ser considerado desde el enjuiciamiento teleológico en la medida en que no sea un mero juicio de gusto: “Es decir, no sólo le gusta su producto según la forma, sino también su existencia, al margen de cualquier estímulo sensible y sin enlazar con ello ningún fin”.⁴⁹ Esta última característica es la que justamente diferencia al interés intelectual del interés empírico en lo bello, pues marca la inmediatez del placer, expresado en la formulación “que la naturaleza haya producido esa belleza”, ese es, indica Kant, el “pensamiento[que] debe acompañar a la intuición y a la reflexión.”⁵⁰

Sabemos que, dado el carácter desinteresado del juicio puro de gusto, no cabe ninguna referencia al fin por el cual la naturaleza, en la generación de sus productos, ofrece tanta variedad de formas bellas. Pero si nos concentramos en la referencia de la belleza al ser humano, que es un miembro o eslabón de esa cadena de fines, podremos asociar el interés en la belleza con la idea de fin último (*letzter Zweck*) y, principalmente, con la idea de fin final (*Endzweck*) y elucidar, así, su función en el sistema teleológico de la naturaleza.

C) LA BELLEZA EN RELACIÓN CON EL FIN ÚLTIMO DE LA NATURALEZA

En el concepto de finalidad externa, se piensa el enlace de medios y fines naturales que llega hasta el ser humano como fin último de la naturaleza, por su capacidad de proponerse fines, de emplear a la naturaleza de manera adecuada a las máximas de sus fines libres, y de orientar esos fines hacia el fin final, en el cual se consume todo el enlace de fines. Así lo señala Kant:

De todos sus fines en la naturaleza permanece solo la condición formal subjetiva, a saber, la idoneidad para ponerse fines a sí mismo, emplear a la naturaleza como medio adecuado a las máximas de sus fines libres en general, sobretodo, orientarlos [a esos fines] al propósito de la naturaleza en el fin final, que yace fuera de ella, el cual, por ende, puede ser considerado como su fin último.⁵¹

La razón humana es teleológica, de ahí la idoneidad del ser humano para orientar las acciones y el conocimiento según fines y así “a partir de un agregado de cosas formadas conforme a fines por su razón, puede elaborar un sistema de fines”,⁵² es decir diseñar una naturaleza como un conjunto entrelazado de fines en orden a un fin final. Pero la condición, señala Kant, es que el ser humano “lo comprenda y tenga la voluntad de dar tanto a la naturaleza como a sí mismo tal relación de fines”.⁵³ Conocer esa capacidad es el primer requisito, pero no es suficiente, sino que además es necesario determinarse a obrar, esto es darle a los fines libremente propuestos siempre una orientación hacia el fin final. Tal como vimos en el apartado anterior, el interés intelectual en lo bello favorece la autoconciencia de la condición moral de los seres humanos y de su tarea específica con respecto a sí y a la naturaleza.

En la nota al pie del §67 ya, Kant se refiere a la belleza como incitadora de cultura, cuestión que expondrá más ampliamente en el §83 titulado “Del Fin último de la naturaleza como sistema teleológico. ¿Por qué es importante esta referencia y esa exposición para integración de la belleza en el sistema de la naturaleza? Porque la cultura,⁵⁴ con la que la naturaleza ha determinado al ser humano, es la que promueve la aptitud para percibir y proponer fines. Por eso, la cultura es propuesta como el fin último de la naturaleza, dada la existencia de la especie humana. De aquí la perspectiva dual con respecto al ser humano, pues él es un medio o sea un miembro más en la cadena de fines y, es a la vez, fin último por esa aptitud para direccionar y direccionarse según fines.

Ya hemos visto que, para que la belleza de la naturaleza estimada en un juicio puro de gusto, también pueda ser considerada como finalidad objetiva de la naturaleza en su conjunto, se requiere haber alcanzado la idea de naturaleza como un gran sistema de fines. A partir de allí vemos que la existencia del ser humano como un miembro de esa trama, es la existencia de un ser para quien la belleza constituye la oportunidad que la naturaleza le brinda para enaltecer sus disposiciones y prepararlo para su tarea más propia. De aquí que, la atención que la naturaleza tiene para con nosotros “en sus formas bellas es, pues, un estímulo para la formación (*Ausbildung*) de las propias disposiciones naturales, a las que pertenecen también las facultades de conocimiento, propicia y promueve con ello el desarrollo de la cultura (*Kultur*)”.⁵⁵

El concepto de cultura que expone Kant en el §83 concuerda, aunque también rebasa, la función de los juicios estéticos que se vinculan con un interés empírico (§41), porque en ellos, como vimos, la atención dispensada hacia la belleza se enlaza con la tendencia a la sociabilidad,

con el refinamiento y la humanización de la conducta. En ambos párrafos Kant se refiere a la belleza del arte y a su función como promotora de cultura. En el §67, en cambio, le atribuye esa función a la belleza de la naturaleza. La belleza se puede considerar como un don, una atención (*Gunst*⁵⁶) que la naturaleza le hace a la especie humana, para darle la ocasión de experimentar un placer -el estético- que lo dispone a la comunicación con los otros, a la vida social, pero, por sobre todo, a la moralidad.

Pero es el enlace del interés intelectual en lo bello de la naturaleza (§42) con el interés moral que despierta la contemplación estética, el que es visto por Kant como una confirmación de la idea de una naturaleza que está en sintonía con los fines de la razón, en particular con la idea de fin final. Por eso adquiere un carácter prioritario, con respecto al interés empírico, cuando queremos seguir a Kant en esta incorporación de la belleza en el sistema teleológico de la naturaleza.

D) LA BELLEZA EN RELACIÓN CON LA IDEA DE FIN FINAL

El último paso de este proceso de enlace de fines, que Kant propone con la finalidad externa de los seres naturales nos lleva hasta la idea del ser humano, en cuanto ser racional, como fin final de la creación de un mundo y a la relación entre este final -que es una idea de la razón práctica- y la belleza. Vamos a tomar como punto de partida de nuestra reflexión acerca de la relación entre la belleza de la naturaleza y la idea de fin final la siguiente afirmación de Kant, que se sitúa en el marco de su teología moral:

Asimismo, con toda probabilidad este interés moral fue el primero en suscitar la atención sobre la belleza y los fines de la naturaleza, que luego sirvió insignemente para reforzar esa idea, si bien no podía fundamentarla ni mucho menos podía hacer prescindible tal interés moral, dado que incluso el examen de los fines de la naturaleza tan sólo adquiere un interés inmediato en relación con el fin final, interés que se muestra en tan gran medida en la admiración de la naturaleza sin consideración de provecho alguno que se pudiera sacar de ella.⁵⁷

Este interés moral, al que alude el texto, remite a la idea de un gobernador moral del mundo que hubiese ajustado sabiamente los fines naturales hacia el fin final: la realización del bien supremo en el mundo. La identificación que hace Kant entre el fin final y el bien supremo, esto es, el mayor grado de progreso posible o felicidad, pero siempre dirigido por la moralidad, significa que la naturaleza misma debe ser coherente con esa disposición moral. Aunque aquella idea no sea objeto de conocimiento posible sino de fe moral, es sostenida aún por la razón menos cultivada. Sin entrar en los pormenores del argumento moral, cuando Kant quiere mostrar el uso legítimo de ese argumento, plantea una especie de círculo virtuoso, por el cual es el interés moral el que despierta la atención por la belleza y por los fines de la naturaleza; y luego, la reflexión sobre la belleza y los fines de la naturaleza es la que fortalece al interés moral. De tal circuito se dio un anuncio en el interés intelectual en lo bello. Allí, la contemplación de la naturaleza despierta un interés inmediato en la belleza que es favorable al cultivo del sentimiento moral, el cual es la expresión de un sentido moral, que ya debe poseerse para apreciar lo bello con interés.

Pero ahora, Kant, además, sitúa en un mismo plano a la belleza y a los fines de la naturaleza, porque en ambos casos se revela el interés moral cuando la naturaleza es considerada con admiración, sin pensar en utilidad alguna. Poner el estudio de la naturaleza bajo la óptica de los fines interesa no solo heurísticamente, es decir, de manera mediata para alcanzar el conocimiento, sino que adquiere para los seres humanos y, por ellos, en función de la naturaleza en su conjunto, un interés inmediato cuando se considera a los fines naturales en relación al fin final. Este direccionamiento es la tarea a la que están destinados los seres humanos según la ley incondicionada dada en la razón, ley que debe ser realizada efectivamente en la naturaleza. La belleza en el ámbito de la teleología cumple un rol de mediación en este direccionamiento hacia el fin final.

Tal fin final ya no es un objeto del mundo natural, sino que refiere a la idea de lo suprasensible como fundamento de la naturaleza y de la condición humana. El ser humano es un ser de la naturaleza, pero no es fin final por su condición sensible o natural sino por la determinación suprasensible que constituye la índole propia de su naturaleza, la destinación moral. La idea de determinación o destinación del ser humano, designa que, justamente, en aquello que configura el ser propio del ser humano le ha sido designada una tarea. El ser humano es fin final en cuanto es sujeto de moralidad y, aclara Kant, sólo por esto, es decir, sólo porque “posee en sí la legislación incondicionada con respecto a los fines, la única que lo capacita para ser un fin final al cual está teleológicamente subordinada toda la naturaleza”.⁵⁸ Esta subordinación de toda la naturaleza al ser humano, solo es en cuanto su tarea consiste en la orientación de los fines naturales hacia la realización del bien supremo en el mundo, por ende, no es subordinación a cualquier fin que arbitrariamente pudiera proponer. Su señorío comporta una obligación.⁵⁹

Entonces, ¿Cómo se integra sistemáticamente la belleza en este ordenamiento de fines objetivos, que encuentra en la idea de fin final su cumbre más alta? Porque en esta cumbre nos encontramos con un ser de la naturaleza sujeto a leyes naturales, pero con una determinación suprasensible, que lo hace agente de una ley incondicionada. Pero también nos encontramos con una naturaleza idónea para constituir un sistema de fines, la naturaleza como arte,⁶⁰ cuyo interés de investigación Kant puso de manifiesto en el §23. El argumento se basa en que sería incoherente, más bien dice contradictorio, una naturaleza sin orientación hacia fines morales en la que exista un ser cuyo destino sea orientar a la naturaleza hacia tales fines, “porque un fin final dado en ellos [los seres humanos] como deber y una naturaleza exterior a ellos sin fin final alguno, siendo así que tal fin debe realizarse sin embargo en la naturaleza, se hallan en contradicción”.⁶¹ Ya desde el comienzo de la tercera Crítica -y es lo que expusimos en la primera parte de este trabajo- la naturaleza muestra una conformidad formal a fin con las facultades de representación del sujeto, luego también una concordancia entre la naturaleza y el sentimiento moral, concordancia acerca de la cual, ella “nos habla cifradamente en sus formas bellas”(§42). Una naturaleza que solo se nos presente como un mecanismo ciego, incapaz de concordar con fines, no se corresponde con la existencia de seres de la naturaleza cuya tarea es la de proponerse y proponer fines y orientarlos a todos ellos hacia fines morales. No es la orientación hacia cualquier tipo de fin, sino hacia fines morales. Porque, así como sería indignante una naturaleza en la que domine el “ciego azar” (§88) más lo sería una naturaleza sin fin final, en la que haya

seres destinados a hacer de la naturaleza un mundo moral, pero en una naturaleza no idónea para ello. Tal, como lo indica Kant en la introducción:

el concepto de libertad debe hacer efectivo en el mundo sensible el fin dado mediante sus leyes y, por consiguiente, la naturaleza también ha de poder pensarse de tal manera que la conformidad a leyes de su forma concuerde al menos con la posibilidad de los fines a realizar en ella según las leyes de la libertad.⁶²

Pensar a la belleza en una teleología de la naturaleza trazada críticamente por Kant, en relación al fin final posiciona a la belleza como reveladora de un orden moral encriptado en el natural, que solo se revela cuando se la contempla con admiración. Este sería el lugar del juicio estético no puro, unido al interés intelectual por lo bello. El interés moral despierta la admiración estética y esta revierte sobre el interés moral, en un juego de potenciación entre lo bello y el bien moral; entre el sentimiento estético de lo bello de la naturaleza y el sentimiento moral.

Kant muestra que la belleza ocupa el lugar de la articulación, entre la determinación racional y la naturaleza sensible. Ella es la señal de un orden suprasensible y a él nos conduce la contemplación estética de la naturaleza. La facultad suprasensible en nosotros es la facultad de un ser natural, pero no por tratarse de un ser natural sino también de un ser inteligible. La belleza marca ese punto de confluencia y hace posible la conjunción de lo sensible y de lo inteligible. Esta idea aparece tempranamente en la Estética de la facultad de juzgar, y es presentada en el texto cuando Kant quiere señalar, buscando una precisión, que cualquier palabra de más o de menos podría hacer fracasar:

Lo que deleita también vale para los animales irracionales; la belleza sólo para los seres humanos, esto es, seres animales pero sin embargo racionales, mas tampoco meramente como tales (por ejemplo, espíritus), sino al mismo tiempo en tanto que animales; lo bueno, empero, vale para todo ser racional en general.⁶³

Lo que se pensaba como contraposición: lo sensible y lo inteligible, intuiciones y conceptos, la belleza lo ha hecho pensar como concordancia, en sus distintas figuras: juego (de las facultades), símbolo (de la moralidad), interés (intelectual). La belleza puede ser pensada desde un juicio objetivo, a partir de considerar su función de articulación entre la naturaleza y el interés moral, cuando se alcanza la meta final del enlace teleológico de fines de la naturaleza. Esa meta está determinada por la razón práctica: el fin final de la existencia de un mundo. La pregunta acerca del “para qué” de la belleza responde a su lugar de vínculo mediador entre la naturaleza y la destinación moral de los seres humanos. De aquí la relevancia del juicio estético no puro, el que va unido a un interés, en particular el interés intelectual en lo bello, como cultivo del sentimiento moral y antecedente del enjuiciamiento teleológico de la belleza.

De este modo Kant puede dar razón del “para qué” la naturaleza ha erigido formas conforme a fin para nuestra facultad de juzgar, y lo hace, tal como vimos mostrando que, tal producción tiene que ser considerada como un fin de la naturaleza que depende de su concepto. La belleza juzgada objetivamente depende del concepto de naturaleza como un sistema de fines en orden al fin final, a realizar en el mundo inscripto en la destinación de los seres humanos.

A MODO DE CONCLUSIÓN

Para considerar a la belleza como un fin de la naturaleza que depende de su concepto primero hubo que precisar el concepto de naturaleza como sistema de fines y, esto se realizó a partir de la idea de finalidad interna fundada en los seres pensados como fines de la naturaleza⁶⁴, y por ellos, extenderla a la naturaleza toda como un conjunto integrado de fines. En el §67, Kant indica que, el tratamiento teleológico de la belleza puede hacerse, “si es que ya, una vez, nos ha autorizado, el juicio teleológico de la misma, por medio de los fines de la naturaleza que nos proporcionan los seres organizados, para llegar a la idea de un gran sistema de los fines de la naturaleza”.⁶⁵ Mostrar la legitimidad de la extensión del principio teleológico, por la vía de la finalidad interna y, luego, también, externa, ha sido el paso necesario para alcanzar el concepto de naturaleza como sistema de fines. Una vez efectuada la fundamentación de esta extensión, se hace viable la consideración teleológico-objetiva de los juicios estéticos, que, por cierto, ya no son más estéticos puros sino teleológicos.

Desde el juicio puro del gusto, que discierne si algo es bello o no, no se puede pensar a la belleza como un fin de la naturaleza, en principio porque la belleza libre no puede ser integrada a un sistema, puesto que no responde a un concepto pensado como fin de su producción, y, además, porque no se puede atribuir a la naturaleza la producción intencionada de belleza (contra el realismo de los fines y a favor del idealismo de la finalidad), es decir, que no es un fin de la naturaleza la producción de objetos bellos. Dicho fin debe ser planteado tomando otro camino, a saber, el de la relación que guardan entre sí los distintos productos naturaleza. Desde esta relación queda habilitada la pregunta: para qué la naturaleza ha producido tanta belleza, pues es una máxima admitida que la naturaleza nada hace en vano.

Por medio del desarrollo argumentativo acerca de la finalidad externa se realiza tal proyección teleológica de la belleza tomando en consideración su función como promotora de cultura, pero sobre todo su función de fomento de la moralidad. En virtud del ser humano, que se integra al conjunto de la naturaleza como un miembro del mismo, la belleza tiene un lugar en dicho sistema. Por un lado, ella, como satisfacción libre vale sólo para los seres humanos, ni únicamente animales ni únicamente seres intelectuales, y, así, es estimada en el juicio estético puro basado en el juego libre de las facultades; pero, por otro, el interés por ella es propio de la vida en sociedad, único marco en el que es posible el despliegue de la vida en cuanto humana. De aquí que, la belleza sea juzgada por el estímulo que produce para el cultivo de la sociabilidad de los seres humanos (§41). El ser humano es un ser de la naturaleza como el resto de los seres, sin embargo, es también el fin último en función del cual, todas las cosas naturales se configuran según fines racionales. Por eso, en relación con la idea de fin último la belleza cumple una tarea formadora de las capacidades humanas frente a la cruda naturaleza, pues humaniza la conducta, y es, por eso, incitadora de cultura. Si el ser humano es el fin final de la naturaleza, por él, la naturaleza deviene cultura. La belleza promueve ese devenir cultura de la naturaleza, con lo que acredita su lugar en el sistema teleológico de la naturaleza.

Pero, vemos que, aún más significativo es el interés intelectual por la belleza de la naturaleza, porque enlaza al sentimiento estético con el sentimiento moral, y, así, resulta ser un estímulo para el desarrollo y fortalecimiento de las fuerzas morales (§42). Por eso este interés

anuncia el valor sistemático de la belleza, y puede ser pensado en concomitancia con la idea de un fin final de la naturaleza. La idea de fin final encierra el mandato inherente a la especie humana con respecto a la realización efectiva del bien supremo en el mundo, conforme a la determinación-destino moral del género humano (*Bestimmung des Menschen*), entonces la belleza de la naturaleza es una vía regia que promueve el desarrollo de la moralidad y por ello, el ennoblecimiento de la especie humana. A su vez, la naturaleza misma pensada como sistema de fines, en tanto aloja en sí seres con una destinación moral, muestra su disponibilidad para ser orientada hacia ese fin final.

Finalmente, esta inquietud de Kant por incorporar a la belleza en una representación teleológica de la naturaleza se inscribe en la misma línea del interés sistemático de la obra: Integrar al juicio estético sobre la belleza de la naturaleza en una teleología natural ordenada hacia una teleología práctica.⁶⁶ El motivo fundamental es que la razón está interesada en que sus ideas morales tengan realidad efectiva, y esto requiere que su realización no sea obstaculizada o impedida por la naturaleza, cuya posibilidad existe, porque no somos sus hijos dilectos. El interés intelectual en lo bello de la naturaleza señala el parentesco del sentimiento estético con el sentimiento moral, puesto que la belleza es una huella o un guiño que la naturaleza nos da, de que contiene en sí un fundamento de una concordancia de su legalidad –conformidad a fin- con nuestras facultades.

Hasta qué punto la tercera Crítica logra lo que no se ha logrado en las dos anteriores, esto es producir efectivamente la unidad del sistema de la filosofía desde los principios de las facultades, si esta obra cumple o no con su objetivo sistemático, es una cuestión que ha generado fuertes discusiones en los pensadores contemporáneos e inmediatamente posteriores a Kant. Lo cierto es que este problema de la inclusión de la belleza en el sistema de la naturaleza con todas sus aristas nos deja en la médula de la filosofía kantiana y ha dado que pensar tanto al romanticismo como a las filosofías del idealismo alemán, que vieron allí un nudo filosófico no desatado completamente y, por ello, un programa de investigación filosófica.

Resumen: En este trabajo nos concentraremos en la relación entre la reflexión estética y la reflexión teleológica a partir de la inquietud de Kant por la inclusión de la belleza en la idea de naturaleza como sistema de fines, tal como la expresa en el §67: “La belleza de la naturaleza, es decir, su concordancia con el libre juego de nuestras capacidades cognoscitivas en la aprehensión y enjuiciamiento de sus fenómenos, también puede considerarse de este modo como finalidad objetiva de la naturaleza en su conjunto.” Admitir tal posibilidad requiere atender, al menos, a dos cuestiones: 1. La posibilidad del abordaje teleológico de los juicios estéticos. Esto nos llevará a determinar en qué medida el enjuiciamiento estético de los objetos de la naturaleza puede ser considerado, también, desde la facultad de juzgar teleológica. Aquí mostraremos a la reflexión estética como propedéutica de la reflexión teleológica; 2. La belleza en la relación externa entre los seres de la naturaleza. Abordaremos la ubicación belleza en el conjunto total de la naturaleza como sistema teleológico en el cual el ser humano es un miembro. Pondremos a la belleza en referencia a la idea de interés, fin último y fin final de la naturaleza.

Palabras clave: Kant, belleza, naturaleza, juicios reflexionantes estéticos, juicios reflexionantes teleológicos.

Abstract: In this work we will focus on the relationship between aesthetic reflection and teleological reflection based on Kant's concern for the inclusion of beauty in the idea of nature as a system of ends, as expressed in §67: “Even beauty in nature, i.e., its agreement with the free play of our cognitive faculties in the apprehension and judging of its appearance, can be considered in this way as an objective purposiveness of nature in its entirety.” Admitting such a possibility requires addressing at least two issues: 1. The possibility of a teleological approach to aesthetic judgments. This will lead us to determine to what extent the aesthetic judgment of natural objects can also be considered from the teleological faculty of judgment. Here we will show aesthetic reflection as a propaedeutic for teleological reflection; 2. Beauty in the external relationship between the beings of nature. We will address

the location of beauty in the total set of nature as a teleological system in which the human being is a member. We will put beauty in reference to the idea of interest, the ultimate end and the final end of nature.

Keywords: Kant, beauty, nature, aesthetic reflective judgments, teleological reflective judgments.

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² Allison H. (2001:163).

³ Las obras de Kant se citarán según la edición de la Academia (Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*. Hrsg.: Bd. 1-22 Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Bd. 23 Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, ab Bd. 24 Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Berlín 1900 ss.). La *Crítica de la razón pura*, se citará con la sigla KrV seguida, como es usual, de las letras A y/o B, según se trate de la primera o segunda edición y, a continuación, el número de la página correspondiente. KU AA 05:279.

⁴ Düsing K. (1986:130).

⁵ KU AA 05:380.

⁶ KU AA 05:193.

⁷ KU AA 05:246.

⁸ Justamente, el rasgo distintivo del sentimiento de lo sublime es su independencia con respecto a los objetos de la naturaleza. En dicho sentimiento el placer reside en la experiencia de la supremacía de la razón frente a cualquier manifestación de la naturaleza, tanto en su magnitud como en su fuerza. Kant indica que se trata de un placer negativo que resulta de la constatación de que no hay objeto adecuado a la exposición de las ideas. La inadecuación que se experimenta sensiblemente en lo informe del objeto provoca la presencia activa en el ánimo de las ideas de la razón y, con ellas, la del sentimiento de lo sublime que manifiesta la elevación de las fuerzas del ánimo desde lo sensible, informe o monstruoso, a lo suprasensible.

⁹ Bartuschat W. (1972:141) considera la importancia de la imaginación (facultad sensible e intelectual) en el juego de las facultades, en tanto este mismo es el fundamento de la finalidad formal, porque en dicho juego la imaginación efectúa la referencia no solo hacia sí, es decir hacia el sujeto y la percepción del estado de las fuerzas del ánimo, sino también, hacia lo otro de sí, que es la naturaleza, es decir, la aprehensión de la forma del objeto empírico singular de la naturaleza. De este modo, la imaginación garantiza el carácter singular del juicio estético: “La interna finalidad de las fuerzas subjetivas no encuentra, sin embargo, esa singularidad, si ella significa una autorreferencialidad, que resulta de la negación de aquello que pueda ser externo a las fuerzas del ánimo.(...) Que la imaginación, sin embargo, es capaz de ser componente del juego conforme a fin de las facultades, necesita de la demostración de que, aquí, la imaginación ha sido dada por la estructura que aún no está determinada por la finalidad autorreferencial. Para que esté garantizado que, en el juego de fuerzas, la imaginación aparezca como la que originariamente está contrapuesta a una finalidad autorreferencial, debe llegar a ser caracterizada en aquello que constituye esta contraposición y esto es, su determinación específica de dirigirse, en cuanto tal, al contenido que es accesible solo en el *medium* de la sensibilidad y, por eso, no sabe nada acerca de la finalidad autorreferencial. Tal cosa, empero, es la naturaleza.” A Bartuschat le interesa remarcar que aun en un juicio puro de gusto, no se pierde la referencia a algo otro exterior al juego de facultades. Dado que el juego de las facultades en un modo especial del vínculo entre entendimiento e imaginación, ella, por su especificidad constitutiva nunca deja de estar referida a un contenido sensible, aunque el juicio puro de gusto no se fundamente en ese contenido.

¹⁰ KU BLIV.

¹¹ Fiona Hughes (2007:249) señala con respecto a la legalidad empírica de los productos de la naturaleza, la necesidad advertida por Kant de establecer el vínculo entre las categorías, en tanto reglas de una naturaleza en general y el principio transcendental de finalidad, en tanto condición de la legalidad de la naturaleza en sus leyes empíricas: “Después de haber planteado este problema a principios de la Crítica de la facultad de juzgar, Kant contesta diciendo que el sistema de las categorías de la primera Crítica se complementa con un sistema basado en el principio de la finalidad de la naturaleza para nuestra facultad de juzgar. Este principio establece que la naturaleza empírica está organizada como si se tratara de un sistema orientado hacia un fin. Sin embargo, no hay ningún propósito o causa final y, por lo tanto, el principio cuenta como subjetivo o reflexionante. (...) El problema al que se dirige la finalidad formal es a lo que se refiere Allison como la posibilidad de “caos empírico”, que se derivaría de los que fueron los principios de la primera Crítica incapaces de conseguir un punto de apoyo en el mundo empírico”.

¹² El concepto de contingencia en la *Crítica de la facultad de juzgar* ha sido abordado por Ingrid Bauer-Drevertmann en su artículo “*Der Begriff der Zufälligkeit in der Kritik der ‘Urteilkraft’*”. In: Kantstudien Bd. 56, 1965, p. 497-504. Allí la autora compara el concepto de contingencia tal como aparece en la *Crítica de la razón pura* y en la *Crítica de la facultad de juzgar*. Ella afirma que podría formarse un principio mediante la transformación del tercer postulado del pensamiento empírico, el cual representaría a la noción de contingencia tal como es usada en la tercera *Crítica*: “Ese principio diría: Aquello cuya interdependencia con lo efectivamente real, no está determinado según las condiciones generales de la experiencia, es contingente”. Bauer-Drevertmann (1966:503).

¹³ Esta expresión corresponde a Gerhard Lehman en su obra: *Voraussetzungen und Grenzen systematischer Kantinterpretation*, en: *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Interpretation der Philosophie Kants*, Berlin, 1969, p. 93.

¹⁴ KU L.

¹⁵ KU AA 05:210; AA 05:350; AA 05:380; AA 05:380 Nota al pie.

¹⁶ KU XLII.

¹⁷ Düsing K. (1986:83)

¹⁸ Düsing K. (1986:84)

¹⁹ Allison H. (2001:49) plantea una perspectiva para abordar esta diferencia en la forma de subsumir cuando se trata de la reflexión o de la determinación de la facultad de juzgar. Considera a la noción de armonía en un sentido mínimo o máximo o ideal, con grados de aproximación al ideal. Porque si bien la “Reflexión implica comparación, sin embargo, y dado que una comparación con otras representaciones con el fin de encontrar elementos comunes queda excluida, por la naturaleza de la reflexión de la que se trata aquí, Kant tiene que explicar qué se compara con qué, en esta reflexión. Su respuesta, que figura en el mismo párrafo, es que: “En un juicio meramente reflexivo la imaginación y el entendimiento son considerados como referidos, en general, a la facultad de juzgar (*power of judgment*), en una comparación con el modo como ellos deben relacionarse, en realidad, en el caso de una percepción dada “ (FI 20: 220; 408). En otras palabras, en tales juicios, una comparación se hace entre la relación real de las facultades de que se trata en la percepción de un objeto dado y su relación máxima o ideal, en la que los “dos amigos” trabajan juntos de una manera carente de fricción. O, como estamos a punto de ver, la comparación estética también puede ser entendida como el acto de indagar si, si o si no, a través del sentimiento o de la forma reflexionada de un objeto, en ocasiones, se percibe una armonía libre en la mera reflexión (esto último es lo que se busca indagar). El propio Kant sugiere esta caracterización de dicha comparación en el siguiente pasaje, en el que trata de vincularla, por primera vez la armonía de las facultades, con la forma reflexionada del objeto, y con un nuevo tipo de finalidad, que difiere de la finalidad lógica previamente consideradas: AK. XX, 220-1”. Ese nuevo tipo de finalidad es, claro está, la finalidad formal estética. Fiona Hughes, por su parte, indica que: “Kant no menciona ningún otro principio de juicio distinto del gusto, por lo que no estoy de acuerdo con la sugerencia de Allison, de que el gusto se basa en otro principio, a saber, el principio de la facultad de juzgar en su empleo subjetivo. En mi opinión, el principio del gusto es el único principio que expresa el uso autónomo de la facultad de juzgar. Mi solución parece dar lugar a un resultado preocupante: que la cognición se basa en un principio estético. Hay fuertes razones, tanto independientes como internas a la filosofía de Kant, para resistirse a tal conclusión.” Düsing, por su parte distingue un principio de conformidad a fin universal, que como vemos en el texto equipara con la finalidad formal lógica, y hace depender de él, también al principio del gusto. En el cuerpo del artículo señalo mi criterio al respecto.

²⁰ Ver nota 18.

²¹ En la primera Introducción Kant se refiere a la reflexión de la facultad de juzgar como reflexionante determinante: “La facultad de juzgar es aquí, en su reflexión, al mismo tiempo determinante y su esquematismo transcendental le sirve al mismo tiempo de regla, bajo la que se subsumen intuiciones empíricas dadas”. EE XX 212.

²² EE XX, 214. “El principio de la facultad de juzgar reflexionante, por medio del cual la naturaleza se piensa como sistema según leyes empíricas, es, empero, meramente un principio para el uso lógico de la facultad de juzgar; ciertamente un principio transcendental según su origen, pero sólo para considerar a priori a la naturaleza como calificada para un sistema lógico de su multiplicidad bajo leyes empíricas.”

²³ EE XX, 230.

²⁴ Henry Allison (2001:62) también presenta la diferencia entre las dos referencias al placer que hace Kant en la segunda Introducción: “hemos visto que en la Sección VI de la Segunda Introducción, que Kant intenta demostrar que un sentimiento de placer está relacionado con el cumplimiento de un objetivo de conocimiento, si ese cumplimiento se percibe como dependiente de la armonía contingente de la naturaleza con nuestras exigencias cognitivas. Pero también vimos que un tal placer es completamente diferente del placer desinteresado de gusto.” Esta cuestión se vincula al problema de la diferencia entre finalidad formal lógica y estética.

²⁵ EE XX:249; KU AA 05: XLV. En esta identificación entre facultad de juzgar reflexionante estética y gusto juegan un papel de consideración el §35 y §el 40.

²⁶ EE XX, 221; KU AA 05: XLII-XLIV.

²⁷ Henry Allison (2001:62) En su argumentación respecto a este vínculo, reconstruye analíticamente en cuatro pasos de lo que a su criterio sería el razonamiento que se deriva del texto de la introducción. En dos de esos pasos señala que “el principio de finalidad lógica o formal se dedujo como un principio de los juicios de conocimiento, que, como tales, no tienen nada que ver con el sentimiento”. Luego: “el intento de fundamentar a los juicios estéticos en el principio de finalidad lógica o formal no funciona, ya que la validez de este último no implica incluso la posibilidad de la validez de cualquier caso o ejemplo de forma”.

²⁸ KU AA 05: 234-5.

²⁹ Henry Allison (2001:64) “La verdadera relación entre la finalidad formal o lógica y el gusto no es que la formal sea en sí el principio de la de este último [el gusto], es más bien que el principio que autoriza a la finalidad formal (las condiciones de un uso reflexionante de la facultad de juzgar) es idéntico al principio subyacente a este últimos [el gusto].” Según la lectura que hace Allison, Düsing distingue entre un principio de finalidad formal en general y el principio de finalidad lógica y afirmaría que este último es el que subyace a los juicios estéticos. Dice Allison (2001:63): “Düsing tiene razón tanto al distinguir entre un principio general de finalidad y el principio de finalidad formal o lógica como una forma específica del mismo, y al señalar que Kant a veces los equipara de manera engañosa. (...) Esto se debe a que aún no está claro cómo un principio general de finalidad podría servir para autorizar determinadas afirmaciones del gusto (ya se refieran a la belleza natural o artística). Y, desgraciadamente, Düsing no tiene nada que decir al respecto.” Es cierto que Kant no es especialmente claro al respecto, pero sí es cierto que Kant no multiplica los principios, sino que se trata de un único principio, tal como lo sostenemos en el cuerpo de este artículo.

³⁰ Es interesante que, además de los procesos de cristalización, Kant considera allí también a la belleza de los seres organizados, en los que la naturaleza parece formarse estéticamente para nuestro gusto, sin que ello signifique alterar el enjuiciamiento teleológico de los mismos, enjuiciamiento que considera la forma interna del producto natural: “así también, sin quitar nada al principio teleológico de enjuiciamiento de la organización, en lo que concierne a la belleza de las flores, de las plumas de los pájaros, de las conchas, tanto según su figura como según el color, cabe muy bien pensar que también podría atribuirse belleza a la naturaleza y a su capacidad para formarse estéticamente conforme afines en su libertad, sin fines particulares orientados a ella, según leyes químicas, por acumulación de la materia exigible para la organización”. AA05:349”. Este problema lo he trabajado en el artículo: Die „freien Bildungen“ der Natur. Die mögliche Koexistenz von Mechanismus und Freiheit in der Beurteilung der Schönheit der Kristalle (2015: 2999-3006).

³¹ El juicio estético de lo sublime también señala hacia algo otro, pero no es un objeto de la naturaleza, sino lo suprasensible en nosotros, la determinación moral, y por ello tiene una función fundamental en el enlace de la naturaleza con la moralidad: “lo auténticamente sublime no puede estar contenido en ninguna forma sensible, sino que sólo concierne a ideas de la razón, las que se hacen sentir y se hacen presentes en el ánimo, a pesar de la imposibilidad de exhibirlas adecuadamente, precisamente por esa inadecuación que se deja exhibir sensiblemente”. AA05:245. Por eso, lo sublime no aporta nada al concepto de naturaleza como arte, aunque sí al tránsito de lo sensible a lo suprasensible, de la naturaleza a la moral. Asimismo, en el interés intelectual en lo bello, Kant muestra el enlace entre la belleza y la moralidad, en la figura del alma bella, figura que tanta discusión generó en el romanticismo y, también en y a partir de la crítica de Hegel.

³² KU AA 05:380.

³³ Bartuschat (1972:142-143) afirma que, frente al juicio puro de gusto como juicio desinteresado, “tomar un interés en lo bello significa evidentemente una reflexión sobre lo que sucede en esa satisfacción y, por eso, [significa] aceptar algo exterior a ese acto de satisfacción” (...) “La referencia a la existencia de algo, referencia que reside en el concepto de interés, quiere garantizar, que el acto desinteresado que tiene como objeto a lo bello, encuentra algo que también existe, esto significa que es real y esto significa, nuevamente, que se diferencia de la pura auto-referencialidad, en la que la subjetividad está solo en sí misma. El interés en esa diferencia es un momento indispensable de la misma facultad de juzgar reflexionante”.

³⁴ KU AA 05: 380.

³⁵ De este problema me he ocupado mi artículo: “La naturaleza no es sólo una máquina: del ser organizado a la naturaleza como sistema de fines”, publicado en la revista de filosofía *Estudios Kantianos*.

³⁶ KU AA 05: 380.

³⁷ KU AA05:379

³⁸ KU AA05:381

³⁹ KU AA 05:379.

⁴⁰ Ina Goy (2008:231-3) considera a este párrafo como el más disperso de la Crítica de la facultad de juzgar teleológica, y señala que no hay ningún argumento convincente, de todos los que Kant ensaya allí, que afirme efectivamente la plausibilidad de tal extensión. En cambio, nosotros trabajamos siguiendo a Düsing con la idea de referencialidad que introducen los seres organizados, desde la que es posible comprender la posibilidad de dicha extensión.

⁴¹ KU, AA 05: 279, §30.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Angelus Silesius: "Die Ros ist ohn warum; sie blühet weil sie blühet, sie acht nicht ihrer selbst, fragt nicht, ob man sie siehet." *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*^{B.} 1, 289. *Ohne Warum*.

⁴⁴ KU AA 05:380. Nota al pie de Kant.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ KU AA 05:299

⁴⁷ Una cuestión que ha sido muy discutida constituye el corazón del §42 y es la afinidad entre el sentimiento estético y el sentimiento moral. La argumentación de Kant lo lleva a concluir que, "si a alguien le interesa inmediatamente la belleza de la naturaleza, hay, en efecto, causas para presuponer en él, al menos una predisposición hacia sentimientos moralmente buenos." KU, AA05:301. Georg Kohler (2008:149) señala que "el interés intelectual en lo bello es una especie descendiente (*Abkömmling*) del interés moral de la razón. Por eso Kant condiciona este interés a la formación del carácter moral." Bartuschat (1972:145) indica que, el interés intelectual en lo bello revela la auto-comprensión del ser humano como ser moral, por eso es señal de un alma bella, y es introducido "como un enlace de lo estético con el bien moral documentado en sí mismo. La referencia a la moralidad se introduce, por cierto, repentinamente, sin embargo, no carece de fundamento" (...) "La amalgama de naturaleza y belleza es la que remite a la moralidad" (*ibid.*). Birgit Reckl (2001:157-8) afirma que si nos detenemos en la exposición de juicio estético puro llevada a cabo en la Analítica podría sorprender esta conexión entre el enjuiciamiento estético y el moral. Sin embargo, "Ese enlace, ese "parentesco" -que Kant perspicazmente formula al final del §42- o también "afinidad": (KU V,298), no se podría considerar, desde luego, como posible, si solo se apoyara en las primeras secciones de la Analítica, en las que Kant delimita decisivamente lo estético de lo moral." Esto contrasta con el final de la Analítica en donde lo bello y lo bueno se piensan conjuntamente (§59).

⁴⁸ Georg Kohler (2008:149) señala que, más allá de lo convincente o no de la argumentación de Kant en el §42, este es relevante para la interpretación de la tercera Crítica, puesto que, dicho párrafo: "Es un puntal del tránsito de la doctrina del gusto a la teleología. Precisa qué es lo que separa a la belleza de la naturaleza de lo sublime. Introduce el pensamiento -de manera más clara de lo que sucede en los párrafos anteriores- de una naturaleza que responde efectivamente a los seres humanos.

⁴⁹ KU *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ KU AA 05:299.

⁵¹ KU AA 05:431. La traducción de este pasaje es nuestra.

⁵² KU AA 05:427.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Sabemos que se trata de un concepto complejo, con acepciones relevantes que Kant quiere destacar y su exploración nos llevaría a otras obras anteriores y posteriores a la KU. Nuestro interés es mostrar que aquí Kant no está pensando a la cultura en términos de oposición con la naturaleza sino más bien como "la aptitud de un ser racional para proponerse fines", es decir disposición de la naturaleza en la especie humana, en favor de su determinación propia: la destinación moral de los seres humanos.

⁵⁵ Düsing K. (1989:132).

⁵⁶ *Gunst* lo hemos traducido como se hace habitualmente como "favor", pero no llega a decir todo lo que encierra este término: dar satisfacción, tener una atención, deferencia, benevolencia, don como regalo. A veces hemos puesto favor, don y, otra vez, atención, en el sentido "tener una atención para con alguien". Un trabajo actual sobre los conceptos de *Gunst* y *Gunstbezeugung* lo realiza Daniel Dohrn en "Konzinnität und Kohärenz. Naturschönheit und Natursystem in Kants Kritik der Urteilskraft."

⁵⁷ KU AA 05:459.

⁵⁸ KU AA05:435-6.

⁵⁹ Otfried Höffe (2008:289) analiza y discute el significado del “título” del ser humano como señor de la creación, especialmente por el carácter antropocéntrico que le ha sido adjudicado a esa tesis. Señala que la idea de *titulum* proporciona un fundamento jurídico: “Se trata de una pretensión jurídico-moral con la que Kant enlaza la tesis de su filosofía natural con la filosofía moral, y, específicamente, con su teoría jurídica. A su vez, sale a la luz, ejemplarmente el interés sistemático de la Crítica de la facultad de juzgar”.

⁶⁰ V. Gerhardt/F. Kaulbach (1979:125) “La analogía entre *physis* y *techne* es la presuposición transcendental de la facultad de juzgar. Ella hace posible pensar como compatibles al último fin de la naturaleza con las acciones técnico- prácticas de los seres humanos. Puesto que ella [dicha analogía] se encuentra en el mismo ser humano, presentado como un fin final moral práctico de la naturaleza, hace posible también, pensar un fin final moral práctico de la naturaleza como un todo.”

⁶¹ KU AA05:458.

⁶² KU B XX.

⁶³ KU AA 05:210. Al respecto, Birgit Recki (2008:207) señala que la libertad simbolizada en la belleza es la marca de un ser racional y sensible a la vez: “Lo estético –símbolo de la libertad- tiene significado ejemplar para la autocomprensión de un ser sensible-racional.”

⁶⁴ Karl Düsing (1989: 131-2) interpreta esta incorporación teleológica de la belleza en el sistema de la naturaleza de la siguiente manera: “La experiencia de lo bello se funda en una relación conforme a fin de las formas de la naturaleza para con nuestras facultades de conocimiento. Pero esta relación conforme a fin ofrece al menos la posibilidad, bajo ciertas presuposiciones, de llegar a ser determinada como relación objetivamente conforme a fin. Si sólo por medio de la idea de la naturaleza como sistema de fines se piensa todo orden de lo particular (fundado mediante la finalidad transcendental) y [se piensa] la técnica de la naturaleza como disposición objetivamente conforme a fin, entonces la concordancia de las formas bellas con nuestras facultades de conocimiento, las que, para Kant, también pertenecen al todo de la naturaleza (en la que nosotros mismos somos un miembro), debe ser representada también, como relación de finalidad objetiva.”

⁶⁵ KU AA 05:380.

⁶⁶ Con el enjuiciamiento teleológico de la belleza de la naturaleza Kant le ha abierto la puerta al proyecto romántico de la formación estética del hombre, que encuentra en Schiller su representante eminente.

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KANT AND HEGEL: HOW AN OBJECTION BECOMES PROOF

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Since its Cartesian launch, the modern ontological proof has undergone many vicissitudes that have stood in its way. Criticism, levelled at its argumentative strength, its conclusive efficacy and even its claim to boast the status of proof, in the strict sense of the term, has not ceased but has continued to grow up to the present day. That this should be the case is, moreover, a matter of course, if one takes into account the boldness that generally animates all attempts to deduce a priori the existence of the supreme being. Nor should it be surprising that criticism, even at its most vigorous, has offered, more or less directly, unforeseen resources thanks to which the proof has acquired new strength. Indeed, it could be said that in many circumstances the attacks of detractors have played a greater role in fostering the vitality of the ontological proof than the strenuous defence of its supporters. What is surprising, however is that certain critiques have unwittingly become arguments containing an original reformulation of the ontological proof.

The singular phenomenon of the metamorphosis of an objection into proof is precisely what we intend to consider in this essay, tracing a path that leads from Kant, the author of the objection on which we will focus most, to Hegel. This is because the Hegelian dialectic offers a new way of reading the Kantian critique leading to a possible rehabilitation of a proof that seemed to have its fate sealed.

1. THE KANTIAN OBJECTION TO THE ONTOLOGICAL PROOF

“Being is obviously (*offenbar*) not a real predicate, i.e., a concept of something that could add to the concept of a thing” (A 598/B 626; trans. p.567). The evidence of Kant’s thesis shines through in a rigorous use of language: being is not a real predicate simply because it is a verbal predicate, and to pass off a verbal predicate as a distinctive note containing the determination of a thing is to speak of things incorrectly.

This is well known, as it is also well known that the thesis conveys the critique of the Cartesian a priori argument that Kant transposes filtered through Baumgarten’s scholastic

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systematisation². What has aroused less interest among scholars, however, is the way in which Kant goes on to enunciate his thesis on existence, offering if not a demonstration, then a sort of indirect proof, an argument aimed at bringing out the untenable consequences that would derive from the contrary thesis and that would affect not only the proof in the strict sense, but the entire ontological system on which it is based:

[...] when I think a thing, through whichever and however many predicates I like (even in its thoroughgoing determination), not the least bit gets added to the thing when I posit in addition that this thing is. For otherwise what would exist would not be the same as what I had thought in my concept, but more than that, and I could not say that the very object of my concept exists (KrV, A 600/B 628; trans. pp. 567-568).

Therefore, I could not say that the object of my concept exists because with the addition of existence, conceived as a predicative determination, the notion of the thing would undergo an increase in content that transforms its nature. Thus, if existence added something to the notion of a possible thing, if being were a real predicate, by stating that a thing exists one would be speaking of a thing other than that whose existence is predicated. The existing object would in principle be other than the object thought of in the concept, since the assertion of existence would change its nature.

In highlighting the aporetic results of the thesis that being is a real predicate, Kant thus intends to show how the logic underlying the ontological proof arises from within, since it renders impossible the correspondence of concept and being that the proof also claimed to sanction as the result of that being that bears within itself all perfections.

In essence, the ontological proof is doomed in any case: either being is not a predicate of the thing, and therefore cannot be so even of that most perfect thing that is God, or being is a predicate of the thing but, in this case (already excluded by Kant), any assertion of existence would be destined to come into conflict with itself. Which means that every existing thing would not be true, if by true is meant the conformity of an object with its own concept. And thus even God, I mean the *ens perfectissimum* of the ontological proof, would exist as something other than the concept expressing its possibility.

This, moreover, would be the inevitable result of an operation that Kant judges to be fundamentally contradictory and which consists in introducing “under whatever disguised name” (KrV, A 597/B 625; trans. p. 566) existence into the concept of a thing. That is, existence is infiltrated into the concept under the name of a *realitas*, of a *perfectio*. And it is this ambiguity that Kant intends to dissolve by denying that existence is a real predicate and thus suggesting that we look elsewhere, and not among the distinctive notes that determine the concept of a thing, for the *more* that distinguishes the possible from the existent. Otherwise, to express it with the famous Kantian image, I could not say that I possess a hundred thalers without finding them increased by the mere fact that they are in my estate instead of not being there. Ultimately, any assertion of existence would result in a false assertion.

2. THE REALITY OF THE POSSIBLE

One is tempted to ask whether Kant's reasoning does not conceal a sophism. What does it indeed mean that if existence were a predicate of the thing, to exist would not be the same thing thought in the simple concept? Is it certain that this argument really invalidates the genuine meaning of the ontological proof? Reduced to its *extrema ratio*, the ontological proof says no more than this: to think of God without existence, therefore as only possible, is a contradiction.

If this is the case, to speak of existence as an addition of content, i.e. as a real predicate, would mean nothing other than affirming that we only *truly* think God insofar as we do not think him separate from his existence. Otherwise, not only would we not think God, but we would not think at all, since a perfect being devoid of the perfection of existence would respond to an obvious contradiction; which would even prevent God from becoming the notion of a possible entity. This is what emerges, moreover, from the formula adopted by Descartes in the fifth of the *Meditationes de prima philosophia*:

[...] it is no less contradictory to think of God (that is, a supremely perfect being) lacking existence (that is, lacking some perfection), than it is to think of a mountain without a valley (Descartes, A.T. 7: 66; trans. p. 37).

One might, then, conclude that Kant's reasoning bears within itself an artifice, insofar as it overturns in its favour the terms in which the a priori proof is posited, which starts from the notion of the *perfectissimum*: To the ontological argument that holds that it is not possible to think of God as non-existent without placing a different entity from the *perfectissimum* from which the proof takes its starting point, Kant objects, in fact, that the very conception of existence as a real predicate gives rise to an inevitable discrepancy between the existing thing and the notion that defines its possibility. Which would ultimately mean that existence configures an excess of content, in virtue of which the notion we have in mind when we think of God is transformed when we refer to an entity that is not only *in intellectu* but also *in re*. As we have seen, however, the ontological proof holds that we have no notion of the divine entity in mind except insofar as it is already connected with existence. As if to say, that *more*, in the case of God, is already necessarily implied in the notion by which we think of its nature and thereby its possibility.

On closer inspection, however, the Kantian objection can also be understood on a different level. Indeed, it intercepts a crucial point of the ontological proof that brings into play the thorny question of the mode of existence proper to the divine entity. And it is precisely in providing a determinate concept of such an existence that the ontological proof reveals its deepest deficiency for Kant. In fact, the objection that being is not a real predicate introduces a systematic critique of rational theology which denounces the impossibility of providing a determinate concept of absolutely necessary existence, i.e. of the way in which actual existence and logical necessity can come together.

That the ontological proof, at least in the form Kant is aiming at, claims to do this by sucking existence into the sphere of *perfectiones*, is exactly what the objection aims to refute,

when it argues that an increase in content, an increase in *realitas*, would result in an entirely different content, so that one would not be dealing with the passage from a possible thing to an existing thing, as the proof claims, but with the passage from a thing of a certain nature to an entirely different thing.

The rationalist attempt to conceive of the necessary existence of a being that is *sub specie aeternitatis* essentially consists of the presumption of resetting to zero the ontological distance between essence and existence and understanding the latter as a complement to the former; a complement which, in the case of *the ens perfectissimum*, is in fact necessary. As Descartes' proof predicts, it is proper to God to exist as it belongs to the triangle to have three angles, or to a mountain to have its valley.

More generally, the thesis of existence as *complementum essentiae* is characteristic of the search which *methodically* disregards the fact of existence in order to draw on the *ratio* why something exists rather than not existing. The ambition is to trace a path that from the thing that can exist, from the minimum ontological requirement of being something thinkable, must lead to actual existence as a consequence. In short, it is a question of pausing on the essential dimension that of a thing that first defines its being *something*, and then identifying the reason for its being in act. This is what happens in Descartes starting from his need to show first of all that the representation of the *ens perfectissimum* can be thought of clearly and distinctly and that this is why it is true and not the result of invention. This is made clear in Descartes' reply to those who, repeating against him the objection formulated by Thomas against Anselm, point out the inadequacy of a proof that claims to attribute to God "actual existence" on the basis of the fact that existence must be thought of as inseparable from God by virtue of his name alone (cf. *Primae Objectiones*, A.T. VII, p. 99; trans. p. 57), that is, by virtue of a nominal definition that indicates God as the most perfect being. Descartes replies to this accusation:

But my argument went as follows: what we clearly and distinctly understand to belong to the true and immutable nature, or essence, or form of a thing, can truly be affirmed of that thing. But after having investigated with sufficient care what God is, we clearly and distinctly understand that it belongs to his true and immutable nature that he exists. Thus we can at that point rightfully affirm of God that he exists (*Primae Responsiones*, A.T. 7: 115-116; trans. p. 66-67).

The belonging of existence to the true and immutable nature of the most perfect being is what must be clearly and distinctly conceived in order to be able to show that God actually exists. That is, the transition to God's actual existence must be inscribable in the possibility of clearly and distinctly conceiving the notion of God. The Cartesian wager, in short, fundamentally points to the possibility of first of all ascertaining that the notion of God is not a vague notion, let alone an arbitrary one, but responds to a true and immutable nature.

Thus, God necessarily exists if his concept really means something, if it does not correspond to a mere name. This abiding in the idea, the preliminary distinction in the space of the thinkable between what is real and what is arbitrary, the instance of rigourising the idea of God represents precisely the methodical procedure of the modern ontological proof. Pivotal

to this procedure is the reference to the reality of the possible, understood not in the privative sense of what does not yet exist, but in the ontologically pregnant sense of what is in itself something regardless of the fact that it exists, and which indeed demands to exist precisely in relation to its being the thing that it is, and to its being in one way rather than another.

The type of existence that the modern ontological proof attributes to the supreme being can, therefore, only be made accessible from the metaphysical distinction between the mode of being of essences and the fact that essences can refer to existing entities. There is, in short, a being of things that prescind from their *de facto* existence, from their contingent being, and pertains to their being something real, a *res*, insofar as they cannot be thought of otherwise than as they are thought, in the same way that a triangle cannot be thought of without three angles and three sides, or a mountain cannot be thought of without a valley, to cite the famous Cartesian example again. It is precisely the possibility of a purely rational consideration of things that prescind from their factual existence that allows access to divine reality as that whose essence coincides with existence, insofar as it is not given in the contingent manner in which factual realities are given³. It can be said that God necessarily exists insofar as the thought of his essence, of his possibility, implies existence; which is consistent with the status of the modern a priori proof which, as Descartes makes explicit, is such only insofar as it moves from the notion of a possible being, and not from an existence⁴. What this means, however, is that the ontological proof, in affirming that God is not thinkable without existence, ends up by sucking existence into the sphere of the definition of an entity that is thought of, at least in principle, regardless of its actual existence.

Now, it is precisely against this outcome that Kant's critique of rational theology is directed, reaffirming against the modern ontological proof the a priori undecidability of existence, whether of God or of anything else. To claim to have cognitive access to the reality of entities that are in the mode of essences, therefore irrespective of their contingent existence, of their occurrence in time and space, is to commit oneself to the existence of things whose content can only be accessed by abstracting from the spatio-temporal mode, the only one for Kant in which it is possible to recognise something as existing; therefore, it is to expose oneself to a dialectical conflict of reason.

The Kantian objection must be understood against the background of the critical thesis about the impossibility of human reason to access the existence of things from a consideration that abstracts from their factual existence.

Starting from this objection, Kant rehabilitates, against rationalist metaphysics, a model that intends to valorise the point of view according to which it is not possibility that from which existence can be thought, since existence presents a constitutive trait of surplus, a something more that cannot be sought in the sphere of the notes through which a thing is thinkable, even in its complete determination, but which must be sought elsewhere. Thus, Kant says that what makes the difference between a possible and an existing thing is not "what is posited" but "how it is posited" (BDG, AA 2: 75; trans. p. 120). This difference, which, as is well known, distinguishes the relative position from the absolute position, sanctions the a priori unattainability of existence as a fact that cannot be sucked within the mere possibility

or determinability of the nature of a thing. Existence is not added content, but exceeds in principle what can be thought of as the meaningful content of a thing. Kant's thesis is, in short, that existence simply cannot be *thought*, unless one wishes to condemn any assertion of existence to an inevitable contradiction: "what would exist would not be the same as what I had thought in my concept, but more than that, and I could not say that the very object of my concept exists".

3. GOD IS MORE THAN HIS CONCEPT

Kant's objection is not resolved, however, entirely in the space of a systematic critique of rationalist ontology. It contains within itself the outline for a formulation of the ontological proof in a profoundly renewed key, and this, in a way, goes beyond the author's own intentions. The scandal of an affirmation that contradicts itself, and the objection that the ontological proof leads, if it moves from its own presuppositions, to a God who, insofar as he exists, cannot be identical with the notion we have of him, that is, with the notion that expresses the possibility/ thinkability of God, offer considerable grounds for rewriting, and even rehabilitating, the proof against which the same objection is launched. Moreover, never as in this case can it be said that the criticism by the detractors has contributed more to the renewal of the ontological proof than the strenuous defence by its supporters; and this is because in this case it is the objection itself that becomes a proof of God's existence.

This implies, however, that the material Kant prepares must be reshaped and understood on the basis of a radical refounding of the relationship between thought and being.

This is what happens with Hegel, whose reformulation of the ontological proof goes hand in hand with the reform of logic. Within the framework of this reform, Hegel offers, in fact, an unexpected way to rethink the Kantian objection along the lines of an argument in favour of the actual reality of the concept of the divine: God exists insofar as he denies the simple identity with himself, the identity thought in his abstract notion. The existing God is the God who has become other than himself. The contradiction, the denied identity, does not therefore mark the failure of the proof. Instead, it marks the transition from the abstract notion to the concrete God. And this is because the truth of God cannot be found in a presumed correspondence between the notion we have of Him and an external entity, but must be identified precisely in a non- correspondence. In fact, in the perspective opened up by Hegelian logic, only that which is differentiated in itself, which suffers contradiction with itself, can thereby gain its concrete being.

The emergence of the Hegelian proof at the heart of the Kantian objection can therefore only be fully understood against the backdrop of a radical change in the way of understanding the nature of thought and the concept: thought, like the concept, does not express in Hegel a function of the thinking 'I', but the dynamic process of the real of which the 'I' is itself a result, the ontological consistency of which cannot be isolated from the process that produced it, except at the price of producing an abstract and unilateral representation. As will be seen, the Hegelian rehabilitation of the ontological proof follows the path of this conception

that identifies the essence of the concept in the movement that removes as a mere abstraction any opposition between the thinking I and thought reality.

Now, if it is true that this approach points to a profound distance between Hegel and Kant, it is equally true, however, that it is precisely Kant's demolishing operation that prepares the ground for a search that, like Hegel's, unhinges the paradigm of the true that underpins the rationalist matrix ontology: the existing God of the Hegelian proof is the true, concrete God, not because it corresponds to the notion through which we think of its possibility. On the contrary, the existence of God represents the disproof of such a notion. In this, the Hegelian thesis puts to good use, albeit in a completely unforeseen direction, the Kantian argument that the existent God of the ontological proof does not coincide with the God thought of in the concept.

But let us look more closely at the Hegelian rewriting of the proof.

The attempt to rehabilitate the a priori argument bears no nostalgic trace in Hegel of the past marked by rationalist theology. On the contrary, nothing is further from him than the ontological logic that aims to deduce the existent from the possible as its determination. Against this paradigm Hegel speaks out by explicitly denying, as Kant had already done, that existence can be regarded as a predicative determination of the thing:

Concrete existence, then, is not to be taken here as a *predicate*, or as a *determination* of essence, of which it could be said in a proposition, "essence exists concretely," or "it *has* concrete existence". On the contrary, essence has passed over into concrete existence; concrete existence is the absolute self-emptying of essence, an emptying that leaves nothing of the essence behind (WL, *Werke* 6: 128; trans. p. 422).

The thesis that being adds nothing to the concept, however, finds in Hegel a different motivation from the Kantian one. Hegel does not so much insist on the fact that existence does not constitute an increase in content with respect to the thing thought of as merely possible, but emphasises that the existence of a thing responds to the becoming other of that which is represented through the notion that describes its nature. The passage *into* existence is at the same time the passage *of* essence. As Hegel says, essence has not remained. In fact, it does not exist insofar as it possesses existence as its determination, but insofar as it *becomes* existence; becoming which entails the negative gesture of its removal as mere essence. The inadequacy of the proposition 'essence exists', emphasised by Hegel, concerns precisely the fact that to exist is not and cannot be something that is conceived a priori apart from existence. Thus, Hegel's dialectic rethinks the terms of the Kantian objection according to which, we repeat, "I could not say that the object of my concept exists [...]".

In short, the Hegelian thesis on existence revisits the meaning of the Kantian objection in a direction that leads, however, towards the rehabilitation of the ontological proof. It is the difference between the existent and the abstract notion that we have of it that points the way by which the ontological argument can be renewed under the banner of a criterion of truth that is no longer that of the mere correspondence between thought and being: the concept's entry into existence expresses, in fact, not its external authentication, but the concept's

becoming other than its simple and immediate identity with itself, so that what is real is not the same content expressed by the concept in its abstract form. Instead, what is real is that which results from the negative movement of removing the defect for which the concept would be something merely subjective, the concept of something only possible. Existence is thus not given as the complement of the possible, as its intensification, but of the possible it rather says the perishing⁵.

So, the fact that something other than what is thought of by means of the ontological notion of its possibility exists does not, as the Kantian objection claimed, invalidate the truth of the concept of the thing that exists, but affirms that the truth of the concept cannot be adequately expressed by the proposition in the form of a judgement, and in particular by the proposition that judges the correspondence of the concept to a reality outside thought. Indeed, this would be tantamount on the one hand to reducing the concept to a purely subjective notion, to that which Hegelianally expresses the mere representation of a thing, and on the other hand to pursuing the being of the concept in a supposedly objective counterpart that appeals to the empirical phantasm of bare factual exteriority, and thus to something that, in principle, cannot be indicated as the reality *proper* to the concept, since it rather expresses what the concept is lacking. If it is a matter of correspondence, this is to be understood, according to Hegel, under the banner of a dynamic processuality that characterises the life of the concept insofar as it expresses the self-realising, objectivising impulse (*Trieb*) of thinking:

The idea is the *truth*; for the truth is this, that objectivity corresponds to the concept, – not that external things correspond to my representations; these are only *correct* representations that *I, this person*, have. In the idea is not a matter of an indexical this, it is a matter neither of representations nor of external things⁶.

It is necessary for truth to gain the vantage point of speculative philosophy, where one no longer has to deal with subjective representations that pursue their ontological complement in the giving of external things, but instead has to deal with a reality that shows itself to be self-founded in the movement of the concept. It is in the nature of the concept to remove the defect by which it would be a purely subjective thing, so that it is not what is thought of as merely subjective content that asserts itself as real, as existing, but what constitutes the negation of the merely subjective.

Beginning with this radical shift in perspective, it is no longer a question of understanding whether or not the concept of what we have in our minds responds to something whose being does not depend on being thought of by us, as if to build an argumentative bridge between the subjective and the objective. Instead, it is a matter of understanding that the true reality of the concept lies first and foremost in the negative gesture of removing the opposition between the subjective and the objective.

This is what Hegel states as a corrective to what he sees, not surprisingly, as the deficient form in which the traditional ontological proof is presented:

The concept of the most real essence should contain all realities, including, therefore, the reality of existence. This expresses, however, only the positive side, according to which being is a moment of the

concept, but not the negative side, according to which the one-sidedness of the subjective concept is to be suspended (G.W.F. Hegel, *Enz. A*, §140; trans. p. 117).

Thus reformulated, the ontological proof does not aspire to the achievement of a result that sanctions the truth of what is contained in the premise; on the contrary, it is based on the possibility that the premise, the positive notion of the *perfectissimum*, insofar as it refers to a concept that is only subjective, and therefore lacking, does not remain in simple being⁷, as if it could boast a reality of its own, an existence that concerns it as its own determination, but is removed from itself, so that with it the opposition between the subjective and the objective finally dissolves:

We are not here talking about any adding of being to the concept or about a simple unity of concept and being — expressions like that are misleading. The unity in question is to be grasped rather as an absolute process, as the living activity of God — but in such a way that both sides are also differentiated in it so that it is the absolute activity of eternally producing itself. We have here the concrete representation of God as spirit (G.W.F. Hegel, *VPR III*: 275; trans. p. 356).

The existence of God is not reduced to a determination pertaining to the notion of a thing. Rather, to think it is to think a *difference* that cannot be resolved on the level of the predications that determine the notion of a thing. Kant thinks of this difference in the form of an objection, pointing out the contradiction that would arise from any assertion of existence that claimed to include the actual being of a thing in its notion. Hegel, on the other hand, identifies precisely in this contradiction the decisive passage from concept to existence. As if to say, what Kant detects in the form of an objection Hegel rediscovers under a radically changed sign, as the argument in which the process of the concrete becoming of God is made explicit as a movement of the concept that denies simple identity with itself.

The effort of metaphysical rationalism was all aimed at securing the notion of God to a reality, to a non-arbitrary content, and then deducing its existence as a predicate belonging to its true and immutable nature. But, by the same token, it left unexplained the terms in which such a nature actually existed, or was actually distinguishable from any other essence conceivable as only possible. Ultimately, it left the very being of God unexplained.

The question then arises in the following terms: what marks the transition from God's *reality* to his *actual existence*, from being understood abstractly as the predicate of the possible, to existence understood as the verb, as the act of being? What *more* does God have than any eternal essence such as that of the triangle, which, in a Cartesian sense, we can conceive of regardless of its existence, even though it is something whose nature does not depend on our will. This is precisely the question that metaphysical rationalism would ultimately leave unanswered. It did not conceive the existence, the concrete being of God, it did not conceive his being necessarily in act, that is, the conjunction between eternal being and actual being.

In the light of this perspective, Kant's objection and Hegel's proof can be read as two sides of the same instance of the rigourisation of the concept of the necessary absolute, of a notion of existence that implies the exit from the logical-ontological order of predicates concerning the notion of the nature of a thing. Kant conceives of this surplus as a possible

architectural agreement between theoretical reason and practical reason that identifies in the existence of God the necessary postulate in order to be able to think of the supreme good in the world as realisable as the fulfilment of our moral life. Hegel finds this surplus in the effected dynamic of the concept, in its becoming other than itself.

In conclusion: according to Kant's critique of rationalist ontology, understood in its deepest sense, the concept of the necessary absolute of rational theology remains an empty, indeterminate concept because it cannot express the concrete existence of God. Hegel intends to fill this void on the ground of a logical reform of the concept which, going beyond rationalism and Kant's critique of it, provides the tools for a rehabilitation of the ontological proof. In it, the unity of thought and being, in the concrete sense of actual existence, no longer appears as a presupposition, a given, but as the result of the self-differentiating process that concerns the very nature of the concept. Although with this Hegel shows a decisive distance from Kant, this does not detract from the fact that Hegel, precisely in the space of this distance, capitalises on the disruptive character of the Kantian objection: 'there would not exist exactly the same thing as I thought in the concept'.

Abstract: In many circumstances the attacks of detractors have played a greater role in fostering the vitality of the ontological proof than the strenuous defence of its supporters. What is most surprising, however, is that certain critiques have unwittingly become arguments containing an original reformulation of the ontological proof. The singular phenomenon of the transformation of an objection into proof is precisely what we intend to consider in this essay, tracing a path that leads from Kant, the author of the objection on which we will focus most, to Hegel.

Keywords: Kant, Hegel, Ontological Proof

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² “Baumgarten [...] maintains that it is this which is more in existence than in mere possibility, for it completes that which is left indeterminate by the predicates inhering in or issuing from the essence. But we have already seen that the difference between a real thing and a merely possible thing never lies in the connection of that thing with all the predicates which can be thought in it” (BDG, AA 2: 76; trans. p. 121).

³ In this regard Arnauld emphasises, for example, that it makes no sense to ask why God exists, since God is a being whose existence is the essence, whereas only things in which it is possible to distinguish essence from existence require an efficient cause in order to exist and to be preserved in being (Cfr. *Quartae Obiectiones*, A.T. 7: 213; trans. p. 127). The existence of the necessary being can thus concern only something that is in the manner of essences and not in the manner of things whose existence is distinguishable, as a contingent fact, from essence. That which does not need an efficient cause in order to exist is, precisely, that which, in order to exist, awaits no passage into existence, insofar as it already exists according to its essence. Thus, Descartes will say in substantial agreement with Arnauld, “when the question arises whether something can give itself existence, one must understand this to be equivalent to asking whether the nature or essence of anything is such that it needs no efficient cause in order to exist” (*Quartae Responsiones*, A.T. 7: 240; trans. p. 144).

⁴ The need to rigorise the notion of God as a possible being will become explicit in Leibniz’s reinterpretation of the Cartesian ontological proof. For Leibniz, what distinguishes the proof from a sophism is precisely the showing first of all that the *ens perfectissimum* is possible, that is, that all perfections are compatible with each other and can, therefore, be found in the same subject (cf. for example G.W. Leibniz, GP IV: 405).

⁵ “We may concede that being is not a predicate, but we are not supposed to be adding anything to the concept. Rather we are removing from it the shortcoming that it is only something subjective, not the idea. (In any case it is already very misleading to call each and every existent entity, however bad, a concept). The concept that is only something subjective, separate from being, is a nullity” (G.W.F. Hegel, VPR III: 273; trans. p. 354).

⁶ G.W.F. Hegel, *Enz. C*, § 213; trans. p. 283

⁷ The concept that is only something subjective, separate from being, is a nullity” (G.W.F. Hegel, VPR III: 273; trans. p. 354).

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TRASPASANDO LOS LÍMITES: KANT Y LA CONTRIBUCIÓN INDIRECTA DE LAS IDEAS ESTÉTICAS A LA AMPLIACIÓN DEL CONOCIMIENTO

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES: KANT AND THE INDIRECT CONTRIBUTION OF AESTHETIC IDEAS TO THE BROADENING OF KNOWLEDGE

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1. INTRODUCCIÓN

La investigación que Kant desarrolla en la *Crítica de la razón pura* (KrV) acerca de la posibilidad del uso puro de la razón arroja claramente un resultado que concierne a los límites de la posibilidad de nuestro conocimiento. Sólo los fenómenos pueden ser objetos de experiencia. Lo suprasensible es, pues, absolutamente incognoscible. Las ideas de la razón, de las que el autor habla en la *Dialéctica Trascendental*, remiten a algo que se encuentra más allá de lo empíricamente dado, y que, por ende, puede ser pensado pero no conocido. Ellas confieren unidad sistemática a los conocimientos alcanzados por el entendimiento, dirigiendo las acciones que éste realiza hacia a una suerte de foco imaginario que se halla enteramente por fuera de los límites de la experiencia; y al hacerlo, generan la ilusión, inevitable y necesaria, de estar referidas a objetos suprasensibles (KrV A 642 = B 670/A 647 = B 675).

Las limitaciones que establece la teoría respecto de la posibilidad del conocimiento no se reducen, sin embargo, solamente a la conocida distinción entre lo fenoménico y lo nouménico, y a la tesis de que sólo puede ser conocido lo fenoménicamente dado. Aun dentro del campo de lo fenoménico, la distinción entre fenómenos externos y fenómenos internos nos enfrenta nuevamente con problemas que conciernen a nuestra capacidad para conocer. En efecto, algunos pasajes de la segunda edición de la KrV, como, por ejemplo, el de la “Refutación del idealismo” (KrV B 274-279) o el de la “Observación general sobre el sistema de los principios” (KrV B 288-294), dejan entrever cierta dificultad para la aplicación de las categorías en el

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ámbito de la intuición interna. Los fenómenos que dan lugar al aparecer de nosotros mismos, y que deberían hacer posible el auto-conocimiento, se suceden sin cesar en el tiempo, de modo que no hay nada permanente en el sentido interno que permita la aplicación de la categoría de sustancia. Y siendo ésta, a su vez, condición para la aplicación de las otras dos categorías de relación, nos encontramos con que los fenómenos internos son difícilmente conceptualizables bajo, al menos, algunas de las categorías. El sentido interno deja aparecer un yo fenoménico desustancializado que no se sujeta a algunas de las condiciones que hacen posible la constitución de un orden objetivo.²

El idealismo trascendental traza, pues, los límites de nuestra capacidad para conocer en dos direcciones contrapuestas: las ideas de la razón no dan lugar a un conocimiento objetivo porque no hay intuición que les corresponda, y el contenido intuitivo del sentido interno difícilmente da lugar a un conocimiento objetivo, porque no hay permanencia allí que permita la aplicación de la categoría de sustancia.

La riqueza y complejidad de la teoría que Kant está proponiendo no nos deja, sin embargo, detenidos frente a estas restricciones impuestas desde la perspectiva epistemológica. La articulación de las tres *Críticas* abre la posibilidad de ir más allá de los límites que presentan nuestras facultades de conocimiento, proponiendo nuevas perspectivas que complementan la estrictamente cognitiva. En el trabajo que presentamos a continuación, nos proponemos demostrar que las ideas estéticas, sobre las que Kant habla en el contexto del análisis de las características del arte bello que realiza en la *Crítica de la facultad de juzgar* (KU), colaboran, de algún modo, en la flexibilización de los límites que presenta nuestra capacidad para conocer. Si bien estas ideas son representaciones intuitivas que no tienen una función cognitiva, dan lugar, no obstante, a nuestro entender, a efectos cognitivos indirectos que amplían nuestros conocimientos de tres maneras diferentes: por un lado, sensibilizan las ideas de la razón, “acercando” intuitivamente el contenido de representaciones para las cuales no hay ningún objeto intuitivamente dado; por otro lado, enriquecen nuestra experiencia cotidiana y la ponen bajo una nueva luz que nos empuja más allá de los límites dentro de los cuales ella tiene lugar; por último, cuando esta experiencia cotidiana se refiere a fenómenos internos, las ideas estéticas operan como vehículos de comunicación universal de fenómenos difícilmente objetivables. Nos interesa particularmente atender al primer y al tercer tipo de ampliación del conocimiento que producen las ideas estéticas, ya que ellos suponen una flexibilización de los límites que establece la teoría para nuestras capacidades cognitivas en las dos direcciones antes mencionadas.

Para esclarecer cómo se producen estos efectos cognitivos indirectos, analizaremos, en primer lugar, la caracterización kantiana de las ideas estéticas y su relación con la concepción del genio. En segundo lugar, intentaremos mostrar cómo las ideas estéticas expanden los conceptos o afectos involucrados en ellas, enriqueciendo, a través de la experiencia de lo bello, tanto el pensamiento de las ideas de la razón como la experiencia ordinaria de fenómenos internos difícilmente objetivables.

2. EL GENIO COMO FACULTAD DE LAS IDEAS ESTÉTICAS

Los párrafos de la KU dedicados al análisis del arte bello nos introducen en una propuesta acerca de las condiciones de posibilidad de la creación de la belleza que es, sin duda, sorprendente por la complejidad y riqueza de las tesis que Kant va desarrollando. Dentro de esta propuesta, la interrelación entre su concepción del genio y su concepción de las ideas estéticas ocupa un lugar central. El genio es precisamente la facultad de las ideas estéticas (KU 05:344).³ Se trata de un talento innato, que no puede ser enseñado ni aprendido, gracias al cual la naturaleza da la regla al arte (KU 05: 308-311). El genio es un favorecido de la naturaleza. Si bien hay cierta intencionalidad por detrás de toda producción de una obra de arte, el genio no se atiene a una regla precedentemente dada, ni puede traducir en preceptos los pasos que siguió para la creación de lo bello. El talento del artista no puede ser enseñado ni aprendido. Se trata de un don natural que consiste en una especial proporción entre las facultades, gracias a la cual el genio tiene la capacidad de crear belleza. Esta creación no tiene lugar siguiendo un plan determinado que el artista pueda transmitir a otros para que logren un producto similar. Homero, por ejemplo, no sabría decir qué reglas siguió para hallar las ideas que presenta en su poesía (KU 05: 309). El genio crea la regla junto con la obra.⁴ Su característica principal es la originalidad. La regla que subyace a la obra será luego abstraída, convirtiéndose en un parámetro para el juicio y en un modelo, no para ser imitado, sino para despertar en otros artistas su propio talento. En este sentido, el genio se diferencia tanto de aquellos que crean un producto del arte mecánico, como de aquellos que contribuyen con grandes descubrimientos al avance de las ciencias. Los productos del arte mecánico se elaboran siguiendo un concepto que concierne a la perfección de la cosa producida. Existen aquí ciertas reglas que deben ser aprendidas e imitadas para alcanzar lo que se ha de producir. En el caso de los descubrimientos científicos, si bien no se basan ellos mismos en el aprendizaje y la imitación, es posible reproducir los pasos que se han seguido para alcanzarlos, y llegar, de esta manera, a resultados similares. Los más grandes descubrimientos difieren, pues, sólo en grado del arduo trabajo imitativo del aprendiz (KU 05: 309). Nadie puede, en cambio, convertirse en un gran poeta por muchas que sean las reglas que se le enseñen para escribir poesía.

Kant destaca, sin embargo, que el talento del genio no reside sólo en su originalidad. Hay cierta corrección académica en la obra que debe ser entrenada y trabajosamente alcanzada, de manera tal que no se dé una originalidad sin sentido, sino una originalidad *ejemplar* que pueda ser seguida por otros.⁵ El talento del genio proporciona el material para los productos del arte; pero para lograr la forma adecuada, se requieren la práctica y la laboriosa repetición de una serie de intentos que lleven gradualmente a perfeccionar el resultado.⁶ La obra bella no surge del mero juego libre de la imaginación, sino de un armónico encuentro entre este libre juego y el operar del entendimiento. Así como el juicio de gusto supone un óptimo acuerdo entre las facultades, la creación de belleza descansa también en una especial proporción entre ellas que el genio recibe, como un don, de manos de la naturaleza.

Esta especial proporción entre las facultades del genio se resume en un principio de animación en la mente al que Kant denomina “espíritu” (*Geist*). Muchas veces, al contemplar una obra, reconocemos que, si bien está adecuadamente elaborada y organizada, hay algo que

está faltando. Ella carece de espíritu. El espíritu, en sentido estético, da lugar a un inusitado movimiento del pensamiento que se produce ante la contemplación de lo bello. Son precisamente las ideas estéticas las que producen este estado de animación de la mente. El espíritu no es otra cosa más que la facultad para la presentación (*Darstellung*) de las ideas estéticas (KU 05: 313).

Kant dedica particularmente los §§ 49 y 57 de la KU a la caracterización de este tipo de ideas. Ellas son representaciones intuitivas, producidas por la imaginación, que se destacan por estimular un movimiento ilimitado del pensamiento (KU 05: 315) que no puede ser conceptualmente aprehendido, ni puede volverse enteramente inteligible a través del lenguaje (KU 05:314). En este sentido, las ideas estéticas son la contrapartida de las ideas de la razón. Mientras que éstas son representaciones conceptuales a las cuales no corresponde ninguna intuición, las ideas estéticas son, en cambio, representaciones intuitivas para las cuales ningún concepto es totalmente adecuado.

Aun así, hay un cierto núcleo conceptual en la idea estética. Pero a él se agregan representaciones intuitivas suplementarias, a las que Kant denomina atributos estéticos, que lo expanden ilimitadamente. Los atributos estéticos extienden la imaginación hacia un campo inconmensurable de representaciones asociadas con el concepto, desbordándolo a través de un movimiento del pensamiento que no puede ser capturado por expresión lingüística alguna. Así, por ejemplo, nos dice Kant, el águila de Júpiter, con el rayo en sus garras, es un atributo estético del poderoso rey del cielo (KU 05: 315). No se trata de un atributo lógico contenido en el concepto. Los atributos lógicos no generan un movimiento del pensamiento que nos lleva más allá de lo que está contenido en el concepto mismo. Los atributos estéticos, en cambio, impulsan la imaginación en todas direcciones, dando origen a una totalidad que no puede ya ser conceptualmente aprehendida.⁷ En este sentido, el genio tiene la capacidad de volver universalmente comunicable, a través de las ideas estéticas, un estado inefable de la mente.

Kant destaca que la facultad de las ideas estéticas se muestra, en su máxima expresión, especialmente en la poesía. En uno de sus poemas, Federico II nos dice: “Partamos de la vida sin un murmullo y sin arrepentimiento, dejando atrás el mundo repleto de buenas obras. Así el sol, tras completar su recorrido del día, esparce todavía una suave luz a través del cielo, y los últimos rayos que envía al aire son sus últimos suspiros por el bien del mundo” (KU 05: 315). Vemos aquí cómo la idea de una disposición cosmopolita hacia el final de la vida se ve vivificada por una serie de imágenes que evocan sensaciones y sentimientos asociados a un bello atardecer. Las ideas estéticas con las que juega el autor hacen que el contenido del poema no pueda ser conceptualmente parafraseable. Cualquier paráfrasis conceptual detendría el movimiento libre de la imaginación que es propio del placer que produce una obra bella.

Esta inadecuación conceptual para capturar el contenido de las ideas estéticas hace que ellas no puedan dar lugar a un conocimiento objetivo. Sin embargo, en la medida en que estas ideas producen una animación de las facultades cognitivas, ellas contribuyen, nos dice Kant, indirectamente al conocimiento (KU 05: 317). Intentaremos elucidar, en el apartado que sigue, de qué manera las ideas estéticas tienen estos efectos cognitivos indirectos.

3- LAS IDEAS ESTÉTICAS COMO REPRESENTACIONES NO COGNITIVAS QUE CONTRIBUYEN INDIRECTAMENTE AL CONOCIMIENTO.

Como ya mencionamos al comienzo de este trabajo, la teoría que Kant nos está proponiendo no nos deja irremediamente detenidos frente a los límites que nuestras facultades presentan a la hora de alcanzar un conocimiento objetivo. La vivificación recíproca de las facultades que se produce tanto en la creación como en la contemplación de lo bello, flexibilizan esos límites, acercándonos, de alguna manera, a aquello que es difícilmente accesible desde un punto de vista cognitivo. En este sentido, las ideas estéticas trazan puentes, a nuestro entender, en dos direcciones contrapuestas: por un lado, sensibilizan las ideas de la razón, y, por otro, vuelven universalmente comunicables fenómenos internos difícilmente objetivables.

3.1- LA SENSIBILIZACIÓN DE LAS IDEAS DE LA RAZÓN

En el párrafo anterior, habíamos mencionado que, si bien las ideas estéticas son representaciones intuitivas, hay un núcleo conceptual en ellas que se ve desbordado por la adición de atributos estéticos, de modo tal que la idea estética rebalsa intuitivamente la posibilidad de ser conceptualmente aprehendida. Este núcleo conceptual es frecuentemente una idea de la razón. Los poetas, dice Kant, nos hablan de seres invisibles, de la eternidad, del reino de los bienaventurados, etc.; pero todas estas ideas, en el contexto del poema, se ven estéticamente expandidas. Las ideas estéticas nos empujan más allá de los límites de la experiencia, y, al hacerlo, nos acercan, a la vez, intuitivamente, ideas de la razón para las cuales no hay ninguna intuición que les corresponda, confiriéndoles la apariencia de una realidad objetiva (KU 05: 314). La idea de la razón se ve, de esta manera, expandida de un modo ilimitado. La imaginación creativa pone en movimiento la facultad de las ideas intelectuales (la razón), llevándola a pensar más que lo que está contenido en el concepto (KU 05: 315).

Cuando contemplamos, por ejemplo, La Piedad de Miguel Ángel,⁸ nos encontramos con una multiplicidad de atributos estéticos que sensibilizan la idea de que la muerte tiene un significado trascendente. El rostro de la virgen no expresa dolor, sino una profunda serenidad. María se inclina hacia el cuerpo sin vida de Jesucristo con una actitud contemplativa que da cuenta de la certeza de que esa muerte tiene un sentido. Las posiciones de sus brazos componen un todo que nos remite a la idea de una contención compasiva y, a la vez, a la idea de una absoluta entrega. Con la mano derecha sostiene el cuerpo inerte de Cristo, mientras que extiende la izquierda en una posición de plegaria. Todos sus gestos expresan un sentimiento de aceptación del sacrificio. Por otra parte, su rostro llamativamente juvenil, simboliza, según el propio Miguel Ángel, su eterna virginidad. El juego de luces y sombras que producen los pliegues de la túnica y el manto de María confieren al conjunto una indecible belleza. La estructura triangular de la obra proporciona a las imágenes una articulación equilibrada y armónica. Miguel Ángel encarna, sin duda, el talento del genio. Tiene la capacidad innata de encontrar los atributos estéticos que expanden ilimitadamente un concepto, y de conferirles una unidad armónica gracias a la cual la disposición de la mente producida por las ideas estéticas presentadas se vuelve universalmente comunicable. La idea racional de trascendencia y la de

la virtud de la piedad se ven, de alguna manera, desbordadas por toda una serie de imágenes que las vivifican intuitivamente, y que tienen efectos cognitivos indirectos en la medida en que animan las facultades de conocimiento sensibilizando algo que nunca puede ser intuitivamente aprehendido. En esta función expansiva, las ideas estéticas trazan puentes entre lo sensible y lo suprasensible, flexibilizando los rígidos límites que separan lo cognoscible de lo incognoscible.

Cabe destacar que aquí las ideas estéticas presentan indirectamente un concepto a la manera en que lo hacen los símbolos. Kant dedica el § 59 de la KU a caracterizar las representaciones simbólicas en el contexto de su tesis de que la belleza es un símbolo de la moralidad. Si bien el autor llama la atención particularmente sobre la belleza natural como símbolo del bien, la tesis también es aplicable a toda forma de belleza, incluida la artística. Nos interesa, de todos modos, atender aquí no tanto a estos efectos prácticos de la belleza, sino más bien a los efectos *cognitivos* indirectos que producen los símbolos, a fin de esclarecer de qué manera las ideas estéticas cumplen una función mediadora entre lo sensible y lo suprasensible.

Kant comienza por destacar, en el párrafo recién mencionado, que no hay, para las ideas de la razón, intuición que les sea adecuada, y que, por este motivo, tampoco puede haber un conocimiento teórico de ellas. A los conceptos puros del entendimiento les corresponden intuiciones dadas *a priori*: los esquemas trascendentales. Las ideas de la razón, en cambio, sólo pueden ser presentadas en la intuición de una manera indirecta a través de los símbolos.⁹ Estos son un tipo de representación intuitiva que cumple la función de presentar indirectamente un concepto por medio de la analogía (KU 05: 352). Kant subraya que, en esta presentación indirecta, en la que están contenidas intuiciones empíricas, la facultad de juzgar lleva a cabo una doble tarea: por un lado, aplica un concepto al objeto de una intuición sensible, y, por otro, aplica luego la regla de reflexión sobre esa intuición a un objeto completamente diferente, para el cual el primero funciona como símbolo. Así, por ejemplo, nos dice Kant, un cuerpo animado podría ser la representación simbólica de un estado monárquico gobernado por leyes internas para el pueblo. Una máquina, como ser un molino, podría, en cambio, ser la representación simbólica de un estado monárquico gobernado por una voluntad singular absoluta (KU 05: 352). En esta doble tarea de la facultad de juzgar, se traslada el modo en que reflexionamos sobre un objeto de la intuición hacia un concepto completamente diferente, para el cual no hay, tal vez, ninguna intuición que le corresponda directamente. La analogía no se establece entre el símbolo y lo simbolizado, sino más bien entre las maneras en que reflexionamos sobre ambos. Si volvemos sobre el ejemplo de La Piedad de Miguel Ángel, el gesto de entrega y apertura de la mano extendida y abierta de María simboliza la apertura y total entrega a Dios de su espíritu. La dimensión de su cuerpo, desproporcionadamente grande, simboliza (más allá de cuestiones relacionadas con la perspectiva y la composición armónica de la obra) su grandeza espiritual. El genio de Miguel Ángel, y su capacidad para descubrir las ideas estéticas adecuadas, dándoles unidad en un todo que ya no es conceptualmente aprehensible, nos empuja más allá de los límites de la experiencia y, a la vez, nos acerca intuitivamente lo que está más allá del límite. Al contemplar la obra, las ideas estéticas que ella presenta generan un intenso movimiento del pensamiento que desborda los atributos lógicos contenidos en las ideas de la razón que están allí involucradas. La imaginación, en su libre juego, expande intuitivamente los conceptos. Y si bien las ideas estéticas no cumplen una función cognitiva, dan lugar, en esta animación

de nuestras facultades de conocimiento, a efectos cognitivos indirectos ya que presentan intuitivamente algo que, en rigor, no puede ser intuitivamente dado.

3.2- LA FLEXIBILIZACIÓN DE LOS LÍMITES DEL CONOCIMIENTO DE FENÓMENOS INTERNOS DIFÍCILMENTE OBJETIVABLES.

Habíamos mencionado anteriormente que las ideas estéticas colaboran en la flexibilización de los límites del conocimiento en dos direcciones contrapuestas: por un lado, sensibilizan las ideas de la razón, y, por otro, colaboran en la universal comunicabilidad de fenómenos internos difícilmente objetivables. Este segundo tipo de efecto cognitivo de las ideas estéticas nos enfrenta con diversos interrogantes: en primer lugar, los textos parecen sugerir que el núcleo conceptual de las ideas estéticas ha de ser siempre una idea de la razón o, más específicamente aún, una idea moral. Pero si esto es así, la función expansiva de las ideas estéticas no podría darse en relación con conceptos empíricos ni en relación con fenómenos internos difícilmente objetivables. Dicho de otra manera, no podría darse el segundo efecto cognitivo indirecto que habíamos mencionado. Para elucidar esta cuestión, es menester, a la vez, responder a otros problemas. Aun admitiendo que el núcleo conceptual de la idea estética pueda ser un concepto empírico, cabe preguntarse si cualquier concepto empírico puede ocupar ese lugar, y en qué sentido la idea estética expandiría un concepto para el cual, por ser empírico, ya habría intuiciones sensibles que le corresponden. Por otra parte, habría que analizar si esa función expansiva tiene connotaciones especiales cuando el concepto empírico en cuestión se refiere a estados internos difícilmente objetivables. Y, por último, es preciso indagar la posibilidad de que esa función expansiva se opere no ya sobre un concepto empírico referido a un estado interno, sino sobre un afecto, es decir, sobre el fenómeno interno mismo.

Respecto de la primera cuestión, muchos intérpretes han puesto el acento en la referencia de la obra de arte a ideas morales o a ideas de la razón.¹⁰ En efecto, los textos kantianos parecen ir, en gran medida, en esta dirección. Los ejemplos que se proponen en el § 49 hacen referencia, todos ellos, a ideas de la razón: la idea del poderoso rey del cielo (Júpiter), la idea moral de una disposición cosmopolita o la idea de virtud (KU 05: 315-316). En el § 52, Kant dice expresamente que, si el arte bello no guarda una relación, cercana o lejana, con ideas morales, se transforma en mera diversión (KU 05:326). No obstante ello, es menester admitir que el texto nos habla también de conceptos empíricos – como los de amor, muerte y fama – que podrían ser vivificados o expandidos a través de las ideas estéticas. En este caso, nos dice Kant, los conceptos se sensibilizan, llevándolos más allá de los límites de la experiencia, con una completitud para la cual no hay ejemplo dado en la naturaleza; la imaginación imita aquí a la razón alcanzando un máximo. Ahora bien, si esto es así, es preciso admitir que las ideas estéticas pueden expandir no solamente ideas de la razón, sino también conceptos empíricos. Nos enfrentamos, en consecuencia, con una de las múltiples tensiones que se presentan en estos pasajes, y que es preciso resolver de alguna manera. El texto ofrece un único ejemplo de este tipo de expansión. Cierta poeta, nos dice Kant, describe un bello amanecer de la siguiente manera: “El sol nació, como nace la calma a partir de la virtud”.¹¹ En este caso, una idea de la razón, la idea de virtud, vivifica el concepto empírico de “amanecer”. Más

precisamente, aclara Kant, lo que lo vivifica no es la idea misma, sino ciertas connotaciones estéticas asociadas a ella. Los sentimientos de paz y serenidad que van de la mano con la idea de virtud vivifican el concepto empírico de “amanecer”. Vemos aquí que, si bien el concepto que la idea estética expande es empírico, se presenta también en el poema una idea moral. En el único ejemplo que Kant ofrece, la tensión antes mencionada se resuelve: el poema no es un mero entretenimiento porque hace referencia a una idea moral, pero, a la vez, lo que se expande estéticamente no es esta idea, sino un concepto empírico. El primer interrogante que habíamos planteado se responde, pues, afirmativamente. Las ideas estéticas pueden no sólo expandir ideas de la razón, sino también conceptos empíricos sin que la obra se convierta, por ello, en un mero entretenimiento. Y si tomamos en consideración la tesis kantiana de que el arte describe bellamente cosas que podrían no ser bellas, creemos que, en principio, cualquier concepto empírico podría ser estéticamente expandido.¹²

Consideramos, sin embargo, que, respecto de esta cuestión, cabe aún preguntarse si los conceptos empíricos pueden ser estéticamente expandidos sólo en el caso de que la obra haga referencia explícita también a ideas morales o, en general, a ideas de la razón. En la medida en que Kant propone este único ejemplo, es difícil dar una respuesta definitiva a este interrogante. Creemos, sin embargo, que, aun en aquellas obras de arte en las que no hay una referencia expresa a ideas de la razón, las ideas estéticas pueden, de todos modos, cumplir la función de expandir conceptos empíricos, sin que por ello la obra se convierta en un mero entretenimiento. El poema de Miguel Hernández “Sino sangriento” podría ejemplificar el modo en que esta expansión de los conceptos empíricos tiene lugar.¹³ En su última estrofa, nos dice el poeta:

Me dejaré arrastrar hecho pedazos,
ya que así se lo ordenan a mi vida
la sangre y su marea,
los cuerpos y mi estrella ensangrentada.
Seré una sola y dilatada herida
hasta que dilatadamente sea
un cadáver de espuma: viento y nada.

Vemos cómo, en este poema, los conceptos que están en juego no son ya ideas de la razón. Miguel Hernández nos está hablando de destrucción y de muerte. La imaginación juega aquí libremente desbordando estos conceptos y creando asociaciones, que no son las habituales, con otros conceptos empíricos como los de estrella, espuma y viento. En este libre juego de imágenes, muerte y espuma, sangre y viento, componen un todo que ya no es parafraseable o conceptualmente aprehensible. No se trata aquí de describir los atributos lógicos contenidos en los conceptos empíricos de muerte y destrucción, sino de vivificar estos conceptos a través de

una multiplicidad de imágenes –los atributos estéticos de la obra- expandiéndolos de un modo ilimitado.

Ahora bien, ¿qué podría significar esta expansión en el caso de conceptos para los cuales ya hay intuiciones empíricas que les corresponden? No se trata ahora de sensibilizar ideas de la razón confiriéndoles algún correlato intuitivo. El correlato intuitivo ya está dado por el carácter empírico del concepto. Según Matherne (2013: 36), tal expansión radicaría en agregar al “contenido lógico” del concepto, que funda nuestro conocimiento teórico, un “contenido estético” que incluye conexiones subjetivas y sentimientos estéticos que enriquecen nuestra comprensión del concepto en cuestión. Creemos, sin embargo, que Kant está haciendo referencia a algo más que un enriquecimiento de nuestra experiencia ordinaria. Como habíamos mencionado más arriba, en esta expansión los conceptos son llevados más allá de los límites de la experiencia, con una completitud para la cual no hay ejemplo dado en la naturaleza. La imaginación, sostiene Kant, imita aquí a la razón alcanzando un máximo (KU 05: 314). Los conceptos se expanden, al parecer, en una dirección inversa a aquella que tenía lugar en la sensibilización de las ideas de la razón. Las ideas estéticas no nos acercan ahora sensiblemente algo que está más allá de los límites de la experiencia, sino que desplazan lo fenoménico más allá de estos límites, poniéndolo bajo una nueva luz que lo arranca de su dimensión cotidiana. Los conceptos de “destrucción” y de “muerte” no nos producen ninguna experiencia estética. Pero puestos en el contexto de la obra de arte, dan lugar a un sentimiento de belleza que los transforma.¹⁴ La imaginación juega libremente; y en este intenso movimiento del pensamiento, ellos alcanzan un máximo para el cual no hay ejemplo dado en la naturaleza. El artista crea algo nuevo a partir de un material empíricamente dado; y, al hacerlo, traza puentes que nos empujan más allá de los límites de la experiencia, generando una mediación entre lo sensible y lo suprasensible. Esta mediación se da claramente en el caso de que las ideas estéticas estén sensibilizando ideas de la razón. Pero, aun en el caso de que ellas estén expandiendo conceptos empíricos, esta mediación también tiene lugar, ya que la vivificación recíproca de las facultades nos empuja más allá de los límites de la experiencia dando lugar a efectos cognitivos indirectos que no sólo la enriquecen, sino que además nos ponen en conexión con algo que es, en principio, incognoscible. Esta mediación se da, desde la perspectiva kantiana, en toda obra de arte. Y si esto es así, la idea indeterminada de lo suprasensible está involucrada en toda creación de belleza. Aunque no haya en la obra una referencia explícita a ideas de la razón, aunque los conceptos que las ideas estéticas expanden sean todos ellos empíricos, la idea de lo suprasensible ocupa, de todas maneras un lugar central, ya que el movimiento del pensamiento que la obra genera nos empuja hacia algo que es más que naturaleza. Por tal motivo, el arte bello nunca es mero entretenimiento. No es preciso, a nuestro entender, que el núcleo conceptual de la idea estética sea una idea de la razón. Tampoco, al parecer, es preciso que haya ideas de la razón vivificando los conceptos empíricos involucrados en la obra, como en el caso del poema citado por Kant. Es el movimiento mismo del pensamiento que la idea estética provoca, independientemente de su contenido, lo que nos remite a una idea de la razón: la idea de lo suprasensible, la cual está a la base de todo juicio de gusto sin determinarlo.¹⁵

Por lo que hemos dicho hasta aquí, esta mediación entre lo sensible y lo suprasensible se da en toda obra de arte. Ya sea que la idea estética expanda una idea de la razón sensibilizándola,

o que expanda un concepto empírico empujándonos más allá de los límites de la experiencia, ella, en su función mediadora, da lugar a efectos cognitivos indirectos que flexibilizan los límites de lo cognoscible.

Ahora bien, habíamos dejado planteada la pregunta acerca de qué connotaciones especiales podrían tener estos efectos cognitivos indirectos en el caso de que los conceptos empíricos estéticamente expandidos se refieran a fenómenos internos. Para dar respuesta a esta pregunta, volvamos por un momento al poema de Miguel Hernández. Los conceptos estéticamente expandidos no son ideas de la razón relacionadas con el significado trascendente de la muerte, como ocurría con la Piedad de Miguel Ángel, sino conceptos empíricos referidos en gran medida a un profundo sentimiento de dolor frente a la destrucción provocada por la guerra. Los atributos estéticos que se presentan en la obra dan lugar a un intenso movimiento del pensamiento. En un libre juego de imágenes, el poeta nos comunica ese dolor describiéndose a sí mismo como una herida que se dilata indefinidamente hasta convertirse en espuma y viento. El dolor lo abarca todo. La muerte es la desaparición completa. Las ideas estéticas que el poeta elige tienen aquí también efectos cognitivos indirectos. Pero ya no se trata de la sensibilización de ideas de la razón, como en la obra de Miguel Ángel, sino de conceptos empíricos referidos a fenómenos internos que el talento del genio vuelve universalmente comunicables. El concepto de “dolor” se expande a través de una multiplicidad de atributos estéticos. El artista tiene la capacidad de expresar bellamente este concepto. Y la superlativa armonía entre las facultades, que hace posible la creación de lo bello, se transmite a quien contempla la obra dando lugar a un sentimiento de placer en el que las ideas estéticas se vuelven vehículo de comunicación de este estado inefable de la mente, comunicando, a la vez, el concepto de “dolor” que están expandiendo. En su expansión, el concepto se enriquece a través de los atributos estéticos que el artista propone, generando un movimiento del pensamiento que nos empuja más allá de lo empíricamente dado. La obra produce, pues, efectos cognitivos indirectos, en cuanto da lugar a distintos tipos de mediaciones que flexibilizan los límites de nuestras facultades de conocimiento. Por un lado, genera una mediación entre lo sensible y lo suprasensible, en la medida en que el movimiento del pensamiento que originan las ideas estéticas nos lleva más allá de los límites de la experiencia. Pero por otro lado también comunica un concepto referido a un fenómeno interno que, de acuerdo con los principios trascendentales de las analogías de la experiencia, resultaría difícilmente objetivable, puesto que sería el estado transitorio de un yo fenoménico desustancializado. Ya no se trata ahora de la incognoscibilidad de lo suprasensible, sino de un tipo de fenómeno que no se ajusta totalmente a las condiciones de objetivación que la teoría misma propone. La vía estrictamente cognitiva nos detiene frente a este límite. Pero a través del juego y vivificación de las facultades que va de la mano con las ideas estéticas, esta limitación se flexibiliza. Gracias a la capacidad para crear belleza, el talento del genio da lugar a la universal comunicabilidad de estados internos. Ante todo, es capaz de volver universalmente comunicable el placer relacionado con el máximo grado de armonía entre las facultades que se produce en la contemplación de lo bello. Pero además, en la medida en que las ideas estéticas son el vehículo de comunicación de este estado inefable de la mente, el genio vuelve, a la vez, universalmente comunicables los contenidos que estas ideas representan. Al expandir el concepto empírico de “dolor”, el fenómeno interno al cual éste se refiere se nos hace presente

a través de una experiencia estética, flexibilizando, de alguna manera, los límites que supone la objetivación del fenómeno.¹⁶

Esto nos lleva directamente a intentar dar respuesta al último de los interrogantes que habíamos planteado, i. e. si las ideas estéticas pueden expandir no ya un concepto empírico referido a un fenómeno interno, sino un afecto, es decir, el fenómeno interno mismo. Kant da una respuesta afirmativa a esta cuestión cuando se refiere a la música sin texto. El tema de la obra no es, en este caso, un concepto, sino un afecto. Las ideas estéticas lo expanden a través de una multiplicidad de sonidos dispuestos en ciertas proporciones matemáticas que dan lugar a una notable riqueza de pensamiento (KU 05: 329). El placer que tiene lugar aquí no se basa simplemente en el carácter agradable de las sensaciones. Si así fuera, la música no sería un arte bello, sino un arte relacionado con el agrado. Lo que permite apreciar la belleza de la obra no es el mero juego de impresiones sensibles, sino *el juicio sobre la forma* en el juego de tales sensaciones (KU 05: 325).

La posibilidad de que las ideas estéticas expandan, en este caso, afectos no deja de ser problemática. ¿Qué relación guarda el sentimiento de lo bello con las emociones? ¿Es posible apreciar la belleza de la música independientemente de la emoción que transmite?¹⁷ Y si no fuera posible, ¿supondría esto una suerte de “contaminación” de la pureza del juicio de gusto? Ya no se trata de preguntarnos acerca del papel que desempeña el carácter agradable de los sonidos. Habíamos dicho recién que la belleza de la obra no depende del agrado que ellos provocan, sino de la forma en que están matemáticamente dispuestos. El nuevo interrogante que se nos plantea ahora se refiere a la posibilidad de que aquello que vuelve bella la obra sea la emoción o el afecto que transmite. Contra esta posibilidad, Kant sostiene, en el § 13 de la KU, que la emoción no puede ser el fundamento de determinación del juicio de gusto. Si así fuera, el juicio perdería su pureza, y sería privado de su imparcialidad y universalidad. Su fundamento de determinación ha de ser siempre la finalidad de la forma del objeto bello (KU 05: 223).

Ahora bien, creemos que es posible retener la idea de que la música expresa emociones, y que constituye, como Kant mismo lo dice, un lenguaje de afectos, sin que esto entre en conflicto con la pureza del juicio de gusto (KU 05: 329). El fundamento de determinación de este último es ciertamente la finalidad de la forma del objeto bello. Pero las ideas estéticas que están involucradas en la obra de arte remiten a un *contenido* que está también en juego. Habíamos mencionado que ellas pueden expandir ideas de la razón, conceptos empíricos o afectos, como en el caso de la música sin texto. En esta expansión, las ideas estéticas promueven el pensamiento, convirtiéndose en vehículos de comunicación de un estado inefable de la mente en el que las facultades se vivifican recíprocamente de un modo placentero. Este estado inefable de la mente es la experiencia estética misma. El genio es capaz de comunicar esta superlativa armonía de las facultades, pero, al hacerlo, comunica también el contenido que las ideas estéticas expanden. Si ese contenido, como en el caso de la música sin texto, es un afecto, este último es también comunicado sin que ello lo convierta en el fundamento de determinación del juicio de gusto sobre la obra. En este sentido, como Kant mismo lo dice, la emoción puede estar combinada con el placer en lo bello, sin que, por eso, ella sea el fundamento de determinación

de este placer (KU 05: 223). La pureza del juicio de gusto no se “contamina” por el hecho de que las ideas estéticas expandan emociones.¹⁸

Más allá de este problema que concierne a la pureza de los juicios de gusto involucrados en la apreciación de la música, nos interesa particularmente volver sobre la cuestión que estábamos indagando, i. e. si las ideas estéticas, al expandir afectos, pueden colaborar en la universal comunicabilidad de estados internos difícilmente objetivables. Tomemos como ejemplo la Balada N° 1 en sol menor de F. Chopin. Es una obra musical sin texto, cuyo título nada nos dice acerca de aquello que está tratando de expresar bellamente. Los atributos estéticos que Chopin pone en juego, el modo en que los sonidos están armónicamente dispuestos, nos comunica el sentimiento de una profunda nostalgia y melancolía, que se transforma, a través del dramatismo de los últimos compases de la obra, en un sentimiento de desesperación y de muerte. El libre juego de la imaginación que desata la obra genera una expansión de estos fenómenos internos, comunicándolos con una intensidad que los desborda y los arranca de su dimensión cotidiana. La obra nos hace sentir lo que sentía el compositor en el momento de crearla, pero a la vez nos empuja más allá de los límites de la experiencia a través de esta segunda naturaleza salida de las manos del genio. En esta expansión de afectos, las ideas estéticas producen efectos cognitivos indirectos: generan puentes entre lo sensible y lo suprasensible, flexibilizando, a la vez, el acceso a ciertos fenómenos internos que, por sus características especiales, resultan difícilmente objetivables en los términos que la teoría kantiana propone. Esta dificultad en cuanto a la posibilidad de objetivación se traduce en una limitación para sacar esos sentimientos del ámbito privado de quien los experimenta. Sin embargo, en la medida en que el arte nos ofrece una vía de acceso que ya no es cognitiva, nos proporciona una herramienta para no quedar detenidos frente a esta limitación. El genio tiene la capacidad de descubrir y articular las ideas estéticas que son vehículo de comunicación de un estado mental que no es conceptualmente aprehensible. El artista nos hace sentir lo que él está sintiendo. Al crear belleza, vuelve universalmente comunicable no sólo la placentera vivificación recíproca de las facultades, sino también el contenido de las ideas estéticas que están operando como vehículos de comunicación, flexibilizando, de esta manera, los límites que nos impone la vía cognitiva.

4- CONCLUSIÓN

A lo largo de estas páginas, hemos intentado llamar la atención sobre los efectos cognitivos indirectos que producen las ideas estéticas en el arte. La bibliografía sobre esta cuestión ha puesto énfasis particularmente en la capacidad de las ideas estéticas para sensibilizar las ideas de la razón, proporcionando una contrapartida estética para representaciones que se caracterizan precisamente por carecer de un correlato intuitivamente dado. Hemos intentado demostrar que las ideas estéticas no sólo flexibilizan de esta manera los límites de nuestras facultades cognitivas, sino que también lo hacen en tanto vehículos de comunicación de fenómenos internos difícilmente objetivables. Esta tesis nos ha enfrentado a una serie de interrogantes a los que hemos tratado de responder apoyándonos en las pocas aclaraciones que Kant hace sobre esta cuestión en la KU. De acuerdo con la interpretación que hemos propuesto, las

ideas estéticas no sólo expanden ideas morales o ideas de la razón en general, sino también conceptos empíricos. Si bien, en el único ejemplo que Kant propone de este tipo de expansión, el concepto empírico es expandido a través de una idea de la razón, creemos que los conceptos empíricos pueden ser estéticamente expandidos aunque no haya una referencia expresa a ideas de la razón en la obra de arte. Esto se debe a que la caracterización misma de las ideas estéticas, como representaciones que producen un intenso movimiento del pensamiento que nos empuja más allá de los límites de lo empíricamente dado, supone la referencia implícita, en todo arte bello, a la idea de lo suprasensible. Por tal motivo, aunque la referencia a ideas de la razón no sea explícita, y aunque todos los conceptos estéticamente expandidos sean empíricos, la obra de arte nunca es un mero entretenimiento.

Ahora bien, si las representaciones estéticamente expandidas son conceptos empíricos que se refieren a fenómenos internos, o son directamente afectos como ocurre en la música sin texto, el arte bello no sólo flexibiliza el acceso a lo suprasensible, sino que también flexibiliza los límites que conciernen a la objetivación de este tipo de fenómenos. Las ideas estéticas vuelven universalmente comunicables ciertos estados internos. Por un lado, son vehículos de comunicación del sentimiento placentero de la vivificación recíproca de las facultades que se da en toda experiencia de lo bello. Y, por otro lado, comunican también universalmente la representación que están expandiendo, sea ésta una idea de la razón, un concepto empírico (referido a fenómenos externos o internos) o un afecto. En este último caso, y en el caso de que el concepto empírico estéticamente expandido se refiera a un fenómeno interno, la idea estética vuelve universalmente comunicables ciertos estados subjetivos de conciencia que son difícilmente objetivables a través de una vía cognitiva. La teoría que Kant está proponiendo ofrece, pues, alternativas que complementan las limitaciones de nuestras facultades de conocimiento, sin pretender por esto traspasar las barreras que nos impone nuestra propia finitud. La experiencia de lo bello abre una dimensión que, sin ser cognitiva, posibilita la flexibilización de los límites que supone nuestra capacidad para conocer tanto en lo que concierne a lo suprasensible, como en lo que concierne a ciertos fenómenos que, por su índole, no se sujetan estrictamente a las condiciones que Kant establece para la constitución de un orden objetivo.

Resumen: En este trabajo, nos proponemos demostrar que las ideas estéticas, sobre las que Kant habla en el contexto del análisis de las características del arte bello que realiza en la *Crítica de la facultad de juzgar*, colaboran, de algún modo, en la flexibilización de los límites que presenta nuestra capacidad para conocer. Si bien estas ideas son representaciones intuitivas que no tienen una función cognitiva, dan lugar, no obstante, a nuestro entender, a efectos cognitivos indirectos que amplían nuestros conocimientos en un doble sentido: por un lado, sensibilizan, de algún modo, las ideas de la razón para las cuales no hay ningún objeto intuitivamente dado, y por otro, operan como vehículos de comunicación universal de fenómenos internos, cuya constitución como objetos de una experiencia posible resulta problemática.

Palabras clave: Kant-Límites-Conocimiento-Ideas Estéticas-Arte.

Abstract: In this work, we intend to demonstrate that the aesthetic ideas, which Kant speaks about in the context of the analysis of the characteristics of beautiful art that he carries out in the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*, collaborate, in some way, in the flexibility of the limits that our capacity to know presents. Although these ideas are intuitive representations that do not have a cognitive function, they nevertheless give rise, in our opinion, to indirect cognitive effects that expand our knowledge in a double sense: on the one hand, they make sensible, in some way, the ideas of the reason for which there is no intuitively given object, and on the other hand, they operate as vehicles of universal communication of internal phenomena, whose constitution as objects of a possible experience is problematic.

Keywords: Kant-Limits-Knowledge-Aesthetic Ideas-Art.

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² Hemos analizado más detalladamente este problema en Jáuregui (2008).

³ Si bien Kant sostiene que también hay ideas estéticas involucradas en la belleza natural, en este trabajo tomaremos sólo en consideración la función que ellas desempeñan en relación con la belleza artística, ya que es aquí, a nuestro entender, donde las ideas estéticas dan lugar a los dos tipos de efectos cognitivos indirectos antes mencionados.

⁴ Según Figueiredo (2022: 282-283), esta capacidad del genio para crear belleza supone un nuevo concepto de libertad que posee un sentido extramoral. La creación de belleza no depende, en rigor, de una decisión, y no es, por tanto, un acto voluntario. Se trata más bien del don de dar origen a una segunda naturaleza a partir de un material que la naturaleza misma proporciona.

⁵ Zilcosky (2007: 99) se pregunta quiénes podrían juzgar esta ejemplaridad. Los textos parecen dar a entender que no serían los críticos ni los filósofos, sino otros artistas, cuya originalidad sería despertada gracias a la ejemplaridad de la obra. A través de esta auto-propagación de la genialidad, el arte se evaluaría a sí mismo. Cf. sobre esta cuestión también Guyer (1996: 297-298).

⁶ Basándose en algunos pasajes de la KU y de las *Reflexiones* 771, 952, 896 y 912, Dyck considera que, desde la perspectiva kantiana, la obra de Herder sería un caso de originalidad no ejemplar (cf. AA *Reflex.* 15: 337, 391-392, 399 y 421; Dyck, 2004: 154-159).

⁷ No estamos de acuerdo con el modo en que Kuplen (2019: 55-56) caracteriza los atributos estéticos. La autora destaca que ellos se refieren a las propiedades específicas y distintivas de un objeto que el concepto, en tanto sólo recoge notas comunes a varios objetos, deja indeterminadas. Creemos que esta caracterización vale para todas las propiedades que particularizan un objeto – ya sea que se trate de un objeto bello o no- y que son intuitivamente *dadas*. Los atributos estéticos, en cambio, si bien se refieren también a propiedades específicas y distintivas del objeto en su particularidad, son un producto de la imaginación *jugando libremente*. Es precisamente este libre juego de la imaginación, en armonía con el entendimiento, lo que hace que el objeto sea considerado bello. Lo distintivo de los atributos estéticos no es, pues, el modo en que particularizan un objeto, sino el modo en que operan las facultades al dar origen a este tipo de representación.

⁸ Nos referimos a aquella que se exhibe en la Basílica de San Pedro en Roma.

⁹ Oroño (2022: 60) destaca que, en principio, cualquier concepto puede ser sensibilizado simbólicamente. Pero algunos conceptos sólo admiten este tipo de sensibilización indirecta. Tal es el caso de las ideas de la razón, de los conceptos morales y de los conceptos empíricos que no se refieren a objetos materiales (por ejemplo aquéllos referidos a sentimientos, emociones, rasgos de personalidad, etc.).

Estamos de acuerdo en que todo concepto admite una presentación indirecta simbólica, y en que las ideas de la razón y los conceptos morales sólo admiten una presentación sensible indirecta. No estamos de acuerdo, sin embargo, en que los conceptos referidos a sentimientos y emociones requieran este tipo de sensibilización simbólica. El sentido interno proporciona, en este caso, un material intuitivo gracias al cual, a nuestro entender, dichos conceptos pueden ser sensiblemente presentados de un modo directo.

¹⁰ Cf. por ejemplo, Guyer (1997: 345-350).

¹¹ Cf. Withof (1782: vol. I, 70).

¹² El único límite que Kant pone a la posibilidad de representar bellamente algo feo es que aquello representado nos provoque asco. En este caso, la representación artística del objeto se vuelve indistinguible de esta peculiar sensación, y resulta imposible, por ende, apreciarla como bella (KU 05: 312)

¹³ Hernández, M. (1960: 82).

¹⁴ El artista no se propone, según Bagad (2017: 168), retratar de una manera verídica y rigurosa los conceptos empíricos involucrados en la obra, sino crear una contrapartida estética de ellos.

¹⁵ En el § 57 de la KU, Kant resuelve la antinomia del gusto apelando precisamente al concepto indeterminado de lo suprasensible. El conflicto entre la tesis “El juicio de gusto no se basa en conceptos, pues, si así fuera, sería posible disputar acerca de él (decidir por medio de pruebas)” y la antítesis “El juicio de gusto se basa en conceptos, pues de otro modo, a pesar de su variedad, no sería posible argumentar acerca de él (reclamar el necesario asentimiento de otros a este juicio)” se resuelve si decimos que el juicio de gusto se basa en un concepto por medio del cual, por un lado, nada se puede saber ni probar acerca del objeto, porque es indeterminable e inadecuado para el conocimiento, pero gracias al cual, por otro lado, el juicio adquiere validez universal. Así pues, la tesis debería decir que el juicio de gusto no se basa en conceptos *determinados*, y la antítesis debería decir que el juicio de gusto se basa en un concepto *indeterminado*: el del substrato suprasensible de los fenómenos (KU 05: 339 y ss.).

Cabría ciertamente aquí preguntarse por qué ese concepto indeterminado habría de ser el de lo suprasensible. Guyer (1997, p. 340), por ejemplo, considera que Kant podría haber elegido el concepto indeterminado de la armonía de las facultades. Allison (2001, p. 249 y ss.), por su parte, destaca que el concepto indeterminado en cuestión podría ser también el de lo bello. Sin embargo, este último autor sostiene que tanto este concepto como el concepto indeterminado de la armonía de las facultades remiten, en última instancia, al concepto indeterminado de lo suprasensible. En efecto, según Allison, Kant, por un lado, caracteriza la belleza como la “forma de la finalidad” del objeto en la medida en que se la percibe en el objeto sin la representación de un fin (KU 05: 236). Esta finalidad sin fin supone la consideración del objeto como si fuese el producto de una causa inteligente y nos remite, por tanto, a un fundamento suprasensible. Por otro lado, la espontaneidad en el juego armónico de nuestras facultades apunta también a un fundamento suprasensible en nosotros ya que no puede ser explicada de un modo naturalista. Así pues, ambos conceptos -el de la armonía entre las facultades y el de la belleza- nos remiten finalmente al concepto indeterminado de lo suprasensible; con lo cual, se justifica la elección de este concepto para la resolución de la antinomia.

Desde nuestro punto de vista, podría agregarse, a favor de la elección kantiana del concepto indeterminado de lo suprasensible para resolver la antinomia, que también su concepción de las ideas estéticas nos lleva en esta dirección. Por un lado, es menester tener en cuenta que las ideas estéticas están involucradas en toda forma de belleza, tanto en la artística como en la natural. Por otro lado, estas ideas son caracterizadas como representaciones intuitivas que producen un intenso movimiento del pensamiento que nos empuja más allá de los límites de la experiencia. La transición hacia lo suprasensible es promovida por las ideas estéticas y, por tanto, por toda forma de belleza. No es casual, pues, que Kant haya elegido el concepto indeterminado de lo suprasensible para resolver la antinomia del gusto.

¹⁶ También Kuplen (2019, 48 y ss.) considera que las ideas estéticas hacen posible la superación de los límites que conllevan los conceptos referidos a estados internos. No estamos de acuerdo, sin embargo, con el modo en que la autora entiende estos límites. Desde su punto de vista, estos conceptos no son empíricos, sino *abstractos*, ya que carecen de un referente físico, perceptual, como sí lo tienen los conceptos referidos a fenómenos externos. Esta carencia supone ciertas limitaciones en la comprensión de su significado. Las ideas estéticas permiten, según Kuplen, superar, de algún modo, estas limitaciones en la medida en que, gracias a los atributos estéticos, ellas conectan este tipo de conceptos con intuiciones sensibles que los vuelven cognitivamente más accesibles.

Desde nuestro punto de vista, los conceptos referidos a fenómenos internos tienen un correlato perceptual, ya que Kant caracteriza la percepción como aquel modo de conciencia que acompaña el aparecer de lo fenoménico (KrV, A 120). En este sentido, ellos no son conceptos abstractos, sino conceptos empíricos, en cuanto se refieren a fenómenos empíricamente dados. Aun así, sin embargo, hay ciertas limitaciones en la comprensión de estos conceptos. Ella radica, a nuestro entender, en las dificultades que supone la *objetivación* de los fenómenos internos. Las ideas estéticas permiten flexibilizar precisamente este tipo de limitación.

¹⁷ Cf. sobre esta cuestión Borges (2022).

¹⁸ Kant ciertamente le resta valor a la música cuando la compara con las otras artes. Pero esto no se debe a que, en cuanto lenguaje de afectos, ella dé lugar a juicios de gusto cuya pureza se vea, de alguna manera, disminuida, sino al hecho de que, al hablarnos a través de meras sensaciones, sin conceptos, promueve un movimiento transitorio del pensamiento que no nos deja algo para reflexionar, como sí lo hace, por ejemplo, la poesía (KU 05: 328).

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SEXO EM KANT

SEX IN KANT

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O QUE KANT PODE NOS DIZER DE RELEVANTE SOBRE SEXO?

Se alguém quiser ler um filósofo sobre sexo, provavelmente escolherá Foucault ou Bataille, entre outros, mas nunca Kant. Quando se quer encontrar algo relevante sobre sexo, geralmente ninguém pensa em Kant. Ele nunca foi casado e, até onde sabemos, não teve relações sexuais. Conforme afirma Helga Varden no seu instigante livro *Sex, Love and Gender*:

Mencionar Kant e sexo numa mesma frase evoca na maioria dos filósofos as seguintes associações: um filósofo celibatário, uma defesa peculiar de uma visão teleológica natural da sexualidade, uma peculiar incorporação da sua teleologia natural na sua teoria moral baseada na liberdade e uma condenação ética forte do desejo e da atividade sexual livre, em geral, e do desejo e atividade que não visem a procriação em particular. (VARDEN, 2020, p115)

Ainda que eu não concorde com todas essas afirmações, realmente Kant é bastante conservador, manifestando em seus escritos uma visão preconceituosa em relação a vários temas relacionados à sexualidade, como relação sexual entre pessoas do mesmo sexo, masturbação e prostituição². Esse texto não pretende defender a totalidade da visão kantiana sobre sexo, que considero presa em parte aos preconceitos de sua época. Não pretendo também dar razões que possam desculpar Kant por defender posições preconceituosas. Pretendo ressaltar, contudo, alguns pontos que considero importantes para uma discussão contemporânea sobre a objetificação. Considero que ele tem uma concepção instigante sobre sexo, que vou chamar de visão não emocional do sexo. Acredito que tal é importante quando levamos em consideração as relações íntimas contemporâneas e a objetificação dos parceiros/ as nos dias de hoje. Ao nos apresentar uma visão muito realista do que o sexo realmente é, ele nos auxiliará a evitar uma ilusão romântica que confunde sexo e amor.

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A PULSÃO SEXUAL COMO INSTINTO E COMO PAIXÃO

A pulsão sexual está relacionada ao instinto, o segundo nível da faculdade do desejo; enquanto instinto, os seres humanos compartilham-na com outros animais. Na *Anthropologia-Mrongovius*, essa inclinação, quando referida aos humanos, é tida como um instinto mais forte do que o dos animais.

A inclinação sexual na verdade não é uma paixão, mas apenas um instinto mais forte que é periódico, como se vê nos selvagens. Ela só se torna uma paixão através do poder da imaginação, e através do cultivo do poder da imaginação essa inclinação sexual é chamada de amor. (Anth Mrongovius, AA 25: 1361)

Na Antropologia Mrongovius, composta pelas anotações deste aluno das aulas ministradas sobre *Antropologia*, a inclinação sexual parece dar origem à paixão amorosa, quando acrescida da imaginação.

Na Antropologia do Ponto de Vista pragmático, contudo, há uma diferença entre a paixão natural sexual, como uma paixão natural e o amor como afeto e paixão.

Kant divide as paixões (*Leideschften*) em paixões de inclinação natural (inatas) e paixões procedentes da civilização dos seres humanos (adquiridas). As do primeiro tipo são a inclinação à liberdade e a inclinação sexual. As do segundo tipo são do desejo de honrarias, de poder e cobiça. As paixões inatas são classificadas como *passiones ardentes*; as adquiridas, como paixões frias (*frigidae*) (Cf. Anth, AA 7:268). As paixões, sejam elas inatas ou adquiridas, se dirigem apenas aos seres humanos e não a objetos:

Mas todas as paixões são sempre desejos dirigidos de seres humanos a seres humanos, não a coisas, e sem dúvida se pode ter muita inclinação a utilizar um campo fértil ou uma vaca, mas não afeto (que consiste na inclinação à comunidade com outros), e muito menos uma paixão. (Anth, AA 7: 268)

Segundo a citação, a paixões naturais também seriam desejos de seres humanos dirigidos a seres humanos e não a coisas. A paixão sexual não se reduziria à mera inclinação para a cópula presente nos animais:

Nos meros animais, mesmo a inclinação mais veemente (por exemplo, da cópula) não se denomina paixão, a única que fundamenta o conceito de liberdade e com o qual a paixão entra em colisão, paixão cujo surgimento pode, portanto, ser imputado ao ser humano. (Anth, AA 7:270)

Vê-se que há aqui uma distinção entre a inclinação sexual e a paixão sexual, mesmo que essa seja vista como uma paixão da natureza. Na *Antropologia* publicada, o instinto não se transforma em paixão de amor através da imaginação, mas numa paixão sexual. Algo semelhante nos é afirmado na *Doutrina da Virtude*: a inclinação sexual é também chamada de “amor”, mas num sentido restrito do termo, apenas enquanto um desejo forte que visa um prazer sensível:

A inclinação sexual também é chamada de “amor” (no seu sentido mais restrito do termo) e é, de fato, o prazer sensível mais forte que se pode ter num objeto. Não é meramente um prazer sensível, como em relação a objetos que aprazem na mera reflexão sobre eles (receptividade que chamamos de gosto). É antes um prazer a partir do sentir prazer com outra pessoa, que pertence à faculdade de desejar, e além disso, ao seu estágio mais elevado, a paixão. (TL, AA 6: 426)

Essa paixão da qual nos fala o texto é baseada num prazer sensível forte, não se restringindo à mera reflexão sobre o objeto do prazer. Ao mesmo tempo, ela não é um mero instinto, que partilhemos com os animais, tomando o lugar de uma paixão, quarto nível da faculdade de desejar, propriamente humana. Por outro lado, essa paixão não é amor de deleite ou amor benevolente, pois seu ardor a diferencia desses dois tipos de amor prático.

Ficaria a questão: a paixão sexual está entre o mero instinto e o amor prático, mas qual seria sua relação com o afeto do amor? E qual a diferença entre a paixão sexual e a paixão do amor?

O AMOR: AFETO E PAIXÃO

Ao falar do amor, Kant o faz como afeto e como paixão. O amor-afeto mostra sua intensidade, aliada à sua curta duração. Esse afeto torna o agente cego para falhas do objeto de amor. Felizmente, como o afeto não é permanente, essa cegueira irá desaparecer com o tempo: “Quem ama pode manter sua visão intacta; mas a pessoa que está apaixonada é inevitavelmente cega para os erros do objeto amado, embora este geralmente recupere sua visão uma semana após o casamento” (Anth, AA 7:253).

O amor romântico, ou o amor como afeto, é também difícil de esconder, e o amante é incapaz de controlar as manifestações dessa emoção, o que dificulta até mesmo a realização de seu objetivo, qual seja, de seduzir o amado:

Um amante sério é muitas vezes contido, desajeitado e pouco cativante na presença de sua amada. Mas aquele que apenas finge estar loucamente apaixonado, e que não tem outro talento, pode desempenhar seu papel com tanta naturalidade que atrai a pobre e enganada donzela inteiramente para sua cilada, só porque seu coração está desinibido e sua cabeça limpa. (Ant, 7:264)

É mais fácil, então, seduzir o homem ou a mulher amada se você não estiver apaixonado. O afeto amoroso não é apenas uma doença da mente, mas é um impedimento para seu próprio propósito romântico.

O amor poderia se transformar numa paixão? Kant considera que o afeto do amor, uma vez satisfeito fisicamente, perde sua força, não podendo tornar-se paixão. Como a satisfação do desejo é o fim do desejo, o amor nunca se tornará uma paixão se o amor físico for satisfeito: “uma vez que o desejo é satisfeito (pelo prazer), o desejo, pelo menos no que diz respeito à própria pessoa envolvida, também cessa. (Ant, AA 7: 266)

A única maneira de o amor romântico ser uma paixão é ele nunca ser satisfeito. O amor poderia então assumir o aspecto obsessivo de outras paixões, como a ambição. E se alguém enlouquece por amor, afirma o nosso filósofo, é porque já estava perturbado ao escolher um alvo impossível. Uma das possibilidades de escolher um parceiro errado, na época de Kant, era se apaixonar por alguém de posição social mais elevada.

Ao analisar a doença mental, Kant afirma que as pessoas dizem que “ele ficou louco de amor”, mas o fato é que ele já era louco: “Apaixonar-se por uma pessoa de uma classe de quem

esperar o casamento é a maior loucura não foi a causa, mas sim o efeito da loucura”. (Ant, AA 7: 217).

Este exemplo é analisado na seção sobre doença mental, indicando que se trata de uma doença que deve ser tratada. Enquanto o amor como paixão é considerado uma doença e tratado na parte reservada às doenças da mente, a paixão sexual não parece trazer em si nada de nocivo.

USUS MEMBRORUM ET FACULTATUM SEXUALIUM ALTERIUS

Ainda que a paixão sexual não seja uma doença que precisa ser curada, como é o caso da paixão do amor, devemos nos perguntar se ela não nos inclina a utilizar o outro apenas como meio para nosso prazer.

Kant nunca considerou que o sexo por si só poderia significar tomar alguém como um fim em si mesmo, o que ele deixa claro no início do § 24 da *Doutrina do Direito*, que versa sobre o direito matrimonial: “a união sexual (*commercium sexuelle*) é o uso recíproco que um ser humano faz dos órgãos e capacidades sexuais de um outro (*usus membrorum et facultatum sexualium alterius*)” (RL, 6: 277).

A união sexual é sempre objetificação; a distinção é se essa união está de acordo ou não com a lei: “A união sexual natural acontece, seja de acordo com a natureza meramente animal (*vaga libido, venus volgiva, fornication*) ou de acordo com a lei. A união sexual de acordo com a lei é o casamento (*matrimonium*)”. (RL, AA 6: 278).

Na § 25 da *Doutrina do Direito*, ele afirma que essa união sexual é objetificadora, pois o outro torna-se uma coisa, um objeto: “O uso natural que um sexo faz dos órgãos sexuais do outro é *prazer*, através do qual um se dá ao outro. Nesse ato, o ser humano faz de si uma coisa, que conflita com o direito de humanidade na sua pessoa.” (MS, 6:278)

No casamento, ambas as pessoas usam o outro como uma coisa, e essa reciprocidade é a única maneira de restaurar sua personalidade: “Há apenas uma condição sob a qual isso é possível: enquanto uma pessoa é adquirida pela outra como *se fosse uma coisa*, aquela que é adquirida adquire a outra por sua vez; pois assim cada um se recupera e restaura a sua personalidade”. (MS, AA 6: 278). É importante notar aqui que a restauração da personalidade não se dá porque o outro não é mais utilizado como meio, mas pela reciprocidade no uso enquanto coisa: a que foi adquirida como se fosse uma coisa adquire, por sua vez, o outro como coisa. Tal estaria de acordo com as leis jurídicas da razão pura.

O casamento teria como objetivo legalizar o uso recíproco do outro como coisa, não tendo como propósito a procriação, ainda que essa pudesse ser tomada como um fim da natureza:

A finalidade de gerar e educar filhos pode sempre ser um fim da natureza, para o qual foi implantado a inclinação dos sexos em relação ao outro, mas não é requisito para aqueles que casam fazer disso seu fim, para que sua união fosse compatível com o direito, porque se assim fosse, o matrimônio seria dissolvido quando a procriação cessasse.” (RL, 6: 278).

Considero que nesse ponto específico, da não consideração da procriação como fim do casamento, Kant é progressista, em que pese seus preconceitos em relação à exigência do casamento se dar com pessoas de sexo diferentes. A desconsideração do fim da natureza, a procriação, como aquilo que estabelece um fim jurídico, abriria espaço para a consideração do casamento homoafetivo, ainda que isso não estivesse no horizonte do século XVIII.

Um outro aspecto curioso é que o sexo não deixa de ser a utilização dos órgãos sexuais do parceiro/a, não havendo aí nenhuma menção em considerar o outro como fim em si mesmo. Discordo nesse aspecto das considerações de Verden, para a qual Kant defenderia que estar sexualmente atraído por alguém é querer sua pessoa e não apenas seu corpo, querer que o outro nos mostre sua ludicidade estética e criativa, que o outro se revele nas suas expressões criativas e espontâneas (Cf VARDEN, 2020, p.120). Considero que Helga Varden, nesse ponto, faz uma romantização que não é encontrada nos textos kantianos. Inclina-se, dessa forma, a uma negação da crueza do que Kant realmente diz: que a relação sexual é querer o corpo do outro. Penso que essa posição kantiana, em que pese sua aparente frieza, traria uma interessante contribuição à discussão contemporânea sobre objetificação.

OBJETIFICAÇÃO E USO INSTRUMENTAL FRACO

Ao discutir a objetificação nas relações íntimas, alguns filósofos, como Martha Nussbaum, no artigo *Objetification*, referem-se à ideia de que a objetificação é moralmente aceitável, apenas se considerarmos o outro em seus sentimentos e como pessoa.

Além disso, há uma ideia de que, na relação íntima, devemos considerar o outro não apenas como um meio, mas também como uma pessoa. Os críticos à instrumentalização do outro nas relações íntimas recorrem muitas vezes à fórmula da humanidade kantiana, segundo a qual se deve agir considerando o outro e a si mesmo, não apenas como meio, mas também como fim.

Na discussão sobre uso instrumental e objetivação, Patricia Marino, no texto “The ethics of sexual objetification: autonomy and consent” (MARINO, 2007), em oposição a Nussbaum, considera que podemos aceitar o uso instrumental fraco de uma pessoa, se ele vier acompanhado de um consentimento informado. Devemos condenar moralmente o “uso instrumental forte”, caso no qual não há consentimento, como no estupro ou no assédio sexual.

Acredito que Kant aceita o uso instrumental fraco, e a única maneira de evitar o uso instrumental forte é a posse recíproca do outro como coisa. E é disso que se trata o casamento.

Então, essa dupla e recíproca objetivação está de acordo com as leis de direito da razão pura. A diferença entre prostituição e casamento consiste no fato de que o casamento preserva o direito da humanidade na própria pessoa apenas acrescentando o aspecto contratual, o do direito de usar o outro por sua vez. Tanto o marido quanto a mulher têm o direito de usar os órgãos sexuais um do outro, e também têm o direito exclusivo de usá-los. Mas esse não é o caso, por exemplo, da prostituição, sendo essa uma das razões pelas quais Kant a condena.

O aspecto contratual preserva a humanidade do marido e da mulher, e a única possibilidade de tornar as relações sexuais uma relação segundo o princípio do direito é a garantia do uso exclusivo dos órgãos sexuais um do outro. Mas isso não implica que sua relação sexual se torne mais do que é: usar o outro como meio para o seu prazer. Claramente aqui se trata, na terminologia utilizada por Patricia Marino, de um uso instrumental fraco.

Poderíamos ampliar a perspectiva kantiana, permitindo outras situações no qual o uso instrumental fraco seria permitido. Uma possibilidade seria pensar no consentimento do uso recíproco dos órgãos sexuais, ao invés da instituição do casamento.

CONCLUSÃO: A LEGALIDADE DO USO INSTRUMENTAL FRACO

Fazer sexo com alguém é sempre usar o outro como um meio para seu prazer. Considero que essa concepção kantiana é progressista porque não submete o ato sexual a uma finalidade de reprodução.

Podemos considerar que no uso do outro como meio para o prazer sexual, se houver consentimento esclarecido, trata-se-ia, na classificação de Marino, de um uso instrumental fraco. Para Kant, uma objetivação fraca estaria de acordo com a lei do direito, desde que haja um contrato do uso recíproco do outro como coisa, um pacto que permita o *usus membrorum et facultatum sexualium alterius*. Minha sugestão é que possamos pensar outras formas de consentimento que não se limitassem ao contrato de casamento e que fizessem, desde uso recíproco, algo correto moralmente.

Assim, essa tentativa de destacar algumas características que Kant atribui à atividade sexual em humanos pode-nos auxiliar a determinar o que seria moral nas relações íntimas do mundo contemporâneo. Um kantismo além das amarras conservadoras do tempo ...

Resumo: Nesse artigo, analisarei a relação que Kant estabelece entre sexo e objetificação. Irei explorar dois pontos. Primeiramente, vou tentar localizar o lugar que a pulsão sexual ocupa. Mostrarei que, na *Antropologia do ponto de vista pragmático*, o sexo não está relacionado ao amor como afeto ou paixão. Em segundo lugar, mostrarei que fazer sexo com alguém é usar essa pessoa como meio, opondo-me às leituras que fazem de Kant um defensor da não objetificação do ato sexual. Por fim, mostro que a relação jurídica entre duas pessoas, através do casamento, torna ético o uso mútuo dos órgãos sexuais, ainda que ambos sejam utilizados como meio e não como fim em si mesmo.

Palavras-chave: sexo. amor. objetificação

Abstract: In this article I will analyze the relationship that Kant establishes between sex and objectification. I will explore two points. First, I will try to locate the place that the sexual drive occupies. I will show that, in *Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view*, sex is not related to love as affection or passion. Secondly, I will show that to have sex with someone is to use that person as a means, opposing readings that make Kant an advocate of the non-objectification of the sexual act. Finally, I show that the juridical relationship between two people, through marriage, makes the mutual use of sexual organs ethical, even if both are used as a means and not as an end in themselves.

Key-words: sex, love, objectification

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² Entre os temas sobre os quais Kant possui uma visão bastante conservadora, estão a relação sexual entre pessoas do mesmo sexo (Cf. TL, AA 6:277), masturbação (Cf. TL, AA 6:425) e prostituição (Cf. TL, AA6: 278).

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O REALISMO IDEALISTA DE KANT

KANT'S IDEALIST REALISM¹

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Em sua crítica ao Quarto paralogismo da psicologia racional na primeira edição da *Crítica da razão pura*, Kant oferece uma resposta ao que ele chama de idealismo problemático, posição que sustenta a impossibilidade da certeza da existência de coisas fora de nós. Nessa resposta, Kant distingue dois sentidos de “fora de nós”, transcendental e empírico: algo transcendentemente externo ou fora de nós seria algo que existe como coisa em si mesma distinto de nós; algo empiricamente externo ou fora de nós é algo no espaço. Kant insiste que os objetos empiricamente externos são, tanto quanto os empiricamente internos, transcendentemente internos e, como tais, representações, sendo sua existência tão certa quanto a de nossas representações do sentido interno.

Dada essa afirmação, não parece surpreendente que críticos contemporâneos a Kant tenham identificado sua filosofia com um idealismo segundo o qual a única certeza é a da existência de seres pensantes e suas representações. Kant, contudo, se surpreende com essa acusação e procura responder diretamente a essas críticas em trechos dos *Prolegômenos*.

A segunda edição da *Crítica da razão pura* reformula em grande parte a seção dos paralogismos, sendo que o quarto paralogismo em particular recebe uma formulação aparentemente muito distinta da que encontramos na primeira edição. Além disso, essa segunda edição introduz, na Analítica transcendental, uma nova seção, intitulada Refutação do idealismo. A questão sobre se essas alterações na segunda edição implicam somente um acréscimo ou, ao contrário, uma revisão da posição kantiana em relação às afirmações da primeira edição tem sido objeto de extenso debate na literatura secundária, e o exame dessa questão é fundamental para a compreensão da natureza do idealismo transcendental kantiano, em particular de suas pretensões realistas.

Pedro Rego procura dividir as interpretações em dois blocos: “fenomenismo” e “idealismo realista”. Conforme o autor, fenomenismo seria a “linha interpretativa da refutação kantiana do idealismo para a qual refutar o idealismo significa exclusivamente provar que existem

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representações fenomênicas objetivas num espaço objetivo”. Já o idealismo realista seria a “leitura que vê em algum momento do projeto refutativo de Kant a convicção de que só se refuta de fato o idealista material cartesiano provando que toda externalidade fenomênica e representacional repousa sobre a base de uma existência efetiva extra-representational”.³ Mais especificamente, o fenomenismo sustentaria que Kant jamais pretendeu provar a existência de algo fora de nós em sentido transcendental, aceitando que tudo que podemos conhecer são representações, e a segunda, que Kant só pode ser dito um realista em algum sentido se pretender ter provado a existência de algo transcendentemente externo a nós.

Gostaria de sugerir que a posição kantiana deveria receber algo como o rótulo de “realismo idealista”,⁴ diferente tanto do “fenomenismo” quanto do “idealismo realista” (se pelo primeiro entendemos a redução dos objetos materiais a estados de sujeitos de representação e pelo segundo, a pretensão de prova de algo transcendentemente externo ao sujeito de representações).⁵ A peculiaridade da posição kantiana, que procurei nomear pelo rótulo “realismo idealista”, seria a tese segundo a qual os objetos espaciais são “representações” em um sentido e “extra-representacionais” em outro sentido: objetos espaciais são puramente fenomênicos (e, portanto, não se pode dizer que são transcendentemente externos e, sim, que são meras “representações” em sentido transcendental) mas são, por outro lado, “extra-representacionais” (por serem empiricamente externos e, portanto, *irredutíveis* a determinações do sentido interno).⁶ Isso, por si só, beira a trivialidade pois, uma vez que Kant insiste em dois sentidos de “interno” e “externo”, não surpreende que seja necessária a distinção entre dois sentidos de “representação”. O que procurei sugerir é que, dados esses dois sentidos, Kant pode pretender distinguir-se do “fenomenismo” sem aceitar o rótulo de “idealismo realista” tal como caracterizado acima. Procurarei mostrar que *recusar* que objetos externos (fenômenos espaciais) possam ser provados “fora de nós” no sentido de “algo que existe como coisa em si mesma distinta de nós” (A373) *não* implica que os objetos externos (os fenômenos espaciais) possam ser “algo que existe como coisa em si mesma idêntica a nós”.

A primeira seção deste texto é dedicada a apresentar alguns trechos centrais das críticas kantianas ao idealismo que naturalmente ensejam a posição à qual pretendo me contrapor, isto é, a interpretação segundo a qual a primeira edição da *Crítica da razão pura* pretendia refutar o idealismo através de um fenomenismo e que Kant, reconhecendo as deficiências dessa estratégia, passa a perseguir a prova da existência de algo transcendentemente externo. No final dessa seção, procuro oferecer algumas indicações de por que essa interpretação naturalmente ensejada talvez deva ser questionada. A segunda seção tratará do sentido no qual podemos ou não dizer que a percepção de um objeto externo é imediata, esclarecimento necessário para compreender em que sentido a existência de objetos do sentido externo não é, segundo Kant, meramente inferida. A terceira seção procurará, apoiando-se sobretudo na idealidade do sentido *interno*, indicar de que modo um mero dualismo empírico é suficiente para recusar que talvez tudo que exista sejam seres pensantes e suas representações.

CRÍTICAS KANTIANAS AO IDEALISMO

Na seção da *Crítica da razão pura* intitulada “Dos Paralogismos da razão pura”, Kant faz uma crítica à psicologia racional, procurando mostrar que as pretensões da psicologia racional apoiavam-se em silogismos que eram, na verdade, paralogismos (falácias formais por conterem um termo equívoco).

Na primeira edição da *Crítica*, o Quarto paralogismo tem um caráter particular. Em primeiro lugar, ele parece ter estrutura e mesmo tema bastante distinto dos três primeiros. Os três primeiros paralogismos claramente fazem afirmações sobre a natureza do eu enquanto pensante. Já o Quarto paralogismo trata da dubitabilidade da existência de objetos dos sentidos externos:

Aquilo cuja existência só se pode inferir como uma causa para dadas percepções tem apenas uma *existência duvidosa*.

Agora, todos os fenômenos externos são de tal tipo que sua existência não pode ser percebida imediatamente, mas apenas inferida como a causa de dadas percepções.

Logo, a existência de todos os objetos dos sentidos externos é duvidosa. (A366-367)

Kant chama essa posição que defende a dubitabilidade da existência dos objetos externos de idealismo problemático:

A esta incerteza denomino a idealidade dos fenômenos externos, e a doutrina dessa idealidade se denomina *idealismo*, em comparação com o qual a afirmação de uma possível certeza dos objetos dos sentidos externos é denominada *dualismo*. (A367)

Por um *idealista* não se deve entender, portanto, aquele que nega a existência dos objetos externos dos sentidos, mas aquele que só não admite que ela seja conhecida através de percepções imediatas, inferindo daí, contudo, que nós nunca poderemos, por meio de toda experiência possível, estar inteiramente seguros de sua realidade. (A369)

A seção dedicada ao Quarto paralogismo na edição A contém uma crítica a esse idealismo problemático que sustenta a impossibilidade de termos certeza da existência das coisas materiais ou espaciais. Como já mencionado, Kant distingue dois sentidos de “fora de nós” e insiste que os objetos empiricamente externos são, tanto quanto os empiricamente internos, transcendentalmente internos e, como tais, representações, sendo sua existência, portanto, tão certa quanto a de nossas representações do sentido interno:

Uma vez, porém, que a expressão “*fora de nós*” traz consigo uma inegável ambiguidade, ora significando algo que se distingue de nós *como coisa em si mesma*, ora algo que pertence apenas ao *fenômeno* externo, distinguiremos então [...] entre os objetos *empiricamente externos*, que denominaremos diretamente coisas *que se encontram no espaço*, e aqueles que poderiam ser denominados externos em sentido transcendental (A373, tradução alterada).

No que diz respeito à realidade dos objetos externos, eu tenho tão pouco a inferir necessariamente quanto no que diz respeito à realidade do objeto de meu sentido interno (meus pensamentos); pois só o que há, de ambos os lados, são representações cuja percepção imediata (consciência) é, ao mesmo tempo, uma prova suficiente da sua realidade. (A371)

Ou seja, ao criticar o idealismo problemático, Kant diz que 1) há dois sentidos de “fora de nós”, empírico e transcendental e 2) os objetos fora de nós em sentido empírico (objetos espaciais) são também meras representações (ou seja, não cabe dizer que existem como coisas em si mesmas distintas de nós). Por isso, diz Kant, temos um realismo *empírico* – a certeza dos

fenômenos externos, que são ditos um tipo de representação – e um idealismo *transcendental* – nada podemos afirmar sobre a existência de algo transcendentalmente externo. Dado isso, é bastante natural ver na crítica kantiana ao Quarto paralogismo na edição A uma tentativa de refutação do idealismo problemático e, com isso, uma prova da certeza da existência dos objetos espaciais. Essa impressão é reforçada na medida em que o diagnóstico geral de Kant é que os silogismos da psicologia racional são paralogismos (contêm um termo equívoco) e dada a distinção entre dois sentidos de externo, parece natural dizer que o termo equívoco identificado por Kant no caso do Quarto paralogismo seria o termo “externo” ou “fora de nós” e que uma “redução” dos objetos externos ao que é transcendentalmente interno é a base da crítica kantiana ao Quarto paralogismo e de uma refutação do idealismo problemático na primeira edição da *Crítica da razão pura*.

A primeira edição da *Crítica* recebeu críticas que o acusavam de um idealismo segundo o qual tudo que existe são representações, acusação que, dada a última passagem citada acima, à primeira vista parece uma acusação muito pertinente. Kant procura, nos *Prolegômenos*, responder a essas críticas feitas na resenha conhecida como Feder-Garve. Nesses trechos, ele se mostra surpreso de ver seu idealismo transcendental, que ele caracteriza como um idealismo formal, identificado ao idealismo que ele chama de material, segundo o qual tudo que existe são seres pensantes e suas representações:

O idealismo consiste na asserção de que não há nada além de seres pensantes; as outras coisas que acreditamos perceber na intuição seriam apenas representações nos seres pensantes, às quais de fato não corresponderiam nenhum objeto situado fora deles. (*Prolog 4 288-9*)⁷

Após essa caracterização, Kant apresenta sua posição:

Admito efetivamente que há corpos fora de nós, isto é, coisas que, embora de todo desconhecidas por nós quanto ao que podem ser em si mesmas, conhecemos pelas representações que sua influência sobre nossa sensibilidade nos provê, e às quais damos o nome de corpos, uma palavra que, portanto, significa não mais do que o aparecimento [ou aparência ou fenômeno] desse objeto que nos é desconhecido, mas não por isso menos real [efetivo, efetivamente existente]. Pode-se chamar isso de idealismo? É o seu exato oposto! (*Prolog iv 289*)

Dada a afirmação kantiana já mencionada, segundo a qual “só o que há, de ambos os lados [interno e externo, portanto também no espaço], são representações” (A371), a surpresa de Kant é que parece surpreendente!⁸

A segunda edição da *Crítica da razão pura* reformula quase toda seção dos Paralogismos. Nessa segunda edição, a crítica ao Quarto paralogismo simplesmente diz que, do fato de eu me distinguir do que me é externo, não se segue que eu poderia existir independentemente do que é externo:

4) Eu distingo minha própria existência como ser pensante das outras coisas fora de mim (às quais também meu corpo pertence): isto é também uma proposição analítica; pois as *outras* coisas são aquelas que penso como *diferentes* de mim. Agora, se esta consciência de mim mesmo é possível sem coisas fora de mim, através das quais me são dadas representações, e se, portanto, eu poderia existir apenas como ser pensante (sem ser um ser humano), isto é algo de que nada sei por meio dessa proposição. (B409)

Como vemos, isso é bastante distinto do que tínhamos na primeira edição.

Além disso, Kant introduz, na segunda edição, uma nova seção, intitulada *Refutação do idealismo*:

Eu só poderia chamar de uma efetiva ampliação, ainda que somente no modo de provar, aquela que fiz à página 275, por meio de uma nova refutação do *idealismo* psicológico e uma rigorosa prova (também a única possível, segundo creio) da realidade objetiva da intuição externa. (BXXXVIII, nota)

Se considerarmos que, na edição A, Kant parecia dizer que a existência dos objetos externos é certa porque o objeto externo é um tipo de representação, e que ele dizia também que não precisamos nem podemos provar a existência algo transcendentemente externo, pode ser natural acreditar que Kant passou a ver como um problema não ter provado a existência de algo transcendentemente externo e, ainda assim, pretender ser um realista. Tendo percebido isso, Kant teria introduzido uma nova refutação do idealismo, buscando agora provar a existência de algo *transcendentemente* externo e deveríamos aceitar que Kant, a partir daí, recusaria suas próprias afirmações na primeira edição. E boa parte da literatura secundária crê ser esse o caso.⁹

Essa impressão, do reconhecimento da necessidade de provar a existência de algo transcendentemente externo, é também reforçada por algumas notas kantianas posteriores. Mesmo após a publicação da segunda edição, parece que Kant continua, nas chamadas *Reflexões*, retomando argumentos contra o idealismo empírico. E algumas dessas reflexões parecem reforçar a tese de que caberia provar a existência de algo externo em sentido transcendental. Na Reflexão 6312, datada por Adickes como de 1790, após retomar algo próximo do argumento da seção Refutação do idealismo da segunda edição da primeira *Crítica*, onde procura mostrar que a determinação da sucessão temporal das nossas representações depende da representação de algo persistente que, como tal, é espacial, Kant acrescenta:

É essa representação do persistente tem de dever-se ou reportar-se [*geben auf*] àquilo que contém o fundamento da determinação temporal, mas não com respeito à sucessão, pois nisso não há nenhuma persistência; conseqüentemente, o persistente deve “repousar” [*liegen*] no que é simultâneo, ou no inteligível, que contém o fundamento das aparências. (Reflexão 6312 *Rel xvii* 612)¹⁰

No entanto, a questão não é tão simples. Em primeiro lugar, como vimos na passagem do prefácio sobre a introdução da seção Refutação do idealismo, Kant crê que suas alterações e mesmo a adição na segunda edição da nova seção são só uma mudança no modo de provar, o que implicaria que ele não pretende recusar as formulações da primeira edição sobre a impossibilidade de provar a existência de algo transcendentemente externo.

Além disso, há outras passagens que reforçam a tese de que Kant não pretendeu rever a impossibilidade de prova de algo de algo transcendentemente externo. Como vimos, mesmo nos *Prolegômenos*, onde Kant está tentando se distinguir do idealismo material, ele parece continuar insistindo que só podemos provar a existência de algo externo em sentido empírico:

Admito efetivamente que há corpos fora de nós, isto é, coisas que, embora de todo desconhecidas por nós quanto ao que podem ser em si mesmas, conhecemos pelas representações que sua influência sobre nossa sensibilidade nos provê, e às quais damos o nome de corpos, uma palavra que, portanto,

significa não mais do que o aparecimento [ou aparência ou fenômeno] desse objeto que nos é desconhecido.
(*Prologomena* iv 289, ênfase minha)

Por essa razão, vários outros intérpretes¹¹ leem as alterações kantianas subsequentes como motivadas por outras razões e não implicando uma recusa do apresentado na crítica ao Quarto paralogismo na primeira edição.

Em artigo anterior,¹² procurei examinar e defender a pertinência e a coerência da argumentação kantiana na crítica ao Quarto paralogismo, procurando mostrar que, ao contrário do que pode parecer, (i) a crítica ao Quarto paralogismo não deve ser lida como uma tentativa de prova da certeza da existência de objetos externos e (ii) o papel da distinção entre dois sentidos de externo não é exatamente o de diagnosticar o termo equívoco no silogismo da psicologia racional. Procurei argumentar em favor da leitura segundo a qual o propósito da crítica ao Quarto paralogismo é mais modesto do que o de uma refutação do idealismo: a intenção de Kant era somente refutar *um fundamento específico* para a afirmação da impossibilidade de demonstrar a existência de objetos empiricamente externos, a saber, uma certa assimetria entre nosso acesso a nós mesmos como objeto do sentido interno e a objetos do sentido externo.¹³ Claro, é importante ressaltar que evitar a confusão entre empiricamente externo e transcendentemente externo é relevante no contexto da crítica ao Quarto paralogismo, pois o caráter transcendentemente interno dos objetos empiricamente externos foi sempre, para Kant, uma condição *necessária* da possibilidade da certeza da existência de objetos empiricamente externos. Mas isso não significa que ele tenha jamais pretendido que esse caráter transcendentemente interno seja o fundamento suficiente para distingui-lo de um idealista material.¹⁴

Mas qual seria, então, o fundamento pelo qual Kant pretende se distinguir do que ele chama de idealista material? Gostaria aqui de sustentar que é algo que estava *suposto* na primeira edição da primeira *Crítica* e que só é explicitamente tematizado na segunda edição, a saber, *a dependência do sentido interno em relação ao sentido externo*.¹⁵ Creio que provar essa dependência foi tudo que Kant pretendeu com a seção introduzida na segunda edição, intitulada Refutação do idealismo. Mesmo sem procurar reconstruir e justificar aqui essa leitura, pode ser útil comentar a seguinte passagem, que Kant acrescenta após pretender ter mostrado que a determinação da minha existência no tempo depende da representação de algo permanente:

a representação de algo *persistente* na existência não é idêntica à *representação persistente*; pois esta pode, como todas as nossas representações – inclusive as da matéria –, ser bastante mutável e cambiável, e se refere todavia a algo persistente que tem de ser, portanto, uma coisa externa e distinta de todas as minhas representações. (B xli)

Gostaria de ressaltar que essa formulação é perfeitamente compatível com tratar-se aqui sempre de mostrar a existência de algo distinto de todas as minhas representações *em sentido empírico*, isso é, a dependência do sentido interno em relação a *representações* do sentido externo e, por isso, em relação a algo espacial, uma vez que o espaço é a forma do sentido externo. O persistente seria, então, sempre algo no espaço e, como tal, transcendentemente interno. Tentarei explicar na sequência por que isso não implica uma renúncia a uma refutação do

idealismo. Por ora, observo somente que o próprio teorema tal como enunciado pretende tratar da existência de algo *no espaço*, portanto, algo *empiricamente* externo: “*A mera consciência de minha própria existência, empiricamente determinada, prova a existência dos objetos no espaço*”. (B 275)

Além disso, mesmo nos *Prolegômenos*, onde Kant estava preocupado em distinguir-se de um idealismo que ele chamou de material, ele continua insistindo que não podemos fazer distinção entre coisas em si:

Que a nossas percepções externas não apenas corresponde, mas deve corresponder alguma coisa real fora de nós não pode, do mesmo modo, jamais ser provado para uma conexão das coisas em si mesmas, mas pode muito bem sê-lo para os propósitos da experiência. (*Prol* iv 336)

Isto é, a única coisa que Kant insiste ser possível fazer, mesmo nessa passagem na qual procura se contrapor ao idealismo material, é provar um dualismo *empírico*.

Antes de procurar indicar de que modo esse dualismo empírico pode ser um realismo, é necessário qualificar em que sentido a certeza da existência de objetos do sentido externo é ou não imediata.

IMEDIATIDADE/MEDIATIDADE DO OBJETO DO SENTIDO EXTERNO

Consideremos mais uma vez o texto do Quarto paralogismo na primeira edição:

Aquilo cuja existência só se pode inferir como uma causa para dadas percepções tem apenas uma *existência duvidosa*.

Agora, todos os fenômenos externos são de tal tipo que sua existência não pode ser percebida imediatamente, mas apenas inferida como a causa de dadas percepções.

Logo, a existência de todos os objetos dos sentidos externos é duvidosa. (A366-367)

A maior, segundo Kant, em todos os paralogismos é sempre absolutamente verdadeira. A menor, dados os dois sentidos de externo ou fora de nós, tem duas versões. Simplificando, teríamos o seguinte:

Maior: Só o imediatamente percebido é indubitável quanto à existência

Menor a: Os objetos empiricamente externos não são imediatamente percebidos.

Menor b: Os objetos transcendentemente externos não são imediatamente percebidos.

Segundo Kant, a primeira versão da menor é falsa e a segunda, verdadeira. Como a Menor a é falsa, a conclusão desejada pelo psicólogo racional (e, no caso em questão, pelo idealista problemático), a saber, a dubitabilidade da existência dos objetos empiricamente externos, não se segue e, com isso, esse alegado fundamento de dúvida quanto à existência dos objetos espaciais é eliminado. Quanto à versão b da menor, sua verdade, associada à verdade da maior, implica a impossibilidade, segundo Kant, de provar a existência de algo transcendentemente externo. Cada uma dessas teses - a saber, (i) “Os objetos empiricamente externos são imediatamente

percebidos” (negação Menor a) e (ii) “A existência de objetos transcendentemente externos é dubitável” (corolário da maior com a Menor b) deixa problemas em aberto. O problema ensejado pela verdade da segunda versão é em que sentido, aceito o corolário, Kant pode ainda pretender-se um realista (esse é o tópico central desse artigo e será tratado na próxima seção). Antes, contudo, é necessário algum esclarecimento sobre a tese da imediatidade da percepção de objetos espaciais.

Embora, para Kant, exista um sentido no qual podemos dizer que os objetos empiricamente externos são imediatamente percebidos, isso obviamente *não* pode significar que, sempre que temos uma representação de algo espacial, estamos percebendo um objeto espacial, o que é evidentemente refutado por ilusões ou alucinações. Em razão disso, diz Kant, são necessárias *leis empíricas* para saber qual a causa de uma determinada representação:

A partir de percepções, contudo, o conhecimento dos objetos pode ser engendrado ou através de um mero jogo da imaginação, ou por meio da experiência. É podem surgir então, certamente, representações enganosas a que os objetos não correspondem, e nas quais o engano pode ser atribuído ora a uma fantasia da imaginação (no sonho), ora a um passo falso da faculdade de julgar (nas assim chamadas ilusões dos sentidos). Para, pois, fugir aqui à falsa aparência, deve-se proceder segundo a regra: *o que se concatena com uma percepção segundo leis empíricas é efetivo.* (A376, tradução modificada)

Por que isso não implica que a *existência* de um objeto externo como causa de uma *representação* de um objeto externo é meramente inferida e, portanto, dada a verdade absoluta da premissa maior, duvidosa? Como compatibilizar essa afirmação com a insistência em objetos do sentido externo serem, assim como os do sentido interno, imediatamente percebidos? Temos que explicar por que, embora devamos dizer que só por leis empíricas podemos determinar se a causa de uma representação é ou não um objeto externo, podemos, ainda assim, dizer que temos percepção imediata de objetos externos.

Gostaria de sustentar que, segundo Kant, (i) a certeza de que há uma folha de papel na minha frente é obtida por uma *inferência* do efeito para a causa, (ii) esta inferência (de minha representação agora desta folha de papel para a conclusão de que de fato há uma folha de papel que eu percebo) é *legítima* mas, por outro lado, (iii) a necessidade de uma inferência para garantir que a causa de minha representação seja de fato neste caso uma folha de papel *não* implica (iv`) que eu *não tenha* percepção imediata da folha de papel (caso de fato a folha de papel tenha engendrado minha representação da folha de papel) nem que (iv`) a certeza da existência das coisas espaciais *em geral* é conclusão de uma inferência que depende de leis empíricas.¹⁶

Os casos de alucinação ou mesmo casos mais simples do que chamamos de ilusões perceptivas deixam claro que a certeza da existência de *um certo objeto particular do sentido externo* depende de inferências de representações para sua causa. Se “vemos” diante de nós uma faca que aparece subitamente e se sustenta sozinha no ar, usamos leis empíricas para descartar que a causa dessa “percepção” da faca seja uma faca e não concluímos pela existência da faca. E, de outro lado, quando temos uma, digamos, situação normal, é por meio de leis empíricas que inferimos a existência de certas coisas conforme sua relação mais ou menos direta com a sensação, conforme nos ensina o segundo postulado da experiência (cf. B265ss).

Em resumo, a legitimidade da inferência está baseada no fato que, graças a leis empíricas, *podemos determinar* o que causou uma determinada representação. Tal determinação, por utilizar leis empíricas, terá a necessidade e universalidade próprias do que depende de leis *empíricas*, mas nem por isso é ilegítima. Graças a essas leis empíricas, podemos determinar quando a causa de uma representação de um objeto externo é efetivamente o objeto e, com isso, determinamos que a representação em questão é efetivamente uma percepção de algo externo.

Por outro lado, a prova da existência de objetos do sentido externo em geral não seria dependente dessa inferência. Isso é fortemente sugerido por uma passagem da Reflexão 6313, estimada de 1790-1791: “Agora, não é necessário que possamos dar uma característica geral segura para cada objeto de sentido externo e efetividade, mas é suficiente ter demonstrado que há um sentido externo. (Ref xviii 613-4)”.¹⁷

Assim, a certeza da existência de objetos *particulares* do sentido externo depende de inferências de efeito para causa, que devem ser feitas de acordo com os princípios da experiência possível. Se é assim, a existência de quaisquer objetos externos particulares nunca será *absolutamente* indubitável. Como concede Kant, “também Descartes, com razão, limitava toda percepção, *no sentido mais estrito*, à proposição “eu (como um ser pensante) sou” (A367, ênfase minha). Mas se essa percepção no sentido mais estrito depende de termos também *alguma* percepção externa e essa depende da afecção por coisas no espaço, então a certeza da existência de objetos do sentido externo *em geral* não é feita por uma inferência de efeito para causa. Para essa última certeza, basta demonstrar que *há* um *sentido externo*. Com isso, a existência de *algo* material é tão indubitável quanto de meus estados.

Assegurado que há um sentido externo, então quando, via leis empíricas, determinamos que a causa de uma representação é um objeto externo, o que determinamos é que a representação em questão *é efetivamente* uma percepção externa. Sendo efetivamente uma percepção externa, o objeto é imediatamente percebido. Ou seja, a inferência é necessária para determinar que se trata de uma percepção externa (e não de uma alucinação, sonho ou ilusão), mas isso não implica que, quando se trata de uma percepção externa, não exista a percepção imediata do objeto externo.

No entanto, como visto, tudo isso depende da suposição de efetivamente haver um sentido externo. E onde Kant demonstra que há um sentido externo? A crítica ao Quarto paralogismo, como vimos, usa sem procurar justificar afirmações sobre a dependência de fantasias da imaginação ou ilusões empíricas em relação a alguma percepção externa. Já na segunda edição, a dependência do sentido interno em relação a um externo é claramente explicitada e defendida.¹⁸

Feito esse esclarecimento sobre a imediatidade da percepção externa, vejamos de que modo essa relação sempre entre os sentidos empírico de interno e externo poderia ser uma base para uma refutação do idealismo, isto é, de que modo esse dualismo empírico seria suficiente para um realismo peculiar, mas não irrelevantemente distinto do que Kant chama de idealismo material.

DUALISMO EMPÍRICO E REFUTAÇÃO DO IDEALISMO

Consideremos, mais uma vez, as premissas do idealista problemático:

Maior: Só o imediatamente percebido é indubitável quanto à existência

Menor: Os objetos externos não são imediatamente percebidos.

Lembremos que a premissa maior, que é sempre absolutamente verdadeira, diz que só o que é imediatamente percebido é indubitável quanto à existência. Por outro lado, lembremos como Kant caracteriza o que é externo de um ponto de vista transcendental: “algo que existe *como coisa em si mesma* distinta de nós” (A373, tradução modificada¹⁹). Assim, para o transcendentalmente externo, teríamos o seguinte:

Maior: Só o imediatamente percebido é indubitável quanto à existência

Menor b: Os objetos transcendentalmente externos não são imediatamente percebidos.

Ora, Kant concede que só fenômenos, não coisas transcendentalmente externas, podem ser objeto de percepção imediata, jamais algo transcendentalmente externo. Portanto, devemos aceitar que a existência de algo transcendentalmente externo é dubitável? Se sim, como então não concluir que Kant está aqui dizendo que é possível, em última análise, que tudo que existe é o sujeito e suas representações? E, se é assim, como, nesse caso, distinguir essa posição do que ele chama de idealismo material?

A solução para esse problema que gostaria de apresentar depende de lembrar em que consiste o “eu” ou o sujeito de representações (pelo menos do ponto de vista da razão teórica): o objeto do sentido interno.²⁰ Dada a caracterização kantiana de um ser pensante como objeto das determinações do *sentido* interno e aceita a dependência do sentido interno em relação a representações do sentido externo, a suposição de que tudo que exista são seres pensantes como nós²¹ me parece absurda. Ela é absurda pois, em primeiro lugar, não dispomos sequer de um significado com utilização possível para o que seria um “ser pensante *em si mesmo*”.²² O que para nós é objeto do sentido interno é, como tal, fenômeno. Como, além disso, esse fenômeno do sentido interno é *dependente* do fenômeno do sentido externo (já que o sentido interno depende do sentido externo), é inconcebível que talvez tudo que exista seja só o eu pensante e suas determinações.²³

A dificuldade apontada acima, sobre como explicar que Kant sustente que toda existência que podemos provar como distinta de nós é a do que é distinto em sentido empírico, sendo que esse “fora de nós” em sentido empírico é também mera representação, e pretenda, ao mesmo tempo não ser identificado com um idealista que sustenta que talvez tudo que exista sejam seres pensantes e as suas representações foi, como já mencionado, objeto de consideração por parte de Kant em sua tentativa de responder à chamada “Resenha Feder-Garve” nos *Prolegômenos*. Retomamos a seguinte passagem:

Admito efetivamente que há corpos fora de nós, isto é, coisas que, embora de todo desconhecidas por nós quanto ao que podem ser em si mesmas, conhecemos pelas representações que sua influência sobre nossa sensibilidade nos provê, e às quais damos o nome de corpos, uma palavra que, portanto, significa não mais do que o aparecimento [ou aparência ou fenômeno] desse objeto que nos é desconhecido, mas não por isso menos real [efetivamente existente]. (*Prologomena* iv 289; tradução modificada)

Como já vimos, a passagem combina a insistência quanto à realidade (ou existência ou efetividade (*Wirklichkeit*)) desse fundamento que nos aparece como corpos com a reiteração da afirmação de que não conhecemos nada das coisas em si mesmas que para nós nos aparecem como corpos. O ponto que gostaria de ressaltar aqui é que Kant não combina somente a afirmação da certeza da existência dos corpos com a absoluta incognoscibilidade de seu fundamento como coisa em si. Ele insiste igualmente na incognoscibilidade do fundamento do objeto do sentido *interno*. Consideremos as seguintes passagens:

[...] estou, por meio dos aparecimentos [fenômenos] externos, tão consciente da realidade dos corpos enquanto aparecimentos externos no espaço como estou, por meio da experiência interna, consciente da existência, no tempo, de minha *alma*, a qual conheço apenas como um objeto do sentido interno por meio de aparecimentos que constituem um estado interno, e cujo ser em si mesmo, que subjaz a esses aparecimentos, me é desconhecido. (*Prologomena* iv 336; grifo meu)

Assim, encontramos nesses textos base para sustentar a posição segundo a qual, embora não possamos falar em uma distinção entre *duas coisas em si* (o fundamento transcendental de nós mesmos e o fundamento transcendental dos corpos), devemos distinguir (i) dois tipos de *fenômenos* (eu enquanto ser pensante e os corpos) e, mais importante, (ii) eu enquanto ser pensante (pelo menos tal como conhecido pela razão teórica) e o *fundamento transcendental desconhecido* (mas efetivamente existente) que pode aparecer, fenomenicamente, como ser pensante ou como corpos. Assim, diante da pergunta: mas não será possível que tudo que exista sejam seres pensantes e suas representações? Para Kant, não, uma vez que seres pensantes, pelo menos tais como nos conhecemos pela razão teórica, são um modo de aparecer de um fundamento desconhecido que depende de um modo de aparecer como corpos de um fundamento desconhecido. Assim, não poderia haver só seres pensantes e suas representações. Sobre o fundamentamento inteligível de corpos e seres pensantes, nada podemos saber, mas a suposição de só haver seres pensantes e não corpos seria, para Kant, absurda.

Como último passo, gostaria de retomar uma reflexão já citada acima, que parecia sugerir fortemente que a refutação do idealismo depende da prova da existência de algo externo em sentido inteligível:

E essa representação do persistente tem de dever-se ou reportar-se [*gehen auf*] àquilo que contém o fundamento da determinação temporal, mas não com respeito à sucessão, pois nisso não há nenhuma persistência; conseqüentemente, o persistente deve “repousar” [*liegen*] no que é simultâneo, ou no inteligível, que contém o fundamento das aparências. (Reflexão 6312 *Rel* xvii 612)

A passagem diz que a persistência deve estar ou “repousar” em algo que é simultâneo, ou no inteligível, sugerindo, portanto, que o permanente é externo não só em sentido empírico, mas também inteligível ou transcendental. No entanto, será que devemos ou mesmo podemos

identificar inteligível com transcendental? Ora, é impossível que o transcendentalmente externo seja *persistente* ou *simultâneo*, já que o tempo não pertence às coisas em si mesmas. Ou melhor, não pertence às coisas em si mesmas *enquanto* coisas em si mesmas. Mas o tempo pode ser dito o *modo de aparecer* de um fundamento inteligível. Assim, talvez tudo que Kant esteja dizendo é simplesmente que não é possível que tudo seja *representação* do sentido interno, mas que deve haver um fundamento inteligível, irreduzível ao *empiricamente interno*, algo que não é nem empiricamente interno nem empiricamente externo. Mas sobre se esse fundamento do empiricamente externo é transcendentalmente distinto do fundamento inteligível do empiricamente interno, sobre isso nada podemos dizer.²⁴

Isso parece compatível e reforçado justamente por considerações kantianas na crítica ao Quarto paralogismo na primeira edição:

Caso se pergunte, agora, se, de acordo com isso, apenas o dualismo tem lugar na doutrina da alma, a resposta é: certamente!, mas apenas em sentido empírico; i. e., na concatenação da experiência a matéria é realmente dada ao sentido externo, como substância no fenômeno, do mesmo modo como o eu pensante é dado, também como substância no fenômeno, ao sentido interno; e, segundo as regras que essa categoria introduz na concatenação de nossas percepções, tanto externas como internas, para constituir uma experiência, os fenômenos também têm de ser conectados entre si em ambos os lados. Caso se queira, no entanto, como costuma ocorrer, ampliar o conceito de dualismo e tomá-lo em sentido transcendental, então nem ele nem o pneumatismo, que lhe é contraposto de um lado, ou o materialismo, que lhe é contraposto de outro, teriam o mínimo fundamento, já que se erraria na determinação dos próprios conceitos e se tomaria a diversidade dos modos de representar os objetos, que permanecem desconhecidos para nós quanto ao que sejam em si mesmos, por uma diversidade dessas coisas mesmas. Eu, representado no tempo por meio do sentido interno, e os objetos no espaço, fora de mim, somos, de fato, fenômenos inteira e especificamente distintos, *mas nem por isso somos pensados como coisas diferentes*. O objeto transcendental que serve de fundamento aos fenômenos externos, do mesmo modo como aquilo que serve de fundamento à intuição interna, não é nem matéria nem um ser pensante em si mesmo, mas um fundamento, para nós desconhecido, dos fenômenos que fornecem o conceito empírico tanto do primeiro como do segundo modo de representação. (B379-80, ênfase alterada)

Em resumo, o dualismo de objetos *empíricos* é base suficiente para Kant pretender distinguir-se de um idealista material se lembrarmos que objetos do sentido *interno* também não são coisas em si mesmas. Ambas as esferas, objetos do sentido interno e objetos do sentido externo são modos de aparecer de um fundamento inteligível e incognoscível. Assim, não faz sentido, para Kant, falar em redutibilidade das coisas em si mesmas a meras representações no sentido de estados de um sujeito de representação.

Resumo: Na primeira edição da *Crítica da razão pura*, Kant, respondendo ao que ele chama de idealismo problemático (que sustenta a impossibilidade da certeza da existência de coisas fora de nós), distingue dois sentidos de “fora de nós”, transcendental e empírico: algo transcendentalmente externo ou fora de nós seria algo que existe como coisa em si mesma distinto de nós; algo empiricamente externo ou fora de nós é algo no espaço. A segunda edição da *Crítica* introduz uma nova seção intitulada Refutação do idealismo que, segundo alguns autores, teria de ser lida como a prova da existência de algo transcendentalmente externo. Procuo sustentar aqui que a peculiaridade da posição kantiana é a tese segundo a qual os objetos espaciais são “representacionais” em um sentido e “extra-representacionais” em outro: objetos espaciais não podem ser ditos externos em sentido transcendental, mas são, por outro lado, “extra-representacionais”, por serem empiricamente externos e, portanto, *irreduzíveis* a determinações do sentido interno). Procuo mostrar também que, se levarmos em conta a *idealidade* do sentido *interno*, há um sentido no qual esse realismo empírico pode ser propriamente chamado de uma posição *realista*, compatível com impossibilidade de prova da existência de algo transcendentalmente externo.

Palavras-chave: realismo empírico, idealismo transcendental, refutação do idealismo

Abstract: In the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant, criticizing what he calls problematic idealism (which holds that it is impossible to be certain of the existence of things outside of us), distinguishes between two senses of “outside us”, transcendental and empirical: something transcendently external or outside us is something that exists as a thing in itself distinct from us; something empirically external or outside us is something in space. The second edition of the *Critique* introduces a new section entitled Refutation of Idealism which, according to some authors, should be read as an attempt to prove of the existence of something transcendently external. I try to show here that the peculiarity of Kant’s position is the thesis according to which spatial objects are “representations” in one sense and “extra-representational” in another sense: spatial objects cannot be said to be transcendently external, but they are, on the other hand, “extra-representational” because they are empirically external and therefore irreducible to determinations of inner sense. I also try to show that, if we take into account the ideality of the *inner* sense, there is a sense in which this empirical realism can properly be called a realist position compatible with the impossibility of proving the existence of something transcendently external.

Keywords: empirical realism, transcendental idealism, refutation of idealism

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NOTAS / NOTES

¹ Este texto procura complementar algumas questões tratadas em outro artigo (ALTMANN, 2017). Por essa razão, é possível que alguns pequenos trechos e notas se sobreponham. A pesquisa da qual este texto resulta contou com apoio de uma bolsa de produtividade em pesquisa CNPq.

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³ Rego (2017) p. 329, n. 9.

⁴ O que chamo aqui de “realismo idealista” partilha com o “idealismo realista” a tese segundo a qual, para Kant, “toda externalidade fenomênica e representacional repousa sobre a base de uma existência efetiva extra-representacional”, mas recusa que essa tese dependa da prova de alguma distinção entre coisas em si mesmas. A sugestão de inversão de ordem do rótulo “idealismo realista” para “realismo idealista” deve-se a, digamos, o que é considerado mais fundamental e o que é uma qualificação desse mais fundamental. O rótulo “idealismo realista” parece sugerir que Kant é, antes de tudo, um idealista e, por isso, é necessária uma modulação desse idealismo para distingui-lo do fenomenismo. Procurarei sugerir que, ao contrário, no que diz respeito à existência de algo irredutível a representações, Kant é fundamentalmente um realista, e somente um idealista quanto à forma (como ele mesmo insiste), o que é um modo de qualificar o que é essencialmente um realismo.

⁵ Trata-se de uma sugestão, pois a defesa do que pretendo sugerir dependeria de uma análise exegética cuidadosa de textos kantianos e de tentativas de resposta a importantes reconstruções na bibliografia secundária com interpretações diversas da defendida aqui, como, por exemplo, Almeida (2013), Faggion (2014), Guyer (1987), Klotz (2008), Longuenesse (2008) e Rego (2013 e 2017). O debate em detalhe dos argumentos apresentados por posições diferentes da sugerida aqui extrapola os objetivos deste artigo. Meu objetivo limita-se a apresentar uma alternativa de interpretação, apoiando-a em alguns textos kantianos centrais.

⁶ Como já enfatizado por diversos autores, são representações no sentido de representados e, portanto, segundo Kant, dependentes quanto à forma da faculdade de representação e, por isso, cognitivamente acessíveis, mas nem por isso deixando de ser extra-representacionais no sentido de independentes quando à existência de estados mentais.

⁷ A tradução utilizada (por vezes com a explicitação de alguma alternativa de tradução) é a de José Oscar de Almeida Marques, em KANT, Immanuel. *Prolegômenos a qualquer metafísica futura que possa apresentar-se como ciência*. Ed. Loyola.

⁸ Talvez parte da surpresa (de Kant e nossa) seja explicável pelo contexto. Chamando atenção para cruzamentos e alterações no uso de certos termos na época bem como para a importância desse aspecto para a boa compreensão do idealismo transcendental, Antoine Grandjean lembra que o termo “realismo” na Idade Média era usado para contrapor-se ao *nominalismo* (cf. Grandjean, 2024). Se Kant pretendia usar o termo idealismo para contrapor-se a um realismo do tipo que se opõe ao nominalismo, a opção kantiana pelo termo “idealismo” é bastante compreensível, compreensibilidade reforçada se lembrarmos que ele procura esclarecer seu idealismo transcendental dizendo que ele pode ser chamado de idealismo formal (cf. *Prolegômenos* iv 337). Nesse caso, sua surpresa com o rótulo recebido seria análoga à natural surpresa de um nominalista acusado de duvidar da existência de particulares. (É claro que seria somente uma surpresa análoga, dadas as especificidades do idealismo kantiano), mas diferenças de contexto podem ajudar a explicar a surpresa de Kant e a nossa surpresa com a surpresa de Kant.

⁹ Por exemplo, Paul Guyer: “he [Kant] also argued that objects with spatial form *had* to be reduced to what are ontologically merely states of the self, in order to render them safe from doubt” (Guyer, P., 1987, p. 281). Segundo Guyer, Kant, na segunda edição, revestia essa posição. Se bem compreendo, Longuenesse, B. (2008), Almeida, G. (2013), Rego, P. (2013) e Faggion, A. (2014) partilham com Guyer essa convicção de que o argumento da crítica ao Quarto paralogismo, na edição A, teria essa implicação indesejável, ensejando então revisões kantianas na segunda edição. Também parece comum a esses autores o reconhecimento de que uma refutação do idealismo em sentido próprio teria de provar a existência de algo *transcendentalmente* externo ao sujeito (convicção também partilhada por Klotz, C. (2008)). Henry Allison parece sustentar, por um lado, que os argumentos kantianos na crítica ao Quarto paralogismo jamais foram revistos, sendo a própria refutação do idealismo na segunda edição dependente do idealismo transcendental e de afirmações como as da crítica ao Quarto paralogismo, sobre o caráter transcendentalmente interno dos objetos do sentido externo, mas, por outro lado, que considerações sobre a noção de sujeito e sobre o sentido interno teriam de ser acrescidas para termos propriamente uma refutação do idealismo. Não me é totalmente claro, contudo, se, ao afirmar que “Guyer is correct in pointing out that the outer objects we experience under the conditions imposed by our sensibility must be assumed to have an existence in themselves that is ontologically distinct from the self” (Allison, 2004, p. 302), Allison está ou não concedendo a necessidade, para uma refutação do idealismo, de uma prova da existência de algo transcendentalmente externo ao sujeito. Outros autores são explícitos sobre a impossibilidade de provar a existência de algo externo em sentido transcendental, mas reconhecem a necessidade de algum acréscimo ao argumento do Quarto paralogismo, como, por exemplo, Edmunds D. (2010), que sustenta a necessidade do apelo a considerações das analogias para a prova da existência de algo empiricamente externo. A necessidade e a possibilidade da prova de algo transcendentalmente externo é também explicitamente recusada por Beiser, F. (2002) e por Caranti, L. (2007). Embora com algumas diferenças partilho em linhas gerais a interpretação desses dois últimos (embora discordando quanto à crítica kantiana ao Quarto paralogismo conseguir e mesmo pretender ser prova da existência de coisas materiais). Também partilho vários pontos da reconstrução de Heidemann, D. (2023) sobre a estratégia e resultados de Kant tanto na crítica ao Quarto paralogismo quanto na Refutação ao idealismo, embora, como nesse texto pelo menos o autor

não trata explicitamente da questão da distinção entre transcendentalmente interno e externo, eu não tenha clareza sobre eventuais diferenças sobre o ponto mais geral que pretendo expor aqui.

¹⁰ Tradução minha. — Auch muß die Vorstellung des Beharrlichen auf dasjenige gehen, was den Grund der Zeitbestimmung enthält, aber nicht in Ansehung der Succession, denn darin ist keine Beharrlichkeit; folglich nur in dem Zugleich, was Zugleich ist, muß das Beharrliche liegen oder in dem Intelligibeln, welches den Grund der Erscheinungen enthält.

¹¹ Cf. nota 6 acima.

¹² Cf. nota 1 acima.

¹³ Klotz, C (2008) e Heidemann, D. (2023) também parecem sustentar esse propósito limitado da crítica ao Quarto paralogismo na primeira edição.

¹⁴ Um sinal de que Kant jamais pretendeu que a crítica ao Quarto paralogismo fosse uma prova da existência de coisas materiais no espaço é sua afirmação de que lidará ali apenas com o idealismo problemático, deixando para depois a refutação do idealista dogmático (cf. A377). Ora, se Kant pretendesse que o caráter transcendentalmente interno dos objetos espaciais provasse sua existência, o idealista dogmático já estaria refutado.

¹⁵ Heidemann (2023) também insiste sobre esse ponto só entrar na segunda edição como consequência das acusações de idealismo material a Kant e sobre seu caráter central na tentativa de refutação do idealismo na segunda edição. Como evidência de que essa dependência estava suposta na primeira edição temos, por exemplo, o fato de Kant usar sem sugerir qualquer traço de justificativa afirmações como as seguintes: “Mas este material ou real, este algo que deve ser intuído no espaço, pressupõe necessariamente a percepção e não pode ser inventado ou produzido pela imaginação independentemente dela, que é quem indica a realidade de algo no espaço” (A373) de “para refutar o idealismo empírico [...] é já suficiente [...] que mesmo a invenção e o sonho, sem a percepção, não sejam possíveis; e que nossos sentidos externos, segundo os *datis* de que pode surgir a experiência, tenham seu objeto real correspondente no espaço.” (A376-7).

¹⁶ Creio que essas afirmações sejam compatíveis com o que Dietmar Heidemann rotula de “modelo de percepção causal direta de objetos especiais” (Heidemann (2022), p. 25). O intérprete ressalta que tal modelo não é convincente como estratégia anticética e é complementado pela Refutação do idealismo, como também defendo aqui. (Minha única observação é insistir que, por razões mais desenvolvidas em Altmann (2013), o propósito de Kant na crítica ao Quarto paralogismo sempre foi o que é explicitado na sua reformulação na segunda edição, a saber, provar que não podemos provar a independência da nossa alma em relação aos corpos e não provar a existência de coisas no espaço. No entanto, para provar que não podemos provar essa independência, Kant precisou refutar um determinado fundamento para o idealismo. Creio que isso levou a ler a refutação desse determinado fundamento como uma pretensão que Kant nunca teve ali e essa leitura, por sua vez, a ler a Refutação do idealismo introduzida na segunda edição como substituindo a crítica ao Quarto paralogismo na primeira edição, ao invés de explicitando algo não tematizado na primeira edição.

¹⁷ Tradução minha. („Nun wird aber auch nicht verlangt, daß wir von jedem Gegenstande äußerer Sinne und seiner Wirklichkeit ein sicheres allgemeines Merkmal angeben können, sondern es ist hinreichend dargethan zu haben, daß es einen äußern Sinn gebe.“)

¹⁸ Ou seja, independentemente da controvérsia sobre se a Refutação ao idealismo pretende ou não provar a existência de algo transcendentalmente externo, é certo que temos ali uma demonstração de que temos um sentido externo. Ou pelo menos uma tentativa de demonstração (o fato de Kant continuamente retomar argumentos de refutação ao idealismo pode sugerir uma insatisfação com suas tentativas, mas esse ponto não nos interessa aqui).

¹⁹ Tradução modificada: “etwas [...] was als Ding an sich selbst von uns unterschieden existiert”

²⁰ Vou deixar de lado aqui possíveis dificuldades com a consciência de mim mesmo como sujeito transcendental, mas, em resumo, como só conheço minha existência de modo determinado como objeto do sentido interno, no caso de provas de existência (como as que estão em questão quando se trata de refutar o idealismo) é a consciência empírica que é relevante.

²¹ A qualificação “como nós” é importante, pela seguinte razão. Talvez não seja absurdo que só existissem seres pensantes, ou, especialmente, um único ser pensante. Talvez, pois não sei o que poderia contar como *representação* por oposição ao que não é representação, nesse caso. Mas seria absurdo que existissem só seres pensantes cuja matéria do pensamento não pode ser dada por eles mesmos. Sobre esse ponto, conferir a aproximação que Heidemann faz entre o realismo kantiano e a discursividade e finitude do nosso pensamento. (Heidemann (2022) pp. 32ss)

²² Pelo menos não do ponto de vista da razão teórica (novamente, deixando de lado a consciência do “eu transcendental”, cf. nota 16).

²³ Claro, é possível que tudo que exista como coisa em si seja o fundamento transcendental do eu que é também fundamento transcendental dos corpos, mas esse fundamento transcendental não é o eu pensante, sendo o eu pensante, pelo menos tal como conhecido pela razão teórica, um fenômeno desse fundamento transcendental. É importante observar que isso não significa, creio, aceitar o que é chamado de interpretação “duplo-mundista” do idealismo transcendental. Em uma leitura “duplo-mundista” do que estou sugerindo aqui, teríamos três tipos de “entidades”: fundamento intelegível desconhecido, corpos, almas. Em uma leitura “duplo aspecto”, um fundamento intelegível desconhecido (inclusive quanto a quaisquer distinções numéricas) e duas entidades sensíveis, duas manifestações desse fundamento para seres como nós, isto é, aparências ou fenômenos como nossa alma e como corpos. Essa seria uma leitura “duplo aspecto” talvez muito mais metafísica do que vários de seus defensores sustentam, mas ela ainda assim permanece, creio, distinta da leitura de “duplo-mundista”.

²⁴ Nesse sentido o que proponho aqui talvez se aproxime de Luigi Caranti, quando ele afirma que “mesmo para considerar nossa experiência como totalmente alucinatória, teríamos que ir além do mundo da experiência e pensar em algum X desconhecido que seja diferente do que aparece para nós, seja um Gênio do Mal ou alguma outra fantasia filosófica (Caranti, 2008, p. 176, tradução minha)”. E talvez se aproxime também da solução de Dietmar Heidemann, para quem a base última da refutação do idealismo é justamente nossa finitude (Cf. Heidemann, 2022, pp. 32ss). Uma comparação mais detalhada dessas alternativas, contudo, ultrapassa o escopo deste artigo.

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KANT AND THE PROJECT OF A PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

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This paper is divided into four sections. The first section explores the concept of a philosophical history of philosophy; the second section argues that the history of pure reason must be understood as a history of self-enlightenment; the third section reconstructs the general lines of a history of pure reason and its symmetry with the nature of reason; the fourth and final section addresses the question of the legitimacy and theoretical status of the project.

1. THE CONCEPT OF A PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

The last chapter of the *Critique of pure reason* sketches the outlines of a project that will remain unfinished. According to Kant, this chapter simply designates “a place that is left open in the system and must be filled in the future” and is aimed to be carried out “from a merely transcendental point of view, namely that of nature of the pure reason” (CPR B880).

A history always has an object and assumes a perspective. As far as the object is concerned, a history of reason can refer either to concepts with an *a priori* or an *a posteriori* origin. In the first case, we are dealing with concepts that involve necessity and universality, while in the second case we are dealing with contingent concepts, since they are the result of empirical abstractions. We must also distinguish between two types of *a priori* concepts, namely mathematical concepts and philosophical concepts. Mathematical concepts are concepts constructed in the pure form of intuition. In this case we have knowledge of the universal in concrete. Philosophy, on the other hand, deals with knowledge of the universal in the abstract. Philosophical concepts cannot be constructed in intuition and must therefore be justified by a different procedure of justification, which Kant calls deduction in some cases and exposition in others. Thus, philosophy must justify how concepts such as “causality”, “existence”, or “substance” can refer *a priori* to the field of experience. We can say that philosophical knowledge is speculative and mathematical knowledge is non-speculative.

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We can consider the history of philosophy from an internal perspective or from an external perspective of reason. A history that adopts the internal perspective seeks to explain philosophical concepts in terms of a genealogical link with the nature of reason. The aim is to reconstruct history in such a way as to show that the emergence of these concepts is linked to certain characteristics of the human rational faculty. On the other hand, adopting a perspective outside of reason means cumulatively describing these concepts and explaining them in terms of the economic, political, social, cultural, or even geographical circumstances in which a given philosophical concept developed. In this case, the aim is to establish causal relationships between theories and social contexts. According to Kant, only the internal perspective can claim rationality or meaning for the history of concepts.

It is possible to clarify the “internal-external” opposition on the basis of the distinction found in the Logic (see Log AA 09: 20-23)² between the objective origin of knowledge. According to its objective origin, all knowledge is either rational or empirical. Knowledge of rational origin is distinguished from empirical knowledge by virtue of being acquired according to principles (*ex principiis*), whereas the latter is acquired on the basis of data (*ex datis*). The former entails necessity and unrestricted universality, whereas the latter is contingent. In this case, a history from the internal perspective of reason would be a narrative that takes principles as its guiding thread, and therefore it would involve necessity and universality. On the other hand, an empirical history of pure reason takes a perspective external to reason. Since Kant identifies rational knowledge of the universal in abstract with philosophy (see Log, AA 09: 29), we can say that the internal perspective corresponds to a philosophical narrative of philosophy, while the external perspective corresponds to a historical narrative of philosophy.

Thus, by combining the options between the different perspectives and objects, the following set of configurations is obtained:

- 1 - Philosophical history of *a posteriori* concepts;
- 2 - Philosophical history of *a priori* concepts;
 - 2.1 - Philosophical history of speculative *a priori* concepts;
 - 2.2 - Philosophical history of non-speculative (mathematical) *a priori* concepts;
- 3 - Empirical history of *a posteriori* concepts;
- 4 - Empirical history of *a priori* concepts;
 - 4.1 - Empirical history of speculative *a priori* concepts;
 - 4.2 - Empirical history of non-speculative (mathematical) *a priori* concepts.

Not all of these combinations imply a real possibility. The option 1, for example, seem to be logically impossible.

While historians of philosophy carry out an empirical history of speculative *a priori* concepts (4.1), the Kantian project differs from the latter by adopting a philosophical

perspective (2.1). Historians of philosophy carry out a literary-bibliographical study, whose aim is to describe the philosophical problems and their treatment over time. In this case, different systems can be compared, either to assess which one is best suited to solve a greater variety of problems, or to explain their emergence on the basis of the historical and economic contexts in which they have been developed. By aiming to establish continuity or discontinuity of problems and concepts along different philosophies, historiographical research is committed to a specific method and discipline, but is not based on an organizing principle. Therefore, this perspective cannot rationally evaluate the past use of concepts because it does not address the nature of reason itself. Although this method might do some justice to the internal dialogue between different philosophies provided that it does not completely subordinate philosophical problems to external criteria (such as an explanation based on economic or political facts), it still remains empirical history according to the criteria set out by Kant. There is a specific place and validity for each type of history, but the claims to legitimacy and how they are used need to be clearly distinguished from one another.

According to Kant, the philosophical history of speculative *a priori* concepts (2.1) can also be called a “philosophizing history of philosophy” (see FM, AA 20:340) or a philosophical history of metaphysics. For him,

a philosophical history of philosophy is itself possible, not historically or empirically, but rationally, i.e., *a priori*. For although it establishes facts of reason, it does not borrow them from historical narrative, but draws them from the nature of human reason, as philosophical archaeology. (FM, AA 20:341)

Leaving aside the fragmentary and lacunar character of the manuscripts collected under the title of *The Progress of Metaphysics*, we find in this text a strong indication of what the project of the history of pure reason would be, namely a philosophical archaeology that would explain the emergence of certain philosophical theory and concepts in terms of a principle internal to reason. This is the case of “whether a history of philosophy might be written mathematically” (FM, AA 20:342). Thus, the different philosophical concepts would, in a specific sense, be deduced from the nature of reason.

2. THE HISTORY AS A PROCESS OF SELF-ENLIGHTENMENT

One of the tasks of the *Critique of pure reason* is to show that the human understanding is the source of certain representations that are *a priori* valid in relation to phenomena. According to Kant, these representations, the categories, have always been and will always be the same³. In this case, how can we speak of a history of pure reason? For there to be history, there must be movement (i.e. changes of states), but how can we think of any movement in a reason that has structures that can never be extended or modified?

To deal with this question, it is necessary to distinguish between a quantitative change and a qualitative change in reason. The former refers to a change in the amount of accumulated knowledge⁴. Thus the reason of two people from different periods is different because they have different amounts of knowledge about something. The second concerns a change in the character of reason itself. That is to say, the denial of a nature of human reason and its *a priori*

structures. This means, at the very least, questioning the possibility of knowing at time T2 what was known and written by other individuals at time T1. In this case, we would no longer speak of “human reason”, but of “multiple rationalities”. This theoretical position was the result reached in the second phase of the historicist movement, which took place in the 19th century and has relativism as its main consequence⁵.

Since, for Kant, there is only one reason, history must be conceived in terms of a change in the amount of speculative knowledge that reason has about itself. In this way, the history of the speculative use of reason would be an improvement in the attempts to know the object *a priori* and, indirectly, to know and clarify itself (both in its capacities and in its limits). Because reason is not transparent to itself, the history of pure reason must be seen as the history of its self-enlightenment. We can speak in these terms only insofar as pure reason functions as an objective standard.

In order to do justice to the plurality and diversity of attempts, while at the same time maintaining the prospect of objectivity, it is necessary to guarantee substantial changes in philosophical perspectives and methodologies, without falling into atomistic relativism. This requires elements of convergence that allow comparison and continuity between these models. This element is the idea of pure reason and a rational nature.⁶

The position adopted by Kant vis-à-vis the previous philosophical tradition can be exemplified in the following passage:

Plato made use of the expression **idea** in such a way that we can really see that he understood by it something that not only could never be borrowed from the senses, but that even goes far beyond the concepts of the understanding (with which Aristotle occupied himself), since nothing encountered in experience could ever be congruent to it. Ideas for him are archetypes of things themselves, and not, like the categories, merely the key to possible experiences. In his opinion they flowed from the highest reason, through which human reason partakes in them; our reason, however, now no longer finds itself in its original state, but must call back with toil the old, now very obscure ideas through a recollection (which is called philosophy) **I do not wish to go into any literary investigation here**, in order to make out the sense which the sublime philosopher combined with his word. **I note only that when we compare the thoughts that an author expresses about a subject, in ordinary speech as well as in writings, it is not at all unusual to find that we understand him even better than he understood himself**, since he may not have determined his concept sufficiently and hence sometimes spoke, or even thought, contrary to his own intention. (CPR, B 370, **bold added**)

Kant's characterization of the concept of “idea” that Plato is said to have possessed is done in an evaluative rather than a hermeneutic or exegetical way. This can be seen in his terminology (for example, “far beyond the concepts of the understanding”, “key to possible experiences”). Kant is not interested in knowing how the “sublime philosopher” dealt with particular metaphysical problems, nor with terminological issues. Rather, he is interested in using an element of his philosophy and modifying it according to certain needs. But by what criteria can we say that it is possible to understand a philosopher better than he understood himself? This is only possible on the basis of a criterion that is no longer subjective, “otherwise, the unqualified historian and judge assesses the groundless assertions of others through his own, which are equally groundless” (CPR B 27). This means that:

A history of philosophy is of such a special kind, that nothing can be told therein of what has happened, without knowing beforehand what should have happened, and also what can happen. Whether this has been investigated beforehand or whether it has been reasoned out haphazardly. For it is the history, not of the opinions which have chanced to arise here or there, but of reason developing itself from concepts. (FM, AA 20:343)

These bolder formulations inevitably lead to other questions: What is the basis that allows Kant to objectively judge the preceding metaphysical systems? In other words, why should the “transcendental standpoint” work as the basis for a future history of pure reason?⁷ The combination of these questions provides us a clue. Kant believes that it is the transcendental perspective, resulting from the Copernican revolution in thought carried out by the *Critique of Pure Reason*, that provides the criteria for objectively judging previous metaphysical systems.

Kant’s proposed Copernican revolution refers to a radical change in the way and method of thinking about the metaphysical problems concerning the possibility of *a priori* knowledge. It is conceived in analogy to the revolutions that, according to him, took place in mathematics (with Thales) and in natural science (with Bacon) (see CPR Bxxii). Instead of thinking that our *a priori* representations are determined by the object, we should investigate whether objects are not determined by our *a priori* representations (see CPR Bxvi-xvii and Bxxiii). In this case, metaphysics would no longer be concerned, at least in the first instance, with objects, but only with the faculties of our mind that provide the *a priori* forms of objects. In other words, the new methodological approach no longer follows the path of formulating *a priori* judgments about objects, but rather investigates what conditions allow *a priori* judgments to be made, and whether human beings possess them.

For that this should be possible, indeed that such a system should not be too great in scope for us to hope to be able entirely to complete it, can be assessed in advance from the fact that our object is not the nature of things, which is inexhaustible, but the understanding, which judges about the nature of things, and this in turn only in regard to its *a priori* cognition, the supply of which, since we do not need to search for it externally, cannot remain hidden from us, and in all likelihood is small enough to be completely recorded (...). (CPR, B 26)

In other words,

this science cannot be terribly extensive, for it does not deal with objects of reason, whose multiplicity is infinite, but merely with itself, with problems that spring entirely from its own womb, and that are not set before it the nature of things that are distinct from it but through its own nature. (CPR B 23)

But Kant’s thesis is stronger than the claim that *a priori* knowledge *can* be measured. For him, it is a *duty* of metaphysics to achieve the completeness of all principles of *a priori* knowledge. “Hence as a fundamental science, metaphysics is also bound to achieve this completeness, and we must be able to say of it: *nil aetum reputans, si quid superesset agendum*” (CPR B xxiv). This happens because:

pure speculative reason is, in respect of principles of cognition, a unity entirely separate and subsisting for itself, in which, as in an organized body, every part exists for the sake of all the others as all the others exist for its sake, and no principle can be taken with certainty in *one* relation unless it has at the same time been investigated in its *thoroughgoing* relation to the entire use of pure reason. (CPR B xxiii)

For metaphysics is by nature and intention a completed whole; either nothing or everything. So what is required for its final purpose cannot be dealt with in a fragmentary way, as in mathematics or empirical natural science, where progress is constant and unending. But we shall attempt the task nonetheless. (FM AA 20: 259)

The investigation of reason itself must be systematic, because only in this way can one be sure that one has reached the completeness of the principles of reason. “Under the government of reason our cognitions cannot at all constitute a rhapsody but must constitute a system” (CPR B860) This means that one cannot attribute principles to reason in a haphazard way, as would happen if one were to come across them by chance, as was the case with Aristotle. His “search for these fundamental concepts was an effort worthy of an acute man. But since he had no principle, he rounded them up as he stumbled on them” (CPR B106f.). Moreover, the investigation of pure reason must be carried out through a dogmatic procedure, that is, “through the regular ascertainment of the principles, the clear determination of concepts, the attempt at strictness in the proofs, and the prevention of audacious leaps in inferences” (CPR Bxxxvi). Therefore, the Criticism must be carried out in a systematic and dogmatic way, according to the highest academic standards.

Thus, the confidence that Kant expresses in his philosophical system is justified by the combination of new view offered by the Copernican turn, the articulated nature of reason, and a dogmatic and systematic method of analyzing reason. This is made clear in the second preface of the *Critique of pure reason*, where the nature of pure speculative reason is conceived as consisting of a

truly articulated structure of members in which each thing is an organ, that is, in which everything is for the sake of each member, and each individual member is for the sake of all, so that even the least frailty, whether it be a mistake (an error) or a lack, must inevitably betray itself in its use. I hope this system will henceforth maintain itself in this unalterability. It is not self-conceit that justifies my trust in this, but rather merely the evidence drawn from the experiment showing that the result effected is the same whether we proceed from the smallest elements to the whole of pure reason or return from the whole to every part (for this whole too is given in itself through the final intention of pure reason in the practical); while the attempt to alter even the smallest part directly introduces contradictions not merely into the system, but into universal human reason. (CPR Bxxxviif.)

The critique of pure reason, as an investigation whose object is reason itself, aims to grasp those characteristics that define the nature of human reason and would be the foundation for an objective analysis of the history of metaphysics. It can therefore be said that the last chapter of the CPR proposes a history from a transcendental point of view, since “transcendental” is the concept that characterizes the knowledge acquired through a critique of pure reason, i.e. a knowledge “that is occupied not so much with objects, but rather with our a priori concepts of objects in general” (CPR B 25).

When Kant speaks of a “nature of reason”, he is referring to certain qualities that are intrinsic to human reason. Indeed, Kant could be criticized for making such a loaded assumption. However, all of these qualities are not ascribed to reason in a dogmatic way, but rather through a careful examination and justification that follows a dogmatic procedure. Among those properties, not all have the same theoretical status. “Nature” ranges from objective

properties expressed by representations with objective validity, such as pure forms of intuition and categories, to subjective properties expressed by ideas or maxims (subjective principles).

Now, since the existence of an unchanging nature of reason serves as the objective foundation for the philosophical history of philosophy, the history of philosophy itself must be characterized as a process of self-enlightenment about reason's own properties and laws. Since reason is not transparent to itself, the process of self-enlightenment can be long and tortuous, happening mostly through attempts and failures, and driven by various interests stemming from different capacities and modes of use.

3. THE OUTLINE OF A HISTORY OF PURE REASON AND ITS SYMMETRY WITH THE NATURE OF REASON

There are therefore three stages which philosophy had to traverse in its approach to metaphysics. The first was the stage of dogmatism; the second that of skepticism; and the third that of the criticism of pure reason. This temporal sequence is founded in the nature of man's cognitive capacity. Once the first two stages have been passed, the state of metaphysics can continue to vacillate for many centuries, leaping from an unlimited self-confidence of reason to boundless mistrust, and back again. But a critique of its own powers would put it into a condition of stability, both external and internal, in which it would need neither increase nor decrease, nor even be capable of this. (FM AA 20: 264)

An account similar to the one quoted above can also be found in the Critique of Pure Reason:

One can call a procedure of this sort, subjecting the *facta* of reason to examination and when necessary to blame, the *ensorship* of reason. It is beyond doubt that this censorship inevitably leads to *doubt* about all transcendent use of principles. But this is only the second step, which is far from completing the work. The first step in matters of pure reason, which characterizes its childhood, is dogmatic. The just mentioned second step is skeptical, and gives evidence of the caution of the power of judgment sharpened by experience. Now, however, a third step is still necessary, which pertains only to the mature and adult power of judgment, which has at its basis firm maxims of proven universality, that, namely, which subjects to evaluation not the *facta* of reason but reason itself, as concerns its entire capacity and suitability for pure *a priori* cognitions; this is not the censorship but the *critique* of pure reason, whereby not merely *limits* but rather the determinate *boundaries* of it - not merely ignorance in one part or another but ignorance in regard to an possible questions of a certain sort - are not merely suspected but are proved from principles. (CPR, B188f.)

These passages can be analyzed in two ways: first, in terms of the stages of metaphysics and their interrelations; second, in terms of the nature of the project of a history of pure reason, that is, the legitimacy of the connection between each stage and the "nature of man's cognitive capacity" (FM AA 20: 264). I deal with the former in this section and the latter in the next. The point here, then, is to understand the main features of the three stages of metaphysics: Dogmatism, Skepticism, and Criticism.

Dogmatism, or the infancy of metaphysics, is characterized by the

the presumption of getting on solely with pure cognition from (philosophical) concepts according to principles, which reason has been using for a long time without first inquiring in what way and by what right it has obtained them. Dogmatism is therefore the dogmatic procedure of pure reason, *without an antecedent critique of its own capacity*. (CPR, Bxxxv)

It can be said that the maxim underlying the procedure of Dogmatism is the following: ‘the limits of possible knowledge are established on the basis of attempts to know supersensible objects’, or alternatively, ‘you discover what you can know by trying it’⁸.

Kant gives at least five reasons or causes for the emergence and long perpetuation of Dogmatism, namely:

1. The natural (theoretical, but above all practical) interest of reason in the objects of metaphysics: God, freedom, and the immortality of the soul (see CPR B 6f.; B881). From these three objects arise the three disciplines that constitute special metaphysics (rational theology, rational cosmology, and rational psychology).
2. Misplaced confidence created by advances in mathematics⁹.
3. Failure to distinguish between synthetic and analytic judgments, which gave the false impression that the analysis of mere concepts provided a real increase in the knowledge of objects¹⁰.
4. Based on the maxim that “you find out what you can know by trying it” (a maxim that works quite well in the field of experience), it has become the customary fate of reason to construct a building and only then to investigate its legitimacy. However, due to the empirical nature of the use of reason, once the building is constructed, various pretexts are created to avoid a detailed examination of its foundations¹¹. It is in this vein that Kant’s critique of Locke runs: he “opened the gates wide to enthusiasm, since reason, once it has authority on its side, will not be kept within limits by indeterminate recommendations of moderation” (CPR B 128).
5. All speculation of the dogmatic metaphysician is beyond the reach of empirical refutation, precisely because its object transcends the field of experience. Thus, the only care the metaphysician has to take is to avoid a contradiction within the speculation, and this can be easily avoided by careful adherence to the principle of non-contradiction.

In its historical course, dogmatic metaphysics has failed to distinguish between ideas, which can have as their object only the suprasensible, and the categories of understanding, which are the rules for syntheses in the field of possible experience (see FM AA 20: 319f.). This error is caused by “a *natural* and *unavoidable* illusion which itself rests on subjective principles and passes them off as objective” (CPR B 354). In other words,

there is a natural and unavoidable dialectic of pure reason, not one in which a bungler might be entangled through lack of acquaintance, or one that some sophist has artfully invented in order to confuse rational people, but one that irremediably attaches to human reason, so that even after we have exposed the mirage it will still not cease to lead our reason on with false hopes, continually propelling it into momentary aberrations that always need to be removed. (CPR B 354f.)

This “natural and unavoidable dialectic of pure reason” occurs because reason, understood as the whole higher faculty of knowledge, is not composed of homogeneous elements. One of

the important innovations in Kant's philosophy is the distinction between understanding and reason in a strict sense. The former has rules that make it possible to understand phenomena as part of nature, while the latter provides concepts about the unconditioned. While the former have objective reality, the latter has only subjective principles. The error arises either when the faculty of judgment takes the subjective principles of reason to be objective concepts of understanding, or when it makes the categories are used beyond the field of possible experience. In this way, a series of contradictions inevitably emerges from within dogmatism, which makes reason appear to be antinomical.

The positions of thesis and antithesis in antinomies do not arise by accident. Both positions, though false, are motivated by interests rooted in the nature of reason. On the side of the thesis, two fundamental interests are at stake: a practical interest, "in which every well-disposed person, once he understands its true advantage to him, heartily shares", because it guarantees the "cornerstones of morality and religion" (CPR B 494); and a speculative interest, because through transcendental ideas "one can grasp the whole chain of conditions fully a priori and comprehend the derivation of the conditioned, starting with the unconditioned" (CPR B 495). On the side of the antithesis, there is also a strong speculative interest, according to which "the understanding is at every time on its own proper ground, namely the field solely of possible experiences, whose laws it traces, and by means of which it can endlessly extend its secure and comprehensible cognition" (CPR B 496). The opposition between thesis and antithesis portrays the opposition of "Epicureanism against Platonism" (see CPR B 499), or the opposition between sensualists and intellectualists.

Each of the two says more than it knows, but in such a way that the first encourages and furthers knowledge, though to the disadvantage of the practical, the second provides principles which are indeed excellent for the practical, but in so doing allows reason, in regard to that of which only a speculative knowledge is granted us, to indulge in ideal explanations of natural appearances, and to neglect the physical investigation of them. (CPR B499f.)

The dogmatic phase culminates in this antinomical state or a "dialectical arena". Metaphysics "is rather a battlefield, and indeed one that appears to be especially determined for testing one's powers in mock combat; on this battlefield no combatant has ever gained the least bit of ground, nor has any been able to base any lasting possession on his victory." (CPR Bxiv- xv) Kant also compares metaphysical systems to buildings in ruins (see CPR B880). It is a distinct feature of this reasoning that it is made in an apagogical way. So, it is reason itself that destroys its own attempts, not the experience that undermines it.

From this inevitable dialectic of human reason and from the fact that no permanent result has been achieved on the terrain of the suprasensible, arises the second stage of metaphysics: *Skepticism*. It adopts "a principle of artful and scientific ignorance that undermines the foundations of all cognition, in order, if possible, to leave no reliability or certainty anywhere." (CPR B451) It produces a distrust towards both the knowledge and the cognoscitive capacities.

However, for Kant, Skepticism

merely *limits* our understanding without *drawing* boundaries for it, and brings about a general distrust but no determinate knowledge of the ignorance that is unavoidable for us, by censuring certain principles of the understanding without placing this understanding regard to its entire capacity on the scales of critique, and, while rightly denying to understanding what it really cannot accomplish, goes further, and disputes all its capacity to expand itself *a priori* without having assessed this entire capacity, the same thing happens to him that always brings down skepticism, namely, he is himself doubted, for his objections rest only on *facta*, which are contingent, but not on principles a that could effect a necessary renunciation of the right to dogmatic assertions. (CPR B795f.)

Kant explains his claim that Skepticism is based on facts and not on principles in the following passage:

All failed dogmatic attempts reason are *facta*, which it is always useful to subject to censure. But this cannot decide anything about reason's expectations of hoping for better success in its future efforts and making claims to that; mere censure can therefore never bring to an end the controversy about what is lawful in human reason. (CPR B792)

Thus, Skepticism is perfectly justified in doubting all previous dogmatic-metaphysical efforts, but it is not justified in denying the possibility of future progress in metaphysics through a better-founded project.

In the history of pure reason, skepticism is portrayed as “a resting place for human reason, which can reflect upon its dogmatic peregrination and make a survey of the region in which it finds itself in order to be able to choose its path in the future with greater certainty, but it is not a dwelling-place for permanent residence” (CPR B789). In other words, skeptical procedure “is nevertheless preparatory for arousing its caution and showing it fundamental means for securing it in its rightful possessions,” (CPR B797) but it cannot be the end point of inquiry. For Kant, reason must be able to fully answer the questions that arise from its own nature, so it is necessary to answer the questions of reason on the basis of a critical investigation based on principles and not on doubts based on facts.

Thus, in the context of the history of pure reason, Skepticism is seen as a stage whose goal is to rouse the awakening metaphysicians from their dogmatic dream and force them to engage in a process of self-knowledge. But skepticism in itself is not productive. It neither satisfies reason's inherent metaphysical interests nor clearly defines the limits of possible knowledge.¹² Skepticism even undermines any pure natural science by casting doubt on the entire *a priori* account of experience.

Once these first two steps have been made, metaphysics can move on to next one, which can only be accomplished by a mature faculty of judgment. This third stage is Criticism or Critical philosophy. It is based on the assumption that before we make judgments claiming to know objects, we must examine the conditions of possibility of those judgments. Criticism has the maxim that the first and inescapable task of metaphysics is to engage in critical reflection. This reflection is compared to a trial in which reason plays the role of both judge and defendant. In the “trial” each “claim of possession” of a particular kind of knowledge must be justified on

the basis of a deduction, that is, a justification based on principles that can be publicly accepted and shared.

Kant believed that he had accomplished this task in his *Critique of pure reason*. An attempt is made to clarify the meaning of criticism by drawing an analogy with the theory of jusnaturalism. In this sense, the realization of a critique of pure reason represents the transition in metaphysics from a state of nature to a state of legality. Disputes should no longer be settled by war, but by a due process according to a law that reason gives for itself³.

In this way, a bipartite division of the history of pure reason comes into play, namely a part corresponding to a pre-metaphysics characterized by the state of nature, and a part referring to a metaphysics characterized by the state of law. The first is characterized by a period of pre-science, in which investigators remain in a simple “groping”. The second begins with a revolution in thinking, which in this case can be called the “Copernican revolution in the way thinking”. This revolution is the beginning of metaphysics as a science (see CPR B xff.; Prol, AA 04: 365ff.).

While Kant states in the preface that for each science there is only one revolution from the pre-scientific to the scientific period, in the last chapter he speaks of several changes that can be distinguished in three ways. With regard to the object of knowledge, the philosophers were either sensualists or intellectualists; with regard to the origin of knowledge, they were either empiricists or noologists; with regard to the method, they either followed the naturalism of reason, “a mere misology brought to principles” (CPR B883), or they followed a scientific method, in which case they proceeded either dogmatically or skeptically. In the last Chapter he also does not explicitly mention his theory about the three stages in the history of metaphysics: Dogmatism, Skepticism, and Criticism. But if we combine this division with the one above, we could say that both the sensualists and intellectualists (with regard to the object) and the empiricists and noologists (with regard to the origin of knowledge) are representatives of the Dogmatism. As for the scientific method, Kant maintains the distinction between dogmatists (Wolf) and skeptics (Hume). It seems that there are at least two different uses of the Dogmatism. The first, as a dogmatic attitude, according to which the philosopher assumes that pure reason need not undergo a critique of its capacity (see CRP Bxxxv). The second, as a ‘foundationalist perspective’ that marks the position of the *Thesis* in the *Antinomy of pure reason*. In this case, Dogmatism is opposed to Empiricism.

As for Criticism, we can see that it expresses a kind of “synthesis” between the above positions. A clear example of this emerges in terms of *method*. On the one hand, critical philosophy adopts the dogmatic procedure, i.e., it establishes principles according to laws, clearly defines concepts, seeks rigor in demonstrations, and avoids reckless leaps in conclusions (see CRP B xxxvi). On the other hand, it also uses the skeptical method, i.e. a procedure that seeks to impartially assess the conflict of the assertions of pure reason in order to discover its point of contradiction. In contrast to Skepticism, the skeptical method

aims at certainty, seeking to discover the point of misunderstanding in disputes that are honestly intended and conducted with intelligence by both sides, in order to do as wise legislators do when from the embarrassment of judges in cases of litigation they draw instruction concerning that which is defective and imprecisely determined in their laws. (CPR B451f.)

The dogmatic method is different from Dogmatism, just as the skeptical method is different from Skepticism. One could say that Dogmatism uses the dogmatic method, but rejects the principle of evaluating the legitimacy of the first principles. In the same way, Skepticism uses the skeptical method, but also assumes “a principle of artful and scientific ignorance that undermines the foundations of all cognition” (CPR B451), i.e., it does not intend in any way to carry out a critique of the faculty of reason. In this sense, Kant tries to use the best of each method and stage, but it grows out of its own independent principle and cannot be ‘derived’ from previous positions.

4. THE LEGITIMACY AND THEORETICAL STATUS OF THE PROJECT OF A PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

“There are therefore three stages which philosophy *had to* traverse in its approach to metaphysics. The first was the stage of dogmatism; the second that of skepticism; and the third that of the criticism of pure reason. *This temporal sequence is founded in the nature of man’s cognitive capacity.*” (FM AA 20: 264, emphasis added) This passage can be compared to a similar one from the first *Critique*, namely, “it is remarkable enough, although *it could not naturally have been otherwise*, that in the infancy of philosophy human beings began where we should now rather end, namely, by studying first the cognition of God and the hope or indeed even the constitution of another world.” (CPR B880, *emphasis added*) These texts raise some questions: In what sense can it be said that the first two stages of the history of philosophy were necessary for the emergence of critical philosophy? What kind of interdependence exists between the three stages of metaphysics?

A distinction between an epistemological dependence and a factual dependence is necessary to deal with those questions. By epistemological dependence is meant a theoretical connection between the results of previous philosophical systems in such a way that they would be taken as starting points for Criticism. In this case, Dogmatism and Skepticism would be taken as premises for Critical philosophy. In this way, it would be impossible for Criticism to have arisen before the others. This cannot be the kind of dependence that Kant is talking about. An example that he thought metaphysics could have started on the safe path of a science long ago is found in the following passage: “That metaphysics has until now remained in such a vacillating state of uncertainty and contradictions is to be ascribed solely to the cause that no one has previously thought of (...) the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments.” (CPR B19)

By “factual dependence” I mean a connection that is in itself contingent (from the perspective of reason itself), but at the same time natural, given certain conditions of our regular use of reason. This contingency is, however, inevitable, that is, it extends to every human use of reason. By “contingent” is meant certain characteristics of human reason in its relation to sensibility (understood in a broad sense that includes emotions, for example, and not only as spatio-temporal perception). Then a distinction should be made between “reason” and “human reason”. When Kant speaks of the former, he is referring to the legitimate conditions for the use

of reason, understood in a normative sense¹⁴. In the second case, the human conditions of use are taken into account.

Let's look at some cases of this human use of reason: Could Skepticism have come before Dogmatism? The skeptic either doubts that we can know something, or doubts that the dogmatist has succeeded in proving our knowledge of something. In the second case, skepticism must necessarily follow dogmatism. In the first case, skepticism couldn't have arisen before dogmatism either, since it does not arise as a questioning of the common use of reason. The common use of human reason in everyday problems does not give rise to skeptical doubts. Without Dogmatism, then, there would still be no speculative use of reason. Skepticism must therefore follow dogmatism, and this succession is also based on a fact, namely the existence of speculative thinking.

Another example: Criticism assumes that dogmatism must develop itself to a certain point before it can emerge. This dependence is based on the fact that the disagreement between the principles of pure reason presents itself with a certain clarity. For example:

The conflict cultivates reason by the consideration of its object on both sides, and corrects its judgment by thus limiting it. What is here in dispute is not the *matter* but the *tone*. For enough remains left to you to speak the language, justified by the sharpest reason, of a firm *belief*, even though you must surrender that of *knowledge*. (CPR B772)

Reason also very much needs such a conflict, and it is to be wished that it had been undertaken earlier and with unlimited public permission. For then a mature critique would have come about all the earlier, at the appearance of which all of this controversy would have had to disappear, since the disputants would have learned insight into the illusion and prejudices that have disunited them. (CPR B775)

Now, just as the antinomies of pure reason were one of the starting points (a factual condition) of Kant's investigation for the first *Critique*, he also considers that the full development of this antagonism is a condition for the emergence of Criticism.

Dogmatism was the first stage of metaphysics for two central reasons: firstly, the great interest (theoretical and practical) that human reason has in the unconditioned; and secondly, the fact that reason assumes in the realm of the suprasensible the same maxim that is used quite successfully for the knowledge of empirical objects, namely, the maxim that 'you discover what you can know by trying it'.

The question now is: what is the theoretical status of this historical narrative? At the beginning of this paper, it was shown that Kant thought of a philosophical history of philosophy in which each stage could be derived from the nature of reason. We also saw that the chronological order between the stages is not based on an epistemological connection, but on a factual one, that is, a connection based on the human nature of reason. Kant presents the different philosophical positions - especially in terms of origin (empiricists and noologists) and object (sensualists and empiricists) - as related to "interests of reason". Thus, each type of philosophy can be linked to the nature of reason through a particular "interest". Empiricism, for example, accurately represents the interest of the understanding in always remaining on its true and proper ground, namely, experience (see CPR B496).

Every stage of metaphysics is linked to an interest of reason. But what kind of connection is this? Is it a kind of deduction or a kind of interpretation? If it were a deduction in the strong sense, one would have to show both that there are certain interests of reason and that they are able to justify certain philosophical positions. Both tasks can hardly be accomplished. It then remains to assume that the connection between the interests of reason and types of philosophical positions is a subjectively necessary connection, i.e. it is not a matter of proving it, but of *interpreting* the history of metaphysics *as if it were* a “mathematically composed” history.

Moreover, an “interest” as a subjective ground cannot support an objective claim, so the history of pure reason cannot have objective validity. The history of pure reason must be interpreted within the horizon of a regulative theory. Thus, it would be the philosopher/historian who, on the basis of an idea, would establish the connection between the nature of reason and its history. The guiding idea for the hermeneutic compass would be the idea of enlightened reason understood as an organic system. Thus, the history of pure reason integrates the system of reason insofar as a way of satisfying the systematic interest of reason.

If the above interpretation is correct, then the history of pure reason can be brought closer to the theory of universal history developed in the *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, published in 1784. Both projects have a regulative validity and are justified on the basis of an interest in bringing rationality to the historical process, while at the same time acknowledging the limits and nature of our cognitive capacities.¹⁵ This objectivity is regulative in the sense that it cannot be objectively proven. But it is not merely contingent, for it is the only legitimate way if one wants to do something different from a merely empirical history. *Mutatis mutandis*, “it is only a thought of that which a philosophical mind (which besides this would have to be very well versed in history) could attempt from another standpoint” (Idea AA 08: 30).

The regulative perspective also requires a justification, which in the case of a philosophical history of philosophy implies a commitment *to the search for objectivity*, or even a commitment to rationality, not as something given or finished, but as an ideal (an archetype) that should guide philosophical activity in its endeavors (the ectype). The following passage clearly states this position:

Now the system of all philosophical cognition is *philosophy*. One must take this objectively if one understands by it the archetype for the assessment of all attempts to serve to philosophize, which should serve to assess each subjective philosophy, the structure of which is often so manifold and variable. In this way philosophy is a mere idea of a possible science, which is nowhere given *in concreto*, but which one seeks to approach in various ways until the only footpath, much overgrown by sensibility, is discovered, and the hitherto unsuccessful ectype, so far as it has been granted to humans, is made equal to the archetype. Until then one cannot learn any philosophy; for where is it, who has possession of it, and by what can it be recognized? One can only learn to philosophize, i.e., to exercise the talent of reason in prosecuting its general principles in certain experiments that come to hand, but always with the reservation of the right of reason to investigate the sources of these principles themselves and to confirm or reject them. (CPR B 866)

He does not abandon this position, for it reappears in the *Metaphysics of Morals*. The following is a long passage, but it is worth quoting because it illustrates in detail how Kant understood the regulative principle applied to his own philosophical work:

It sounds arrogant, conceited, and belittling of those who have not yet renounced their old system to assert that before the coming of the critical philosophy there was as yet no philosophy at all. - In order to decide about this apparent presumption, it need but be asked *whether there could really be more than one philosophy*. Not only have there been different ways of philosophizing and of going back to the first principles of reason in order to base a system, more or less successfully, upon them, but there had to be many experiments of this kind, each of which made its contribution to present-day philosophy. Yet since, considered objectively, there can be only one human reason, there cannot be many philosophies; in other words, there can be only one true system of philosophy from principles, in however many different and even conflicting ways one has philosophized about one and the same proposition. So the *moralist* rightly says that there is only one virtue and one doctrine of virtue, that is, a single system that connects all duties of virtue by one principle; the *chemist*, that there is only one chemistry (Lavoisier's); the *teacher of medicine*, that there is only one principle for systematically classifying diseases (Brown's). Although the *new system* excludes all the others, it does not detract from the merits of earlier moralists, chemists, and teachers of medicine, since without their discoveries and even their unsuccessful attempts we should not have attained that unity of the true principle which unifies the whole of philosophy into one system. - So anyone who announces a system of philosophy as his own work says in effect that before this philosophy there was none at all. For if he were willing to admit that there had been another (and a true) one, there would then be two different and true philosophies on the same subject, which is self-contradictory. - If, therefore, the critical philosophy calls itself a philosophy before which there had as yet been no philosophy at all, it does no more than has been done, will be done, and indeed must be done by anyone who draws up a philosophy on his own plan. (MM AA 06:206f.)

We see here a clear commitment to objectivity as a regulative ideal. Thus, the defense of objectivity is not a submission to an immutable and dogmatic truth, but a commitment that each philosopher must justify its metaphysical claims against the previous ones. Any overcoming cannot be done by means of tricks or detours, but should be based on addressing the limits and valid points set by previous philosophical enterprises.

In this sense, Kant claims that the first *Critique* “establishes a mode of thinking” (Prol, AA 04:383) that requires principles to be publicly justified for the philosophical community according to the idea of a Republic (see also CPR 766). He challenges every opponent

to prove in his own way any single truly metaphysical (i.e., synthetic, and cognized *a priori* from concepts) proposition he holds, and at best one of the most indispensable, such as the principle of the persistence of substance or of the necessary determination of the events in the world through their cause – but, as is fitting, to prove it on a priori grounds. (Prol, AA 04: 378)

Otherwise, if the opponent “can't do this (and silence is confession), then he must admit” it (Prol, AA 04: 378). The commitment with objectivity requires that the “*Critique* must either be accepted or a better one put in its place” (Prol, AA 04: 379), but it does not allow an alleged refutation without replacing it with a better and more complete project. The acceptance is not final, however, because anyone can always “express his reservations, indeed even his veto” (CPR B 766). Therefore, Kant does not claim that we must accept all the results of the *Critique* (as a theory), but anyone who wants to engage in metaphysics must be subjected to the critical demands of justifying synthetic a priori judgments. It is in this methodological sense, and not

as a stage of metaphysics, that we must understand the famous phrase: “The critical path alone is still open” (CPR B883).

Abstract: This paper reconstructs the premises and meaning of the final chapter of the first *Critique*, *The History of Pure Reason*. It argues that the project of a history of pure reason rests on the main arguments developed throughout the work, especially the idea of pure reason as an organized whole. It also claims that this philosophical history has a regulative status.

Keywords: History, Philosophy, Reason, Idea, Regulative Knowledge

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² All translations are quoted from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* (1992ff.) and follows the rules established by the Akademie Ausgabe. Kant, Immanuel (1900ff): *Gesammelte Schriften*. Hrsg.: Bd. 1– 22 Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Bd. 23 Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, ab Bd. 24 Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Berlin.

³ See: In such a war there arise exactly as many pure concepts of the understanding, which apply to objects of intuition in general a priori, as there were logical functions of all possible judgments in the previous table: for the understanding is completely exhausted and its capacity entirely measured by these functions.” (CPR B 105), “The pure understanding (...) is therefore a unity that subsists on its own, which is sufficient by itself, and which is not to be supplemented by any external additions.” (CPR B 90).

⁴ “Knowledge” is understood here in a strong sense, i.e. linked to the concept of “truth”, not just in the sense of believing that you know something.

⁵ See Schnädelbach, 1983.

⁶ This topic will be discussed in the last section.

⁷ Cf. “I will content myself with casting a cursory glance from a merely transcendental point of view, namely that of nature of the pure reason, on the whole of its labors (...)” (CPR 880)

⁸ This can be seen in the following passages: “(...) the science whose final aim in all its preparations is directed properly only to the solution of these problems is called metaphysics, whose procedure is in the beginning dogmatic, i.e., it confidently takes on the execution of this task without an antecedent examination of the capacity or incapacity of reason for such a great undertaking.” (CPR B 7); “the uncritical dogmatist, who has not measured the sphere of his understanding and thus has not determined the boundaries of his possible cognition in accordance with principles, who therefore does not already know in advance how much he is capable of but thinks he can find it out through mere experiments (...)” (CPR B 796)

⁹ See: “For in mathematics reason succeeded in knowing a priori the constitution of things, well beyond all expectation of the philosophers; why should there not be just as much success in philosophy? As to the possibility of knowledge a priori, it did not strike the metaphysicians as a radical difference, to be treated as an important problem, that mathematics proceeds on the terrain of the sensory, since reason itself can construct concepts for it, i.e., present them a priori in intuition, and thus know the objects a priori, whereas philosophy undertakes an extension of reason’s knowledge by mere concepts, where its objects cannot, as in the other case, be set before us, since they hover, as it were, ahead of us in the air.” (FM AA 20:262) In the same way see also CPR B 8.

¹⁰ According to Kant, “A great part, perhaps the greatest part, of the business of our reason consists in analyses of the concepts that we already have of objects. This affords us a multitude of cognitions that, although they are nothing more than illuminations or clarifications of that which is already thought in our concepts (though still in a confused way), are, at least as far as their form is concerned, treasured as if they were new in sights, though they do not extend the concepts that we have in either matter or content, but only set them apart from each other. Now since this procedure does yield a real a priori cognition, which makes secure and useful progress, reason, without itself noticing it under these pretenses surreptitiously makes assertions of quite another sort, in which reason adds something entirely alien to given concepts and indeed does so a priori, without one knowing how it was able to do this and without such a question even being allowed to come to mind.” (CPR B 9f.)

¹¹ See: “It is, however, a customary fate of human reason in speculation to finish its edifice as early as possible and only then to investigate whether the ground has been adequately prepared for it. But at that point all sorts of excuses will be sought to assure us of its sturdiness or to refuse such a late and dangerous examination.” (CPR B9)

¹² See: Skepticism “is at best only a means for awaking it [Dogmatic] from its sweet dogmatic dreams in order to undertake a more careful examination of its condition. Since, however, this skeptical manner of withdrawing from a tedious quarrel of reason seems to be the shortcut, as it were, for arriving at enduring philosophical tranquility, or at least the high road that is happily recommended by those who would give a philosophical appearance to a scornful contempt for all investigations of this kind, I find it necessary to exhibit this manner of thought in its true light.” (CPR B785) “All skeptical polemicizing is properly directed only against the dogmatist, who continues gravely along his path without any mistrust of his original objective principles, i.e., without critique, in order to unhinge his concept and bring him to self-knowledge.” (CPR B791)

¹³ See: “Without this [the critique of pure reason], reason is as it were in the state of nature, and it cannot make its assertions and claims valid or secure them except through *war*. The critique, on the contrary, which derives all decisions from the ground-rules of its own constitution, whose authority no one can doubt, grants us the peace of a state of law, in which we should not conduct our controversy except by *due process*. What brings the quarrel in the state of nature to an end is a *victory*, of which both sides boast, although for the most part there follows only an uncertain peace, arranged by an authority in the middle; but in the state of law it is the verdict, which, since it goes to the origin of the controversies themselves, must secure a perpetual peace. And the endless controversies of a merely dogmatic reason finally make it necessary to seek peace in some sort of critique of this reason itself, and in a legislation grounded upon it; just as Hobbes asserted, the state of nature is a state of injustice and violence, and one must necessarily leave it in order to submit himself to the lawful coercion which alone limits our freedom in such a way that it can be consistent with the freedom of everyone else and thereby with the common good.” (CPR B779f.)

¹⁴ Here I generally share some of Pollok’s position about the normativity of reason (Pollok 2017). But I develop a constructivist reading of the CPR in Klein (2023).

¹⁵ For a discussion about the legitimacy of the essay *Idea* published in 1784 in the context of the first critique see Klein 2014.

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PURPOSIVENESS, TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS, AND PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY. NOTES ON THE *IDEA FOR A UNIVERSAL HISTORY WITH A COSMOPOLITAN AIM*, IN LIGHT OF THE *TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC OF THE CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON*

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1. THE METHOD OF HISTORY AS A PROBLEM: THE INTRODUCTION TO THE *IDEA FOR A UNIVERSAL HISTORY WITH A COSMOPOLITAN AIM*

It is known that the first text Kant explicitly dedicated to reflecting on history was the *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (IaG), published in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift* on November 4, 1784.² In the brief observations that serve as an introduction to the nine propositions of the IaG, Kant does not provide sufficient indications to understand the systematic placement that his philosophy of history – or rather, philosophical history – has within critical writings of the first half of the 1780s.³ Perhaps it is also for this reason that this writing offers many suggestions when it is related to the *Critique of Pure Reason* (KrV):⁴ from the opening pages of the IaG, the reflections present in the *Transcendental Dialectic* of the KrV seem to echo, both the passages referring to the antinomy of reason and, above all, those concerning the principle of purposiveness (*Zweckmäßigkeit*) and the question of the method of philosophical investigation in general. Thus begins the writing of 1784:

Whatever concept one may form of *the freedom of the will* with a metaphysical aim, its *appearances*, the human actions, are determined just as much as every other natural occurrence in accordance with universal laws of nature. History [*Geschichte*], which concerns itself with the narration of these appearances, however deeply concealed their causes may be, nevertheless allows us to hope from it that if it considers the play of the freedom of the human will *in the large* [*im Großen*], it can discover within it a regular course; and that in this way what meets the eye in individual subjects as confused and irregular yet in the whole species [*an der ganzen Gattung*] can be recognized as a steadily progressing though slow development of its original predispositions (IaG, AA 08: 17.01-12).

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Regardless of the meaning and ontological status that could be attributed to human actions from a metaphysical point of view, what is important to note is that they, even if recognized as manifestations of freedom, present themselves as facts of nature, that is, as phenomena subject to “universal laws of nature”. History, as a simple narrative⁵ of these specific phenomena, would be nothing more than natural history or a kind of branch of physics.⁶ However, precisely because they are also recognized as manifestations of freedom, human actions cannot be reduced only to facts of nature but also need to be investigated according to the “play of freedom”. If there are traits – even if phenomenal – of freedom in nature, the historical narrative of this freedom needs to address the problem that Kant presented in the antinomy of pure reason: it needs to reconcile the demand of the understanding for a determined and determinant knowledge, limited to the objects of experience, with the demand of reason for a possibly more comprehensive ‘knowledge’, which admits, in a certain way, the noumenal point of view.

It is from this assumption that Kant can declare, in the form of hope, what is the first aspect of the task of history: going beyond a purely naturalistic investigation of human actions, without, of course, harming the teachings of the *Transcendental Analytic*. The second aspect of the task of history depends intimately on this first aspect: understanding the actions of each individual in light of the actions of human beings as a whole, as a species. As the idea of humanity – in both a synchronic and diachronic sense – indicates the most comprehensive dimension that the investigation of human actions can reach, it is precisely on this scale that history needs to try to clearly identify the signs by which it is possible to recognize an order and a regular course in the actions of humanity as a whole.

Kant does not deny that each individual is already, in a certain sense, a history, but not in the proper sense in which history is assumed to be knowledge. Each individual already presents a certain order as an agent subject, and it is possible to elaborate a narrative that concerns him. If this were not the case, we would not be able to speak of an individual or of an agent subject. In other words, it is possible to make a history, in a certain sense, of the individual based on his conduct. Similarly, it is possible to make a history, in a certain sense, of a family, community, state, nation, or civilization. Even so, there would be a totality that, due to its maximum scope, would impose itself on an investigation of human actions that aims to find – and establish – with clarity the regular tendencies of human actions. According to Kant, this totality can be represented by humanity only as a species. The investigation of the human species as a whole – more than the study of other human groups – allows us to recognize the continuous and constant development of human faculties.

In this sense, history, as a narrative of this development, needs to address the question that Kant posed in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*, that is, it needs to be concerned with the requirement that reason orders its own knowledge not only in a determined manner but simultaneously in a systematic way in order to achieve its fullest possible development. History is nothing but a specific application of the general regulative tendency of human reason, which, by demanding completeness in its knowledge and science, demands that the

investigated object also be considered as if it tended toward completeness, and, therefore, be approached on the scale that best reals this tendency toward completeness.

However, it seems appropriate to provide a brief analysis of the first pages of the IaG before reconstructing in a more specific way some passages of the argumentative movement that Kant presents in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic* to prepare some final observations on the philosophical history still in the IaG.

At first sight, the task of history boils down to finding the plan of nature behind the phenomenal manifestations, which in themselves are chaotic and meaningless.

Here there is no other way out for the philosopher - who, regarding human beings and their play in the large [*im Großen*], cannot at all presuppose any rational *aim of theirs* - than to try whether he can discover an *aim of nature* [*Naturabsicht*] in this nonsensical course of things human; from which aim a history in accordance with a determinate plan of nature [*Plane der Natur*] might nevertheless be possible even of creatures who do not behave in accordance with their own plan. (IaG, AA 08: 18.05-10).

This methodological prescription is based on the premise that

individual human beings and even whole nations think little about the fact, since while each pursues its own aim in its own way and one often contrary to another, they are proceeding unnoticed, as by a guiding thread, according to an aim of nature [*Naturabsicht*], which is unknown to them, and are laboring at its promotion, although even if it were to become known to them it would matter little to them (IaG, AA 08: 17.23-27).

Both statements would be dogmatic if they were not critically limited. In fact, it is necessary to consider the condition from which the plan of nature is conceived as objective, to affirm its existence and then the need to discover it for historical investigation to be valid.⁷ In other words, the previous problem reappears: since the observer of human actions encounters a potentially infinite multiplicity of isolated phenomena, if he remains strictly faithful to them, any possibility of a systematic history, guided by a principle of synthesis, will be excluded. Therefore, we can only hope for the existence of an objective plan of nature, which, of course, is not enough to demonstrate its real existence. Instead of a contradiction,⁸ there seems to be a tension between the two extremes, in which Kant indicates that there is room for the discovery of a principle in historical research that is objective but not determined.

It can be observed that if, on the one hand, Kant attributes to nature itself a aim, which represents the guideline in light of which the empirical manifestations of human freedom must be interpreted, on the other hand, it is the hybrid nature of the human being that prevents this principle from being considered determined.

Since human beings in their endeavors do not behave merely instinctively, like animals, and yet also not on the whole like rational citizens of the world in accordance with an agreed upon plan, no history of them in conformity to a plan [*planmäßige Geschichte*] (as e.g. of bees or of beavers) appears to be possible (IaG, AA 08: 17.28-32).

The actions of the human being, whose faculty of will can be determined both rationally and sensibly, cannot being reduced only to the mechanism of nature, as with “bees and beavers”,

or only to a pure will always *in actu*, as with beings that are perfectly rational in their actions, that is, beings whose will is holy. The phenomenal character of the manifestations of human freedom inevitably also suggests their noumenal character; the latter, in turn, is glimpsed in the concrete actions that manifest it. Hence, an impasse results, “so that in the end one does not know what concept to make of our species” (IaG, AA 08: 18.04-05), given the absence, in human actions, of a determined objective systematic order but also given the rational need to consider this order as if it truly existed.

If it is possible to adopt a point of view that allows us to understand human actions as organized into a system according to a somewhat objective principle, without yielding to a naturalistic perspective, then we will be able to understand in what sense it is possible to speak of a plan of nature determined for humanity. At the same time, it is necessary to avoid the opposite danger, which is violating the dictate of the *Transcendental Analytic*, according to which knowledge is obtained only through determined and determinant concepts.

Having defined the extreme limits of the field of action of the history of the human species – the uselessness of a mere physics of human actions, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the illegitimacy of an illusory knowledge as transcendent –, it remains to be understood if and in what terms Kant can speak of a philosophy of history as transcendental, that is, what epistemological status can be conceived for the principles on which this philosophical history is based. To try to elucidate what has been presented by this point in the IaG, the pages Kant dedicates to the teleological principle and the idea of systemic unity in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic* of the KrV will be summarized.

2. TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS AND PURPOSIVENESS: THE *APPENDIX TO THE TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC*

2.1 THE USE AND OBJECT OF TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

When approaching the regulative use of the ideas of pure reason, Kant quickly exposes the complementarity of dialectical logic to analytic logic: the demonstration of the illusion of the pretensions of dialectical reason confirms that our inferences, when they demand to be considered scientific truths, must be subject to the natural and necessary limit represented by experience. Therefore, Kant systematically connects the function of dialectical logic to what had been identified as the engine of all KrV. The objective is to understand the meaning of the “natural propensity” of human reason “to overstep all these boundaries” (KrV, A642/B670.12) imposed by experience, although reason itself recognizes the illegitimacy of the results to which this inclination leads. It is from this radical tension that animates human reason that the effort to understand the legitimacy of the use of transcendental ideas becomes significant because these ideas “are just as natural to it [to human reason] as the categories are natural to the understanding” (KrV, A642/B670.13-14). When it comes to metaphysics and scientific knowledge, which should not be confused with each other or even identified as being similar, one cannot be suppressed to the detriment of the other. The *Transcendental Dialectic* ends up representing not only a confirmation of the *Transcendental Analytic* but also the part of the KrV

aimed at answering the main question of the work,⁹ showing how the natural ideas of pure reason reveal their legitimacy, which is as necessary as it is peculiar.

Kant is quick to clarify in what terms one can speak of a legitimate use of transcendental ideas. Since “everything grounded in the nature of our powers must be purposive [*zweckmäßig*] and consistent with their correct use” (KrV, A642/B670.18-19), the characterization of transcendental ideas as natural and necessary products of human reason implies that their correct use must be possible. The existence of natural faculties devoid of utility would be an absurdity, as Kant repeats in the first proposition of the IaG.¹⁰ This legitimate use is possible as long as the end for which the ideas of pure reason – as well as the categories of the understanding – are given is respected. Furthermore, as Kant explicitly states, transcendental ideas in themselves are not the point at issue, as we can recognize only their naturalness, that is, the spontaneity with which reason produces them (as problematic concepts). The point is to recognize that the danger of error and illusion resides in a use of transcendental ideas that does not conform to their proper end. The criterion for discerning a correct use of the ideas of pure reason according to their end is the same as that which applies to the categories of the understanding and permeates the entire KrV: the relationship with possible experience. In other words, in relation to transcendental ideas, one can and should ask what possible experience justifies their use.

If transcendental ideas are related directly to an object that, as it is assumed, corresponds to them (KrV, A643/B671.09-10), we will make a transcendent (*transzendent*) or extravagant (*überfliegend*) use of them. This use is illegitimate because there is no sensible intuition of the supposed object corresponding to transcendental ideas – the soul, the world, or God. Since transcendental ideas do not operate like pure concepts of the understanding, that is, they do not operate through the categorial subsumption of intuitions received by sensibility, Kant identifies the only possible experience for transcendental ideas no longer found in the objects themselves that are known to us through understanding, but rather in the way in which these objects are known to us through understanding. More specifically, the object of the ideas of reason is no longer the formal content that our understanding receives as a result of the intuitive reaction to things through sensibility, but rather the very form of synthetic intellectual activity in general. The immanent (*immanent*) or indigenous (*einheimisch*) use of the ideas of reason will then exist only in relation to the general use of the understanding (*Verstandesgebrauch überhaupt*) with respect to the objects with which our understanding deals (KrV, A643/B671.10- 12).¹¹ It is in this sense that “reason never relates directly to an object, but solely to the understanding and by means of it to reason’s own empirical use” (KrV, A643/B671.15-17) and is therefore legitimate. If the pure concepts of the understanding find their legitimate use – immanent, internal, empirical – through their application to the possible objects of sensible intuition determined *a priori* by the pure forms of space and time, it is this same activity of intellectual synthesis that ultimately constitutes the only possible object of experience for the ideas of pure reason, whose aim, therefore, is not to determine concepts of objects but to organize them and provide them with “that unity which they can have in their greatest possible extension, i.e., in relation to the totality of series” (KrV, A643/B671.17-20). Here, there is a clear indication of what, three years later, was written in the introduction to the IaG: it is no longer a matter of knowing the objects of experience in their individuality, but of giving order and shape to the

intellectual activity of knowing these individual objects of experience, considering them now on another scale, that is, in their maximum extent, in their totality. Kant therefore outlines the nature of this totality.

Thus, reason really has as object only the understanding and its purposive application, and just as the understanding unites the manifold into an object through concepts, so reason on its side unites the manifold of concepts through ideas by positing a certain collective unity as the goal of the understanding's actions, which are otherwise concerned only with distributive unity (KrV, A643/B671.22-672.06).¹²

In addition to reiterating the difference between the categorical synthesis of understanding and the synthesis of reason through,¹³ and in addition to introducing the fundamental distinction between the constitutive use of the pure concepts of the understanding and the regulative use of transcendental ideas, Kant explains the meaning of human cognitive activity in general, inserting the principle of finality into its double opening. On the one hand, the principle of purposiveness is used by Kant in a normative way to identify the legitimate use of the ideas of pure reason. As mentioned, in this respect, Kant's reasoning does not propose anything new regarding the discussion of pure concepts of the understanding. The specific difference lies in the object to which the transcendental ideas must refer, so that an empirical use can be made of them – which is legitimate because it conforms to ends – since, in the case of ideas of pure reason, the peculiar object of experience is the empirical use – which is legitimate because it conforms to the ends – of the understanding. On the other hand, it can be observed that it is the very reflection of reason on such use and legitimate object that realizes and implements the principle of purposiveness: when reason questions the legitimacy of both a use (which is identified as legitimate when it conforms to ends) and an object (which it identifies as legitimate when directed at an empirical use – a use that conforms to ends – of the understanding), reason itself recognizes that all human activity involving research, explanation and knowledge exists only in orientation to a specific end – that of systematizing individual intellectual knowledge and guaranteeing it as a collective, that is, total unity.

In other words, reason, through its ideas and the activity of reflecting upon the activity of intellectual synthesis, recognizes that the individual knowledges produced distributively by understanding is naturally predisposed to be collectively understood, organized and unified in a system. In addition, it could not be otherwise because only in a system do such knowledges properly make sense. The reflection of reason on the principle of purposiveness seems to performatively abide by this same principle as the scope within which cognitive activity is effected on a larger scale. This explains the natural tendency toward a collective and total unity on the part of reason, which is dissatisfied with the only distributive unity achieved by understanding. The latter, in fact, is subject to potentially infinite fragmentation, unless it is conceived starting from the idea of totality that guides and orders it, unifies it and gives it meaning, presenting the general rule of its use – purposiveness – as the end that naturally moves it.¹⁴

However, the internal tension of human reason persists. The Kantian conclusion about the epistemological status of transcendental ideas is, at first sight, paradoxical because even in their legitimate use, these ideas do not lose their illusory character, even though

this illusion (which can be prevented from deceiving) is nevertheless indispensably necessary if besides the objects before our eyes we want to see those that lie far in the background, i.e., when in our case, the understanding wants to go beyond every given experience (beyond this part of the whole of possible experience), and hence wants to take the measure of its greatest possible and uttermost extension (KrV, A644/B672.21-673.05).

In this sense, Kant can define transcendental ideas as a “*focus imaginarius*” (KrV, A644/B672.14-18). Until now, the teleological use of ideas of reason, which places the principle of purposiveness as the scope for the cognitive activity, still lacks a deduction that attests to its objective necessity. Justifying the necessity of the empirical use of transcendental ideas through the mere observation of their naturalness, as Kant has done thus far in the KrV, is equivalent to admitting only the subjective necessity of such use.

2.2 THE INDETERMINATE OBJECTIVE NECESSITY OF TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

In the first part of the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*, Kant seems to reinforce the subjective nature of the necessity of the principle of purposiveness, even when he introduces a second movement in his reasoning. Through the distinction between the apodictic use of reason and its hypothetical use, and through the distinction between logical and transcendental principles, Kant reaffirms both the problematic nature and the mere regulatory function of the empirical use of transcendental ideas, as well as the merely subjective need for such use. In the hypothetical use of reason, the idea as the rule to which the particular is reduced is only assumed to be universal, since it is impossible to objectively represent its condition, contrary to what happens with rules that are universally given in an objective determined way, such as categories. Therefore “the hypothetical use of reason, on the basis of ideas as problematic concepts, is not properly constitutive, that is, not such that if one judges in all strictness the truth of the universal rule assumed as a hypothesis thereby follows” (KrV, A647/B675.05-09).

As Kant states, the use of transcendental ideas, when in accordance with their end, can only be regulative because it has the end goal of “bringing unity into particular cognitions *as far as possible* and thereby approximating the rule to universality” (KrV, A647/B675.11-13, emphasis added). Strictly speaking, therefore, one cannot speak of universality, only of an approximation of it or, in other words, of “*projected* unity, which one must regard not as given in itself, but only as a problem” (KrV, A647/B675.16-18).¹⁵ In this sense, the systematic unity of knowledge – that totality which reason sets as the end goal of the cognitive activity, thus making it its possible object of experience – will be only a logical not contradictory principle and is intended to help our understanding harmonize the result of the distributive synthesis, in the search for a so-called superior collective synthesis. Returning to the lexicon of the introduction to IaG, it can be said that the systematic unity represents the expected

principle, so that the isolated manifestations of freedom can be considered within the totality of the human species. On the other hand, to say that

all possible cognitions of the understanding (including empirical ones) have the unity of reason, and stand under common principles from which they could be derived despite their variety: that would be a transcendental principle of reason, which would make systematic not merely something subjectively and logically necessary, as method, but objectively necessary (KrV, A648/B676.10-16).

This last indication is particularly relevant for the philosophical history because, translating the terms of Kant's hypothesis, would be equivalent to saying that even the systematic unity of human actions would be objectively knowable, as a plan of nature. Kant thus shows at least two things: 1) the question of the epistemological status of transcendental ideas must be examined and resolved within the space comprised between objective constitutive transcendental rules and subjective regulative transcendental principles; 2) transcendental ideas, in their legitimate use, are universal rules that are necessary – albeit only from a subjective, hypothetical and problematic perspective – to recognize the methodical nature of human cognitive activity, that is, its organizing systematicity centered around the idea of purposiveness. While the argumentative continuity with what was said above may be evident, Kant also seems to suggest the need to find objective validity for the ideas of reason. Kant clarifies his purpose through the example of the concept of force in general.

Due to their heterogeneity, the forces acting on a specific phenomenon cannot be reduced to the concept of a fundamental force if the only possible use of reason is apodictic and constitutive because this idea of a fundamental force, as a universal rule, does not subsume a specific empirical determination. However, the idea of a fundamental force is not only needed by reason as a logical and methodological principle that can provide the maximum possible unity to the specific knowledge of individual forces but also ultimately plays the role of a fundamental principle, since “the more appearances of this power and that power are found to be identical, the more probable it becomes that they are nothing but various expressions of one and the same power” (KrV, A649/B677.11-14).¹⁶ In addition, if Kant hastens to repeat that the rational unity represented by the idea of fundamental force “is merely hypothetical” (KrV, A649/B677.18-19), that is, it meets a subjective requirement of reason, he also affirms with equal rapidity that,

if one attends to the transcendental use of the understanding, it is evident that this idea of a fundamental power in general does not *function* merely as a problem for hypothetical use, but pretends to objective reality, so that the systematic unity of a substance's many powers are postulated and an apodictic principle of reason is erected (KrV A650/B678.03-08).

The oscillating movement of the argument can be read as an attempt to account for the continuous displacement of the point of view proper to the dialectic of reason. If the distinction between the apodictic and hypothetical use of reason were assumed statically, that is, understood only according to the determinant judgment of the understanding, it would not be possible to understand how an idea of reason, such as force in general, could remain a mere hypothetical principle and, at the same time, be something more than a simple subjective

principle, until it becomes an apodictic principle of reason. However, looking at this same distinction from different perspectives, such as understanding and reason, it may be possible to overcome the contradiction as apparent. As apparent at least for reason. Therefore, it is necessary to remember that in its relationship with understanding, reason does not address understanding in the same way that understanding deals with determined objects; instead, reason considers only the conditions that allow understanding to operate as an activity of synthesis in its empirical use. It is in this sense that the objective reality and validity of the principle of purposiveness must be admitted.

For the law of reason to seek unity is necessary, since without it we would have no reason, and without that, no coherent use of the understanding, and, lacking that, no sufficient mark of empirical truth; thus in regard to the latter we simply have to presuppose the systematic unity of nature as objectively valid and necessary (KrV, A651/B679.12-17).

Only by reaffirming that the reflexivity of reason exclusively addresses the empirical use – that is, according to its end – of the understanding in general, Kant can, without losing coherence, to comprehend this same reflexive activity of reason from a perspective different from that of the determinant judgment of the understanding. The problem, therefore, remains that which was posed at the beginning of the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*: defining the legitimate use of transcendental ideas, that is, their objective and necessary validity, without compromising the results of the *Transcendental Analytic*. However, the progressive specification of the terms in which this demonstration is possible leads Kant to change the point of observation of the problem, initially corresponding only to the perspective of determinant judgement of the understanding and now gradually to the perspective of reason as well. For this change in perspective to be complete, a final movement is still necessary – a deduction.¹⁷

Kant's cautious statement in this regard, in the second part of the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*, confirms that the perspective for demonstrating the objective validity of the immanent use of transcendental ideas has changed: in fact,

the ideas of reason, of course, do not permit any deduction of the same kind as the categories; but if they are to have the least objective validity, even if it is only an indeterminate one, and are not to represent merely empty thought-entities (*entia rationis ratiocinantis*), then a deduction of them must definitely be possible (KrV A669/B697.15-698.01).

This represents “the critical business of pure reason” (KrV A670/B698.03). Kant returns, therefore, to the initial question of the legitimate use and object of the ideas of reason, specifying the necessary ways to think about these issues:

it makes a big difference whether something is given to my reason as an object absolutely or is given only as an object in the idea. In the first case my concepts go as far as determining the object; but in the second, there is really only a schema for which no object is given, not even hypothetically, but which serves only to represent other object to us, in accordance with their systematic unity (KrV, A670/B698.05-12).

From the point of view of reason as reflecting upon the empirical use of the synthetic activity of the understanding, the object of transcendental ideas is redefined as a schema necessary

to give systematic and complete unity to cognitive activity. As schemas, transcendental ideas are related to a form – the synthetic activity of the understanding itself – that is approached by them as its object. A paradigmatic example of this is the theological idea, the most comprehensive and complete of all, which Kant uses to further specify the objective validity (from the point of view of reason, not of the determinant judgement of the understanding) of the transcendental ideas and the principle of systematic unity that they carry.¹⁸

Then it is said, e.g., that the things in the world must be considered as if they had gotten their existence from a highest intelligence. In such a way the idea is only a heuristic and not an ostensive concept; and it shows not how an object is constituted but how, under the guidance of that concept, we ought to seek after the constitution and connection of objects of experience in general (KrV A670/B698.21-A670/B699.05).

Finally, Kant can present the result of all dialectical logic and, taking stock *Of the final aim of the natural dialectic of human reason*, declares that

Pure reason is in fact concerned with nothing else but itself, and it can have no other concern, because what is given to it is no objects to be unified for the concept of experience, but cognitions of understanding to be unified for the concept of reason, i.e., to be connected in one principle (KrV A680/B708.02-06).

If Kant recovers the point of view of the determinant judgment of the understanding, according to which “the systematic unity [of reason] does not serve reason objectively as a principle [...] but subjectively as a maxim”, it is precisely thanks to the relation, now explicit, between the self-referentiality of reason and the legitimate heuristic function of his ideas that Kant can simultaneously affirm that the systematic unity – established by transcendental ideas as the end to the cognitive activity of the understanding – is a principle “also objective, but in an indeterminate way (*principium vagum*)” (KrV A680/B708.08-15).

Although Kant still does not fully formulate the question, as this occurs only in the KU, here we can glimpse the problem regarding the lack of a specific domain for reflective judgment. Only from the point of view of reflective judgment can transcendental ideas gain an objective necessity, which is otherwise denied to them. However, this is precisely an indeterminate objectivity, since there is no object, if by object we understand the determinate object known by understanding.¹⁹ In this sense, the idea of God becomes paradigmatic when it represents, as the totality of totalities, the very form of totality. As a finite being, the human being, on the one hand, needs an object to fulfill the idea of an infinite totality, but on the other hand, ends up confusing this object – which is only the schema that reflective reason uses to exemplarily understand the form of the principle of systematic unity – with a determined object of the understanding. Transcendental ideas in their legitimate use should instead show that

this highest formal unity that alone rests on concepts of reason is the purposive unity of things; and the speculative interest of reason makes it necessary to regard every ordinance in the world as if it had sprouted from the intention of a highest reason. Such a principle namely, opens up for our reason, as applied to the field of experience, entirely new prospects for connecting up things in the world in accordance with teleological laws, and thereby attaining to the greatest systematic unity among them (KrV A686/B714.18-A687/B715.04).

3. PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY AND PURPOSIVENESS: THE METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSITIONS OF THE *IDEA FOR A UNIVERSAL HISTORY WITH A COSMOPOLITAN AIM*

Now, returning to a more detailed examination of the IaG, we will focus mainly on those propositions – the first three and the last – in which the methodological relevance of the principle of purposiveness is highlighted.

The first proposition explicitly refers to the systematic unity in the investigation of phenomena according to the principle of purposiveness, as seen previously in the KrV. From the title, Kant states that “all natural predispositions of a creature are determined sometime to develop themselves completely and purposively [*zweckmäßig*]”,²⁰ and explains that “with all animals, external as well as internal or analytical observation confirms this. An organ that is not to be used, an arrangement that does not attain to its end, is a contradiction in the teleological doctrine of nature” (IaG, AA 08: 18.19-24).²¹ Here, Kant reaffirms one of the first issues addressed at the beginning of the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*: by its very organic-functional nature, any original disposition is ordered to a specific end. The legitimate use of this provision is using it to achieve its own end. Kant confirms this relationship between the natural disposition of the faculties toward an end and their legitimate use as a realization of that end is confirmed by the fact that the opposite would be contradictory. The contradiction would occur not so much in relation to the understanding, which knows only certain individual objects, but rather in relation to reason, which reflects on the form of cognitive activity in general. The determinant judgement of the understanding could very well find, for example, an event that, in its individuality, falsifies and contradicts the rule according to which the natural dispositions of living beings operate according to an end; however, this same falsifying case not only is possible but also is understood and recomposed without contradiction within a general system of knowledge thanks to reason, for example, through the exception to the rule scheme, given the need for an orderly, systematic and complete knowledge. Reason, which conceives of nature as a regular and unitary totality, precludes any other explanation, under penalty of the contradiction of reason with itself: “if we depart from that principle, then we no longer have a lawful nature but a purposelessly [*zwecklos*] playing nature; and desolate chance takes the place of the guideline of reason” (IaG, AA 08: 18.24-27). In other words, to paraphrase the mentioned words of the KrV, without a rational principle that unifies and systematizes the historical events known in their individuality, historical knowledge itself would be impossible.

It is the necessity and interest of reason in its speculative use that now not only makes one wait but also imposes on the knowledge of phenomena – including human actions – the necessary systematic unity according to the rational principle of purposiveness. It is not a matter of finding this unity systematically and teleologically organized in a determined way in nature – this statement would only be possible in a dogmatic way, not from a critical point of view – but rather to understand that reason immediately and necessarily uses this same systematic and teleologically organized unity at the moment when we question ourselves about how we know the phenomena of nature, including the manifestations of human freedom.

In this sense, as the title of the second proposition of the IaG states, “in the human being (*as the only rational creature on earth*), those predispositions whose goal is the use of his

reason were to develop completely only in the species, but not in the individual” (IaG, AA 08: 18.29-32).²² Kant uses a double characterization of reason to mark it as one of the natural human dispositions and, at the same time, as the peculiar natural disposition of the human being, the one that allows him to specifically distinguish him from other animals. Like any other natural disposition, reason finds its legitimacy in complete development according to its own end. In this sense, reason is analogous not only to any other physical organ but also to other human faculties, for example, to the understanding: the legitimate use of both faculties consists of conforming to the end to which they are naturally disposed. However, unlike all other natural dispositions of the human being, reason does not suffer any limitation: even the understanding, in its legitimate use, must be limited to sensible experience. The specificity of reason lies in its power to extend “the rules and aims [*die Regeln und Absichten*] of the use of all its [of human being] powers far beyond natural instinct, and it knows no boundaries to its projects” (IaG, AA 08: 18.33-19.01), i.e., it does not know those limits imposed by sensibility to the understanding but recognizes only in itself the conditions that shape its drawings and, therefore, make them legitimate. If the human being, as a being endowed with reason, is allowed to overcome her sensibly determined nature, this is legitimately allowed only according to the principles of reason.

Thus, it seems possible to strictly interpret Kant’s proposition according to which reason prevails among the natural human dispositions, which it understands as being disposed toward its end. This is true of all natural human dispositions, including reason itself, understood as the object of its most specific reflexive activity. Reason, when reflecting on its own legitimate use and object of investigation, discovers human rational activity as a producer of knowledge only when subjected to the principle of purposiveness, which leads it to bring all cognitive activity – including determinate cognitive activity of the understanding and indeterminate activity that reason itself produces not only in relation to the objects investigated by it but also in relation to itself – back to the same principle. The circularity of the argument should not come as a surprise given the premise, already explained in the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*, that pure reason is properly concerned only with itself. If reason, when reflecting on its own activity, understands the objective necessity of the principle of finality that animates it, in this same self-reflexive movement and at the same time, it recognizes in itself the legitimate and spontaneous author of this principle as well as of its own activity and end.²³

In the philosophical history, the design of nature, which is indispensable for systematically accounting for free human actions, actually proposes a specific articulation of the schema that reason uses to understand all of its cognitive activity. It is not, therefore, an illusory and transcendent fantasy but an objective necessity – although, from the point of view of the determinant judgment of the understanding, it is subjective and indeterminate as to its object – because it conforms to the natural end of rational activity. *Mutatis mutandis*, reason cannot find meaning in its activity of research, explanation and understanding of the individual phenomenal manifestations of human freedom unless it starts from a schema, through which it is necessary to think of them as teleologically inserted in a plan of nature that is not limited to the mere physical determination of individual actions.

Therefore, it is a matter of reconciling, according to the principle of purposiveness, the activity of systematization and indeterminate unification typical of reason with the determination of the human being and with that finitude that makes it impossible for him to have an all-comprehensive intellectual intuition and imposes to him the individuality of the person and the singularity of actions. As mentioned, starting in the introduction to the *IaG*, Kant resorts to the idea of species, which avoids a phenomenal spatiotemporal determination and at the same time does not require appealing to cognitive faculties that do not belong to the human being. In the second proposition, Kant specifies that in the case of a finite rational being, such as a human being, reason, like any other natural human disposition, is not perfect from the beginning but undergoes development.

Reason itself does not operate instinctively, but rather needs attempts, practice and instruction in order gradually to progress from one stage of insight to another. Hence every human being would have to live exceedingly long in order to learn how he is to make a complete use of all his natural predispositions (*IaG*, AA 08: 19.02-05).

If, in fact, the improvement of all natural dispositions is impossible for the individual human being (and for the individual nation, as seen in the introduction to the *IaG*), this is not impossible for the species, understood as “an immense series of generations, each of which transmits its enlightenment to the next, in order finally to propel its germs in our species to that stage of development which is completely suited to its aim” (*IaG*, AA 08: 19.07-10). Thus, Kant echoes the questions raised by the dialectic of reason in relation to the transcendental ideas of the soul, the world and God, which represent indeterminate totalities that, although remaining indeterminable and indeterminate due to the impossibility of subsuming sensible intuitions under them, must be thought of and applied to cognitive activity to systematically know all determinable and determinate individual phenomena. Within the idea of the species as the indeterminate totality of the individual manifestations of human freedom, Kant identifies the appropriate object of historical investigation. In the idea of species, reason finds the idea for the maximum expansion of its heuristic and explanatory use of the free actions of individuals. Only by reflecting on humanity as a whole, in its spatiotemporally indeterminate totality, reason will be able to identify a common thread that serves as an objective methodological criterion and, at the same time, a motivation for historical investigation.

As is well known, Kant articulated this thread in the realm of pure practical reason. The third proposition of the *IaG* corroborates the idea that resorting to the teleological scheme as a condition for elaborating the history of humanity as if it followed a real plan of nature implies the recognition of the eminently moral end of human reason, that is, the ability of reason to determine the will by itself. “Nature has willed that the human being should produce everything that goes beyond the mechanical arrangement of his animal existence entirely out of himself, and participate in no other happiness or perfection than that which he has procured for himself free from instinct through his own reason” (*IaG*, AA 08: 19.28-33).

Kant develops the previous statement that reason is the faculty of extending beyond the mere natural mechanism the use of natural dispositions in general and of rational activity itself in particular. To do this, he takes up what has been said from the beginning about the perfectibility

of human faculties, constantly in tension and therefore never determined necessarily or only by sensibility and instincts or by perfect pure reason and a holy will. Advancing in the direction already highlighted, according to which reason legitimately considers conform to its own end, individual natural actions were recognized and organized consistent with the progressive realization of human rationality as freedom. Thus, Kant can state the specific conformity to the specific end of the human being: to obtain everything from one's own means or, in other words, to be autonomous. In this sense, historical reflection allows us to consider the individual events of nature as oriented so that human beings, when trying to satisfy their needs, progressively affirm their autonomy, cultivating and developing their rationality (IaG, AA 08: 19.33-20.08). Likewise, it is not contradictory that each generation, taken individually, seems to work only for future generations, without ever being able to enjoy the fruit of its own effort (IaG, AA 08: 20.13-20). The point of view to be adopted is, in fact, always that of the species as the idea of reason – and therefore, the idea of an indeterminate totality – according to which the happiness of the individual (individual human being, individual family or nation or generation) is subordinated to the dignity of the happiness of humanity as a whole, since “it appears to have been no aim at all to nature that he [the human being] should live well; but only that he should labor and work himself up so far that he might make himself worthy of well-being through his conduct of life” (IaG, AA 08: 20.10-13).²⁴

From the more strictly moral considerations of the third proposition, as is well known, in the subsequent propositions, Kant's argumentative movement extends to the field of law and politics – or rather, to the application of moral rationality to social organization, both for the constitution of the rule of law and for a federation of states.²⁵ The eighth proposition summarizes in its title the trajectory of Kant's reasoning: “One can regard the history of the human species in the large as the completion of a hidden plan of nature to bring about an inwardly and, to this end, also an externally perfect state constitution, as the only condition in which it can fully develop all its predispositions in humanity” (IaG, AA 08: 27.01-07). Only in the last proposition, the ninth, does Kant return to the more strictly methodological issues addressed in the introduction and the first three propositions, no longer emphasizing only the theoretical aspect of the issue, since the difficulties related to the epistemological status of historical investigation were resolved and the practical character of human reason was made explicit. Having shown in what sense “a philosophical attempt to work out universal world history [*Weltgeschichte*], according to a plan of nature the aims at the perfect civil union in the human species, must be regarded as possible and even as furthering this aim of nature” (IaG, AA 08: 29.01-05), we can now take another step toward a political intervention, specifically from the historical investigation thus conducted.²⁶ This philosophical attempt to construct universal history, as a systematization of individual actions according to the teleological scheme of the realization of freedom as rationality of human species, at the same time must be considered an effective means of accelerating the constitution of a rule of law that is as diffuse as possible, which effectively guarantees the conditions for the free cultivation of natural human dispositions. The rational reflection on history, therefore, far from corresponding to “only a novel” (IaG, AA 08: 29.10) or to “history [*Historie*] proper, that is written merely *empirically*” (IaG, AA 08: 30.31-32), presents itself as an activity that feeds and participates in the unfolding of reason

itself according to its own end: its spontaneous freedom as independence and autonomy. It is this same reflexive activity of reason, focused on free human actions as “philosophical history [*philosophische Geschichte*]”, that allows us to understand the world and imposes the duty of trying to change them, or in Kant’s words, “to direct it [the desire for honor of the heads of state as well as their servants] at the sole means by which they can bring their glorious remembrance down to the latest age” (IaG, AA 08: 31.06-08). It is thanks to “that idea of a world history that has, which in a certain way has guiding thread *a priori*” (IaG, AA 08: 30.30-31) that Kant defines the specific scheme and the completely peculiar territory for human reason to satisfy the need to orient itself in the world, affirming humans’ willingness to escape from mere natural mechanisms without falling into the fantasies of visionaries.

We can conclude by saying that history as philosophical history certainly does not refer to attributes belonging to the world: the limits imposed by the understanding to determined knowledge of things do not allow for that. However, this determined knowledge of the world does not seem to represent the primordial need of our rationality because the most urgent need is to signify the world and our actions in it. Kant considers reason an expansive power that, in view of its own end – freedom – gives a superior meaning to the world by unifying apparently disaggregated phenomena and guiding our instincts. This is perhaps the most emphatic result, in terms of historical analysis, of Kant’s commitment to an idea of rationality that is, not only in the practical but also in the speculative sphere, not only determinant.

Abstract: This paper aims to point to relationship between *Transcendental Dialectic* of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (KrV) and *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (IaG). Specifically, it seeks to show the theoretical and methodological foundation that the principle of purposiveness and the systematicity of reason, as presented in the KrV, offer to Kant’s philosophical conception of history in the IaG. The paper is divided into three sections. The first section presents – as problematic – the premises that, in the introduction to the IaG, Kant adopts in his philosophical investigation of history. The second section focuses on the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*, examining the legitimate use of transcendental ideas, as well as their indeterminate objective necessity. Finally, the third section examines some propositions of the IaG, suggesting that the repercussion of the *Transcendental Dialectic* on the IaG allows us to understand Kant’s distinctive investigative method in philosophical history.

Keywords: Kant, purposiveness, transcendental ideas, indeterminate objectivity, method in philosophical history.

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² On the development of Kant's political thought in the precritical period until his early writings on the philosophy of history, see Vlachos 1962, 15-231. For an analysis of the methodological suggestions on history offered by Kant, in an unsystematic way, in his geography and logic classes, see Gonzales 2014, 265-290.

³ Since the early systematic analyses regarding the placement of Kant's philosophy of history within his critical philosophy, the most common interpretation has been to understand the IaG in light of the critical writings from the second half of the 1780s and the entire decade of the 1790s. See, for example, Weyand 1963, 49-107 and Galston 1975, 205-261. This kind of interpretation also persists in more recent analyses, as exemplified by Allison 2009, 24-45. On the other hand, there are readings that emphasize

the relationship between IaG and Kant's critical writings of the first half of the 1780s, as can be seen in Kleingeld 1995, 13-31 and Guyer 2000, 372-407. In turn, IaG is presented as still precritical by those interpreters who consider that Kant's philosophy of history acquires a critical character only with the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (KU). In this regard, see, for example, Yovel 1980, 154-157 and 252-270.

⁴ The *Prolegomena* (Prol.), of 1783, as well as the *Groundwork for the metaphysics of morals* (GMS), of 1785, but already completed in 1784 (see the letter to Biester of 31 December de 1784, Br, AA 10: 398.01-03), are, together with KrV, the other critical and systematic works available to Kant at the time of publication of the IaG. *Zweckmäßigkeit's* idea seems to represent a good criterion for reasonably focusing only on the KrV: in the Prol. the notion of *Zweckmäßigkeit* does not appear, whereas in the GMS it is briefly mentioned by Kant – and we will also do so here (see below, the last part of the paper) – although the notion of end (*Zweck*) is widely present when it is described the deliberative dynamics. On the relevance of the KrV – among the critical writings of the first half of the 1780s – for the systematical foundation of the IaG, see Kleingeld 1995, 110-115; Kleingeld 2008, 524-526; Hoesch 2014, 198-231 and Deligiorgi 2017, 685-695. It is worth mentioning that a brief note in the same direction is already found in Wilkins 1966, 172-181 and Riedel 1978, 6-9.

⁵ In one of his rare pronouncements during the years of elaboration of the KrV, the writing *Of the different races of human beings* of 1775/77, Kant already distinguished between the description of nature (*Naturbeschreibung*) and the history of nature (*Naturgeschichte*). He emphasized how the former, based on the empirical observation of the similarities between animals, constituted only “a school system for memory” and “only aims at bringing creatures under titles”, while the latter, based on the principle of reproductive affinity, was “a natural system for the understanding” and “aims at bringing them [creatures] under laws” (VvRM, AA 02: 429.17-19). If the mere empirical description does not go beyond “the cognition of natural things as they *are now*”, on the other hand, “always leaves us desirous of the cognition of that which they once *were* and of the series of changes they underwent to arrive at each place in their present state”, transforming the scholastic mnemonic classification technique “into a physical system for the understanding” (VvRM, AA 02: 434.23 footnote). In 1775, Kant already showed the minimum presupposition for one to be able to properly speak of *Geschichte*: when making a history of natural phenomena, one cannot fail to seek a principle of systematic unity beyond the mere empirical description. The latter leaves the understanding unsatisfied, feeding its natural tendency to unify, according to universal principles, cases that, when taken only as they appear to the observer, can only show an individual and accidental character. It is in accordance with *Geschichte's* notion that, in the ninth proposition of the IaG, Kant proposes the definition of (philosophical) history as *Weltgeschichte*, while the *empirische Historie* refers only to the description of human phenomena (IaG, AA 08: 30.30- 35). We will see, however, that the need for systematicity attributed in 1775/77 to the understanding will still be identified by Kant from the KrV as proper to reason. On these themes, see Marcucci 1972, 163-168; Marcucci 1974, 425-432 and Düsing 1986, 133-142.

⁶ On the relationship and distinction between philosophy of nature and philosophy of history in Kant's thought, see Kaulbach 1965, 430-451.

⁷ On the role of the plan of nature in critical foundation of Kant's philosophy of history, see Deligiorgi 2006, 451-468.

⁸ Yovel argues that Kant only critically employs the notion of teleology from the KU onwards, while, still in the IaG, Kant resorts to a dogmatic concept of teleology. According to Yovel, in the IaG, Kant commits “the major dogmatic error” by ascribing to nature “such a hidden teleological plan”, thus contradicting the dictates of the KrV. It is worth noting that when referring to the KrV, Yovel considers only the *Transcendental Analytic*, i.e., the knowledge derived from the determinant judgment of the understanding. When Yovel mentions the *Transcendental Dialectic*, he confines himself to considering the antithesis of the second antinomy of pure reason, without considering the other sections and chapters, nor the *Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic*.

⁹ Recall the beginning of the preface of 1781, and therefore of the entire KrV, in which Kant points to “the peculiar fate” that characterizes human reason, “that it is burdened with questions which it cannot dismiss, since they are given to it as problems by the nature of reason itself, but which it also cannot answer, since they transcend every capacity of human reason” (KrV, AVII.01-05).

¹⁰ See below, the last part of the paper, in which the question is taken up again.

¹¹ For an analysis of the terminology used by Kant, see Zachhuber 2000, 139-154. Note, *en passant*, that with regard to the equivalence established by Kant between ‘immanent’ and ‘internal’, the parallel between transcendental ideas and pure concepts of the understanding does not lose cohesion, as the categories also have an immanent and internal use, referring not to the thing itself - in this case, the categories would have an external and transcendental use - but to the mere a priori form of the phenomenon given to sensible intuition (KrV, A20/B34.06-09). For an explanation of what Kant understands by immanent as opposed to transcendent, and by transcendent as opposed to transcendental, see the third paragraph of the first part, *On the transcendental illusion*, of the introduction to the *Transcendental Dialectic* (KrV, A296.11-19/B352.17-353.06). In the KrV, Kant will reformulate the two terminological pairs – *transzendent*/überfliegend and *immanent*/einheimisch – associating *immanent* with *physisch* and *transzendent* with *hyperphysisch*. Kant reaffirms that only “the first use [of reason] is addressed to nature, insofar as its knowledge can be applied to (concrete) experience; the second, to the connection of the objects of experience that transcends any experience”. Note that it is now only the transcendent or hyperphysical use of reason that is distinguished as internal (*innere*) or external (*äußere*), as referring, respectively, to the knowledge of the world or of God, while the idea of soul – as a thinking nature (*denkende Natur*) – is understood through the immanent or physical and legitimate use of reason. See the third chapter, *The Architectonic of pure reason, of the Transcendental Doctrine of Method* (KrV, A845/B873.09-875.01).

¹² See the brief but insightful observation by Weil 1990, 140-141, which emphasizes how history – and, with it, politics – become a philosophical problem when they are related to totality.

¹³ See what Kant says in the penultimate and third-to-last paragraphs of section A, *On reason in general*, of the second part, *On pure reason as the seat of transcendental illusion*, of the introduction to the *Transcendental Dialectic* (KrV, A302.01-12/B358.14-359.06). Here, although the “entirely different” nature of the synthesis of reason through principles compared to the synthesis of understanding through concepts is already recognized, this differentiation is still not articulated and explained based on the criterion of purposiveness.

¹⁴ On the relationship between systematicity of reason and its purposiveness, see Guyer 1990, 17-43; Buchdahl 1992, 183-191; Rescher 2000, 64-98; Abela 2006, 408-422; Mudd 2017, 81-106; Zuckert 2017, 89-107 and Ginsborg 2018, 131-162.

¹⁵ On projecting order and unity to nature as rational necessity of a kind of meta-methodological basis for employing particular knowledges, see Kitcher 1986, 201-233 and Kitcher 1994, 253-272.

¹⁶ “Unique and radical, that is, absolute” (KrV, A649/B677.18), Kant adds a little later.

¹⁷ For an exposition of the theme, see Marcucci 1985, 127-156.

¹⁸ On the not merely subjective use of the transcendental ideas, see Marcucci 1972, 106-132.

¹⁹ Read, for example, what Kant will write in the third part – *On the critique of power of judgment, as a means for combining the two parts of philosophy into one whole* – of the introduction to KU, to justify the reflexive and self-referential activity of the faculty of judgment, presenting its role in the critical system: “in the family of the higher faculties of cognition there is still an intermediary between the understanding and reason. This is the power of judgment, about which one has cause to presume, by analogy, that it too should contain in itself *a priori*, if not exactly its own legislation, then still a proper principle of its own for seeking laws, although a merely subjective one; which, even though it can claim no field of objects as its domain, can nevertheless have some territory and a certain constitution of it, for which precisely this principle only might be valid” (KU, AA 05: 177.04-12). The reflexive activity of reason as a faculty of judging is guided by a principle – purposiveness – which remains subjective only from the perspective of reason as a faculty dedicated to the determination of objects: despite the clear distinction of its use, reason intends to determine its objects according to the categories or the law of liberty, according to whether its use is speculative or practical. It is in this sense that reason as a reflective faculty belongs to both an indeterminate domain and a purely subjective principle, insofar as such a principle is not immediately directed to the determination of objects of sensible experience or practical experience but only to the way in which activity rational cognitive development generally occurs in the knowing subject.

²⁰ On the theoretical role of the idea of development of human natural predispositions in Kant’s philosophy of history, see Kleingeld 1995, 193-210 and Ameriks 2009, 46-67. The same idea is utilized by Wood to assert - perhaps somewhat radically - that Kant’s philosophy of history is naturalistic, that is, a branch of biology. On the other hand, Cohen, while acknowledging an important relationship between philosophy of history and biology, recognizes that Kant’s philosophy of history is not merely naturalistic. Cohen distinguishes two strands within Kantian reflection on history: an empirical history (linked to biology) and a practical history (linked to morality). However, Cohen does not recognize empirical history as grounded in the principle of purposiveness. Also, Zammito suggests some reservations regarding the naturalistic approach to Kant’s philosophy of history. On the other hand, however, he questions the extension of the notion of development of natural predisposition to reason and freedom. See Wood 1999, 207-215; Zammito 2008, 29-62 and Cohen 2009, 109-142.

²¹ At the beginning of the first section of the GMS, we find something very similar: “In the natural constitution of an organized being, that is, one constituted purposively for life [*zweckmäßig zum Leben eingerichteten*], we assume as a principle that there will be found in it no instrument for some end other than what is also most appropriate to that end and best adapted to it” (GMS, AA 04: 395.04-08). A specification of the organic character of living beings as an indication of a natural disposition is already found in the mentioned writing of 1775/77, in which Kant, when dealing with the ability of organisms to adapt in the evolution of animal species, states that “chance or the universal mechanical laws could not produce such as *preformed*. Yet even where nothing purposive shows itself, the mere faculty to propagate its adopted character is already proof enough that a particular germ or natural predisposition for it was to be found in the organic creature. For outer things can well be occasioning causes but not producing ones of what is inherited necessarily and regenerates agreements” (VvRM, AA 02: 435.01-09). Although Kant’s appeal to teleological understanding and explanation is still very timid and deliberately presented as a mere unchecked possibility, the need to resort to the principle of purposiveness through the idea of preformed disposition is already shown. The tone and context will be different in §81 of KU, *On the association of mechanism with the teleological principle in the explanation of a natural end as a product of nature*, whose central part is dedicated to the analysis of the application of the teleological principle to the explanation of evolution animal from the point of view of occasionalism or preformation, in its evolutionary and epigenetic articulations (KU, AA 05: 422.20-424.18). On the relationship between the systematic understanding of history and the organic development of rationality, see Lehmann 1980, 96-140 and Ypi 2021, 69-75.

²² Again, at the beginning of the first section of the GMS, Kant establishes a relationship between the subordination of natural human dispositions to reason for moral improvement as a natural end of the human being, a theme proposed in the third proposition of the IaG. In the GMS, Kant states that “in a being that has reason and a will, if the proper end of nature were its *preservation*, its *welfare*, in a word its *happiness*, then nature would have hit upon a very bad arrangement in selecting the reason of the creature to carry out this purpose. For all the actions that the creature has to perform for this purpose, and the whole rule of its conduct, would be marked out for it far more accurately by instinct, and that end would have thereby been attained much more surely than it ever can be by reason; and if reason should have been given, over and above, to this favored creature, it must

have served it only to contemplate the fortunate constitution of its nature, to admire this, to delight in it, and to be grateful for it to the beneficent cause, but not to submit its faculty of desire to that weak and deceptive guidance and meddle with nature's purpose [*Naturabsicht*]" (GMS, AA 04: 395.08-22). In contrast, and as stated in the second proposition of the IaG, the finite rational beings act according to "another and far worthier purpose of one's existence, to which therefore, and not to happiness, reason is properly destined, *b* and to which, as supreme condition, the private purpose of the human being must for the most part defer" (GMS, AA 04: 396.10-22).

²³ For an analysis of the dogmatic, regulative, and reflective approaches to history that can be detected in Kant's philosophy of history, see Makkreel 1995, 123-137.

²⁴ At the end of the second section of the GMS, this paradox is recalled in the following terms: "even though a rational being scrupulously follows this maxim himself, he cannot for that reason intelligible world count upon *every* other to be faithful to the same maxim nor can he count upon the kingdom of nature and its purposive order [*zweckmäßige Anordnung*] to harmonize with him, as a fitting member, toward a kingdom of ends possible through himself, that is, upon its favoring his expectation of happiness; nevertheless that law, act in accordance with the maxims of a member giving universal laws for a merely possible kingdom of ends, remains in its full force because it commands categorically. And just in this lies the paradox that the mere dignity of humanity as rational nature, without any other end or advantage to be attained by it - hence respect for a mere idea - is yet to serve as an inflexible precept of the will, and that it is just in this independence of maxims from all such incentives that their sublimity consists, and the worthiness of every rational subject to be a law giving member in the kingdom of ends; for otherwise he would have to be represented only as subject to the natural law of his needs (GMS AA 04: 438.33-439.12).

²⁵ Some years later, Kant contextualizes these same themes in §83 of KU, *On the ultimate end of nature as a teleological system*, within the distinction between happiness (*Glückseligkeit*) and culture (*Kultur*), which judgment makes use "to judge the human being not merely, like any organized being, as a natural end, but also as the *ultimate end* [*letzten Zweck*] of nature here on earth, in relation to which all other natural things constitute a system of ends [*System von Zwecken*] in accordance with fundamental principles of reason" (KU, AA 05: 429.25-30). More precisely, Kant will state that "the formal condition under which alone nature can attain this its final aim [*Endabsicht*] is that constitution in the relations of human beings with one another in which the abuse of reciprocally conflicting freedom is opposed by lawful power in a whole, which is called *civil society*; for only in this can the greatest development of the natural predispositions occur" (KU, AA 05: 432.26-32).

²⁶ Kaulbach identifies three main uses of Kant's philosophy of history: epistemological, political, and prognostic, while Krasnoff, for example, explains the teleological foundation of Kant's philosophy of history as necessary for political action. See Kaulbach 1975, 65-84 and Krasnoff 1994, 22-40.

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COMO SÃO POSSÍVEIS JUÍZOS JURÍDICOS SINTÉTICOS A PRIORI?

HOW ARE SYNTHETIC A PRIORI JURIDICAL JUDGMENTS POSSIBLE?

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A metafísica dos costumes advém da ideia de liberdade. A *KrV* mostrou, na “solução da terceira antinomia”, que a tese segundo a qual existe uma causalidade pela liberdade é compatível com a antítese, que afirma que só existe a causalidade pela natureza, pois cada uma se refere a uma ordem completamente diferente, uma vez que a causalidade pela natureza concerne aos fenômenos, enquanto a causalidade pela liberdade corresponde ao *noumenon* (*KrV*, AA 03, B: 569). A ideia de liberdade proveniente da solução da terceira antinomia é a liberdade transcendental que consiste em “iniciar espontaneamente uma nova série de fenômenos” e (*KrV*, AA 03, B: 561) só tem uso regulador para razão pura teórica.

Além disso, a liberdade transcendental é a condição de possibilidade da liberdade prática, que é constitutiva para a razão pura no seu uso prático. No homem, a faculdade do desejo divide-se em vontade, que produz a lei moral, e arbítrio, que produz as máximas da ação. Quando a vontade neutraliza as inclinações sensíveis oriundas da sensibilidade que afetam o arbítrio, ocorre a liberdade prática em sentido negativo e quando a lei moral proveniente da vontade determina o arbítrio para a ação, então, advém a liberdade prática em sentido positivo, o que só é possível porque o arbítrio humano é um *arbitrium liberum* na medida em que é afetado pelas inclinações sensíveis, embora não seja determinado por elas, como acontece no *arbitrium brutum* dos animais (*MSRL*, AA 06: 213-4).

A liberdade é sempre uma ideia da razão que pertence ao domínio do *noumenon* ou inteligível e, portanto, por não ter uma intuição empírica ou *a priori* correspondente, só pode ser pensada, mas não pode ser conhecida. Isto significa que a liberdade é o fundamento da lei moral (*ratio essendi*), o que, para “criaturas como nós”, tem a forma de um imperativo categórico, pois deve ser imposta como um dever. Porém, a lei moral é a razão para conhecer a liberdade (*ratio cognoscendi*) (*KpV*, AA 05: 4), porque somente podemos reconhecer a validade objetiva da liberdade transcendental por que ela é a condição de possibilidade da liberdade prática, que, por sua vez, é a condição de possibilidade da lei moral, portanto, ao demonstrar

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a validade objetiva da lei moral por meio do “fato da razão”, a consciência da lei moral (KpV, AA 05: 56), então, fica demonstrada também a validade objetiva das ideias de liberdade transcendental e prática.

Na “Introdução” à *MS*, Kant afirma que as leis da liberdade são chamadas de leis morais e podem ser divididas em éticas ou jurídicas na medida em que se referem à liberdade no uso interno do arbítrio ou à liberdade no uso externo do arbítrio respectivamente (MSRL, AA 06: 214); em seguida apresenta os conceitos que são comuns às duas partes da moral. Posteriormente, na “Introdução à doutrina do direito”, mostra um quadro intitulado “divisão da moral como sistema de deveres em geral”, em que divide a moral em “doutrina elementar” e “doutrina do método”, depois subdivide a doutrina elementar em deveres jurídicos (direito privado e direito público) e deveres de virtude (MSRL, AA 06: 242), indicando que a moral inclui tanto o direito quanto a ética.

Por isso, existem duas maneiras pelas quais a lei moral proveniente da vontade determina o arbítrio para a ação, uma vez que a vontade pode determinar tanto a matéria quanto a forma das máximas produzidas pelo arbítrio e, conseqüentemente, existem também dois modos da liberdade prática. Portanto, esta pode ser dividida em liberdade no uso interno do arbítrio, quando a vontade determina a matéria do arbítrio, e liberdade no uso externo do arbítrio, quando a vontade determina a forma da relação externa entre os arbítrios (MSRL, AA 06: 214). A matéria consiste nos fins da ação, enquanto a forma representa o modo de relação externa do arbítrio de cada um com o arbítrio de todos os outros. A vontade deve determinar tanto a matéria como a forma do arbítrio, porque, caso contrário, todos os fins da ação, bem como todas as relações externas, seriam exclusivamente determinados patologicamente pelas inclinações, o que anularia a razão prática. É possível distinguir os deveres éticos ou deveres de virtude como deveres provenientes da liberdade interna e os deveres jurídicos como deveres provenientes da liberdade externa (MSRL, AA 06: 239 e também MSTL, AA 06: 406-7).

Esta diferenciação na liberdade de arbítrio permite a Kant distinguir as duas partes da metafísica dos costumes através do caráter subjetivo e objetivo da legislação.

A legislação subjetiva considera o móbil da ação. Na ética, a motivação do sujeito para a ação é a moralidade, a qual exige a realização da ação por dever ou por respeito pela própria lei moral, enquanto, no direito, a legalidade exige simplesmente que a ação seja externamente conforme o dever, independentemente das intenções do sujeito que podem ser as inclinações sensíveis, o autointeresse ou mesmo a coerção.

Por sua vez, a legislação objetiva mostra que existe uma diferença de conteúdo, e não apenas motivacional, entre deveres jurídicos e os deveres de virtude (éticos) (MSRL, AA 06: 218). Kant inclusive ilustra esta diferença objetiva entre deveres jurídicos e deveres de virtude com um exemplo: o direito contratual é objetivamente um dever jurídico em que as partes se comprometem a praticar uma ação entre si que pode ser imposta por coação externa em caso de incumprimento, porque se fosse um dever de virtude, então, se transformaria em um mero dever de benevolência em que uma das partes se compromete a ajudar a outra, o que só admitiria a autocoação, mas nunca a coerção externa (MSRL, AA 06: 220).

Visto que, na doutrina da virtude, a vontade determina a matéria do arbítrio, isto significa que ela estabelece fins para a ação, então, devem haver fins que sejam também deveres. Os candidatos a fins que também são deveres são a própria perfeição ou a perfeição alheia e a própria felicidade ou a felicidade alheia, mas é contraditório propor a perfeição alheia como fim da ação do outro, pois só o outro pode propor isso para ele mesmo, e a própria felicidade é uma meta empírica que cada pessoa persegue naturalmente (MSTL, AA 06: 385-6). Então, os fins que são também deveres referem-se à humanidade na nossa pessoa, à nossa própria perfeição, e à humanidade na pessoa dos outros, à felicidade alheia.

Consequentemente, como a liberdade interna consiste na determinação da matéria do arbítrio, pois estabelece fins para ação que também são deveres, os quais ampliam o conceito de dever além da mera liberdade externa, então, o princípio supremo da doutrina da virtude é um juízo sintético *a priori* (MSTL, AA 06: 396).

Ademais, a liberdade interna, como determinação do arbítrio pela lei moral proveniente da vontade, permite deduzir o princípio supremo da doutrina da virtude como um imperativo categórico. Pois, como toda ação pressupõe um fim, mas, se todo fim fosse simplesmente empírico, então isso anularia toda razão prática, então, devem existir fins da ação que também sejam deveres, portanto, o arbítrio, como faculdade que produz as máximas da ação, deve produzir máximas de fins que possam também ser deveres. Consequentemente, o arbítrio tem que ser determinado pela lei moral proveniente da vontade, então, a lei moral, o imperativo categórico, tem que assumir a forma de um princípio que estabeleça o dever de agir de acordo com uma máxima de fins que também são deveres. Por isso, Kant afirma que o princípio supremo da doutrina da virtude é um imperativo categórico, que se expressa através da fórmula “aja segundo uma máxima de fins que seja para cada um uma lei universal” (MSTL, AA 06: 395).

Além disso, ao contrário da liberdade externa, que simplesmente exige a coação externa sobre o arbítrio de acordo com uma lei de liberdade, a liberdade interna exige que o ator aja tanto externa quanto internamente pelo fim da ação, que é um dever estabelecido de acordo com a razão prática, por isso, implica substituir a coação externa pela autocoação (MSTL, AA 06: 396), então, os deveres de virtude exigem também uma virtude, que é a força da máxima no cumprimento do dever (MSTL, AA 06: 394).

Kant apresentou o princípio supremo da doutrina da virtude apenas uma única vez já na sua forma definitiva na “Introdução à doutrina da virtude”, em 1797, como um juízo sintético *a priori* e como uma versão do imperativo categórico, mas, o princípio do direito, possui uma longa história no pensamento kantiano, por isso, ele se transforma continuamente e oscila entre ser concebido como um juízo sintético *a priori* ou como um juízo analítico, além do mais, não há uma relação clara entre os três princípios, o imperativo categórico, o princípio do direito e o princípio da democracia (a vontade unificada do povo) (Habermas, 2023, p. 118).

A primeira exposição do princípio do direito ocorre no início da “Dialética transcendental” da *KrV*, para explicar o conceito de ideia. Inicialmente Kant afirma que a língua alemã não dispõe de uma palavra adequada para expressar esse conceito e, melhor do que inventar uma

nova palavra, é recorrer a uma que já tenha se tornado conhecida na história da filosofia e, por isso, se apropria do conceito de ideia utilizado por Platão no grego clássico (KrV, AA 03: A 312; B 368-9), mas diz que é possível, a partir do confronto de pensamentos, compreender melhor um conceito do que o autor que o formulou inicialmente (KrV, AA 03: A 314; B 370).

Para explicar o conceito de ideia, Kant apela para uma das principais ideias de Platão, a “constituição” exposta em *A república*, que ele considera ser a única capaz de promover a “máxima liberdade” humana porque produz leis que permite que “a liberdade de cada um deve poder coexistir com a liberdade de todos os demais”², além disso, afirma também que esta constituição gera, como consequência, a máxima felicidade possível (KrV, AA 03: A 316; B 373), embora, mais tarde, em *TP* negue esta relação entre a liberdade e a felicidade ao formular o primeiro princípio *a priori* do estado, pois entende que um governo que leve em consideração a felicidade e o bem-estar do povo se torna paternalista, pois age segundo uma relação de pai para filho (TP, AA 08: 291).

O otimismo kantiano com a “constituição republicana” chega a ponto de concordar com Platão de que esta constituição permite gerar um tipo de legislação e de governo segundo o qual nenhuma pena será necessária porque nenhum delito será cometido (KrV, AA 03: A 317; B 373-4).

Posteriormente, ele retoma a definição do princípio do direito em *TP*, contudo, ademais da primeira formulação em que usa o verbo “*bestehen*” (coexistir) introduz também versões do verbo “*stimmen*” (concordar), algumas vezes na forma de substantivo, o qual possui um sentido mais forte do que simplesmente “coexistir”: o direito é a restrição da liberdade de cada um, sob a condição de sua concordância com a liberdade de todos os demais, na medida em que isso é possível segundo uma lei universal³ (TP, AA 08: 289-90). Contudo, sempre que usa variações do verbo “*stimmen*”, ele relaciona o princípio do direito com a coação.

Em seguida, na *MSRL*, Kant expressa o princípio do direito por meio do verbo “*bestehen*”, mas também das variações do verbo “*stimmen*”, notadamente nas partes D e E da “Introdução à Doutrina do Direito”, novamente relacionado com o conceito de coação, como, por exemplo, no título da seção E, dedicada ao direito estrito, isto é, aquele que não contém nenhuma referência com a ética (MSRL, AA 06: 232): “o direito estrito deve ser representado também como a possibilidade da concordância da liberdade de cada segundo uma lei universal mediante uma coação recíproca”⁴. A seguir, introduz uma versão ainda mais forte do que nos dois casos anteriores, por meio do verbo “*vereinigen*” (unificar): “o direito é, portanto, o conjunto das condições sob as quais o livre arbítrio de cada um pode se unificar com o livre arbítrio de cada um dos demais, segundo uma lei universal da liberdade” (MSRL, AA 06: 230)⁵. Apesar destas diferentes formulações que implicam sentidos aparentemente distintos, Kant não faz qualquer observação que indique que ele as interprete com significados ou forças semânticas diversas.

Deve-se observar que em *KrV* e *TP*, Kant formulou o princípio do direito como uma forma de relação entre as liberdades, mas, na *MSRL*, ele o expõe como uma forma de relação entre as liberdades de arbítrio. A explicação para esta mudança consiste na introdução, na *MSRL*, da distinção entre vontade e arbítrio (*wille* e *willkür*, respectivamente) (MSRL, AA 06:

213), neste sentido, tanto a ética quanto o direito se referem à determinação das máximas do arbítrio pela lei moral proveniente da vontade.

E, somente na *MSRL*, Kant introduziu uma fundamentação do princípio do direito.

O princípio universal do direito diz que “uma ação é jurídica se provém da máxima que permite que o livre arbítrio de cada um possa coexistir com a liberdade de todos os demais segundo numa lei universal” (*MSRL*, AA 06: 230); em seguida, ele expressa o princípio do direito na forma de um imperativo categórico: “aja externamente de tal maneira que o livre uso do seu arbítrio possa coexistir com a liberdade de todos os demais segundo com uma lei universal”.

Contudo, ao formulá-lo como um imperativo categórico, isso pode sugerir que ele deve ser seguido tanto subjetivamente quanto objetivamente por dever, mas o direito exige apenas que se aja externamente conforme o dever e, por isso, pode ser imposto coercitivamente o que implica que o sujeito não precisa conectar a sua motivação com o dever jurídico, embora Kant diga que isso constitua um postulado e, portanto, não pode ser demonstrado. Consequentemente, o princípio do direito é uma regra para as máximas de ação, mas somente a ética pode exigir que ele próprio seja tomado como uma máxima, porque, para o direito, a liberdade dos demais pode ser totalmente indiferente ou, inclusive, o agente pode até mesmo ter o desejo ardoroso de prejudicar os outros, desde que a sua ação externa seja regulada por uma lei universal da liberdade que permita a conciliação com a liberdade de todos os demais (*MSRL*, AA 06: 231).

A seguir, Kant demonstra as razões pelas quais o princípio do direito é um imperativo categórico. Pode-se diferenciar as duas partes da metafísica dos costumes por meio da distinção entre os deveres jurídicos e os deveres de virtude. Os deveres de virtude se referem a um fim, que é também um dever, por isso, não permitem uma legislação externa, mas os deveres jurídicos exigem apenas uma legislação externa, pois, embora a legislação externa possa determinar que as ações externas sejam conformes a um fim, não pode tornar este fim o móbil da ação (*MSRL*, AA 06: 239).

E, para explicar porque a metafísica dos costumes é uma doutrina dos deveres e não dos direitos, embora um se refira ao outro, pois todo dever corresponde a um direito e vice-versa, Kant mostra que todas as leis morais, incluindo todos os direitos e deveres correspondentes, procedem da liberdade, mas como só podemos conhecer a liberdade⁶ através do imperativo categórico que ordena agir por dever, então, o conceito do direito, enquanto um poder de obrigar os outros, não pode ser obtido diretamente da liberdade, mas só pode ser deduzido do próprio imperativo moral (*MSRL*, AA 06: 239).

A liberdade é a condição de possibilidade de toda a filosofia moral e, portanto, do imperativo categórico, mas como a liberdade pode ser pensada, mas não pode ser conhecida, pois é uma ideia da razão que está no plano do *noumenon* e, por isso, é incognoscível para “criaturas como nós” que não temos uma intuição nem sensível, nem pura, do inteligível, então, a validade objetiva do imperativo categórico não pode ser demonstrada a partir da liberdade, em cujo caso ele seria um juízo analítico, por isso, Kant fundamenta o imperativo categórico no

“fato da razão”, isto é, a “consciência da lei moral”, a qual não pode ser esquecida, pois, mesmo o maior facínora não pode apagar o acusador em sua própria consciência e, como a consciência da lei moral é inteligível e não está no tempo, que é uma forma *a priori* da intuição sensível, então, por mais que o tempo passe, isso não arrefece o sentimento de arrependimento acerca da má ação que o autor realizou (KpV, AA 05: 176-7). Portanto, a consciência da lei moral, enquanto o fato da razão, prova a validade objetiva do imperativo categórico e, por isso, ele é um juízo sintético *a priori*. Contudo, como a liberdade é a condição de possibilidade do imperativo categórico, então, ao se demonstrar a validade objetiva do imperativo categórico, fica também demonstrada a validade objetiva da própria liberdade (KpV, AA 05: 56). Portanto, na filosofia moral kantiana, é o fundamentado (imperativo categórico) que fundamenta o seu fundamento (liberdade) e é esta estratégia de fundamentação que prova que o imperativo categórico é um juízo sintético *a priori* e não um juízo analítico porque ele não pode ser obtido diretamente da liberdade, ou seja, de seu fundamento.

Como o princípio do direito não pode ser deduzido diretamente da liberdade, porque ela é incognoscível, então, não pode ser um juízo analítico, mas, como é deduzido do imperativo categórico e ele próprio tem a forma de um imperativo categórico, então, também tem que ser um juízo sintético *a priori*. Mas, o princípio do direito tem que ser um juízo sintético *a priori* significativamente diferente do princípio supremo da doutrina da virtude, porque, este último, é sintético, pois exige que se acrescente à liberdade um fim para a ação, mas é *a priori*, porque o fim não pode ser qualquer um, por exemplo, um fim empírico, mas tem que ser um fim que é também um dever. Enquanto o princípio do direito, por outro lado, permite agir motivado por um fim qualquer, as inclinações, o medo da coação, o autointeresse, bastando que a ação seja conforme o dever, portanto, não exige que se acrescente à liberdade um fim da ação que é um dever, como elemento sintético.

Kant expõe a demonstração de que o princípio do direito é um juízo sintético *a priori*, ainda que não faça essa afirmação explicitamente, na seção sobre o direito estrito. Ele define o direito estrito como aquele que não contém qualquer relação com a ética, porque, nesse caso, um dever jurídico estaria associado a uma virtude, como ocorre, no exemplo assinalado por ele, de que o devedor paga a sua dívida porque é um dever fazê-lo. Mas o direito estrito não pode ser pensado como composto de dois elementos separados, o dever, que estabelece uma obrigação para a ação, e a coação, que gera a capacidade para obrigar o arbítrio de outro, porque o direito estrito estabelece uma associação indissociável entre o dever e a coação de tal modo que direito e coação significam a mesma coisa. Por isso, no direito estrito, o credor recorre unicamente aos meios coativos para obrigar o devedor a pagar a sua dívida. Evidentemente que esta coação do direito estrito segue as regras da filosofia moral, ou seja, tem que ser uma coação recíproca e universal submetida a uma lei da liberdade que permite que o arbítrio de cada um concorde com o arbítrio de todos os demais (MSRL, AA 06: 232).

Em seguida, Kant faz uma analogia entre a lei da coação recíproca universal e a terceira lei de Newton, que diz que a toda ação corresponde uma reação de igual intensidade e direção, mas em sentido contrário e afirma que a coação recíproca constitui, em certo sentido, a construção do princípio do direito (MSRL, AA 06: 232), porque na base desse juízo dinâmico

da física haveria um conceito meramente formal da matemática pura, mais especificamente da geometria (MSRL, AA 06: 233).

Na “Disciplina da razão pura”, da *KrV*, Kant mostra que a razão precisa de uma disciplina para evitar o seu uso dogmático que ocorre quando o sucesso da matemática induz empregar o método “*more geometrico*” cartesiano na filosofia (KrV, A: 724-5; B: 752-3). Pois a filosofia não pode operar como a matemática, porque a filosofia procede discursivamente a partir de conceitos (KrV, A: 713; B: 741), ou seja, trata o seu objeto pelo pensamento, mediante simples palavras (KrV, A: 735; B: 763); enquanto a matemática deduz os seus teoremas meramente dos conceitos, mas constrói os conceitos puros do entendimento na intuição pura, neste sentido, a geometria constrói os conceitos no espaço e a aritmética faz uma construção simbólica dos números no tempo. Por isso, para compreendermos todas as propriedades de um conceito da geometria, por exemplo, o de triângulo, não se pode obtê-lo diretamente do conceito de triângulo, mas deve-se construí-lo na intuição pura do espaço, o que permite demonstrar o teorema de Pitágoras ou que a soma dos ângulos internos é igual a 2 ângulos retos, por exemplo (KrV, A: 716; B: 744).

Porém, nesta passagem do direito estrito, Kant diz que a razão abasteceu o entendimento com intuições *a priori* que permitem construir o princípio do direito por meio da coação recíproca, por isso, no direito, o reto se opõe ao curvo e ao oblíquo, de tal modo que, com relação ao curvo, o menor caminho entre dois pontos é uma única linha reta, e, com respeito ao oblíquo, há uma única linha perpendicular a uma linha reta que passa por dois pontos. Esta analogia permite mostrar que, no direito, há sentido estrito, pois cada um pode determinar o que é seu com uma precisão matemática, enquanto, na ética, há um sentido lato, pois existe uma gradação para as exceções (MSRL, AA 06: 233).

Nestes termos, o princípio do direito parece ser semelhantes aos juízos sintéticos *a priori* da geometria, apresentados na *KrV*, Naturalmente que é muito duvidoso como se pode entender a coação recíproca como análoga à intuição *a priori*, especialmente depois que ele mostrou, por meio da exposição metafísica (na edição B de 1787), as características que fazem do espaço e do tempo intuições e *a priori* (KrV, B: 37-40), bem como pelo modo que exibiu, na exposição transcendental (também na edição B de 1787), como são possíveis conhecer juízos *a priori* a partir destas intuições *a priori* (KrV, B: 40-1). O mais estranho com essa analogia é que, segundo a *KrV*, a razão produz ideias, o entendimento gera conceitos e a sensibilidade fornece as intuições, por isso, o entendimento produz os conceitos que serão construídos na intuição pura ligada à sensibilidade, mas, nesta passagem do direito estrito, Kant afirma que é a razão que fornece intuições *a priori* para o entendimento.

Evidentemente, que essa explicação do princípio do direito como um imperativo categórico e, conseqüentemente, como um juízo sintético *a priori*, gera muitas dificuldades, por isso, Kant simplesmente a abandonou e o reformulou inteiramente na versão definitiva apresentada, posteriormente, na *MSTL*⁷.

Na “Introdução à Doutrina da Virtude”, Kant afirmou que o princípio do direito é um juízo analítico, porque pode ser extraído diretamente do conceito de liberdade, pelo mero

princípio de contradição, que o direito estabelece uma coação externa que restaura a liberdade externa, pois é um obstáculo que impede um obstáculo à liberdade externa (a negação da negação é o mesmo que a afirmação)⁸, a qual é compatível com qualquer fim que o agente escolher, ao contrário da princípio supremo da doutrina da virtude, que constitui uma máxima de fins que são também deveres e, por isso, acrescenta à liberdade, como elemento sintético, esses fins que também são deveres (MSTL, AA 06: 396).

Que a coação externa, na medida em que se opõe à um obstáculo à liberdade externa em concordância com leis universais (um obstáculo à um obstáculo dela), pode coexistir com fins em geral e, pelo princípio de contradição, está claro que eu não preciso ir além do conceito de liberdade para compreender isso; logo, cada um pode escolher o fim que quiser — então, o princípio supremo do direito é um juízo analítico (MSTL, AA 06: 396).

Evidentemente que, se o princípio do direito é um juízo analítico, então, em primeiro lugar, ele não pode ser um imperativo categórico, pois o imperativo categórico é um juízo sintético *a priori*, mas, se os deveres jurídicos derivam do princípio do direito, então, os deveres jurídicos, também não poderiam ser imperativos categóricos e nem juízos sintéticos *a priori*, e, em segundo lugar, se ele é um juízo analítico porque pode ser extraído da mera liberdade, pelo princípio de contradição, que a coação externa, enquanto negação da negação da liberdade, é compatível com fins quaisquer da ação, então, dele não podem derivar deveres jurídicos que são fins que também são deveres.

No entanto, existem alguns exemplos em que Kant interpreta os deveres jurídicos através da fórmula da humanidade do imperativo categórico, como o fim dos exércitos mercenários e o direito penal:

No 3º artigo preparatório para a paz perpétua, Kant propõe o fim dos exércitos permanentes, pois o simples fato de receberem um salário, os transforma em mercenários, o que implica, tanto para o governo quanto para o soldado, tratar a humanidade na sua própria pessoa e na pessoa dos outros como mero meio e não também como fim em si mesmo, portanto, os exércitos mercenários devem ser substituídos por uma milícia de cidadãos que realiza práticas militares voluntárias e regulares (ZeF, AA 08: 346). Logo, embora Kant não o afirme explicitamente, as milícias de cidadãos são compatíveis com o imperativo categórico, pois implicam tratar a humanidade na sua pessoa e na pessoa dos demais simultaneamente como um meio e também como um fim em si mesmo.

Ademais afirma que o direito penal é um imperativo categórico, pois deve eliminar todas as concessões à felicidade, portanto, qualquer concepção utilitarista de punição é inaceitável e o criminoso deve ser punido simplesmente porque cometeu um crime. Como exemplo, ele apresenta o caso em que é oferecido perdão a um condenado se ele aceitar fazer o teste de um medicamento perigoso, fazendo o papel de cobaia, porque isso implicaria tanto por parte da justiça quanto do próprio condenado, tratar a humanidade como um simples meio (MSRL, AA 06: 331-2).

Além disso, existem vários exemplos em que Kant afirma que os deveres jurídicos são fins que também são deveres.

A mais notável destas afirmações de que um dever jurídico é um fim que é também um deve aparece em *TP*, logo no início de seu “Contra Hobbes”, onde Kant assevera que o contrato originário é completamente diferente de todos os outros contratos sociais porque, embora todos os contratos sociais consistam em associações para promover coletivamente qualquer fim (fim comum), o contrato originário, que estabelece a união dos homens em todas as relações externas através de uma constituição civil, é um “fim em si”, “um fim que cada um deve ter”, um “dever primordial e incondicional”, um fim para as relações externas entre os homens que é “em si mesmo um dever” e até “a condição formal suprema de todos os deveres externos” (*TP*, AA 08: 289).

Não obstante, o dever jurídico que Kant mais insistentemente associa como sendo um fim que é também um dever para a humanidade é a paz perpétua, começando pelo “Primeiro Suplemento” de *ZeF*:

Agora, a questão que se refere à essência da intenção da paz perpétua é: “o que a natureza faz em favor desta intenção, ou seja, **o fim, que a própria razão do homem torna um dever**, e, portanto, da sua *intenção moral*, e como ela garante que aquilo que o homem *deveria* fazer de acordo com as leis da liberdade, mas não o faz, ele *fará* por uma coação da natureza, sem prejuízo dessa liberdade, notadamente com relação a todas as três partes do direito público, o direito *político, das gentes e cosmopolita*” (*ZeF*, AA 08: A 365)⁹.

E repete a mesma afirmação ao final do “Primeiro Suplemento”:

Desta forma, a natureza, através do mecanismo das próprias inclinações humanas, garante a paz perpétua; evidentemente que com uma certeza que não é suficiente para prever o seu futuro (teoricamente), mas é, no entanto, suficiente em termos práticos e **torna um dever trabalhar para esse fim** (não apenas quimérico) (*ZeF*, AA 08: A 368)¹⁰.

Além disso, no “Primeiro Apêndice” de *ZeF*, Kant censura o moralista político, que tergiversa sobre os princípios da razão prática em benefício dos interesses e inclinações empíricos, e afirma que o político moralista formula o princípio de que, caso encontre algum defeito na constituição vigente ou nas relações internacionais, “é um dever, especialmente para o Chefe do Estado”, corrigi-los segundo o direito natural, embora a prudência política, conforme com a moral, determina que essa modificação não deve ser precipitada e colocar em risco o próprio estado ou as relações internacionais, por isso, é preciso que os governantes, tenham, pelo menos em mente, que devem “promover uma aproximação constante ao fim (a melhor constituição segundo leis jurídicas)”, ou seja, aquela que fomenta a paz perpétua (*ZeF*, AA 08: A 372).

Embora, na *MSRL*, Kant já tenha afirmado que é possível distinguir as duas partes da *MS* com base no conceito de fim, pois os deveres de virtude exigem que os fins sejam também deveres tanto para a legislação interna quanto externa, enquanto os deveres jurídicos são passíveis apenas de uma legislação externa, pois somente o próprio sujeito pode internamente considerar um dever como um fim para a sua ação e o direito pode apenas obrigar externamente a que o sujeito obedeça a um determinado fim, mas não tem como obrigá-lo a que esse fim seja o móbil de sua ação (*MSRL*, AA 06: 239). Contudo, ele insiste, no final do *MSRL*, que a paz perpétua é o fim último do direito das gentes e que os esforços para se aproximar constantemente dela é uma tarefa fundada no dever e, portanto, no direito dos homens e dos estados (*MSRL*, AA 06:

350), de modo que se pode dizer que o estabelecimento da paz perpétua constitui não apenas uma parte, mas o fim último da doutrina do direito (MSRL, AA 06: 355).

Contudo, há uma referência que mostra que, mesmo depois de afirmar na *MSTL* que no direito os fins da ação podem ser quaisquer, inclusive fins empíricos, enquanto na ética, os fins da ação têm que ser também deveres, Kant volta a assegurar que os deveres jurídicos são fins que também são deveres na “Segunda Parte” de *SF*. Essa obra foi planejada inicialmente para mostrar o conflito da faculdade inferior de filosofia com a faculdade superior do direito; mas, na verdade, expressa a ideia de que o entusiasmo universal e desinteressado pela Revolução Francesa constitui um acontecimento de “nosso tempo” que representa um sinal histórico que revela a natureza moral da espécie humana, o que explica o progresso constante da humanidade para melhor, bem como que a Constituição Francesa de 1793 é um exemplo empírico da constituição republicana que mostra como a *respublica noumenon* pode se realizar historicamente na *respublica phaenomenon*.

Esta causa moralmente influente é dupla: em primeiro lugar, a do direito, que um povo não possa ser impedido por outros poderes de adotar uma constituição civil que eles próprios considerem boa; em segundo lugar, **o fim (que é também um dever)** de que a constituição de um povo seja em si mesma jurídica e moralmente boa, porque possui uma natureza tal que evita a guerra de agressão de acordo com princípios, que não pode ser nenhuma outra senão a constituição republicana, pelo menos segundo a ideia, podendo-se entrar na condição em que a guerra (fonte de todos os males e corrupção da moral) seja evitada e, assim, a espécie humana, apesar de toda a sua fragilidade, tem uma garantia negativa, pelo menos de não ser perturbada no seu progresso para melhor (*SF* 85-6)¹¹.

Obviamente que todos os deveres jurídicos, mesmo os que tem a forma do imperativo categórico quanto os que são fins que também são deveres, podem ser obedecidos apenas conforme o dever e não por dever.

Isto significa que, do ponto de vista da legislação objetiva, os deveres jurídicos são deduzidos da razão prática. Mas o direito não pode exigir subjetivamente que o agente aja motivado pelo fim da ação, ou seja, do ponto de vista da legislação subjetiva, o direito não está sujeito à legislação interna, mas apenas à legislação externa. Somente a ética pode exigir que o agente aja externa e internamente motivado pelo fim da ação que também é um dever. Portanto, as duas afirmações, que o direito exige agir para um fim que é um dever e de que o direito permite agir por qualquer fim, são igualmente verdadeiras, desde que se tenha em mente a distinção entre a legislação objetiva e a subjetiva, por isso, o direito estabelece objetivamente fins da ação que também são deveres, mas não pode exigir que esse fim, que é um dever, seja o móbil da ação (MSRL, AA 06: 239).

No entanto, isto não explica como, desde o ponto de vista da legislação objetiva, podem existir deveres jurídicos que tem a forma do imperativo categórico ou que são fins que também são deveres e, ao mesmo tempo, derivam do princípio do direito. Pois, se o princípio do direito é um juízo analítico, então os deveres jurídicos baseados no princípio do direito também deveriam ser juízos analíticos, mas o imperativo categórico é um juízo sintético *a priori*; além disso, se os deveres jurídicos são fins que também são deveres, mesmo que apenas objetivamente, estes fins constituiriam elementos sintéticos adicionados à liberdade externa e,

por isso, os deveres jurídicos não poderiam ser deduzidos diretamente da liberdade externa pelo mero princípio de contradição.

Mas isto representa um problema ainda mais complexo. Na “Introdução” à *KrV*, Kant escreveu que a filosofia crítica mostrou que há um progresso constante do conhecimento nas ciências, na matemática e na física, porque elas são compostas por juízos sintéticos *a priori*. Porém, porque ainda não foi demonstrado que a metafísica é composta por juízos sintéticos *a priori*, então, não há progresso na metafísica e cada filósofo nega todo conhecimento anterior e recomeça do zero, o que, aliás, ele próprio fez. Por isso, o propósito da filosofia crítica é responder às três questões-chave:

Como são possíveis juízos sintéticos *a priori* na matemática?

Como são possíveis juízos sintéticos *a priori* na física?

São possíveis os juízos sintéticos *a priori* na metafísica? (*KrV*, AA 03: 20).

Portanto, se a filosofia crítica consiste em mostrar que a metafísica, para ser uma ciência, como a matemática e a física, tem que ser composta por juízos sintéticos *a priori*, mas, se os deveres jurídicos forem obtidos a partir do princípio do direito, enquanto juízo analítico, então, também seriam juízos analíticos e, por isso, a própria doutrina do direito seria pré-crítica.

Logo, para mostrar que a doutrina do direito faz parte da filosofia crítica, é necessário demonstrar, antes de tudo, que pode haver um pequeno número de deveres jurídicos que são juízos analíticos, mas que a maior parte e os mais importantes deveres jurídicos tem que ser juízos sintéticos *a priori*.

Kant afirma que os deveres jurídicos provêm da liberdade externa, mas podem ser divididos em um único direito inato à “liberdade externa inata” (MSRL, AA 06: 316), que corresponde a cada homem por natureza, independentemente de qualquer ato jurídico, e, em direitos adquiridos, que requerem um ato jurídico. O homem tem direito à liberdade externa inata apenas em virtude de sua própria humanidade, desde que essa liberdade possa coexistir com a liberdade de todos os outros de acordo com uma lei universal, que permita a sua independência em relação ao arbítrio coercitivo dos demais. Da liberdade inata podem ser obtidos analiticamente a igualdade, independência, integridade e imprejudicabilidade inatos, que não podem ser considerados direitos propriamente ditos, mas meras derivações da liberdade inata, pois ela é o único direito inato (MSRL, AA 06: 237-8).

Se o único direito inato é a liberdade externa inata com as suas derivações analíticas, enquanto todos os direitos sobre os objetos externos do arbítrio são direitos adquiridos, então, a divisão entre direito inato e direitos adquiridos é constituída por dois membros extremamente desiguais em termos de extensão (MSRL, AA 06: 238).

Como se sabe, nos juízos analíticos, o predicado já se encontra no conceito de sujeito e, portanto, pode ser extraído diretamente dele, enquanto, nos juízos sintéticos, o predicado amplia o conceito de sujeito, pois acrescenta algo que não estava incluído nele, então, apenas o direito à liberdade externa inata é um juízo analítico, uma vez que pode ser extraído diretamente da liberdade externa; enquanto todos os outros direitos são adquiridos, pois dependem de um

ato jurídico e, portanto, ampliam seu conceito para além da mera liberdade externa, portanto, a maioria dos deveres jurídicos têm que ser juízos sintéticos *a priori*.

Kant afirma que existe uma relação entre os direitos inatos e analíticos com o meu e o teu interior e os direitos adquiridos e sintéticos com o meu e o teu exterior, pois explica que o direito à liberdade externa inata constitui “o meu e o teu inatos”, o que “também pode ser chamado de interno (*meum vel tuum internum*); porque o externo deve sempre ser adquirido” (MSRL, AA 06: 237). Portanto, a única proposição jurídica *a priori* que pode ser deduzida da liberdade inata pelo princípio da contradição é a posse empírica, que é um juízo analítico, uma vez que, se detenho um objeto externo que está fisicamente sob o meu arbítrio (que pode ser um lugar no espaço que meu corpo ocupa), e outra pessoa me tira este objeto, então, ela afeta exclusivamente o meu interno (minha liberdade) e a máxima de sua ação está em contradição direta com o “axioma do direito” (MSRL, AA 06 : 247-8, 250 e também: 254).

Portanto, se o princípio do direito é um juízo analítico e ele somente faculta apenas a posse empírica, que também é um juízo analítico, então, “como é possível um juízo jurídico sintético *a priori*?” (MSRL, AA 06: 249). Kant demonstra que os juízos jurídicos sintéticos *a priori* são possíveis a partir da fundamentação da posse meramente jurídica como uma posse inteligível.

A afirmação de que a posse empírica de um objeto externo do meu arbítrio pode ser deduzida da liberdade inata pelo princípio de contradição significa apenas que um outro afetaria arbitrariamente a minha liberdade interna caso me retirasse o objeto, mas não representa uma fundamentação nem mesmo do direito a própria posse empírica no estado de natureza, a qual irá exigir vários passos adicionais.

Em primeiro lugar, em virtude do fato de que a Terra é esférica, então, no estado de natureza, há uma posse comum originária de todos os objetos externos do nosso arbítrio. A posse comum originária não deve ser confundida, entretanto, com o comunismo primitivo, porque isso já constitui uma forma de propriedade, a propriedade coletiva, mas, ainda não existe nenhum tipo de propriedade no estado de natureza, nem privada, nem coletiva (MSRL, AA 06: 251). Isso não significa que a teoria kantiana seja incompatível com o comunismo, apenas que ele precisa ser instituído posteriormente como uma transformação da propriedade privada em coletiva.

Porém, no estado de natureza tem que haver uma autorização jurídica para o uso privado dos objetos externos do arbítrio, o postulado jurídico da razão prática, que permite que a liberdade de qualquer um seja compatível com a liberdade de todos os outros, uma vez que um objeto que está fisicamente em meu poder deve, em alguma medida, também estar juridicamente sob meu poder, caso contrário, existiriam coisas em si mesmas, sem dono, ou *res nullius*, e, neste caso, a razão prática se anularia ao recusar o uso de coisas utilizáveis (MSRL, AA 06: 246).

Evidentemente que tem que haver um uso privado dos objetos independentemente do sistema político e econômico no qual um indivíduo se encontra, pois uma pessoa, enquanto um corpo, tem que ocupar um lugar no espaço e dois corpos não podem ocupar o mesmo lugar

no espaço, além disso, os seres humanos tem que fazer um uso privado de moradia, vestuário, alimentação, etc... Isso não pode ser negado nem mesmo pelo comunismo mais radical. Aliás, o comunismo não nega a propriedade privada, mas apenas a propriedade privada dos meios de produção e, de fato, na maioria dos lugares em que foi implementado, até admite a propriedade privada dos meios de produção sob determinadas restrições, como a limitação do número de empregados, por exemplo.

Portanto, se, no estado de natureza, há uma posse comum originária dos objetos externos, então, o uso privado desses objetos exige uma autorização especial, pois, do contrário, o simples uso privado de objetos externos do nosso arbítrio, necessários à subsistência humana, constituiria uma violência de cada um contra todos os demais e seria contrário ao princípio do direito e à liberdade inata.

Mas essa autorização jurídica para o uso privado dos objetos externos do arbítrio facultada pelo postulado jurídico da razão prática, constitui uma ampliação *a priori* da razão prática além da mera liberdade externa. Pois o postulado é uma lei permissiva que não pode ser extraída do mero princípio do direito, pois impõe aos outros a obrigação, que não teriam, sem ele, de se abster de utilizar os objetos de nosso arbítrio simplesmente porque os possuímos empiricamente antes de todos os demais (MSRL, AA 06: 247). Consequentemente, o postulado é apenas uma autorização jurídica para usar privadamente os objetos externos do arbítrio que alguém detém empiricamente, mas, na medida em que implica uma ampliação da razão prática, então, o postulado constitui um elemento sintético e, nesse caso, a simples autorização para a posse empírica no estado de natureza já é um juízo sintético *a priori*, por isso, algo que está fisicamente em meu poder, deve estar, “em alguma medida” também juridicamente em meu poder.

Porém, a posse inteligível estabelece um poder sobre os demais de exigir que eles se abstenham do uso de um objeto externo do nosso arbítrio, mesmo sem a sua detenção física, por conseguinte, o objeto não precisa estar fisicamente sob o meu poder para possuí-lo juridicamente. Ao contrário da razão teórica que exige, para conhecer, a subsunção de uma intuição empírica sob um conceito, a razão prática abstrai de toda intuição empírica, portanto, de toda detenção física do objeto, por isso, a posse meramente jurídica deve ser uma forma de poder sobre o arbítrio dos outros sem a detenção empírica do objeto, pois me prejudica o uso que qualquer outra pessoa faz do objeto, sem o meu consentimento (MSRL, AA 06: 251-2).

Portanto, a posse meramente jurídica é uma posse inteligível, que abstrai do objeto empírico, isso significa que a posse meramente jurídica, ou a possibilidade do “meu e do teu exterior”, enquanto uma posse inteligível, não pode ser conhecida e, por isso, Kant afirma que é “surpreendente” que a razão prática se expanda sem precisar de intuições, inclusive *a priori*, justamente pela eliminação de condições empíricas e, desta forma, pode-se comprovar, de modo analítico, que existem juízos jurídicos sintéticos *a priori* (MSRL, AA 06: 255).

A dedução da posse meramente jurídica implica a abstenção recíproca no uso do objeto externo do arbítrio. Mas a renúncia de outrem e a garantia do uso exclusivo do objeto do

arbítrio não podem ser obtidas por vontade unilateral, mas somente pode ser garantida por uma vontade omnilateral.

Portanto, no estado de natureza só existe a posse empírica, autorizada pelo postulado jurídico da razão prática, o que confere, aos agentes, uma posse provisória: “uma posse em antecipação e preparação” do estado civil (MSRL, AA 06: 257). Isso significa que a posse empírica do estado de natureza tem a presunção jurídica de se tornar a posse inteligível quando ocorrer a entrada no estado civil.

Em uma palavra: o modo de ter algo exterior como seu no estado de natureza é a posse física que tem a presunção jurídica de legalizá-la pela união com a vontade de todos na legislação pública, e é juridicamente válida segundo uma expectativa comparativa (MSRL, AA 06: 257).

Consequentemente, o que garante a passagem da posse provisória para a posse peremptória (MSRL, AA 06: 257), instituindo a posse meramente jurídica como posse inteligível, que só pode existir no estado civil é uma forma da vontade universalmente legisladora. Portanto, a posse meramente jurídica, enquanto uma posse inteligível, não pode ser obtida diretamente da liberdade externa mediante o simples princípio de contradição, porque a posse inteligível constitui uma ampliação da razão prática a medida em que permite que uma pessoa possua um objeto externo de seu arbítrio sem a sua detenção física e, por isso, o uso que qualquer outro faz desse objeto lesiona, não somente o meu interior, mas o meu exterior. Mas, então, a vontade universalmente legisladora torna a posse meramente jurídica, como uma posse inteligível, em juízo sintético *a priori*.

Como é evidente que a “metafísica do direito” pertence à filosofia crítica e, portanto, tem que ser uma ciência fundamentalmente composta por juízos sintéticos *a priori*, então, é inevitável pressupor que existe outro princípio para o direito, além do princípio do direito, que seja um juízo sintético *a priori* e que seja responsável para que os deveres jurídicos sejam também juízos sintéticos *a priori*. Além disso, deve haver uma enorme diferença entre a quantidade e a importância entre os deveres jurídicos baseados no princípio do direito, portanto, também analíticos, e os fundamentados neste outro princípio, para que a doutrina do direito seja uma ciência crítica formada principalmente por juízos sintéticos *a priori*.

Porém, se existem dois princípios para o direito, isso exige que a vontade determine a forma da relação externa entre os arbítrios de duas maneiras diferentes: primeiro, o princípio do direito indica que o arbítrio de cada um deve ser conciliado com o arbítrio de todos os demais segundo uma lei universal de liberdade, o que determina uma relação entre os arbítrios mediada pela coação externa, a qual pode ser deduzida da liberdade externa pelo princípio da contradição; em segundo lugar, o contrato originário estabelece uma associação de cada vontade particular e privada, constituindo uma vontade comum e pública dentro de um povo (TP, AA 08: 297).

Contudo, deve-se recordar que, em TP, ainda não havia a distinção entre vontade e arbítrio, então, à luz dessa diferenciação definitiva de Kant na MSRL, pode-se dizer que o contrato originário permite unificar os arbítrios particulares por meio da vontade universalmente

legisladora de um povo, porque ela faz uma síntese da liberdade dos arbítrios que saem do estado de natureza e ingressam no estado civil como um povo.

Kant utiliza vários termos para se referir à vontade universalmente legisladora, “vontade geral”, “vontade comum”, “vontade unificada *a priori*”, etc... Mas, todas elas podem ser resumidas pela expressão “vontade unificada do povo” (MSRL, AA 06: 269)¹², porque, como essa vontade universalmente legisladora é uma ideia *a priori* da razão e provém do contrato originário, que também é uma ideia *a priori* e não um fato social (TP, AA 08: 297), Kant afirma que o estado de natureza é um estado não-jurídico (MSRL, AA 06: 306) por causa da ausência de uma justiça pública dotada de poder coativo. Portanto, a vontade universalmente legisladora, ainda que seja uma ideia *a priori*, tem que dispor de alguma forma de vigência que lhe permita exercer um poder coativo, o que só pode ocorrer no estado civil, quando se transforma na vontade unificada do povo, o soberano.

Por conseguinte, a forma da vontade universal, válida no estado civil, é a vontade unificada do povo. Segundo a constituição republicana, a vontade unificada do povo exerce o poder legislativo, do qual provém todo o direito, segundo a fórmula: quem legisla em nome de outrem pode cometer uma injustiça contra outrem, portanto, só o povo unido, ao legislar cada um sobre todos os outros, jamais pode ser injusto com ninguém, porque não se pode ser injusto naquilo que se decide sobre si mesmo. Portanto, apenas a vontade unificada do povo pode ser universalmente legislativa (MSRL, AA 06: 313-4). Então, somente no estado civil, a vontade unificada do povo institui a posse meramente jurídica e, com isso, torna possível os juízos jurídicos sintéticos *a priori*.

Ademais, como a liberdade externa inata somente pode ter validade absoluta no estado de natureza, no qual o agente tem o direito de usar os objetos que possui fisicamente, pois qualquer ação alheia afeta o seu interior, então, ela constitui uma “liberdade selvagem e sem lei” (MSRL, AA 06: 316).

Contudo, a permanência absoluta da liberdade inata no estado civil a transformaria em um direito inalienável, tornaria impossível toda a coação legal, porque isso afetaria o “seu” interior de alguém, e inútil a posse jurídica, pois ninguém seria obrigado a devolver um objeto que detém fisicamente. Consequentemente, a liberdade inata tem que ser transferida ao soberano através do contrato originário. Porém, ao mesmo tempo em que transferem sua liberdade inata ao soberano, recuperam-na integralmente no estado civil, pois o contrato originário não pode cometer injustiças contra ninguém (MSRL, AA 06: 316), por isso, podem usufruir do seu interior, independentemente do arbítrio coativo dos demais, mas agora sob a autorização do soberano. Por conseguinte, nenhuma pessoa do povo pode coagir legalmente os demais, pois o soberano detém o monopólio da violência legal, mas o soberano pode coagir os súditos; nesse sentido, o titular da posse jurídica, não pode obrigar outra pessoa do povo, que detém a posse empírica, a devolver um objeto de seu arbítrio, mas pode apelar para que o soberano determine a devolução do objeto, usando, inclusive, o seu poder coativo.

Não verdade, Kant mostrou que a vontade unificada do povo explica como são possíveis os juízos sintéticos *a priori* apenas no direito privado, uma vez que é óbvio que todo o direito

público (os princípios do estado civil) provém da vontade unificada do povo (o soberano), pois evidentemente é uma expansão do direito para além do direito natural, inato e analítico, portanto, o direito público é sem dúvida composto por juízos sintéticos *a priori*.

Pode-se concluir que, se o direito possui dois princípios, o princípio do direito, que é um juízo analítico, mas que fundamenta apenas os direitos inatos associados à liberdade inata, que constituem uma parte muito pequena do conjunto dos deveres jurídicos, enquanto o princípio da vontade unificada do povo é um juízo sintético *a priori*, que fundamenta todos os direitos adquiridos, os quais compõem a maior parte dos deveres jurídicos, isso explica a possibilidade de que Kant apresente os direitos adquiridos com a forma do imperativo categórico e também como juízos sintéticos *a priori*. Isso também demonstra que a *MSRL*, na medida em que a maioria dos deveres jurídicos são juízos sintéticos *a priori*, faça parte de filosofia crítica.

Resumo: A Liberdade transcendental é o fundamento da liberdade prática que, por sua vez, é o fundamento da filosofia moral, a qual consiste na determinação das máximas do arbítrio pela lei moral proveniente da vontade e pela neutralização das inclinações sensíveis. Mas a liberdade se divide em liberdade interna do arbítrio, quando vontade determina a matéria do arbítrio, estabelecendo fins que também são deveres, o que torna o princípio supremo da doutrina da virtude uma máxima de fins e, portanto, um juízo sintético *a priori*; e a liberdade no uso externo do arbítrio, que determina a forma do arbítrio, que permite que o arbítrio haja segundo qualquer fim, desde que a ação ocorra apenas conforme o dever, mas não por dever, o que fundamenta o princípio do direito. Depois de tentar formular o princípio do direito como um juízo sintético *a priori* com a forma de um imperativo categórico, Kant abandona esse projeto e afirma que o princípio do direito é um juízo analítico porque pode ser deduzido diretamente da liberdade pelo princípio de contradição, uma vez que, no direito, os fins da ação podem ser quaisquer. Contudo, se o direito for deduzido a partir de um juízo analítico, não pode pertencer à filosofia crítica, pois isso exige mostrar que a metafísica é composta por juízos sintéticos *a priori*, logo, deve haver outro princípio do qual são deduzidos a maioria dos deveres jurídicos como juízos sintéticos *a priori*. Por isso, Kant introduziu a vontade unificada do povo, como um juízo sintético *a priori* capaz de explicar como a posse empírica, autorizada pelo postulado jurídico da razão prática, no estado de natureza, pode se transformar na posse meramente jurídica, enquanto uma posse inteligível, sem detenção do objeto, no estado civil, ampliando a razão prática para além da simples liberdade, o que explica como são possíveis os juízos jurídicos sintéticos *a priori*.

Palavras-chave: liberdade, ética, direito, vontade, arbítrio.

Abstract: Transcendental Freedom is the foundation of practical freedom which, in turn, is the foundation of moral philosophy, which consists in the determination of the maxims of choice by the moral law arising from the will and the neutralization of sensitive inclinations. But freedom is divided into internal freedom of choice, when will determine the matter of choice, establishing ends that are also duties, which makes the supreme principle of the doctrine of virtue a maxim of ends and, therefore, a synthetic a priori judgment; and freedom in the external use of choice, which determines the form of the choice, which allows the choice to exist according to any ends, as long as the action occurs only in accordance with duty, but not from duty, which makes the principle of right possible. After trying to formulate the principle of right as a synthetic a priori judgment in the form of a categorical imperative, Kant abandons this project and states that the principle of right is an analytical judgment because it can be deduced directly from freedom through the principle of contradiction, a since, in the right, the ends of the action can be any. However, if the right is deduced from an analytical judgment, it cannot belong to critical philosophy, as it is necessary to show that metaphysics is composed of a priori synthetic judgments, therefore, there must be another principle from which the majority of juridical duties are deduced as synthetic a priori judgments. Therefore, Kant introduced the unified will of the people, as an a priori synthetic judgment capable of showing how empirical possession, authorized by the juridical postulate of practical reason, in the state of nature, can be transformed into merely juridical possession, as an intelligible possession, without detaining the object, in the civil status, expanding practical reason beyond simple freedom, which explains how synthetic a priori juridical judgments are possible.

Keywords: freedom, ethics, right, will, choice.

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² „daß jedes Freiheit mit der andern ihrer zusammen **bestehen** kann“ (KrV, AA 03: A 316; B 373). Todas as traduções são do autor do artigo.

³ „Recht ist die Einschränkung der Freiheit eines jeden auf die Bedingung ihrer **Zusammenstimmung** mit der Freiheit von jedermann, in so fern diese nach einem allgemeinen Gesetze möglich ist“ (TP, AA 08: 289-90).

⁴ „Das strikte Recht kann auch als die Möglichkeit eines mit jedermanns Freiheit nach allgemeinen Gesetzen **zusammenstimmenden** durchgängigen Wechselseitigen Zwanges vorgestellt werden“ (MSRL, AA 06: 232).

⁵ „Das Recht ist also der Inbegriff der Bedingungen, unter denen die Willkür des einen mit der Willkür des andern nach einem allgemeinen Gesetze der Freiheit zusammen **vereinigt** werden kann“ (MSRL, AA 06: 230).

⁶ A expressão é “Wir kennen unsere eigene Freiheit” (MSRL, AA 06: 239), que deve ser traduzida por “nós só podemos conhecer a nossa própria liberdade”, mas a liberdade só pode ser conhecida se aceitarmos as obscuras passagens do “Canon” da *KrV*, onde Kant diz que a liberdade pode ser conhecida mediante a experiência, mas, à luz das versões mais elaboradas da liberdade na filosofia moral, a liberdade não pode ser conhecida de nenhuma maneira possível, mas, como uma ideia da razão, pode ser apenas pensada (KpV, AA 05: 5-7).

⁷ As duas partes da *MS* foram publicadas separadamente: *MSRL* foi publicado no final de 1796 ou no início de 1797 e *MSTL*, em meados de 1797 (CORTINA, 2008, p. XVIII-XIX).

⁸ O direito é igual a liberdade = L; o delito D é a negação da liberdade = -L; a pena é a negação do delito D = -D; portanto, a pena é -(-L) = L.

⁹ Negrito do autor do artigo, itálico do próprio Kant.

¹⁰ Negrito do autor do artigo.

¹¹ Negrito do autor do artigo.

¹² “vereinigten Willen des Volkes” (MSRL, AA 06: 269).

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ON LOGIC AND LANGUAGE IN THE KANTIAN THOUGHT: A CRITICAL APPROACH

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“Immanuel Kant” bedeutet logisch: “*alle* Immanuel Kant”.

A. Schopenhauer³

In number 80 of the *Kritische Fragmente*, Friedrich Schlegel wrote:

I unwilling miss the category almost in Kant’s family tree of primordial concepts, which has certainly had as much effect in the world and in literature, and has corrupted as much, as any other category.⁴

In an earlier version, the fragment continued like this: “The same goes for the categories ‘so to speak’ and ‘perhaps’”.⁵

Like most of his “Critical Fragments”, this one has a polemical slant, but it could also be taken as a clue to the problem of completeness of the table of categories in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Why were *beinahe*, *gleichsam* and *vielleicht* not included among the pure concepts of the understanding?

Posed in such way, this question widely differs from the readings that accept their *Vollständigkeit*, to use the term of Klaus Reich, and examine the discovery of the twelve pure concepts of the understanding following the guiding thread of the logical table of judgements⁶. The all-sufficient categories have, notwithstanding, always generated suspicion, as is the case here with Schlegel and later Schopenhauer⁷. Schlegel’s fragment is instructive in drawing attention to the fact that the twelve categories are related not only to logical judgements but also to *ordinary language in general*. In investigating the *a priori* concepts that should be part of the Transcendental Analytic, Kant had to deal with the proximity and boundaries between logic and grammar, which the following pages will try to shed some light on. The majority of readers of the *Critique of Pure Reason* seem convinced that its twelve categories are satisfactorily well defined and delimited, and cannot be confused with the meanings in which the same

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terms are used in common languages. However, there is a grey zone between the usual words and the transcendental concepts that is interesting to explore in order to verify Kant's difficulty to keenly demarcate the limits between logic and language. This "no man's land" includes mainly the so called syncategorems and exponible judgements.

There are many passages in the Kantian *corpus* that deal with the analogy between language/ grammar and logic⁸. In comparing these two disciplines Kant follows the Wolffian example: just as the logician examines the sound common understanding (*gesunder Menschenverstand*) in order to extract the rules or the principle of reason of its operations⁹, so the grammarian must observe the ways the speakers employ the language to establish the grammatical rules. But the Wolffian analogy can also take on a slightly different inflection when it is used to explain the similar work of the grammarian and the *transcendental* logician as can be read in this passage from the *Prolegomena*:

To search in our ordinary knowledge for the concepts which do not rest upon particular experience and yet occur in all knowledge from experience, of which they constitute as it were the mere form of connection, presupposes neither greater reflection nor deeper insight than to detect in a language the rules of the actual use of words generally and thus to collect elements for a grammar (*in fact both inquiries are very closely related*), even though we are not able to give a reason why each language has just this and no other formal constitution, and still less why exactly so many, neither more nor less, of such formal determinations in general can be found in it.¹⁰

This text is well known, and it has also been noted that Kant is thinking here of logic and transcendental philosophy in comparison to Latin grammar: in his search for the pure concepts of understanding, the transcendental philosopher proceeds like a grammarian investigating the semantic of words, whose correct use is given in a classical language, that is, a language no longer subject to change and corruption¹¹. The comparison can be understood not just as an analogy, implying much more a real co-working between the philosopher and the grammarian. Of course, not everything that is grammatical is also transcendental, but how could one know the difference between them without reflecting *on both*?

An attempt has been made to show in another place that Kant does not conceive of language and grammar merely as something analogous to logic, but as a part of the heuristics he employs to arrive at the transcendental elements of pure knowledge¹². A text that well documents this heuristic role of grammar in relation to transcendental logic is found in the *Lectures on Metaphysics Pöhlitz*:

Transcendental Philosophy

If transcendental concepts were analysed in this way, it would be a transcendental grammar [*transcendentale Grammatik*], which contains the foundation of human language; for example, how *praesens*, *perfectum*, *plusquamperfectum* are contained in our understanding, what *adverbia* are, etc. If we reflected on this, we would have a transcendental grammar. Logic would contain the formal use of understanding. Then you could follow transcendental philosophy, the doctrine of general *a priori* concepts. (I. Kant, V-Met-L1/Pöhlitz, AA 28: 576)

Accurate grammar would play the role of transcendental logic, while the formal logic would continue to be the discipline that merely explains the use of concepts, judgements, syllogisms, etc., notions were largely well established by Aristotle. One striking aspect of the passage is that it does not talk about *nouns*, i.e. grammar has to do not only with semantics, but also with syntax in general.

SYNCATEGOREMS

Going on to analyse specific cases, let's take a closer look at that class of words the scholastics logicians called *syncategoremata*, which will make the relationship between grammar and logic clearer. A “dogmatic” author who presents very well the syncategorems and, with them, the link between language (grammar) and logic, is Wolff's follower and professor in Jena, Johann Peter Reusch (1691-1758)¹³. In paragraph 439, chapter VI (on propositions and judgements) of his *Systema logicum antiquorum*, Reusch distinguishes between simple propositions, in which there is a single subject and a single predicate, and compound propositions, in which there are many subjects, many predicates or even, simultaneously, many subjects and many predicates. In the next paragraph, he presents the different types of composition as follows:

[Species of composition]

These many subjects and predicates are reciprocally related to each other thanks to certain conjunctions, for whose variety or denomination the compound proposition receives varied appeal. Thus, the *conditional* or *hypothetical* conjunctions, the *causal* conjunctions, the *copulative* conjunctions, the *disjunctive* conjunctions, the *relative* conjunctions, the *adversative* conjunctions, the *occupative* conjunctions and the *illative* conjunctions can be used for this purpose: as established in grammar. This gives rise to conditional or hypothetical compound propositions, causal propositions, copulative propositions, disjunctive propositions, relative propositions, adversative propositions, occupational propositions and illative propositions. The conjunctions that give form to compound propositions are *syncategorems* (§ 215); hence [this form] can be called a syncategorematic or syncategorical proposition; in this respect, the simple proposition opposed to it is called *categorical* by some, but in others this name is given to the one opposed to the conditional or hypothetical.¹⁴

In this text, Reusch lists a series of complex propositions in which different types of *conjunctions* are present. If we look at the table of Kantian judgements, we see that it only includes two of these conjunctions: the conditional and the disjunctive. This last kind of judgement is expressed by the alternative conjunction “or” or the Latin “vel/vel”: “*Habitus est vel bonus, vel malus*” is the instance given by Reusch¹⁵. Kant accordingly uses *entweder, oder*¹⁶. The conjunction “if” (*wenn*) is for its part the grammatical correlate of the hypothetical proposition. The *Critique of Pure Reason* gives as example: “If there is a perfect justice, then the persistently evil person is punished.¹⁷” The instance example given by Reusch says: “*if we place our belief in God, we can always enjoy a peaceful mind*”¹⁸. The immediate sequence of his texts brings an example of another kind of syncategorem: “*because God takes care of providence, there is no need to be disturbed by evils*”¹⁹. The connective “because” expresses a *causal* compound proposition, and if this well-known grammatical explanation is accepted, it poses a problem for the Kantian table of categories. In fact, already only by its name, it seems evident that the *causal* conjunction (*quoniam, weil, because*) fits grammatically much more

with second category of the relationship – *Kausalität und Dependenz, Ursache und Wirkung* – than the *conditional* conjunction *si* (*wenn*, if).

Admitting notwithstanding the correlation between the hypothetical judgement and the category of cause and effect, there is a series of other conjunctions that have no correspondence in the table of pure concepts, because they cannot be given transcendental status, as with the conditional statement. The list provided by Reusch is extensive, as seen in the quote. In his *Logica Hamburgensis*, Joachim Jungius explains, in addition, that syncategorems cannot be considered predicaments because there are certain words that do not signify a thing separately, in its difference from others, but a kind of “mode of the thing”. These words, called co-signifiers or syncategoremata, are: all, something, not, if, or, and, because²⁰. Nor can they be confused with post-predicaments, because they are not reducible to predicaments in the same way, although this statement admits exceptions²¹.

EXPONIBLE JUDGMENTS

The difficulty of reducing syncategorems to predicaments can be further clarified by resorting to the so-called *exponible judgments*. Their definition by Reusch reads as follows:

[What is an exponible proposition?]

§ 391. There are propositions which, because of particles or ways of saying, involve some multiplicity [*aliquam involvunt multiplicitem*], so that they must be explained by some other propositions if they are to have their clarity. Such *propositions* are commonly called *exponible* or, more purely, in Rotenbeck’s opinion, explainable, *explicable*.²²

In paragraph 31 of *the Jäsche’s Logic*, the reader also finds this definition of exponible judgements: “Judgements in which an affirmation and a negation are contained simultaneously, but in a covert way, so that the affirmation occurs distinctly but the negation covertly, are exponible propositions”.²³

The note to the text gives the following example and explanation: “In the exponible judgment, Few men are learned, for example lies (1.), but in a covert way, the negative judgment, Many men are not learned, and (2.) the affirmative one, Some men are learned”.²⁴

This exponible judgement would be easy to explain; it would be a judgement made up of two judgements. But when examining each of them, the logician comes across an unexpected complexity, namely the words “few” and “many”. These quantifiers are not found in the traditional twofold nor in the threefold Kantian division of judgement quantity into universal, particular and singular. The question would then be: what kind of subject is the set “few” or “not many”?

Parallel passages in the *Lectures on Logic* show Kant’s same position on the problem. In the *Wiener Logik* we read:

Judicia exponibilia. E.g., if I say, A few men are learned, then I can derive from this (1.) Some men are learned. For a few are some, of course. (2.) Many men are not learned, for a few is the opposite of many. These two propositions are included in the one proposition, which contains an affirmation and a negation, but expressed in the form of affirmation. These are exponible judgements.²⁵

And in the *Logik Philipp*:

To expose [*Exponieren*] means to analyse [*aus einander setzen*]. So there has to be something mixed up. If two judgements are hidden in one, they have to be developed. That's an exponible judgement.

If an exponible judgement is developed [*ausgewickelt*], it contains two judgements, one of which affirms, the other denies. For example, "few men are devout" means as much as: "some men are devout and others are not".

An exponible judgement therefore contains: 1. subject and 2. predicate, but dual quality and quantity. (I. Kant, V-Lo/Philippi, AA 24: 465.)

Just like "few men are learned", "few men are pious" is a judgement that has the subject-predicate form, which is actually a simple judgement and apparently not a compound one. Dividing it into two parts helps us to understand its form better, because the problem is to explain how, in the same proposition, one and the same subject can be understood in terms of two different quantities ("few are P" implies the opposite quantity "many are not P") and two opposite qualities (affirmation and negation). This is how the problem is presented in the *Logik Blomberg*:

An exponible judgement is one that actually, in a hidden way, has 2 judgments, not in such a way that it has 2 subjects or predicates, but rather in such a way that the judgements in it are of two kinds as to quantity, also as to quality[;] for they are *affirmative*, but also *negative*. (I. Kant, V-Lo/Blomberg, AA 24: 277; Eng. trans., p. 223)

The exponible judgement is built on four other judgements of the *Urteilstafel*. So why is it excluded as the guiding thread to the transcendental logic? The lack of clarity and distinction is not a criterion for its exclusion, because its is transparently explained here. Shouldn't Kant have give his reasons to eliminate it, just as he did when including the singular judgement and the infinite judgement?

The difficulty the logician has to deal with when developing the exponible judgement also appears in the § 162 of *Acroasis logica*, in which Baumgarten writes:

A proposition cryptically composed of an affirmative and a negative is said to be *exponible*, in the resolution of which it is *expounded*. These are the exclusive, the exceptive, the restrictive, the declarative, the comparative and the reduplicative [propositions].²⁶

For Baumgarten, the *propositio exponibilis* is a compound proposition, just like the modal proposition. The modal proposition implies a way in which the predicate refers to the subject – with the addition of the expressions "it is necessary that", "it is contingent that", "it is possible that", "it is impossible that"; in the *exponibilis* we see the presence of exclusions, exceptions, restrictions, etc. which are marked by the addition of complicating particles such

as only, unique, except, all, more than, less than, greater than, less than, as, while etc. This is what the Wolffian Baumeister explains in § 202 of his logic:

In addition [to modal propositions], exponible propositions must be considered. For exponible propositions are propositions in such a way that they involve some difficulty or multiplicity [*aliquam involvunt difficultatem et multiplicitem*] due to certain particles [*ob particulas quasdam*], in such a way that they must be explained by some other propositions, when it is necessary to know the clarity that befits them.²⁷

Exponible propositions are defined by the presence of “uncomfortable” particles that medieval logic defines, once again, as syncategoremata or syncategoreumata, i.e. words (mainly “quantifiers”) that have no meaning on their own and only gain meaning when they accompany another concept. The grammarians of the Middle Age usually separated terms according to two main criteria: categoremata, which include nouns, adjectives, personal and demonstrative pronouns and verbs, and syncategoreumata, which include conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions, although the logicians of the time also explained that the word of a grammatical class could be analysed according to both criteria. This link between the syncategoreumata and the exponible proposition is presented with simplicity and clarity by Peter of Spain: “Exponible proposition is a proposition that has an obscure meaning, requiring exposition due to some syncategorem implicitly or explicitly put in it or in some word”.²⁸

Among the Wolffians, the use of the word is rarer, but the concept is present²⁹. Once again, Johann Peter Reusch, pupil of Wolff, is among those who use the word, and his text helps us to better understand the division of grammatical classes:

A syncategorematic term or syncategoreme is one that does not have a full meaning, or that does not mean anything determinately by itself, but that helps the meaning of the sentence only together with another, such as adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections. This is also where the term oblique comes in, covering cases in names and tenses and moods that refer to something else, such as the oblique cases of names and all tenses and moods except the present tense.³⁰

Syncategorems include adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections and also verb tenses and moods other than the present tense. They can also be called “oblique” and differ from categorematic, so-called “straight” terms³¹. Both designations come from grammar, which explains why the term can be treated in two ways, namely if it obeys the nominative or some other declension. The parallel between logic and grammar is clear. Just as the logician must finally convert judgements into the categorical judgement, the grammarian must always have in mind the straight case that is implicit in the oblique case, or the present tense of the verb. In other words, the declined word must be converted to the zero degree of the nominative, so that it can be part of a direct proposition or, as we say grammatically, an attributive sentence. The same goes for the verb in tenses and moods other than the indicative; they are also limitations or modalisations of the present tense. There are also mixed cases, which can be both categorematic and syncategorematic³².

We can conclude that the logical problem of the exponible proposition is related to the inherent difficulty in such conversion, that is, how to reduce the co-signifying terms to the subject-predicate form or how to reduce the quantifications to simple subjects. As it is

impossible to transform co-signifiers, Kant's answer to the problem of explicable judgements is that it goes beyond the field of logic and can only be solved in the broader field of grammar. This is the conclusion he reaches in the *Jäsche Logic*:

Since the nature of explicable propositions depends merely on conditions of language, in accordance with which one can express two judgments briefly at once, the observation that in our language there can be judgements that must be expounded belongs no to logic but to grammar.³³

The *Blomberg Logic*, however, states the opposite. It is the duty of logic to find the exponent that brings out the judgement hidden in the exponent proposition:

An explicable judgment is one that actually in a hidden way has 2 judgments, not in such a way that it has 2 subjects or predicates, but rather in such a way that the judgements in it are of two kinds, as to quantity, also as to quality[;] for they are *affirmative*, but also *negative*. Now logic has the duty that it must explicate explicable judgments.³⁴

The *Jäsche Logic* says that, given the difficulty of logic in presenting the exponents capable of performing the conversion, it is only up to grammarians to explain judgements which include a negation in the brevity of their affirmation. Only the grammarian can make the judgements contained in this type of proposition “evolve”, i.e., show the characteristic notes embedded in a concept or representation, by which the reason for something is explained. One last text, from *Lectures on Logic Busolt* provides an explanation of the explicable judgement, which is interesting because it includes adverbs of intensity in German: “An explicable judgement is one that is both affirmative and negative. Such judgements are helped in German by the words *allein, nur, wenige* etc. etc. (I. Kant, V-Lo/Busolt, AA 24: 666)”.

In a text in which he analyses the presuppositions of the table of judgements, Giorgio Tonelli perfectly explained the problem arising from Kant's difficulty in explaining explicable judgements. Tonelli recalls that many species of compound judgements that cannot be expounded were “left out” of the table of judgements, such as copulative, reduplicative, relative and disjunctive propositions, for which Kant does not provide a rational explanation³⁵. In fact, a series of possible judgements are left out of the logical table, because it is not possible to expose the notes that characterise them, it is not possible to explain the rule according to which they are composed, unlike what happens with the conjunctions “if” and “or”, which would be the grammatical analogues of the hypothetical judgement and the disjunctive judgement³⁶. As in the passage from *Logik Busolt*, we read in Refl. 5107 (AA 18: 90).

The word “lediglich, blos, allein, nur” compared to the words “überhaupt, schlechthin, schlechterdings”. Those are not words of limits, but of the *actus* of limitation. The words “an, durch, zu” are the functions of categories.

Cosignifiers such as *lediglich, blos, allein, nur, an, durch, zu* come to be thought of by Kant as terms that express “acts” of restriction, as opposed to the “generalisers” *überhaupt, schlechthin* and *schlechterdings*³⁷. Francesco Valleri Tommasi gives us another very unexpected example of syncategoremata in Kant: “Adverbs and prepositions, such as (I, you), are inexplicable; this is what philosophy about languages consists of”.³⁸

It is interesting to see that here the pronoun I (as well as you) goes along with the syncategoremata, the same I that transcendental logic will define years later as the condition of all judgements, as something that cannot be predicated of anything, and as the subject of all possible predicates. This reflection from the years 1769-1770 pictures a moment when the insufficiency of logical explanation is once again referred to grammar, and more precisely to a “philosophy of languages”. In short, was this perhaps a more promising path than the one Kant took at the beginning of the following decade?

CORRECTING LOGIC THROUGH COMMON LANGUAGE

In his *Contributions to the Critique of Language*, Fritz Mauthner makes an interesting observation about the particular judgement. According to him, its familiar form – Some A’s are B’s – does violence to ordinary language. Instead of using “Some mammals are dogs” to convert the universal judgement “All dogs are mammals”, it would be more natural to say “dogs are of the species (or family) of mammals”. The formulation “some mammals are dogs” can also be converted, more elegantly, into the following proposition, which contains at once the singular judgement and the universal judgement: “The dog is a species of mammal” (*Der Hund ist eine Säugetierart*). Or, as he explains in another example, it’s not absolutely necessary to go through the universal proposition “every dog is an animal” in order to arrive at the particular proposition “some animals are dogs”. The word “dog” would be enough, and the quantifiers superfluous. So, the proposition would have a much simpler form: “the dog is an animal”, “the dog is a mammal”, constructions that are much more common in ordinary language, which dismisses the logical apparatus of the particular judgement. Wouldn’t logic still have a lot to learn from language?

Schopenhauer had already argued in the same direction, and Mauthner seems to be inspired by this when he says that the problem is not exactly logical, but simply linguistic. The text deserves to be fully quoted:

The difference between *particular judgements* (*propositiones particulares*) and *universal judgements* often rests only on the external and accidental circumstance that the language has no word to express by itself the part of the universal concept here to be detached, which is the subject of such a judgment. If it had, many a particular judgment would be a universal one. For example, the particular judgment: “Some trees bear gall-nuts” becomes the universal, because for this detached part of the concept “tree” we have a special word: “All oaks bear gall-nuts”. The judgement: “Some persons are black” is related in just the same way to the judgement: “All Negroes are black.” Or else this difference depends on the fact that, in the mind of the person judging, the concept he makes of the subject of the particular judgment has not been clearly detached from the general concept as a part of which he denotes it; otherwise, instead of the particular judgments, he would be able to express a universal judgment. For example, instead of the judgment: “Some ruminants have upper incisors, this judgment: “All ruminants without horns have upper incisors”.³⁹

The passage develops the argument found in volume I of Schopenhauer’s main work:

[...] one and the same part of the sphere of the concept ‘tree’ can be isolated through a particular and through a universal judgment, thus: ‘Some trees bear gall-nuts,’ or ‘all oaks bear gall-nuts.’ We see that the difference of the two operations is very slight, in fact that its possibility depends on the richness of the language. Nevertheless, Kant has declared that this difference reveals two fundamentally different

actions, functions, categories of the pure understanding that just through these determines experience *a priori*.⁴⁰

In his attempt to show the untenability of Kant's doctrine of categories (*ibid*, p. 631, transl. p. 469), based on a lack of more exact consideration between intuitive knowledge and abstract reflective knowledge, Schopenhauer also discusses the singular judgement. His treatment of it is also worth remembering:

The logical rule that *judgements, singular* as regards quantity, and hence judgements having as their subject a *singular concept* (*notio singularis*) are to be treated just like universal *judgements*, depends on the fact that they are actually universal judgements, having merely the peculiarity that their subject is a concept which can be supported only by a single real object, and which therefore contains under itself only a single thing; thus when the concept is denoted by a proper name. This is really to be taken into consideration, however, only when we go from the abstract representation to the representation of perception, and thus when we wish to realize the concepts. In thinking itself, in operation with judgements, no difference results from this, just because there is no logical difference between single concepts and universal concepts. 'Immanuel Kant' signifies logically 'every Immanuel Kant'. Accordingly, the quantity of judgements is really only twofold, namely universal and particular. An individual representation cannot be in any way the subject of a judgement, because it is not an abstraction, is not something thought, but something of perception. Every concept, on the other hand, is essentially universal, and every judgment must have a *concept* as its subject.⁴¹

The differentiation of the singular judgement in relation to the universal and the particular – as claimed by Kant – can only be accepted in the abstract-logical sphere, and has no transcendental validity. This is because in the purely logical sphere one can hypothetically accept judgements such as "Socrates is mortal". Here Socrates is any and all Socrates, as Immanuel Kant is *every* (*alle*) Immanuel Kant. In other words, it's a generalisation that makes it possible to convert Socrates and Kant in a concept, because without it there is no proper judgement, defined as a link between two *concepts*. In the so-called singular judgement, we have no *concept*, but a generic representation, and that's why the proposition Socrates is mortal says nothing more than "Every mortal is mortal". By pretending to issue a judgement of this kind, what is being done is to smuggle the concrete experience of a singular being into the realm of logic, confusing this *formal* science with ontology. Grammar would also help to understand the problem: the *proper* name is taken as if it were a *generic* name.

In this same paragraph on logic from the second volume of *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer proposes his own suggestion for what scholastic logic called a syncategorem (although without using the technical term):

'For, because, why, therefore, thus, as, since, although, indeed, yet, but, if, either-or,' and more like these, are really *logical particles*, their sole purpose being to express what is formal in the thought-processes. They are therefore a valuable possession of a language, and do not belong to all languages in equal number. In particular 'zwar' (the contracted 'es ist wahr') seems to belong exclusively to German; it always refers to an 'aber' that follows or is added in thought, just as 'if' refers to 'then'.⁴²

Instead of placing the uncomfortable particles in the realm of grammar, Schopenhauer takes them into the realm of logic, calling them *logische Partikeln*, but at the same time pointing

out that each language would have a different number of them. Is this a more fruitful way of thinking the relationship between logic and language?

Whatever the answer to that question may be, it's important to note the relevance syncategorems have had in the history of logic, as François Muller explains:

If the term “syncategorem” goes back to the Stoics, it is nevertheless thanks to Shyreswood, who devoted an entire work to this subject, that syncategorems enjoyed an astonishing fortune in the Middle Ages: Ockham, Burleigh, Buridan, Albert of Saxony, all of them studied, and with rare penetration, what is today considered one of the surest manifestations of the realisation of the formal character of logic.⁴³

Abstract: This text returns to the old discussion about the *Vollständigkeit* of Kant's logical table of judgements, as a necessary device to discover the pure categories of understanding. The question is addressed from the point of view of the relationship between logic and language, more precisely from the point of view of what scholastic logic calls syncategorems and explicable judgements.

Keywords: logic - language - syncategorem - explicable judgement

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NOTAS / NOTES

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³ *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, II, 9.

⁴ Friedrich Schlegel, *Kritische Fragmente*, in *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel Ausgabe*, Munich - Paderborn - Wien, Ferdinand Schöningh, 1967, p. 157.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ K. Reich, *Die Vollständigkeit der kantischen Urteilstafel*. English translation: *The completeness of Kant’s table of judgments*. Translated by Jane Kneller and Michael Losonsky. Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 1992.

⁷ According to Schopenhauer, the issues related to the discovery of those categories following the table of judgements must be solely to satisfy Kant’s need for pleasure in architectural symmetry (*bloß seine Lust an architetonischer Symmetrie zu befriedigen*) (I, p. 618)

⁸ For a wide-ranging discussion of the subject, see Mirella Capozzi “Kant on Logic, Language and Thought”, in D. Buzzetti and M. Ferriani (org.), *Speculative Grammar, Universal Grammar and Philosophical Analysis of Language*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamin, 1987, pp. 97-148.

⁹ C. Wolff, *Vernünfftige Gedancken von den Kräfften des menschlichen Verstandes und ihrem richtigen Gebrauche in Erkänntnis der Wahrheit*, Halle, Renger, 1742 (1713).

¹⁰ I. Kant, Prol, 04: 322-23. English translation by Paul Carus and revision by James W. Ellington, *Prolegomena to any future metaphysics that will be able to come forward as science, with Kant’s letter to Marcus Herz, February 27, 1772*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett, 2001, p. 60. Italics added. For Crusius, since the structure of languages contains countless subtleties and arts, in order to deal with these, both a “general grammar” and “various special philosophical grammars” (*sowohl eine allgemeine als auch mehrere speciale Grammaticken*) would be necessary. Christian Augusti Crusius, *Weg zur Gewissheit und Zuverlässigkeit der menschlichen Erkenntniß*, Leipzig, Gleditsch, 1947, p. 393.

¹¹ Cf. Mirella Capozzi “Kant on Logic”, pp. 97, 153. The Reflections on Logic make it explicit why the grammatical categories appear in Latin: it is from the *Haupteinrichtung* of this language that the rules of French and German are taught (I. Kant, Refl.1620, AA 16: 40). For the ancient sources of this conception of the eight parts of the sentence, see the corresponding note

to this Reflection by Adickes (AA 16: 50-1). Kant also tries to establish a “table of grammatical categories” from Latin rhetoric: “Nomen, Pronomen, Verbum, Participium, adverbium, praepositio, conjunctio, interjectio.” (Refl, 1629, AA 16: 50). This kind of “table of grammatical terms” will be very illuminating for the argument developed here.

¹² M. Suzuki “A palavra com invenção. Heurística e linguagem em Kant”, in *Studia kantiana*, 6/7 (2008), pp. 29-61.

¹³ In the *Logic Lectures Hechsel*, we read that Reusch is one of those authors who wanted to combine Aristotle with Wolff. I. Kant, *Logik-Vorlesungen. Unveröffentlichte Nachschriften*. Edited by Tillman Pinder, Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1998, v. 2, p. 289.

¹⁴ J. P. Reusch, *Systema logicum antiquorum atque recentiorum item propria precepta exhibens*, § 440, Jena, Cröker, 1733, pp. 479-480.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Cf. I. Kant, *Logik Bauch*, in id., *Logik-Vorlesungen. Unveröffentlichte Nachschriften*, edited by Tillmann Pinder, Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1998, v. 1, p. 175.

¹⁷ I. Kant, KrV AA 05: 62. English translation by Werner S. Pluhar, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett, 1996, p. 126.

¹⁸ “*si fiduciam in Deo collocamus; tranquilo semper animo frui possumus*”. J. P. Reusch, *Systema logicum antiquorum*, p. 480.

¹⁹ “*quoniam Deus exerit providentiam; malis conturbari non decet*”, or, reversing the order: “*malis conturbari non decet, quoniam Deus exerit providentiam*”. Ibid.

²⁰ Joachim Jungius, *Logica Hamburgensis, hoc est Institutiones Logicae*. French translation by François Muller: *La logique de Hamburg de Joachim Jungius* (see note 8), p. 54. On *Prädikamente* und *Postprädikamente* in Kant, see *Krv*, AA 04: 67. Eng. trans., p. 133. On the explanation of the categories as “co-signifiers”, see Peter Hispanus Portugalensis, *Syncategoremata*, edition by I. M. de Rijk and translation by Joke Spruyt, Leiden, Brill, 1992, pp. 38-40: “Et dicitur syncategoreuma a ‘sin’, quod est ‘con’, et ‘categoreuma’, quod est ‘predicativum’ vel ‘significativum’, quasi: ‘consignificativum’.”

²¹ “Syncategoremata are not generally reduced to predicates, so the *majority*, i.e. most or the greatest number, can be reduced to the predicate of quantity or relation. The particle *si* [if] designates the consequence of an utterance taken from another utterance; it can therefore be referred to the category of action or even relation.” *La logique de Hamburg de Joachim Jungius*, p. 60.

²² Johann Peter Reusch, *Systema logicum antiquorum*, § 391, p. 425. The passage Reusch cites from Rotenbeccius says: “[...] A proposition that hides, as it were, (a) many enunciations within it, favours (b) some obscurity and also needs to be explained or made more evident, hence it can also be called an explicable proposition, and it is more correct to call it such than explicable (which is a barbaric word). Examples of such propositions are: *There is only one mediator of God and man; Among men only Christ was without sin; All men except Christ are sinners; Christ must be worshipped as God; Charity is worth more than hope and faith.*” Rotenbeccius (Georg Paul Röttenbeck), *Logica Vetus et Nova*, Frankfurt/ Leipzig, § 1473, pp. 245-246.

²³ I. Kant, Log, AA 09:109; Eng. trans., p. 605.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ I. Kant, V-Lo/Wiener, AA 24: 936, Eng. trans., p. 375.

²⁶ A. G. Baumgarten, *Acroasis logica*, Halle, Hemmerde, 1756, p. 47.

²⁷ F. C. Baumeister, *Institutiones philosophiae rationalis methodo Wolffii conscriptae*, in: Christian Wolff, *Gesammelte Werke*, Hildesheim, Olms, 1989, § 202, p. 115.

²⁸ “Propositio exponibilis est propositio habens obscurum sensum expositione indigentem propter aliquod syncategoreuma in ea implicite vel explicite positum vel in aliqua dictione [...]”. Petrus Hispanus Portugalensis, *Summulae Logicales*, edited by J. P. M. Mullally, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame, 1964, p. 104. Apud François Muller: *La logique de Hamburg de Joachim Jungius* (see note 8), v. 2, p. 123. On Peter of Spain, see Joke Spruyt “Peter of Spain”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/peter-spain/>>.

²⁹ His opponent Crusius defines terms like this: “A *term* is called *categorematic*, if it is able to constitute a subject or predicate in a proposition, and *syncategorematic* if it is not able to do so.” Christian Augusti Crusius, *Weg zur Gewissheit und Zuverlässigkeit der menschlichen Erkenntniß*, pp. 394-95.

³⁰ Johann Peter Reusch, *Systema logicum antiquorum atque recentiorum item propria precepta exhibens*, Cap. IV, De usu cognitionis, pp. 245-246.

³¹ On converting the oblique case to the straight case, see François Muller, commentary to *La logique de Hamburg de Joachim Jungius*, p. 124. On the intrinsic correlation between the affirmative categorical proposition and the *nominativus*, see Leibniz, *Elementa Calculi*, April, 1679. In: G. W. Leibniz, *Philosophische Schriften*, v. 4, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 2006, p. 197:

“omnem propositionem veram categoricam affirmativam universalem, nihil aliud significare quam connexionem quandam inter Praedicatum et subjectum in caso recto de quo hic semper loquar, ita scilicet, ut praedicatum dicatur inesse subjecto vel contineri in subjecto, eoque vel absolute et in se spectato vel certe seu in aliquo exemplo.” On the difference between categorematic and syncategorematic infinity, cf. id., *Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain*, II, 17, Paris, Flammarion, 1921, p. 113.

³² Johann Peter Reusch, *Systema logicum antiquorum*, p. 245. Instances of mixed terms: “nemo” = “nullus homo”, “nihil” = “nulla res” etc.

³³ I. Kant, Log, AA 09:109; *Immanuel Kant's Logic. A Manual for Lectures (The Jäsche Logic)*, in *Lectures on Logic*, translation by J. Michael Young, p. 605. See I. Kant, V-Lo/Pöhlitz, AA 24: 580: “Exponible Urtheile gehören nicht in die Logik, denn ihre Eigenschaft wohnt nicht der Logik, sonder der Sprache bei [...] das gehört also eigentlich in die Grammatik, daß in unserer Sprache Urtheile sey können die exponirt werden müssen.”

³⁴ “Die logic nun hat die Pflicht, sie muß die exponible urtheile exprimiren.” I. Kant, V-Lo/Blomberg, AA 24: 277; Eng. trans., p. 223.

³⁵ Giorgio Tonelli, “Die Voraussetzungen zur Kantischen Urteilkraft”. In: *Kritik und Metaphysik. Studien. Heinz Heimsoeth zum achtzigsten Geburtstag*. Hrg. Friedrich Kaulbach und Joachim Ritter. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1966, p. 157.

³⁶ A very interesting case is that of the copulative judgement, which *Logik Bauch* puts together with the judgements of relation. There would be thus 4 and not just 3 judgments in this division of the understanding. I. Kant, *Logik Bauch*, in *Logik-Vorlesungen*, v. 1, p. 172. “Ein judicium copulativum ist ein solches Urtheil, daß aus vielen Judiciis besteht, die mit einander bestehn können; nemlich, wenn ein praedicat oder Subject im simplen kathegorischen Urtheil wahr gefunden wird; so sind copulative Sätze in der Verbindung mehrerer Begriffe unter einander enthalten” (ibid., p. 175)

³⁷ Following the tradition, Kant here subordinates syncategorems to the so-called *affections* of judgement, that is, the conditions, restrictions and limitations to which non-categorical propositions are subject. On the other hand, he thinks that *überhaupt*, *schlechthin* and *schlechterdings* would be adequate words to express the non-conditional or unlimitedness of categorical propositions. Until another source shows otherwise, this is Kant's original thought. On affections in Kant and the Wolffians, see M. Suzuki, “Cos'è una condizione? Il categorico e l'ipotesico nella logica del pensiero kantiano”. In *Analytica*, 25, 1 (2021), pp. 64-87.

³⁸ “Die *adverbia* und *praepositiones*, imgleichen (ich, du), ferner das *plusquamperfectum* etc. sind unerklärlich; darin besteht die philosophie über sprachen.” Refl. 4159, AA 17: 438. Cf. Francesco Valerio Tommasi, “Michael Piccart, Kant e i termini primi. Il trascendentale nel rapporto tra filosofia e linguaggio”, in *Archivio di filosofia*, (2005), p. 18.

³⁹ A. Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, II, § 9: Zur Logik überhaupt. In: id., *Sämtliche Werke*, edited by Wolfgang Frhr. von Löhneysen, Frankfurt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976, v. 2, pp. 139-140. English translation by E. F. J. Payne, *The World as Will and Representation*, New York: Dover, 1969, v. 2, p. 105.

40 Id., *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Anhang: *Kritik der kantischen Philosophie, Sämtliche Werke*, v. 1, p. 613; Eng. translation, p. 455.

41 Id., *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, v. 2, pp. 139; Eng. trans., pp. 104-105.

42 Ibid., p. 138; Eng. trans., p. 104.

43 F. Muller, *La logique de Hambourg de Joachim Jungius* pp. 80-81.

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KANT UND DAS ANDERE DER NOTWENDIGKEIT – DER ZUFALL

KANT AND THE OTHER OF NECESSITY - CONTINGENCY

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KANT UND DIE NOTWENDIGEN VERKNÜPFUNGSLEISTUNGEN DES DENKENS

Kants Erkenntnistheorie ist wesentlich bestimmt durch die Frage nach der Möglichkeit von Geltungsansprüchen der Notwendigkeit und Allgemeingültigkeit, für die die Kategorien als Erkenntnisprinzipien ebenso einsteht, wie das Sittengesetz und mit ihm der kategorische Imperativ einer reinen praktischen Vernunft. Die berühmte Leitfrage für Kants kritische Erkenntnistheorie, die Frage also, „Wie sind synthetische Urteile a priori möglich?“, spricht nur die Modalität der Möglichkeit aus, nicht die der Notwendigkeit. Die Frage nach dem Apriori synthetischer Urteile ist ein Erbe der rationalistischen Tradition einer *philosophia more geometrico*, die Kant kritisch reflektiert und in ihre Schranken verwiesen hat. Die notwendigen Geltungsansprüche des Verstandes und der Vernunft hat er neu begründet. Notwendige Geltungsansprüche setzen die höchsten Standards der Erkenntnis in Theorie, Moral, Recht, schließlich auch der Ästhetik, die Kant stets von empirischen Erkenntnissen abgrenzt.

Das Zentrum von Kants erkenntnistheoretischem Kategoriensystem bildet die Begründung der Kausalität und in eins damit deren naturgesetzliche, notwendige Geltungsansprüche. Kausalität ist das zentrale unter all den Gesetzen, die das Subjekt im Erkenntnisprozess der Natur vorschreibt. Doch zunächst muss Kant überhaupt begründen, dass das Denken mit einer Gesetzmäßigkeit operiert, die der Natur die Gesetze des Subjekts vorgibt, denen diese im Erkenntnisprozess folgt. Bevor Kant zur Transzendentalen Deduktion der Kategorienfunktionen des reinen Verstandes übergeht, hält er daher fest:

Es sind nur zwei Fälle möglich, unter denen synthetische Vorstellung und ihre Gegenstände zusammentreffen, sich aufeinander notwendigerweise beziehen, und gleichsam einander begegnen können. Entweder wenn der Gegenstand die Vorstellung, oder diese den Gegenstand allein möglich macht. Ist das erstere, so ist diese Beziehung nur empirisch und die Vorstellung ist niemals a priori möglich. Und dies ist der Fall mit Erscheinung, in Ansehung dessen, was an ihnen zur Empfindung gehört. Ist aber das zweite, weil Vorstellung an sich selbst (denn von dessen Kausalität, vermittelt

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des Willens, ist hier gar nicht die Rede) ihren Gegenstand *dem Dasein nach* nicht hervorbringt, so ist doch die Vorstellung in Ansehung des Gegenstandes alsdenn a priori bestimmend, wenn durch sie allein es möglich ist, etwas *als einen Gegenstand zu erkennen*. Es sind aber zwei Bedingungen, unter denen allein die Erkenntnis eines Gegenstandes möglich ist, erstlich *Anschauung*, dadurch derselbe, aber nur als Erscheinung, gegeben wird, zweitens *Begriff*, dadurch ein Gegenstand gedacht wird, der dieser Anschauung entspricht.²

Zum genauen Verständnis dessen, was mit dieser Deduktion bewiesen wird, ist viel geschrieben worden. Das kann hier nicht Thema sein. Kant jedenfalls geht (1781) davon aus, gezeigt zu haben:

So übertrieben, so widersinnisch es also auch lautet, zu sagen: der Verstand ist selbst der Quell der Gesetze der Natur, und mithin der normalen Einheit der Natur, so richtig, und dem Gegenstande, nämlich der Erfahrung angemessen ist gleichwohl eine solche Behauptung. Zwar können empirische Gesetze, als solche, ihren Ursprung keineswegs vom reinen Verstande herleiten, so wenig als die unermessliche Mannigfaltigkeit der Erscheinungen aus der reinen Form der sinnlichen Anschauung hinlänglich begriffen werden kann. Aber alle empirische Gesetze sind nur besondere Bestimmungen der reinen Gesetze des Verstandes, unter welchen und nach deren Norm jene allererst möglich sind, und die Erscheinungen eine gesetzliche Form annehmen, sowie auch alle Erscheinungen, unerachtet der Verschiedenheit ihrer empirischen Form, dennoch jederzeit den Bedingungen der reinen Form der Sinnlichkeit gemäß sein müssen.

Der reine Verstand ist also in den Kategorien das Gesetz der synthetischen Einheit aller Erscheinungen, und macht dadurch Erfahrung ihrer Form nach allererst und ursprünglich möglich. Mehr aber hatten wir in der transz. Deduktion der Kategorien nicht zu leisten, als dieses Verhältnis des Verstandes zur Sinnlichkeit, und vermittelst derselben zu allen Gegenständen der Erfahrung, mithin die objektive Gültigkeit seiner reinen Begriffe a priori begrifflich zu machen, und dadurch ihren Ursprung und Wahrheit festzusetzen.³

Kants Begriff der Notwendigkeit im Kontext der Erkenntnisse der Gesetze und mithin der Kausalität in der Natur ist bekanntlich nicht nur durch den Rationalismus, sondern auch durch David Humes Empirismus bestimmt. Hume sei es gewesen, der ihn aus dem dogmatischen Schlummer geweckt habe, wie er etwa in der Vorrede zu den *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik* bekennt.⁴ Hume ist es, der der Kausalität in der Natur und in der menschlichen Erkenntnis Notwendigkeit zuschreibt, die er durch menschliche Gewohnheit zu erklären sucht. Kant wird dieser Erklärungsart eine bloß subjektive Notwendigkeit zusprechen, während er selbst vom Ausweis objektiver Notwendigkeit durch die Kategorie der Kausalität spricht.⁵

Dass die Sprache, so auch die Sprache Kants, die Modalität der Notwendigkeit mit all ihren unterschiedlichen Verbindlichkeitsgraden und Bedeutungsschattierungen kennt, verweist auf ihr anderes, die Zufälligkeit und den Zufall. Zufall spielt in der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, anders als Notwendigkeit, eine systematisch untergeordnete Rolle und ist im Gang dieser Schrift, dem Gerichtshof der Vernunft, selten explizites Thema. Als das Andere der Notwendigkeit wird Zufälligkeit unter den Modalkategorien angeführt:

Möglichkeit – Unmöglichkeit

Dasein – Nichtsein

Notwendigkeit – Zufälligkeit.⁶

Die Kategorienordnung leitet zahlreiche Teile von Kants Erkenntnistheorie, so auch die vier Antinomien der reinen Vernunft, die der Quantität, Qualität, Relation und Modalität folgen. Bei näherer Betrachtung zeigt sich, dass in der Vierten, den Modalitäten gewidmeten Antinomie, der Zufall überraschenderweise nur negativ und unausgesprochen verortet ist. Die Thesis lautet: „Zu der Welt gehört etwas, das, entweder als ihr Teil, oder ihre Ursache, ein schlechthin notwendiges Wesen ist.“⁷ Die Antithesis lautet: „Es existiert überall kein schlechthinnotwendiges Wesen, weder in der Welt noch außer der Welt, als ihre Ursache.“⁸ Erst in der weiteren Diskussion dieser Antinomie werden die Gegenspieler des Notwendigen, Zufall und Zufälligkeit, explizit genannt.

Der Zufall ist auch dort indirekt in Kants Erkenntnistheorie präsent, wo es um Verbindungsleistungen geht, die Kant als empirisch, also als a posteriori einordnet, auch wenn Kant das Moment des Zufalls nicht explizit ausspricht und auch nicht von einem ‚Prinzip des Zufalls‘ spricht, obwohl der Zufall auch eine Modalkategorie, als ein Prinzip ist. Kant zufolge ist Notwendigkeit hingegen immer auch mit Momenten verbunden, die er als a priori bestimmt sieht.

Die Modalität der Notwendigkeit spielt im Verein mit der Frage nach der Begründung von Kausalität eine zentrale und herausragende Rolle. Doch kennt Kant andere Begriffe der Notwendigkeit, die nicht der Kategorie entsprechen. Zu unterscheiden sind daher formallogische sowie transzendentallogische Notwendigkeit, ferner die Notwendigkeit ästhetischer Urteile des Schönen und Erhabenen, sowie die moralisch-praktische Verbindlichkeit von Handlungsmaximen und die dem Sittengesetz inwohnende Notwendigkeit.⁹

Was man in der geltungstheoretischen Orientierung Kants an der Notwendigkeit allgemeinverbindlicher Urteile leicht übersieht, ist, dass Kant in seiner Erkenntniskritik zwar den Kategorien den Rang von Prinzipien zuweist, die a priorische und notwendige Synthesisleistungen erbringen. Gleichwohl kennt Kant in der Transzendentalen Deduktion der reinen Verstandesbegriffe auch Synthesisformen, die er der Empirie zuschreibt und von den Kategorienleistungen abgrenzt, wie etwa Assoziation, Affinität, empirische Reproduktion und andere.¹⁰ Der Zufall ist hier negativ und zumeist ungenannt präsent, insofern von der zerstreuten Mannigfaltigkeit des Empirischen die Rede ist, würde dieses nicht unter die Einheit des reinen Selbstbewusstseins gebracht. Zuletzt aber geht es in den Transzendentalen Deduktionen der beiden Auflagen der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* von 1781 und 1787 darum zu zeigen, dass der Bereich des reinen Apriori und des reinen Verstandes Geltung hat in Kontexten der empirischen Erkenntnis. Dazu hat er 1781 die Deduktion von oben mit einer Deduktion von unten und 1787 einen ersten Beweisschritt mit einem zweiten komplettiert. Diese Schritte zeigen, dass im zerstreuten Mannigfaltigen des Empirischen, also im Zufälligen, gleichwohl Geltungsansprüche durch die Kategorien¹¹ möglich sind.

Kant hat sich bekanntlich an Hume abgearbeitet, um die Notwendigkeit der Kausalverbindung systematisch anders zu begründen, als dies David Hume getan hat. Diesem hatte er die Explikation von subjektiv gültigen notwendigen Kausalverknüpfung¹² zugestanden, während er selbst nach der Begründung einer notwendigen und objektiv gültigen Verbindung¹³ forschte. Bemerkenswert ist, dass Hume vielfach von der Annahme einer

notwendigen Verbindung von Ursachen und Wirkungen spricht, dabei aber dem Zufall in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* keine explizite systematische Bedeutung zumisst. Wie bei Kant ist der Zufall zumeist negativ präsent, wenn es Hume gilt, Notwendigkeit in der Verbindung von Gedanken über Kausale Zusammenhänge auszuweisen. Wichtig zu sehen ist, dass David Hume seine Untersuchung „Von der Vorstellung der notwendigen Verknüpfung“ im *Inquiry* mit einer Würdigung und Kritik der Philosophie beginnt, die sich an der Methode der Mathematik und Geometrie¹⁴ orientiert. Auch wenn Kant die Notwendigkeit der Verbindung von Ursache und Wirkung durch die Kategorie der Kausalität neu und anders begründet, ist er doch auch sehr Humes Denken verpflichtet.

KANT ÜBER DEN ZUFALL

Wenn man glaubt, Kant habe die Zufälligkeit stets nur als Schatten der Notwendigkeit in seinem System mitgeführt, und als eigenes philosophisches Thema aus seinem kritischen System gebannt, so täuscht man sich. Der Zufall hat in der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* und besonders im naturteleologischen Teil derselben eine bedeutende Stellung. In der folgenden längeren Passage Kants werden Zufall und Notwendigkeit in sprechender Weise präsentiert und durchdacht:

Nun sind aber die Gegenstände der empirischen Erkenntnis, außer jener formalen Zeitbedingung, noch auf mancherlei Art bestimmt oder, so viel man a priori urteilen kann, bestimmbar, so dass spezifisch-verschiedene Naturen außer dem, was sie als zur Natur überhaupt gehörig gemein haben, noch auf unendlich mannigfaltige Weise Ursachen sein können; und eine jede dieser Arten muß (nach dem Begriffe einer Ursache überhaupt) ihre Regel haben, die Gesetz ist, mithin Notwendigkeit bei sich führt, ob wir gleich, nach der Beschaffenheit und den Schranken unserer Erkenntnisvermögen, diese Notwendigkeit gar nicht einsehen. Also müssen wir in der Natur in Ansehung ihrer bloß empirischen Gesetze, eine Möglichkeit unendlich mannigfaltiger empirischer Gesetze denken, die für unsere Einsicht dennoch zufällig sind (a priori nicht erkannt werden können); und in deren Ansehung beurteilen wir die Natureinheit nach empirischen Gesetzen und die Möglichkeit der Einheit der Erfahrung (als Systems nach empirischen Gesetzen) als zufällig. Weil aber doch eine solche Einheit notwendig vorausgesetzt und angenommen werden muß, da sonst kein durchgängiger Zusammenhang empirischer Erkenntnisse zu einem Ganzen der Erfahrung stattfinden würde, indem die allgemeinen Naturgesetze zwar einen solchen Zusammenhang unter den Dingen ihrer Gattung nach, als Naturdinge überhaupt, aber nicht spezifisch, als solche besondere Naturwesen, an die Hand geben, so muß die Urteilskraft für ihren eigenen Gebrauch es als Prinzip a priori annehmen, daß das für die menschliche Einsicht Zufällige in den besonderen (empirischen) Naturgesetzen dennoch eine für uns zwar nicht zu ergründende, aber doch denkbare gesetzliche Einheit in der Verbindung ihres Mannigfaltigen zu einer an sich möglichen Erfahrung enthalte.¹⁵

Dieser Abschnitt ist für den ersten Blick ebenso dunkel, wie er von großer systematischer Tragweite ist. Kant geht offenkundig davon aus, dass das Erkenntnisprinzip der Kausalität zusammen mit den weiteren Kategorien und Prädikabilien, deren primäre Funktion ist, dass überhaupt Erkenntnis möglich ist, im Weiteren erlaubt, eine Vielzahl von Kausalgesetzen in der Natur aufzudecken und zu beschreiben. Diese Auf- und Entdeckungen sind die wissenschaftstheoretischen Leistungen der empirischen Wissenschaften. Die Bestimmung der großen Kausalgesetze betreffen das wissenschaftliche Gebiet der Physik, das Kant nicht selten mit dem Namen des Physikers und Mathematikers Isaac Newtons verbindet. Während die *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* eine Grundlegung der Erkenntnismöglichkeiten ausweist, zeigen die

Metaphysischen Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft (1786) und die Überlegungen im *Opus posthumum* mit dem *Übergang von der Physik zur Naturwissenschaft*, wie notwendig geltende Momente im Gang der Erkenntnisse der Naturwissenschaft zu begreifen seien.

Wenn auch die Veränderungen und Geschehnisse in der Welt nur durch das Prinzip der Kausalität und der übrigen Kategorien durchgängig erkennbar ist, so ist sie gleichwohl nicht durchgängig und allein durch physikalisch mathematisierbare Naturgesetze beschreibbar, wie Kant mit der Teleologie zeigt. Eine unendliche Vielfalt an Erscheinungen entzieht sich der Erkenntnis durch die Physik und der Quantifizierbarkeit in Raum und Zeit.¹⁶

Mit der Ausarbeitung der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* erkennt Kant, dass auch die Zweckmäßigkeit ein transzendentes Prinzip der Erkenntnis ist, die nicht nur das Geist-Konzept des Schönen und Erhabenen in Natur und Kunst zu erklären erlaubt, sondern auch die Naturerkenntnis über den Kategorienrahmen hinaus zu bestimmen möglich macht. Die Naturerkenntnis besteht nämlich zu weiten Teilen aus „bloß empirischen Gesetze[n]“. Man müsse sich, so Kant weiter, die „Möglichkeit unendlich mannigfaltiger empirischer Gesetze denken, die für unsere Einsicht dennoch zufällig sind (*a priori* nicht erkannt werden können)“. Die empirischen Gesetzmäßigkeiten zu beforschen, bedarf es empirischer Naturwissenschaften. Was aber Aufgabe der Philosophie ist, ist die Frage nach der Systematisierung dieser unendlichen Zahl an empirischen Gesetzen in der Natur, die sich zunächst für die Beurteilung als „Natureinheit nach empirischen Gesetzen und d[er] Möglichkeit der Einheit der Erfahrung (als Systems nach empirischen Gesetzen) als zufällig“ erweist. Es ist Bedürfnis der Vernunft, Einheit in der Mannigfaltigkeit zu schaffen, sofern sie Prinzipien dafür zur Verfügung hat.¹⁷

Das Prinzip der Zweckmäßigkeit und mit ihr das Vermögen der reflektierenden Urteilskraft, das die gesamte *Dritte Kritik* trägt, ist dasjenige Prinzip, das auf der Ebene der Gegenstände der Natur Zweckmäßigkeit in der Mannigfaltigkeit der besonderen Formen der Natur entdeckt. Dieser Bereich der Naturphilosophie, der Bereich der Biologie, ist der Physik insofern entgegengesetzt, als im Organischen die damals bekannten Formen der Geometrie und Algebra nicht dazu dienen, notwendige Ordnungszusammenhänge und Naturgesetzmäßigkeiten aufzudecken. Zwar zeigt sich im gesamten Bereich der Natur eine unendliche Mannigfaltigkeit der erscheinenden Formen, aber nur im Bereich der Newton'schen Physik lassen sich mathematisierbare Gesetze, also in Raum und / oder Zeit konstruierbaren Regeln nach Maßgabe von Zahlenverhältnissen der Algebra oder Raumverhältnissen der Euklidischen Geometrie entdecken, wie Kant dies in den *Metaphysischen Anfangsgründen der Naturwissenschaft* von 1786 ausarbeitet. Statistik und Wahrscheinlichkeitsrechnung bleiben von Kant unberücksichtigt, wohl, weil er sie nicht kannte. Der Mathematiker, Physiker und Astronom Pierre-Simon Laplace hatte die Wahrscheinlichkeitsberechnungen in seiner Schrift *Théorie analytique des probabilités* (1812) (Analytische Theorie der Wahrscheinlichkeit) erst nach Kants Tod entwickelt und in seinem *Essai philosophique sur les probabilités*, 1814 (Philosophischer Essay über die Wahrscheinlichkeit) einem breiteren Publikum vorgelegt.

Systemtheoretisch ist die reflektierende Urteilskraft das Vermögen, das neben den großen Naturgesetzen eines Newton im Hinblick auf die „bloß empirischen Gesetze“ der Natur, die in „unendlich mannigfaltiger“ Zahl gedacht werden müssen und für unsere Einsicht von Kant als

„zufällig“ erachtet werden, weil sie, wie Kant hier ausdrücklich betont, nicht a priori erkannt werden können, diese dennoch in solche Zusammenhänge fasst und beurteilt, für die die reflektierende Urteilskraft selbst das Gesetz gibt. Die Annahme einer solchen „Natureinheit nach empirischen Gesetzen und die Möglichkeit der Einheit der Erfahrung (als Systems nach empirischen Gesetzen) als zufällig“ ist Kant zufolge gleichwohl eine notwendige Annahme für die Erfahrung der Natur als einer Einheit.

Zufall spielt also in Kants Erkenntnistheorie eine weit größere Rolle, als es sich vordergründig zeigt.¹⁸ Zufällig ist, was, wenn überhaupt, bloß empirisch erkannt werden kann oder was sich der Einsicht des menschlichen Denkens entzieht. Kant betont, dass der Zufall erkenntnistheoretisch und transzendentalphilosophisch bestimmt. Er verbindet damit keine ontologische Behauptung.

Dass der Zufall in der Kant-Forschung eher selten Thema ist, mag seinen Grund darin haben, dass Kant und die Tradition, der er sich verpflichtet weiß, Philosophie als Wissenschaft versteht und damit Forderungen der Notwendigkeit einher gehen, während der Zufall der Empirie sowie den Grenzen des menschlichen Erkenntnisvermögens zugeschrieben ist, die für Kant nicht die zentralen Gegenstände der Philosophie als Wissenschaft sind. Das Zufällige galt als ein Jenseits der Philosophie, sofern sich diese als Wissenschaft des Notwendigen verstand. Der Zufall ist der Schatten des Notwendigen, wie sich prägnant sagen lässt.

DAS ZUFÄLLIGE IN DEN ERSCHEINUNGSFORMEN DER NATURWESEN

Überdem ist die objektive Zweckmäßigkeit, als Prinzip der Möglichkeit der Dinge der Natur, so weit davon entfernt, mit dem Begriffe derselben *notwendig* zusammenzuhängen, daß sie vielmehr gerade das ist, worauf man sich vorzüglich beruft, um die Zufälligkeit derselben (der Natur) und ihrer Form daraus zu beweisen. Denn wenn man z.B. den Bau eines Vogels, die Höhlung in seinen Knochen, die Lage seiner Flügel zur Bewegung, und des Schwanzes zum Steuern u.s.w. anführt; so sagt man, daß dieses alles nach dem bloßen *nexus effectivus* in der Natur, ohne noch eine besondere Art der Kausalität, nämlich die der Zwecke (*nexus finalis*), zu Hülfe zu nehmen, im höchsten Grade zufällig sei; d.i. daß sich die Natur, als bloßer Mechanism betrachtet, auf tausendfache Art habe anders bilden können, ohne gerade auf die Einheit nach einem solchen Prinzip zu stoßen, und man also außer dem Begriffe der Natur, nicht in demselben den mindesten Grund dazu a priori allein anzutreffen hoffen dürfe.¹⁹

Mit den hier angeführten Beispielen, macht Kant deutlich, dass die Natur nicht bloß einen Bauplan gefunden hat, um Lebewesen zu schaffen, die bestimmte Lebensfunktionen erfüllen, wie den Flug in der Luft, das Leben im Wasser, in der Erde, und vieles mehr. Die Natur ist in ihren Erfindungen reich, ja geradezu verschwenderisch hinsichtlich der Artenvielfalt und der Realisierung wichtiger Funktionen des Lebens. Hier ist noch gar nicht die Rede von der unglaublichen Vielheit und Varietät der Individuen einer Art von Lebewesen. Diese Vielfältigkeit, diese Variabilität kann nicht anders als zufällig für unsere Einsicht angesehen werden, wie Kant deutlich macht. Das biologische Leben hat nicht einen Mechanismus für bestimmte Funktionen ausgebildet, sondern sehr viele.

Die einzelnen Lebensfunktionen lassen sich zwar kausalmechanisch erforschen und untersuchen, doch das erklärt nicht die Varietät der Formen, die die Natur hervorbringt. Jede

einzelne ‚Lösung‘ von Funktionalitäten des Lebens in der Natur ist als Funktion notwendig zur Erfüllung der Aufgabe, doch ihr Sosein sowie ihr Anderssein ist zufällig, da sich „die Natur, als bloßer Mechanismus betrachtet, auf tausendfache Art habe anders bilden können, ohne gerade auf die Einheit nach einem solchen Prinzip zu stoßen“, wie Kant festhält.

Diese Konstellation eines überall anwendbaren Mechanismus der Kausalität der Natur neben einer Zweckmäßigkeit der Naturformen, die für den menschlichen Verstand formal nicht greifbar sind, sondern nur empirisch in ihrer vielfältigen Zufälligkeit fassbar werden, ist nun Anlass für Kant, eine Antinomie der teleologischen Urteilskraft als Problem zu begründen. Diese Antinomie zeigt eine gewisse Ähnlichkeit mit der Dritten Antinomie in der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, mit der Kant das Wechselverhältnis von Freiheit und Naturkausalität thematisiert und letztlich deren Kofunktionalität ausgewiesen hat. Im Detail der Argumentation ist die Antinomie der teleologischen Urteilskraft jedoch komplexer strukturiert ist.²⁰

Kant stellt die Antinomie der teleologischen Urteilskraft in Paragraph 70 (und die nachfolgenden) der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* vor, leitet im folgenden Paragraphen die Auflösung der derselben ein, die er ab dem Paragraphen 74 fortsetzt und die mit Paragraph 78 schließlich ihren systematisch sehr wichtigen Abschluss findet. Kant diskutiert in der Dialektik der Teleologie, ob sie überhaupt in einen antinomischen Widerstreit geraten kann. Ein solcher antinomischer Widerstreit wäre der des Naturmechanismus und der Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur.

Bei dieser zufälligen Einheit der besonderen Gesetze kann es sich nun zutragen: daß die Urteilskraft in ihrer Reflexion von zwei Maximen ausgeht, deren eine ihr der bloße Verstand a priori an die Hand gibt; die andere aber durch besondere Erfahrungen veranlaßt wird, welche die Vernunft ins Spiel bringen, um nach einem besondern Prinzip die Beurteilung der körperlichen Natur und ihrer Gesetze anzustellen. Da trifft es sich dann, daß diese zweierlei Maximen nicht wohl nebeneinander bestehen zu können den Anschein haben, mithin sich eine Dialektik hervortut, welche die Urteilskraft in dem Prinzip ihrer Reflexion irre macht.²¹

Aus der Analytik der Teleologie ergeben sich zwei Beurteilungsmaximen, die in Paragraph 70 der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* in folgender Weise formuliert sind:

1. „Alle Erzeugung materieller Dinge und ihrer Formen muß als nach bloß mechanischen Gesetzen möglich beurteilt werden.“²²
2. „Einige Produkte der materiellen Natur können nicht als nach bloß mechanischen Gesetzen möglich beurteilt werden (ihre Beurteilung fordert ein ganz anderes Gesetz der Kausalität, nämlich das der Endursachen).“²³

Kant führt nun aus, dass diese beiden bloßen Beurteilungsmaximen für die mechanistische Betrachtung der Natur und für die teleologische in keinen Widerstreit miteinander geraten können, weil das subjektive Prinzip der Beurteilung sowohl des Mechanismus, mit dem die kausale Betrachtung der Natur nach dem Prinzip der *causa efficiens* erfolgt, als auch die teleologische Betrachtung der Natur, keine Gesetze aufstellen, also auch keine Antinomie vorliegen kann. Kant betont, dass hinsichtlich der Beurteilungsmaximen des Kausalmechanismus und der teleologischen Kausalität die reflektierende Urteilskraft nicht in

eine Antinomie geraten kann. Damit ist aber noch nicht die Möglichkeit ausgeräumt, dass die reflektierende Urteilskraft, die die Natur nach dem Prinzip der Zwecke beurteilt, in einen antinomischen Widerstreit mit sich gerät.

Kant weist darauf hin, dass die subjektive Perspektive der Beurteilung der Natur nach Maßgabe des menschlichen Geistes nichts darüber aussagt, was das ontologische Prinzip der jeweiligen Verursachung ist. Aus der Perspektive der kritischen Philosophie kann darauf auch keine Antwort gegeben werden.

Gleichwohl liegt es nahe, dass der menschliche Geist sich von der Frage leiten lässt, was der faktische Grund einer Verursachung ist. Sofern dies geschieht, so wird der menschliche Geist nicht mehr bloß die oben genannten Beurteilungsmaximen gegeneinander ins Feld führt, sondern er wird für den Mechanismus und die Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur zwei Gesetze aufstellen. Die im kritischen Geschäft nicht ausreichend geübte Urteilskraft wird die Maximen in die Form von Gesetzen umformen, wenn sie sich anschickt, kausale Sachverhalte der Natur zu beurteilen. Diese Sätze lauten dann:

1. „Alle Erzeugung materieller Dinge ist nach bloß mechanischen Gesetzen möglich.“²⁴
2. „Einige Erzeugung derselben ist nach bloß mechanischen Gesetzen nicht möglich.“²⁵

Die Allaussage des ersten Satzes geriete dann in Konflikt mit den besonderen Fällen, die im zweiten Satz thematisiert werden, wenn der erste den zweiten ausschließen würde, wie es vordergründig verstanden werden könnte. Nun ist Kant aber der Ansicht, dass der Kausalmechanismus der Natur zwar tatsächlich für alle Gegenstände der Natur gilt. Gleichwohl zeigt er in mehreren Argumentationsgängen, dass es Gegenstände in der Natur gibt, die durch den Kausalmechanismus nicht angemessen beurteilt werden können. Es sind dies die Lebewesen in der Natur, deren innere Organisiertheit als ein Verhältnis zu denken ist, in dem alle Teile zueinander, sowie das Ganze im Verhältnis zu seinen Teilen und umgekehrt sich wechselseitig Ursache und Wirkung sind. Selbst dann, wenn ein Organismus bis ins kleinste Detail nach dem Mechanismus der Natur bestimmt werden könnte, wäre er *als* Organismus, *als* Prinzip des Lebens nicht hinreichend bestimmt. Daher bedarf es des Beurteilungsprinzips der Finalursachen, die erlauben, Lebewesen nicht als Aggregate von Teilen, sondern als in sich organisierte, zweckmäßige Ganzheitlichkeiten zu verstehen. Überdies sieht sich die Urteilskraft veranlasst, nicht bloß organisierte Lebewesen, sondern auch größere Einheiten, schließlich das Ganze der Natur durch die Annahme einer inneren Zweckmäßigkeit zu begreifen. Während der Kausalmechanismus eine objektiv geltende konstitutive Erkenntnis ermöglicht, führt die Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur zu einer objektiv bloß unbestimmten, daher nur regulativ geltenden Erkenntnis. Regulativ deshalb, weil sie nur die Verhältnismäßigkeit der Teile zu dem Ganzen zu bestimmen vermag, ohne ihren Ermöglichungsgrund, den Zweck oder die Idee des Ganzen und seiner Teile näherhin bestimmen zu können.

Unter Angabe des jeweiligen Geltungsbereichs und seiner Grenzen lassen sich so *causa efficiens* und *causa finalis* miteinander vereinigt denken. Die *causa efficiens* kann einen höheren Grad der Verbindlichkeit ihrer Erkenntnis beanspruchen, vermag aber nur einzeln

und in sukzessiven Reihen Relationen von Ursachen und Wirkungen zu bestimmen. Die *causa finalis* vermag nur Verhältnismäßigkeit mit unbestimmtem Grund zu stiften, kann dafür aber weit komplexere Zusammenhänge bis hin zum Ganzen der Natur gedanklich umfassen.

Kants Dritte Antinomie der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* stellt den Grundtypus dar, an dem sich auch die teleologische Antinomie orientiert. Die Sätze der Dritten Antinomie lauten:

„Thesis. Die Kausalität nach Gesetzen der Natur ist nicht die einzige, aus welcher die Erscheinungen der Welt insgesamt abgeleitet werden können. Es ist noch eine Kausalität durch Freiheit zu Erklärung derselben anzunehmen notwendig.“²⁶

„Antithesis. Es ist keine Freiheit, sondern alles in der Welt geschieht lediglich nach Gesetzen der Natur.“²⁷

In der Dritten Antinomie findet sich die systematische Vorlage für die Auflösung der teleologischen Antinomie. Die scheinbar kontradiktorisch einander ausschließenden Sätze lassen sich als bloß konträr verstehen und können unter anzugebenden Bedingungen nebeneinander bestehen. Kant zeigt in der Dritten Antinomie der Freiheit, dass nicht bloß das Geschehen in der Natur, sondern auch alle Handlungen und Wirkungen von Handlungen, hervorgebracht durch den menschlichen Willen, ja selbst die Bestimmungsgründe des Willens selbst nach bloß kausalmechanistischen Gesetzen gedacht werden können müssen. Demnach ist der Satz richtig, wonach alles in der Welt bloß nach Gesetzen der Natur geschieht. Dennoch ist Kant der Ansicht, dass die Gesetze der Natur die Handlungen der Vernunft und des menschlichen Willens nicht hinreichend erklären. Zu ihrer vollständigen Erklärung muss zusätzlich eine Kausalität der Freiheit angenommen werden, die der durchgängigen ersten Erklärungsart nicht widerspricht, sondern diese vielmehr ergänzt. Dies ist deshalb möglich, weil einerseits alle Wirkungen der Vernunft, seien sie bloß gedachte Gedanken oder Handlungsimpulse, die Wirkungen in der Welt der Erscheinungen zur Folge haben, in der Sukzession der Zeit oder gar im Auseinandersein der Erscheinungen des Raumes wirklich werden. Vernünftigkeit an sich als normative Verbindlichkeit, ja auch ihr Gegenteil, die Unvernunft, was immer ihr besonderer Gehalt sein mag, steht für Kant andererseits jedoch außer der Zeit. Willensäußerungen müssen daher sowohl zeitimmanent nach dem Zusammenhang der Naturgesetze in den Erscheinungen der Welt, als auch als Moment eines absoluten Anfangs in der Zeit nach dem Gesetz der Freiheit begriffen werden. Demnach gelten in der Antinomie der Freiheit beide Sätze gleichermaßen nach den je unterschiedlichen Bedingungen der Verstandeserkenntnis einerseits, der Vernunftkenntnis andererseits.

Wendet man sich nun wieder der Antinomie der teleologischen Urteilskraft zu, so zeigt sich auch hier, dass beide Prinzipien, des Mechanismus und der Zweckmäßigkeit, zusammen bestehen können und müssen. Für den Naturzweck gilt, dass er,

als Begriff von einem *Naturprodukt*, Naturnotwendigkeit und doch zugleich eine Zufälligkeit der Form des Objekts (in Beziehung auf bloße Gesetze der Natur) an eben demselben Dinge als Zweck in sich faßt; folglich, wenn hierin kein Widerspruch sein soll, einen Grund für die Möglichkeit des Dinges in der Natur, und doch auch einen Grund der Möglichkeit dieser Natur selbst und ihrer Beziehung auf etwas, das nicht empirisch erkennbare Natur (übersinnlich), mithin für uns gar nicht erkennbar ist, enthalten muß, um nach einer andern Art Kausalität als der des Naturmechanismus beurteilt zu werden, wenn man seine Möglichkeit ausmachen will.²⁸

An einem Naturzweck, also einem Lebewesen, lässt sich sehr viel kausalmechanisch erklären. Kant konnte sich in seiner Zeit wohl kaum vorstellen, wie sehr die kausale Erschließung der Welt, also auch der biologischen Welt, voranschreiten wird, hat dies aber theoretisch und hypothetisch als eine Aufgabe der Wissenschaft angesehen. Empirische, kausale Gesetzmäßigkeiten suchen das Allgemeine im Besonderen herauszuarbeiten. Gleichwohl geht Kant davon aus, dass Lebewesen in einem hohen Grad durch zufällige Formen bestimmt sind, die die Verallgemeinerbarkeit nicht zulassen. Im Naturprodukt ist „Naturnotwendigkeit und doch zugleich eine Zufälligkeit der Form des Objekts (in Beziehung auf bloße Gesetze der Natur) an eben demselben Dinge als Zweck“ zu finden.

Doch zunächst muss es scheinen, als gebe es keinen Fall, nach dem die reflektierende Urteilskraft in einen antinomischen Widerstreit mit sich geraten könne. Entweder stehen mechanische und teleologische Beurteilungsmaximen einander gegenüber. Die aber sind problemlos miteinander kompatibel. Oder die Vernunft begehrt, die Erzeugungsgründe von Sachverhalten der Natur zu erkennen. Diese Frage nach der Ontologie verschiedener Kausalitäten übersteigt aber die Möglichkeiten dessen, was der menschliche Verstand zu erkennen vermag. Mit der Darlegung des scheinbaren Widerstreits von Beurteilungsmaximen und dem antinomischen Widerstreit von Aussagen über verschiedene Gesetze kausaler Erzeugungen, die sich als unlösbare Fragen für die menschliche Vernunft zeigen, hat sich offenbar die Frage nach einer Antinomie der reflektierenden, teleologischen Urteilskraft aufgelöst.

Dass dem nicht so ist, lässt sich äußerlich daran ablesen, dass nach der Darlegung in § 70 mit dem nächsten § 71 eine „Vorbereitung zur Auflösung obiger Antinomie“ vorgestellt wird. Erst mit § 78 wird eine „Vereinigung des Prinzips des allgemeinen Mechanismus der Materie mit dem teleologischen in der Technik der Natur“ in Aussicht gestellt. Was also ist der transzendente Schein, was ist die Antinomie der reflektierenden Urteilskraft? Der letzte Abschnitt des § 71 besagt:

Aller Anschein einer Antinomie zwischen den Maximen der eigentlich physischen (mechanischen) und der teleologischen (technischen) Erklärungsart beruht also darauf; daß man einen Grundsatz der reflektierenden Urteilskraft mit dem der bestimmenden, und die *Autonomie* der ersteren (die bloß subjektiv für unsern Vernunftgebrauch in Ansehung der besonderen Erfahrungsgesetze gilt) mit der *Heteronomie* der anderen, welche sich nach den von dem Verstande gegebenen (allgemeinen oder besondern) Gesetzen richten muß, verwechselt.²⁹

Kant spricht in diesem Abschnitt nicht von einer Antinomie, sondern vom Anschein einer Antinomie. Dieser Anschein, so besagt dieser Abschnitt, beruht auf einer Verwechslung des Grundsatzes der reflektierenden Urteilskraft mit der bestimmenden. Die reflektierende Urteilskraft handelt in ihrem Gebiet autonom, die bestimmende heteronom, weil sie von den Grundsätzen des Verstandes abhängig ist. Diese Verwechslung kommt nun deshalb zustande, weil es keinen Beweis dafür gibt, dass der Kausalmechanismus ausreicht, um die Erzeugung der organisierten Natur hinreichend zu erklären. Ebenso aber kann nicht bewiesen werden, dass es zur Erzeugung der organisierten Natur einer anderen Kausalität als der des Mechanismus bedarf. Die reflektierende Urteilskraft handelt richtig, wenn sie das Prinzip der Zwecke, d.i. der Endursache der Natur, für die Beurteilung der organisierten Natur in Anspruch nimmt. Sofern

die bestimmende Urteilskraft das Prinzip der Zwecke auf die organisierte Natur anwendet oder anwenden würde, übertritt sie ihre Befugnis, da sie dieses damit zu einem objektiven Prinzip machen und etwa dem Kausalmechanismus gleichstellen würde. Der Satz, nach dem die „Bedingungen der *Möglichkeit der Erfahrung* überhaupt [...] zugleich Bedingungen der *Möglichkeit der Gegenstände der Erfahrung*“ sind,³⁰ ist für das Prinzip der Zwecke nicht zu rechtfertigen.

Schon am Ende des § 70, in dem die fragliche Antinomie vorgestellt wird, betont Kant, dass es „unausgemacht“ sei, „ob nicht in dem uns unbekanntem inneren Grunde der Natur selbst die physisch-mechanische und die Zweckverbindung an denselben Dingen in einem Prinzip zusammenhängen mögen; nur daß unsere Vernunft sie in einem solchen nicht zu vereinigen imstande ist, und die Urteilskraft also, als (aus einem subjektiven Grunde) *reflektierende*, nicht als (einem objektiven Prinzip der Möglichkeit der Dinge an sich zufolge) bestimmende Urteilskraft, genötigt ist, für gewisse Formen in der Natur ein anderes Prinzip, als das des Naturmechanismus zum Grunde ihrer Möglichkeit zu denken.“³¹

Wenn man mit Blick auf die Antinomien der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* und besonders die dritte Antinomie sagen kann, dass der zugrunde liegende Konflikt ein solcher des Denkens des Verstandes und der Vernunft ist, so ist der Konflikt der Teleologie ein solcher der reflektierenden und bestimmenden Urteilskraft.

Im Paragraphen 74 diskutiert Kant einige wichtige Unterschiede von Kausalmechanismus und Zweckursachen. Überraschenderweise spricht Kant davon, dass der Mechanismus ein dogmatischer Begriff sei, was der Zweckbegriff niemals sein könne. Ist man meist gewohnt, dass das Prädikat „dogmatisch“ eine Abwertung beinhaltet, die auf die überschwängliche Nutzung eines Begriffs hinweist, heißt dies für Kant in diesem Kontext, dass dem Mechanismus objektive Realität für die bestimmende Urteilskraft zukommt, dass ihm also auch eine Anschauung in angemessener Weise gegeben werden kann. Den Zweckursachen kommt auch objektive Realität zu, sofern von organisierten Wesen der Natur die Rede ist, aber diese objektive Realität gilt nur für die reflektierende Urteilskraft. Dem Mechanismus entspricht ein objektiv gegebener Sachverhalt, eine objektive Verursachung und Erzeugung eines Zustandes, der sich der Erfahrung arbeitet. Der Ort, an dem Kant dies entwickelt hat, ist das System der Grundsätze, das der Sprachregelung Kants in der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* zufolge die Dogmatik der Grundsätze des reinen Verstandesgebrauchs genannt werden darf. Für die Zweckursachen kann nur das Vermögen, und zwar in kritischer und gerade nicht in dogmatischer Absicht, angegeben werden. Kant betont daher auch wiederholt, dass dem Zweckbegriff Zufälligkeit zuzuschreiben ist, während vom Mechanismus die Notwendigkeit ihrer Gesetzmäßigkeiten ausgesagt wird, die er mit dem Dritten Postulat des empirischen Denkens genauer ausarbeitete. Die Zufälligkeit des Zweckbegriffs sagt etwas über die Form des Objekts eines organisierten Wesens aus, nicht aber etwas über den Erzeugungsgrund seiner Materie nach.³²

Der Zweckbegriff ist freilich unerlässlich und insofern auch notwendig, um organisierte Wesen der Natur in ihrer Eigentümlichkeit zu beurteilen. Mit den Naturprodukten als organisierten Wesen ist für Kant die ausgezeichnetste Form zweckmäßig bestimmter Gegenstände bezeichnet. Diese zeichnen sich durch innere (statt äußere), materiale (statt bloß

formale) und objektive (statt relative) Zweckmäßigkeit aus. „*Ein organisiertes Produkt der Natur ist das, in welchem alles Zweck und wechselseitig auch Mittel ist.*“³³ In dieser Formel fasst Kant bündig zusammen, was er zuvor im Detail entwickelt hat, um materiale, innere, objektive Zweckmäßigkeit in den Produkten der Natur zu bestimmen. Diese Formel schließt mehrere interne Bestimmungen ein. „[E]in Ding existiert als Naturzweck,“ so Kant, „*wenn es von sich selbst (wenn gleich in zwiefachem Sinne) Ursache und Wirkung ist.*“³⁴ Zum Naturzweck, der sich selbst Ursache und Wirkung ist, gehört, dass er sich erstens der Gattung nach erzeugt und erhält. Zweitens erzeugt er sich als Individuum durch sein Wachstum, das von einer mechanischen Größenerzeugung gänzlich zu unterscheiden sei. Drittens erzeuge es sich selbst auch so, „*daß die Erhaltung des einen von der Erhaltung des anderen wechselweise abhängt.*“³⁵ Kant denkt hierbei etwa an die Selbsthilfe der Natur bei Verletzungen. Der Naturzweck ist sich dabei Ursache seiner selbst, weil dies Ursachesein dem Bauplan des Naturwesens inhäriert. Es ist sich zugleich Wirkung in den genannten und beobachtbaren Erscheinungen der Naturwesen.

Zweckursachen organisierter Lebewesen haben objektive Realität, obwohl zugleich gilt, dass das Erzeugungsprinzip dem menschlichen Verstand nicht erkennbar ist. Sie sind für unser Verständnis von der Natur unerlässlich und unverzichtbar. Gleichwohl stellt sich ein Transzendentaler Schein ein, wenn die bestimmende Urteilskraft hier gleich dem Mechanismus ein Gesetz erkennen will, wo doch nur ein Begriff als Beurteilungsprinzip möglich ist. Kant betont nun überdies, dass die Zweckursachen nur für die organisierte Natur objektive Realität in Anspruch nehmen können und für die Reflexion unabweislich sind. Für größere Zusammenhänge der Natur (Biotope), für das ganze der Natur ist der Begriff bloß nützlich. Die Vernunft, deren Natur es ist, immer größere Zusammenhänge und Einheiten erfassen und denken zu wollen, mag einen Abschluss der Teleologie in einem verständigen Wesen erkennen wollen. Aber dies können wir uns nur denken, es ist nicht zu beweisen und daher auch nicht zu erkennen. Die Unumgänglichkeit des Prinzips der Zweckursachen demonstriert Kant mit folgender Überlegung:

„Es ist nämlich ganz gewiß, daß wir die organisierten Wesen und deren innere Möglichkeit nach bloß mechanischen Prinzipien der Natur nicht einmal zureichend kennen lernen, viel weniger uns erklären können; und zwar so gewiß, daß man dreist sagen kann, es ist für Menschen ungereimt, auch nur einen solchen Anschlag zu fassen, oder zu hoffen, daß noch etwa dereinst ein Newton aufstehen könne, der auch nur die Erzeugung eines Grashalms nach Naturgesetzen, die keine Absicht geordnet hat, begreiflich machen werde; sondern man muß diese Einsicht den Menschen schlechterdings absprechen.“³⁶

Wenn heute der Gencode des Grashalms, ja sogar viel komplexerer Lebewesen, und auch der des Menschen entschlüsselt werden konnte, ist dann nicht doch Kants Newton des Grashalms aufgestanden, seiner Prognose zu widersprechen? Nach meinem Verständnis – nein. Die moderne Wissenschaft hat die Untersuchung der Natur nach dem Prinzip des Kausalmechanismus in ungeahnte Tiefen vorgebracht. Dazu zählt auch der Gencode. Nun, da die Natur bestimmte Lebewesen „erfunden“ hat, kann sie der Mensch, der ihren Gencode entschlüsselt hat, dessen Funktionen zu einem Teil beschreiben, er kann klonen, manipulierend eingreifen. Was aber die „Absicht der Natur“ ist, gerade ein Grashalm, und gerade diese Art mit seiner bestimmten Beschaffenheit, wachsen zu lassen, ist mit der Entschlüsselung des Gencodes

nicht beantwortet. Es bleibt für unser Erkennen zufällig, dass es diese und jene Lebewesen gibt, nicht aber andere. Die Wichtigkeit des Prinzips der Zweckursachen ist auch, so meine These, durch die moderne Wissenschaft, so unglaublich ihre Fortschritte und Möglichkeiten sind, nicht aufgehoben. Das Prinzip der Zwecke beurteilt und bestimmt die spezifische Form des Lebens als einer hochkomplexen Teil-Ganzes-Relation und so kann erst der Mechanismus angeleitet werden, bestimmte Teile und Zusammenhänge zu beschreiben und zu untersuchen. Gewiss ist also für Kant, dass wir die Natur nach dem bloßen Mechanismus nicht zureichend erkennen können und es daher wenigstens des Reflexionsprinzips der Zwecke der Natur bedarf. Wir können aber auch nicht wissen, dass es wahr ist, dass der Natur eine absichtsvolle Erzeugung der Natur zugrundliegt. Das Prinzip ist unverzichtbar, aber es leistet nicht, was die Vernunft gerne wissen möchte, was nämlich das Prinzip ist, das, mit Goethe zu sprechen, die Natur „im Innersten zusammenhält“.³⁷

Den § 76 überschreibt Kant mit „Anmerkung“. Am Beispiel eines anschauenden Verstandes, der nicht der unsere ist, der mit den Begriffen zugleich die Anschauungen vorstellt, hebt Kant die Leistung hervor, die unserem Verstand hinsichtlich des Prinzips der Zwecke möglich ist. Zugleich weist er damit auch die Grenze unseres Verstandes auf, der die Zwecke eben nicht erkennen kann. Der anschauende Verstand, so behauptet Kant, kennt nicht die Unterscheidung von wirklichen, das heißt unmittelbar gegebenen, und möglichen, das heißt in Abwesenheit vorstellbaren, Gegenständen der Erfahrung.³⁸ Dem anschauenden Verstand ist mit dem Begriff zugleich die Anschauung und umgekehrt gegeben. Dass ein möglicher Gegenstand der Erfahrung bloß durch den Begriff vorgestellt wird, ist hier eine etwas aparte Überlegung Kant. Wichtig ist jedoch, dass beim abwesenden Gegenstand die sinnliche Vorstellung auf Reproduktionen aus der Vergangenheit angewiesen ist, und keine unmittelbare Anschauung eines Gegebenen im engen Sinne vorliegt. Ebenso aber ist dem anschauenden Verstand die Unterscheidung von Notwendigkeit und Zufälligkeit nicht möglich. Da dem anschauenden Verstand mit dem Begriff zugleich die Anschauung und umgekehrt gegeben ist, gibt es für ihn kein bloßes Prinzip der Reflexion, das Begriffe der Vernunft hervorbringt, die in bestimmten Hinsichten bloß zufällig sind, wie es der Zweckbegriff der reflektierenden Urteilskraft ist.

Beide Überlegungen zeigen, dass dem menschlichen Denken Differenzierungen möglich sind, die einem anders gearteten Verstand, wie dem von Kant konstruierten anschauenden nicht möglich sind. Das bedeutet aber zugleich, dass unserem Verstand Grenzen in der Erkennbarkeit gesetzt sind. Denkbar ist für Kant, dass der anschauende Verstand über eine Anschauung verfügt, die ihm die Zwecke und Absichten der Natur einsichtig machen; einsichtig im wörtlichen Sinn, dass Zwecke einsehbar, anschaubar sind. Kant folgert, dass es für den anschauenden Verstand also keinen Unterschied zwischen Mechanismus und Zweckmäßigkeit gäbe. Unserem Verstand fällt es schwer, einen Begriff der Vernunft (den der Zwecke) als notwendig zum Prinzip des Objekts gehörig denken, ohne eine Anschauung davon haben zu können. Daher stellt sich auch immer wieder die Transzendente Schein ein. Für unseren Verstand heißt dies hier zusammenfassend, was Kant schon in anderen Kontexten entwickelt hat:

Da nun aber das Besondere, als ein solches, in Ansehung des Allgemeinen etwas Zufälliges enthält, gleichwohl aber die Vernunft in der Verbindung besonderer Gesetze der Natur doch auch Einheit, mithin Gesetzlichkeit, erfordert (welche Gesetzlichkeit des Zufälligen Zweckmäßigkeit heißt), und die Ableitung der besonderen Gesetze aus den allgemeinen in Ansehung dessen, was jene Zufälliges in sich enthält, a priori durch Bestimmung des Begriffs vom Objekte unmöglich ist: so wird der Begriff der Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur in ihren Produkten ein für die menschliche Urteilskraft in Ansehung der Natur notwendiger, aber nicht die Bestimmung der Objekte selbst angehender, Begriff sein, also ein subjektives Prinzip der Vernunft für die Urteilskraft, welches als regulativ (nicht konstitutiv) für unsere *menschliche Urteilskraft* ebenso notwendig gilt, als ob es ein objektives Prinzip wäre.³⁹

In § 77 vollzieht Kant noch ein weiteres Gedankenexperiment. Sprach er zuvor vom anschauenden Verstand, dem mit den Begriffen zugleich die Anschauung gegeben ist, so sucht er nun das Problem der Zufälligkeit, das mit dem Besonderen in den Zwecken der Natur gegeben ist, genauer zu fassen. Er stellt dabei einen intuitiven Verstand dem diskursiven Verstand des Menschen entgegen. Unser Verstand geht vom Allgemeinen zum Besonderen, oder genauer vom Analytisch-Allgemeinen zum Besonderen einer gegebenen empirischen Anschauung, um eine Sache unter ein mechanisches Naturgesetz zu subsumieren. Kant begnügt sich hier mit dem knappen Hinweis, dass der Verstand dabei das zufällige Mannigfaltige nicht bestimmen könne; vielmehr müsse dies bei einem gegebenen Gegenstand der Natur durch die Urteilskraft bestimmt werden. Ein plastisches Beispiel scheint mir, kann aus der modernen Medizin angeführt werden. Medikamente sollen nach einer allgemeinen Regel im menschlichen Körper funktionieren und doch weiß die Medizin, dass jeder Körper ein ganz besonderer ist, der mitunter seinen ganz besonderen Regeln folgt, weshalb medizinische Maßnahmen nur annäherungsweise nach den allgemeinen Regeln anschlagen, häufig aber individuelle Einstellungen erforderlich machen. Dies nach Maßgabe von Kants Zweckbegriff zu untersuchen, wäre ein weites und gleichwohl höchst spannendes Anwendungsfeld.

Ein intuitiver Verstand würde hingegen, so Kant,

vom *Synthetisch-Allgemeinen* (der Anschauung eines Ganzen, als eines solchen) zum Besondern geh[en], d. i. vom Ganzen zu den Teilen; der also und dessen Vorstellung des Ganzen die *Zufälligkeit* der Verbindung der Teile nicht in sich enthält, um eine bestimmte Form des Ganzen möglich zu machen, die unser Verstand bedarf, welcher von den Teilen, als allgemein gedachten Gründen zu verschiedenen darunter zu subsumierenden möglichen Formen als Folgen fortgehen muß.⁴⁰

Mit anderen Worten will Kant hier sagen, dass der intuitive Verstand das Ganze dessen, was wir als Zweckursache denken, insgesamt mit ihren Teilen und den Verhältnissen untereinander anschauen könnte. Er enthielte das, was wir als Zufälligkeit der Teile im Verhältnis untereinander erfassen, nicht bloß als eine Form in sich, sondern er könnte das organisierte Naturprodukt insgesamt anschauend erfassen. Dagegen setzt Kant den diskursiven Verstand ab, um dessen Eigenheit erneut herauszustellen:

„Nach der Beschaffenheit unseres Verstandes ist hingegen ein reales Ganze der Natur nur als Wirkung der konkurrierenden bewegenden Kräfte der Teile anzusehen.“⁴¹ Wir erfassen also mit dem diskursiven Verstand die Möglichkeit des Ganzen abhängig von den Teilen, nicht aber die Möglichkeit der Teile in Abhängigkeit vom Ganzen.

Wollen wir uns also nicht die Möglichkeit des Ganzen als von den Teilen, wie es unserem diskursiven Verstande gemäß ist, sondern, nach Maßgabe des intuitiven (urbildlichen), die Möglichkeit der Teile (ihrer Beschaffenheit und Verbindung nach) als vom Ganzen abhängig vorstellen: so kann dieses, nach eben derselben Eigentümlichkeit unseres Verstandes, nicht so geschehen, daß das Ganze den Grund der Möglichkeit der Verknüpfung der Teile (welches in der diskursiven Erkenntnisart Widerspruch sein würde), sondern nur, daß die *Vorstellung* eines Ganzen den Grund der Möglichkeit der Form desselben und der dazu gehörigen Verknüpfung der Teile enthalte.⁴²

Wir können nicht die Beschaffenheit und die Verbindung der Teile in ihrem inneren Zusammenhang erfassen, sondern wir erfassen nur die Form der Verknüpfung der Teile mit dem Ganzen. Wir denken uns mit der Vorstellung eines Zwecks den Grund der Möglichkeit des Ganzen und der Verknüpfung mit den Teilen. In der Abgrenzung zu einem möglichen anderen Verstand will Kant genau herausstellen, was uns zu erkennen absolut verwehrt und daher nicht möglich ist. Gleichwohl wird umrissen, dass auf die reflektierende Urteilskraft in der Betrachtung der Natur in keiner Weise verzichtet werden kann. Bemerkenswerterweise erklärt sich moderne Wissenschaft oft genug bereit, auf das Prinzip der Finalursachen gänzlich zu verzichten. Ob das wirklich der Fall ist, sei dahingestellt und kann jetzt nicht untersucht werden.⁴³

Kant sieht sich erneut veranlasst, zu betonen, dass es „uns schlechterdings unmöglich [ist], aus der Natur selbst hergenommene Erklärungsgründe für Zweckverbindungen zu schöpfen, und es ist nach der Beschaffenheit des menschlichen Erkenntnisvermögens notwendig, den obersten Grund dazu in einem ursprünglichen Verstande als Weltursache zu suchen.“⁴⁴ Dies ist freilich ein verständlicher und nachvollziehbarer Grund für die heutige Wissenschaft, das Prinzip der Zwecke insgesamt aus ihrem Bereich zu verbannen.

Ist mit dem bisherigen gezeigt, dass beide Prinzipien, die des Mechanismus und der Zweckursachen unabweislich notwendig für das Verständnis der organisierten Natur ist, so muss nun gezeigt werden, wie diese beiden Prinzipien nebeneinander bestehen können, ohne sich gegenseitig aufzuheben oder zu beschränken. Für das Prinzip der Zwecke konnte nur ein unbestimmter, nicht näher aufzuschließender Grund angegeben werden. Kant schreibt:

Da wir nun von diesem nichts als den unbestimmten Begriff eines Grundes haben können, der die Beurteilung der Natur nach empirischen Gesetzen möglich macht, übrigens aber ihn durch kein Prädikat näher bestimmen können: so folgt, daß die Vereinigung beider Prinzipien nicht auf einem Grunde der *Erklärung* (Explication) der Möglichkeit eines Produkts nach gegebenen Gesetzen für die *bestimmende*, sondern nur auf einem Grunde der *Erörterung* (Exposition) derselben für die *reflektierende* Urteilskraft beruhen könne.⁴⁵

So gilt insgesamt, dass die Verbindung der beiden Prinzipien in einem gemeinsamen Grund in einem solchen unbestimmten und daher nur übersinnlichen, intelligiblen Grund zu finden sein kann: „Nun ist aber das gemeinschaftliche Prinzip der mechanischen einerseits und der teleologischen Ableitung andererseits das *Übersinnliche*, welches wir der Natur als Phänomen unterlegen müssen.“⁴⁶ Kant betont nun überdies, dass die Maxime der reflektierenden Urteilskraft nicht nur die Möglichkeit der Vereinigung der beiden Prinzipien verlangt, sondern dies notwendigerweise geboten ist, um Naturprodukte in angemessener Weise nach den Möglichkeiten unseres Verstandes zu begreifen: „so führt obige Maxime [der reflektierenden

Urteilkraft, V.L.W.] zugleich die Notwendigkeit einer Vereinigung beider Prinzipien in der Beurteilung der Dinge als Naturzwecke bei sich, aber nicht um eine ganz, oder in gewissen Stücken an die Stelle der andern zu setzen.“⁴⁷

Den unbestimmten Grund der Endursachen werden wir, so Kant, nie einsehen. Gleichwohl dürfen wir das Ganze der Natur nach diesen beiden Prinzipien nach Maßgabe unserer Möglichkeiten zu erkennen, beziehungsweise zu beurteilen suchen.

„Hierauf gründet sich nun die Befugnis und wegen der Wichtigkeit, welche das Naturstudium nach dem Prinzip des Mechanisms für unsern theoretischen Vernunftgebrauch hat, auch der Beruf: alle Produkte und Ereignisse der Natur, selbst die zweckmäßigsten, so weit mechanisch zu erklären, als es immer in unserm Vermögen (dessen Schranken wir innerhalb dieser Untersuchungsart nicht angeben können) steht, dabei aber niemals aus den Augen zu verlieren, daß wir die, welche wir allein unter dem Begriffe vom Zwecke der Vernunft zur Untersuchung selbst auch nur aufstellen können, der wesentlichen Beschaffenheit unserer Vernunft gemäß, jene mechanischen Ursachen ungeachtet, doch zuletzt der Kausalität nach Zwecken unterordnen müssen.“⁴⁸

Am Ende von Kants langer und diffiziler Argumentation steht die Einsicht, dass wir zwar beide Beurteilungsprinzipien zum Verstehen der organisierten Natur brauchen, dass wir aber keine Einsicht in die Frage nach der möglichen gemeinsamen Wurzel der beiden Verursachungsprinzipien erlangen können, weil dies aufgrund der unüberschreitbaren Grenzen unserer Erkenntnis nicht möglich ist.

Auch unabhängig von Kants Argumentation lässt sich die ungebrochene Virulenz dieser Frage demonstrieren, wenn man eine Antwort darauf sucht, ob die Intelligenz, die Spontaneität, die Transzendenz oder die Freiheit ihrerseits durch einen Kausalmechanismus oder durch Zweckverursachung hervorgebracht ist.

Im Falle der teleologischen Antinomie Kants ist viel darüber diskutiert worden, ob es sich hier überhaupt um eine Antinomie handelt. Dazu ist kurz zu bemerken, dass sich ein Antinomienproblem nach Maßgabe Kants nicht am Resultat bemisst, also an der Unentscheidbarkeit einer Alternative oder andernfalls der Koexistenzbehauptung zweier Sätze, die sich nicht als kontradiktorisch, sondern als bloß konträr erweisen. Eine Antinomie ist das Problem eines Scheins, in den sich die Vernunft hineingetrieben sieht. Vor diesem Schein weiß sich möglicherweise der Erkenntnistheoretiker zu schützen, offenkundig aber nicht der Wissenschaftler selbst, wie zahlreiche Diskussionen der Gehirnforschung unserer Tage von selbst zu beweisen scheinen.

Kants Ansicht ist es, dass der Kausalmechanismus der Natur zwar tatsächlich für alle Gegenstände der Natur gilt. Gleichwohl zeigt er in mehreren Argumentationsgängen, dass es Gegenstände in der Natur gibt, die durch den Kausalmechanismus nicht angemessen beurteilt werden. Es sind dies die Lebewesen in der Natur, deren innere Organisiertheit als ein Verhältnis zu denken ist, in dem alle Teile zueinander, sowie das Ganze im Verhältnis zu seinen Teilen und umgekehrt sich wechselseitig Ursache und Wirkung sind. Selbst dann, wenn ein Organismus bis ins kleinste Detail nach dem Mechanismus der Natur bestimmt werden könnte, wäre er *als* Organismus, als Prinzip des Lebens nicht hinreichend bestimmt. Überdies sieht sich die Urteilkraft veranlasst, nicht bloß organisierte Lebewesen, sondern auch größere

Einheiten, schließlich das Ganze der Natur durch die Annahme einer inneren Zweckmäßigkeit zu begreifen. Während der Kausalmechanismus eine objektiv geltende konstitutive Erkenntnis ermöglicht, führt die Zweckmäßigkeit der Natur zu einer objektiv bloß unbestimmten, daher nur regulativ geltenden Erkenntnis. Regulativ deshalb, weil sie nur die Verhältnismäßigkeit der Teile zu dem Ganzen zu bestimmen vermag, ohne ihren Ermöglichungsgrund, den Zweck oder die Idee des Ganzen und seiner Teile näherhin bestimmen zu können.

Unter Angabe des jeweiligen Geltungsbereichs und seiner Grenzen lassen sich nach Kant *causa efficiens* und *causa finalis* zwar als Beurteilungsprinzipien vereinen. Die Erkenntnis einer gemeinsamen Wurzel der Erzeugung von Verursachungen entzieht sich gleichwohl vollkommen unserem menschlichen Erkenntnisvermögen. Die *causa efficiens* kann einen höheren Grad der Verbindlichkeit ihrer Erkenntnis beanspruchen, vermag aber nur einzeln und in sukzessiven Reihen Relationen von Ursachen und Wirkungen zu verknüpfen. Die *causa finalis* vermag nur Verhältnismäßigkeit mit unbestimmtem Grund zu stiften, kann dafür aber weit komplexere Zusammenhänge bis hin zum Ganzen der Natur gedanklich umfassen. Letztlich aber ist die *causa efficiens* der *causa finalis* unterzuordnen, wie Kant hier ausführt. Das aber heißt auch, dass der Zufall für unsere Erfahrung und mithin für unsere Erkenntnis weit umfassender ist, als das, was wir als kausale Notwendigkeit zu bestimmen vermögen.

Abstract: Die kritische Philosophie Kants basiert bekanntlich auf der Frage nach der Möglichkeit synthetischer Urteile a priori. In eins damit gehen Geltungsansprüche der Urteile in der Erkenntnis, der Moral, des Rechts, der Ästhetik und anderen philosophischen Gebieten einher, die sich als notwendig ausweisen lassen. Der Grad der Notwendigkeit differiert je nach Kontext. Zentral für Kants Erkenntnistheorie ist die objektiv notwendige Geltung kausaler Urteile, die er neu und in Abgrenzung zu den subjektiv notwendigen Urteilen begründet, die er David Humes Kausaltheorie zuschreibt. Notwendigkeit, apriorische Geltung von reinen oder, zumeist, nicht-reinen synthetischen Urteilen a priori im Erfahrungskontext sind nicht denkbar ohne ihr anderes, die Empirie und der Zufall. Der Zufall spielt in Kants Erkenntnistheorie der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* eine weniger marginale Rolle, als es auf den ersten Blick scheinen mag. Von großem und offenkundigem Gewicht ist der Zufall in Kants Teleologie, die er im zweiten Teil der *Kritik der Urteilskraft* ausarbeitet. In der Natur herrschen unendliche Varietät, unendliche viele empirische Gesetze, mithin für die menschliche Erkenntnisfähigkeit der Zufall vor. Mit der (scheinbaren) Antinomie der teleologischen Urteilskraft, dem Wechselverhältnis von (notwendigem) Kausalmechanismus und Finalität als teleologischer Zweckmäßigkeit zeigt Kant, dass die beiden Prinzipien für Naturerkenntnis und Naturbeobachtung jeweils unabdingbar sind, auch wenn ihnen je eigene Aufgaben zugewiesen sind.

Kant's critical philosophy is, as is well known, based on the question of the possibility of synthetic judgments a priori. This goes hand in hand with the validity claims of judgments in cognition, morality, law, aesthetics and other philosophical areas that can be shown to be necessary. The degree of necessity differs depending on the context. Central to Kant's epistemology is the objectively necessary validity of causal judgments, which he grounded anew and in distinction to the subjectively necessary judgments that he attributed to David Hume's causal theory. Necessity, a priori validity of pure or, for the most part, non-pure synthetic judgements a priori in the context of experience are inconceivable without their other, empiricism and contingency. Contingency plays a less marginal role in Kant's epistemology in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, than it might seem at first glance. Contingency is of obvious importance in Kant's teleology, which he elaborates in the second part of the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. Nature is characterized by infinite variety and an infinite number of empirical laws, and therefore contingency is predominant for human cognition. With the

(apparent) antinomy of teleological judgement, the reciprocal relationship between (necessary) causal mechanism and finality as teleological expediency Kant shows that the two principles are indispensable for knowledge and observation of nature, even if they each have their own tasks.

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² Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. A 92 / B 124-125.

³ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. A 127/128.

⁴ Vgl. Immanuel Kant. *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können*. (1783), AA 4, 257-262.

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⁶ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 80 B 106. Das jeweils erste Relat der Modalkategorien ist gesperrt gedruckt. In den *Prolegomena* werden in der Tafel der Kategorien nur die jeweils ersten Relate aufgelistet: Kant, *Prolegomena*, AA 4, 303. Beachte in den *Prolegomena* ferner AA 4, 339 und 363.

⁷ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 452 B 480.

⁸ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 453 B 481.

⁹ Vgl. Georg Sans, „Notwendigkeit“, Birgit Recki: „ästhetische Notwendigkeit“, Ulrich Seeberg: „logische Notwendigkeit“, Burkhard Nonnenmacher: „praktische Notwendigkeit“, Ulrich Seeberg: „subjektive / objektive Notwendigkeit“, in: *Kant-Lexikon*. Hg. v. Marcus Willaschek / Jürgen Stolzenberg / Georg Mohr / Stefano Bacin Bd. II, Berlin Boston 2015, 1679-1686.

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¹² Immanuel Kant. *Prolegomena*, AA 4, 257-258.

¹³ Vgl. Violetta L. Waibel: Die Notwendigkeit der Verbindung von Ursache und Wirkung. Noch einmal: Hume und Kant. In: Kant und die Philosophie in Weltbürgerlicher Absicht. *Akten des XI. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses in 5 Bänden*. Stefano Bacin / Alfredo Ferrarin / Claudio La Rocca / Margit Ruffing Hg.), Bd. V, Berlin / New York (De Gruyter) 2013, 519-531.

¹⁴ David Hume. *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, 39-40; *Untersuchung*, 74-76.

¹⁵ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, AA 5, 183-184.

¹⁶ Vgl. Konrad Cramer. *Nicht-reine synthetische Urteile a priori. Ein Problem der Transzendentalphilosophie Kants*, Heidelberg: Winter 1985.

¹⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 302, B 359: „Der Verstand mag ein Vermögen der Einheit der Erscheinungen vermittelt der Regeln sein, so ist die Vernunft das Vermögen der Einheit der Verstandesregeln unter Prinzipien.“

¹⁸ Einen sehr guten und bündigen Überblick über die vielfältigen Bedeutungsvarianten des Begriffs „Zufall“ in Geschichte und Gegenwart, in Naturwissenschaft und Philosophie gibt der Artikel „Zufall“ von Manfred Stöckler in *Enzyklopädie Philosophie*, Bd. III, Hg. v. Jörg Sandkühler, Hamburg 2021, 3113-3117. Zufall wird Ordnung, Gesetz, Absicht, oder auch Notwendigkeit entgegengesetzt. Vgl. ferner Georg Sans. Artikel „Zufall“. *Kant-Lexikon*. Hg. v. Marcus Willaschek / Jürgen Stolzenberg / Georg Mohr / Stefano Bacin, Bd. III, Berlin Boston 2015, 2723-2725.

¹⁹ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. § 61, AA 5, 360.

²⁰ Vgl. Violetta L. Waibel, Kant und Fichte über die Antinomie der Freiheit: Was bleibt? *Die Klassische Deutsche Philosophie und ihre Folgen*. Hg. von Christian Danz und Michael Hackl, Göttingen: Vienna University Press (Vandenhoeck und Rupprecht) 2017, 183-215

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²³ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. § 70, AA 5, 387.

²⁴ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. § 70, AA 5, 387.

²⁵ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. § 70, AA 5, 387.

- ²⁶ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. A 444 / B 472.
- ²⁷ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. A 445 / 473.
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- ³² Vgl. Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilkraft*. § 74, AA 5, 396.
- ³³ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilkraft*, § 66, AA 5, 376.
- ³⁴ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilkraft*, § 64, AA 5, 370-371.
- ³⁵ Kant, *Kritik der Urteilkraft*, § 64, AA 5, 371.
- ³⁶ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilkraft*. § 75, AA 5, 400.
- ³⁷ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust. Der Tragödie erster Teil*, Nacht, Faustmonolog: „Daß ich erkenne, was die Welt Im Innersten zusammenhält, Schau alle Wirkenskraft und Samen, Und tu nicht mehr in Worten kramen.“
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- ⁴⁴ Immanuel Kant. *Kritik der Urteilkraft*. § 77, AA 5, 410.
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THE MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL ADHERENCE TO SYMBOLIC GREEN NARRATIVES: A KANTIAN THEORETICAL APPROACH

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, theories have tried to account for public adherence to deceptive phenomena such as greenwashing. A number of these theories have sought to answer why people choose to take actions that endorse narratives they acknowledge to be merely symbolic and, to a large extent, intentionally manufactured to deceive them.

In the context of narratives targeting green or environmental issues, this phenomenon has been addressed by theories of economics and social psychology. By offering descriptions in terms of the motivational aspects that govern consumers' choices, such theories tend to overfocus on the individual's perception concerning these narratives' falsity, consequently neglecting the *moral* aspect of people's decisions. In addition, even theories engaged in addressing moral aspects tend to overlook further components that are key to a deeper understanding about why agents endorse green narratives despite recognizing that they are deceptive. As a result, the mechanisms at work in cases where green narratives succeed in misleading their audience remain opaque, leading to a partially obscured picture of the phenomenon.

My main goal in this paper is to explore the adherence to green narratives which the agent recognizes as deceptive or merely symbolic from a moral standpoint. I will show that once under a moral framework, we allow for an approach whereby the overlooked components become salient.

Two of these components will be explored. The first refers to the idea that human moral experience is essentially *normative*, which is particularly evident in situations that place the agent in a position to make decisions in light of certain principles. The second, in turn, concerns a feature that is fundamentally at play when such decisions are made, namely the *first-person perspective*. As a result, I will make the case for a way of approaching the phenomenon

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of green narratives from an ethical and normative standpoint which additionally focuses on self-regarding considerations.

In Section One, I elucidate what I mean by symbolic green narratives (SGN) and contextualize the problem from two theories that I believe represent the context I have just laid out. The first theory descriptively delineates the phenomenon, while the second one presents an attempt (albeit limited) to approach it from an ethical standpoint. I then discuss the limitations of these theories and argue that they should be complemented by a moral perspective approach.

Presenting this complementary theory will be my goal in the next two sections. To do so, I will draw from the theory of a Kantian philosopher credited with elaborating on the first-person perspective, Christine Korsgaard. A number of elements from Kant's moral psychology will be underlined to elucidate Korsgaard's theory, but also to provide decisive insights towards an explanation of individual-level adherence to SGN.

In Section two I summarize the concepts that make Kant's moral psychology relevant to the cases discussed here. I begin by approaching the concepts of necessity and necessitation to present Kant's view concerning the characteristic features of human moral experience. I discuss the concepts of laws or norms to endorse the Korsgaardian thesis that agents' practical identities are sources of moral obligations. Section 03 explores SGN's normative aspect. I contend in this section that it is precisely this aspect that places such narratives on an essentially moral register, and ultimately that looking at the decision-making on green narratives from a moral perspective brings to the surface the problems in endorsing such narratives. I then approach virtue-signaling and self-affirmation to argue that such psychological phenomena find equivalence in Kant's thought, being regarded by Kant as blameworthy insofar as they hinder the proper functioning of practical reason.

The debate around SGNs can undoubtedly be enriched by a Kantian-inspired contribution. Kant's concept of *maxim* advances the notion of motivation and importantly connects with the idea that our moral life is essentially normative, as it involves the idea of principle; these principles are in play when we make decisions on moral matters. They are enacted by what, in her theory of self-constitution, Korsgaard calls *moral* and *practical identities*.

Contra amoralist arguments², I argue that decisions to endorse SGN are typically based on moral grounds, and most importantly that understanding the normative and self-regarding aspects behind such decisions is critical if we are to act in accordance with our best judgment. In this sense Korsgaard's theory is especially appealing, as it provides us with understanding about how practical identities play a role in an agent's reasoning with regard to green narratives, as well as concerning the tensions stemming from our practical identities once we perform actions that endorse narratives we acknowledge as deceptive.

SECTION 1. ACCOUNTING FOR MORAL BEHAVIOR VIA DESCRIPTIVE THEORIES

The increasing interest in awareness of different sectors of society for issues related to sustainability (Zhang et al, 2008; Follows & Jobber, 2000; Shepherd et al, 2005) combined with the growth of so-called ethical consumption (De Pelsmacker et al, 2005) has made “corporate greening” a profitable marketing strategy. This new trend, which has encouraged numerous companies to go green, has at the same time intensified companies’ needs in making public their attitudes on environmental issues. In this context and aiming to convince the public about the commitment and environmental impact of a company, goods, or services, green narratives emerge. Many of these narratives came out as merely symbolic or performative, meaning that they fail to comply with what is publicized³.

In this paper, I refer to the concept of *symbolic green narratives*⁴ (SGN, for short) as comprising discourses or communication mechanisms that seek to create or reinforce misleading beliefs in their audiences regarding the environmental commitment of those who produce them. The production of SGN includes not only the manufacture of certain goods, services, or corporate guidelines, but also the discursive manner in which these products are made public. Thus, the scope of what I refer in this paper to as green narratives includes texts, images, packaging, advertising pieces, audiovisual media, and other discursive ways of conveying meaning through language.

In the last decades one may witness the emergence of critical stances towards such narratives⁵ as well as a growing body of studies addressing this phenomenon more directly. Among the aims of the debates on SGN, the need to list the factors that explain the individual-level adherence to such narratives is typically stressed and commonly carried out by applying certain theories to the scope of the phenomenon under analysis. Two theoretical strategies are worth highlighting.

In seeking clarity about the processes involved in the effectiveness of SGN, Nyilasy et al (2012) draw on a conjunction between attribution theory and attitude change theory. The former theory, borrowed from general psychology, holds that agents tend to attribute causes for observed phenomena. However, agent engagement with a company’s green advertisement is not immediate; this allows that stimuli caused by green advertising result in a change in the consumer’s attitude towards that company. Effectively, this means that when it comes to SGN, the public suspects at the outset that the corporation’s pledge is not authentic. This points to the fact that while companies manufacturing SGNs expect positive brand attitudes from their audience, that audience’s perception of the merely symbolic nature of these narratives often results in rather negative attributions.

In this sense, one may claim that the explanatory potential of SGN’ power lies in the individual’s perception of green marketing, which in turn is mediated by attribution mechanisms and attitude change or formation. As such, once their misleading nature is perceived, these narratives tend to produce a negative brand perception, which brings damage to the firm that adopts them, indicating that “some firms would be better off staying silent” (Nyilasy et al, 2012, p. 121).

A further theory used when it comes to determining the factors responsible for the effectiveness of green narratives at the individual level is the theory of competitive altruism. This theory focuses on a typically pervasive behavior, that of virtue signaling, which has more recently been explored in the philosophical literature under the name moral grandstanding⁶.

The theory of competitive altruism is used by Mitchell & Ramey (2011) to outline a hypothesis about consumer adherence to green products, which in turn would arise due to the social sensitivity that individuals generally hold towards their peers. Mitchell & Ramey stress that social and anthropological factors underlie individuals' adherence to green narratives in general, many of which are merely symbolic. Therefore, when certain companies produce green narratives but lack a genuine alignment between their environmental commitment and their policies, regulations, or practices, they rely on the support of such mechanisms to meet their market goals.

Thus, according to Mitchell & Ramey's application of theory of competitive altruism, the elements accounting for SGN's effectiveness in being endorsed by their audiences are essentially anthropological and social.

While I grant Nyilasi et al that one of the elements explaining adherence to SGN is the individual's perception concerning the falsity of these narratives, I argue that SGN's success may falsely suggest that the role played by the individuals is restricted to the perception that they are potential victims of deception, leading them, as a result, to change their attitude accordingly. Put another way, overemphasizing the perception of falsity might lead one to believe that when perceived, the merely symbolic nature of a narrative *necessarily* produces in the individual a negative brand attitude, prompting the agent to boycott the green deceiver.

A more robust explanation of public adherence to SGN still seems to be needed, in particular, an explanation that accounts for cases that paradoxically result in *positive actions* of engagement *despite* the perception of their symbolic nature⁷. Although not explicitly stated, I believe that explaining how such narratives succeed is one of the goals of Mitchell & Ramey's approach resulting in the application of the theory of competitive altruism to greenwashing cases. This theory would explain why agents tend to undertake actions that display their positive engagement with narratives they perceive as deceptive. In particular, the performance of these actions is directly parasitic on the fact that "individuals selfishly tend to be perceived as altruistic because it elevates one's status, which in turn affords one benefits associated with the higher status" (Mittchel & Ramey, 2011, p. 42). However, while competitive altruism theory contains a thesis that seems to account for why agents endorse SGN *beyond the perception of intended deception*, the way it is framed leaves aside a critical aspect of agents' decision making when it comes to such issues. Namely, it overlooks the fact that such deeds may be pursued not just out of a need for external recognition, but also out of psychological coping mechanisms of self-affirmation.

In what follows, I take a similar path to the aforementioned scholars and offer a hypothesis about individual-level adherence to SGN. My hypothesis complements the theoretical lines I have just discussed in that it advances the following premises:

- (1) when it comes to green consumption, individuals' decision about engaging with SGN occurs within an ethical framework;
- (2) once in the ethical realm, actions stemming from such engagement (e.g. the consumption of symbolically green products or services, or the reproduction or validation of SGN) may be deemed as moral, immoral, or prudential, as they concern the agent's autonomous deliberation; and
- (3) in light of the perceived symbolic or deceptive aspect of these narratives, individuals' adherence is significantly influenced by first-person psychological, in addition to (third-person) anthropological and social aspects.

My goal is to draw close attention to psychological and morally informed aspects of an agent's decisions, in particular, how the practical identities of these agents shape their reasoning with regard to green narratives. A first step towards this will consist in understanding the main traces of human moral deliberation, notably how moral judgments are guided by practical principles.

SECTION 2. KANT'S MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

Imagine a consumer who, out of environmental concerns, decides to stop buying single-use plastic products. Despite her urge to get those products, she suppresses her desire so that her action is consistent with her best judgment. For Kant, such an agent is subject to the power of elements that *necessitate*, i.e., constrain her will, in such a way that she feels compelled to carry out certain actions.

One might, however, wonder why someone *feels bound* to comply with it. Addressing this concern amounts to exploring the nature of what has been discussed under the name of *moral obligation*, which in turn permeates agents' reasoning when they deliberate about moral issues.

Drawing on the idea that as human beings, we have the capacity to act from the representation of laws, in what follows I elaborate on how Kant's concept of obligation captures this distinguishing feature of human nature.

2.1. NECESSITY, NECESSITATION AND MORAL OBLIGATION

In *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* Kant states that whereas "everything in nature works according to laws" we, as rational natural beings, have "the capacity to act according to the representation of laws, i.e., according to principles, or a *will*." (GMS 4: 412).

With this, Kant wants to draw attention to the difference between, on the one hand, the way nature works and, on the other, the way beings that are not only natural, but also rational, act. A lion who kills a gazelle out of hunger is directly determined by sensible impulses, that is,

natural ones. Their “choice is not free, but necessitated by incentives and stimuli” (VE: 344). Human moral agency, on the other hand, is not *purely* a matter of a natural law because we are not only sensible, but also rational beings. Thus, our moral actions do not follow immediately from sensible stimuli, meaning that between our desire to eat the remains of animal corpses and the performance of such an action, there is room for deliberation.

Yet, assuming that when it comes to human moral agency there is a space for deliberation involves acknowledging that such deliberation is typically determined by factors that stem from our nature as *sensible* and *rational* human beings. Reflecting the duality of human nature, Kant calls these factors *laws of freedom*, i.e. laws that concern free human action, constraining it. Those are, as the concept itself emphasizes, free actions that are also marked by laws; laws that nevertheless do not imply natural necessity (such as in the case of natural laws) but rather necessitation [*Nötigung*].

Kant makes the relationship between *free action* and *necessitation* explicit in the opening sentence of the Introduction to his *Doctrine of Virtue*, where he maintains that “the very concept of duty is already the concept of necessitation (constraint) of a free choice through the law” (MS, 6: 380). To see what this means, we turn to the elucidated passage in the *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* where Kant defines *willing* as our ability to act in accordance with the representation of laws. This equivalency⁸ means that, for Kant, human will is oriented to change – and, in some sense, *to cause* – states of affairs in the world. In turn, being able to act from laws means that one’s actions are not mere movements arising from stimuli and sensible impulses, but rather byproducts of intentional forces, which point to precisely what must be taken into account if reason is to acquire a practical interest. As Kant points out,

[t]he human power of choice is indeed an *arbitrium sensitivum*, e yet not *brutum* but *liberum* because sensibility does not render its action necessary, but in the human being there is a faculty of determining oneself from oneself, independently of necessitation by sensible impulses. (KrV A534 / B562)

A lion (which has *arbitrium brutum*) does not choose to hunt its prey; it is instead immediately responsive to what is necessarily determined by its sensibility. Unlike a lion, human action is not *directly* determined by sensibility. Conversely, when morally worthy, human action can be carried out on purely rational principles.

To see why this is so, take Kant’s concept of incentive [*Triebfeder*]. For Kant, human action always involves incentives, because as human beings, we need incentives in order to be motivated to act. An incentive is, as Korsgaard (1996, p. 242) clearly puts it, a kind of “first-order impulse (...) to the performance of an action”. But to count as a motive for a certain action, incentives still need *principles*. According to Kant’s moral psychology, the principle behind our choices may ultimately be either rational, i.e., *duty* or material, i.e., *self-love*. Put another way, we say in the former case that an action is performed for the sake of duty, and in the latter, out of inclination [*Neigung*].

Such a view with regard to the principles of choice has two notable aspects. First, as said, that at bottom, all moral action is ultimately grounded on what is required by *either morality* (rational principle) *or self-interest* (material principle).

Only in the former case such an action bears moral worth. For example, one may resist the urge to buy single-use plastic products out of duty *or* out of inclination. If the agent's concern for the environment is what determines the action, her action was done from the motive of duty, thus bearing moral worth. In other words, her action has moral worth because the rational principle, i.e., her observance of what morality requires, is what caused her to decide to act in a way that curbs her inclination towards single-use plastic products. On the other hand, if one's action was merely performative, with an eye to, for example, making the agent appear to be more virtuous than she really is, then her action (although in accordance with duty) has no moral worth.

But what is wrong with an action being done out of inclinations? What if the effects of my actions are good, even though their determining motive is, for instance, my sympathy towards green issues? For Kant, for an action to have moral worth, it cannot have been performed out of material principles, because those are merely conditioned. It is conditioned, i.e., contingent, that I am an environmentally sympathetic person, as I could of course be a person who does not care about green issues⁹. Therefore, this cannot be the determining reason why I perform my action, if it is to have moral worth. Analogously, the moral worth of an action is unrelated to “the *effect* that is expected from [that action], nor therefore in any principle of action that needs to borrow its motivating ground from this expected effect” (GMS 4: 401) since such effects are similarly conditioned, meaning that they “could also have been brought about by other causes”. The moral worth of an action is closely tied, for Kant, to what is distinctive of a rational will, namely the ability to act according to the representation of laws and therefore from the sake of duty.

A second notable aspect with regard to the principles of choice is that principles are able to determine the will (and therefore one's deeds) only insofar as they are incorporated into actions as a result of one's free choice (REL 6: 24).

Thus, while we may often find our actions strongly driven by sensible impulses such as passions and other pathological emotions¹⁰, we can still act as morality requires. Yet, whatever incentives present to us, they only become the determining motive for the action after being incorporated in that action as a result of our self-determination. This means that an agent must render such an inclination as a part of the *principle* one gives to oneself. Thus, no matter how much one's action is naturally bound to sensible impulses, one must have incorporated those incentives into what one regards as the principle for which one acts. Such a self-imposed principle Kant calls a *maxim*. Agents that conform their actions to, say, environmental preservation, hold this practical rule as their maxim. This points to the fact that *human moral actions are principled*, meaning, they bear maxims¹¹.

Yet, maxims allow us to assess our actions. As was discussed earlier, as agents we act for reasons, that is, for inclinations we represent as sufficient motives for our actions, meaning that we *incorporate* certain inclinations into the maxims of our actions. In effect, as agents, we experience and act under the idea of freedom to the extent that freedom is imbued within the idea of agency. Not to consider oneself an agent amounts to not interacting with the world at all. Given that good actions, that is, actions with moral worth, are those performed from

duty, ensuring that interest in morality, i.e., duty, is the determining motive for that action is tantamount to confirming that we are on the right path to performing a good deed. Hence, the maxims of our actions allow us to evaluate whether or not our actions have moral worth. Stated another way, the maxims of our actions make it possible for agents to assess how they act in the world.

Of course, it is not the case that we should only act from maxims that allow moral assessment. It is true that a number of actions we perform do not have a moral dimension, and Kant himself calls attention to over-moralizing issues that do not merit moral consideration¹². However, once we genuinely acknowledge a topic as morally charged, we must seek to act out of duty, despite the strong tendency to act according to our inclinations.

Now, back to the concepts of law and necessitation. As such, our experience of free agency is essentially connected with the idea of laws. Laws give shape to this relationship. As Korsgaard (2009) emphasizes, they shape our daily actions. Norms defining one's "*do's and don't's*" within a social democracy, the parental demands regarding their children's education, and other sets of norms that we follow on a daily basis, define our social life by means of setting boundaries on our total freedom as individuals¹³.

However, sometimes,

we find ourselves doing what we think we ought to do, in the teeth of our reluctance, and even though nothing obvious forces us to do it. We toil out to vote in unpleasant weather, telephone relatives to whom we would prefer not to speak, attend suffocatingly boring meetings at work, and do all sorts of irksome things at the behest of our families and friends. (Korsgaard, 2009, pp. 2 - 3)

The examples outlined by Korsgaard suggest that many of our actions are carried out as the outcome of laws or commitments we set for ourselves. They are, in this sense, *internal*, and represent what an agent sets as *a norm or law for oneself*⁴.

Thus, saying that, for instance "one *ought* to x" illustrates a principle. This principle involves that our action can go one certain way, but not another, meaning that our action is constrained, i.e., necessitated. We identify the outcome of these constraints with what we refer to as *duties*. In this sense, the very concept of duty entails a constraint to our will. That is what obligation is based on: the concept of duty implies from the outset the idea that a will that suffers necessitation in its freedom is under obligation imposed by reason.

By extension, laws of freedom express duties that necessitate our will to perform actions that we would not have pursued if those norms were not posed. For example, when I refrain from getting a product I would like to have because it comes packaged in single-use plastic, there must be something compelling me to act in this way, since if it depended solely on my desire, I certainly would not do so.

Kant's account of obligation captures these features of our moral psychology. According to him, ethical norms are likely to be represented by us as commands or *imperatives*, which, in turn, necessitate our will. And here is where the distinguishing factor of the typically human moral experience lies: these norms count for sensible and rational beings like us. Only

human beings are capable of acting from the representation of laws, i.e., of understanding and acting on imperatives. Such imperatives place human beings under obligation, binding them by virtue of their (rational but at the same time sensible) nature. If we were merely rational beings, moral norms would not apply since our will would already conform to what is morally required. Conversely, when it comes to laws of nature, the idea of obligation does not seem to apply. One is not likely to claim that a lion *feels obligated* to hunt its prey, for what determines the occurrence of such a natural phenomenon is a cause-effect necessary relation. It is thus reasonable to claim that the idea of obligation amounts to a distinctive aspect of our moral experience. There is a sense in which we say that we are obligated to treat our fellow human beings respectfully, to look after people we love, to provide help when we are asked to do so, and so forth.

These distinctions shed light on the idea of moral obligation or, put differently, on what determines the sense of obligation we experience when dealing with particular circumstances. Once in the moral realm, we make decisions that not only involve laws, but depend on our distinctive way of apprehending and representing such norms.

In the next section I will argue that when it comes to SGN, the way we experience these obligations, namely a typically moral way, is a prominent and necessary factor in understanding what lies behind our endorsement of such narratives.

SECTION 3. EXPERIENCE AND MORAL OBLIGATION ON SYMBOLIC GREEN NARRATIVES

In broad terms, the aim of marketing strategies amounts to generating and maintaining competitive advantages through tactics geared towards satisfying the needs and wants of a target audience (Obermiller et al, 2008). Concurrently, manufacturing green narratives can be seen as one of such tactics, for they are designed to appeal to consumers' sense of obligation as a path to generating engagement.

The fact that consumers' sense of obligation is central to such narratives' success points to the ethical nature of the decisions and actions arising from them. However, from the fact that these narratives are *designed* to prompt a moral appeal, it does not follow that the decisions and actions concerning them have moral value from a Kantian perspective. This is because the correct motivation is crucial for moral value; the factors involved in the production of green strategies are not inherently associated with the decisions and actions that may eventually result from these narratives. In this sense, the presence of an element intrinsic to the decision-making process would be necessary to ensure that such actions and decisions are within the moral realm.

My aim in the next section is to introduce this element. I elaborate on the idea that decision-making about green narratives must be faced as a decision that encompasses a moral aspect in virtue of its normative character. I will show that once we focus on how market strategies are designed and performed by means of targeting a certain type of consumer, the essentially normative character of these decisions and actions emerges, a fact that emphasizes the sense by which *the way* these narratives are produced plays a heuristic role. I contend

that we may conclude that once perceived, these narratives connect with consumers' practical identities, producing moral obligations. In the last part of the section, I rewind to the idea of moral worth, and provide reasons why a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon must take into account a first-person perspective that embodies explanations about psychological aspects that may act as impediments in assessing our maxims. Finally, I discuss why failing to carry out such appraisals may raise problems.

3.1. THE ETHICS OF SYMBOLIC GREEN NARRATIVES

The emergence of ethical consumption and its prominence, particularly in recent decades, has led companies to pursue green marketing strategies. In general, market strategies are devised based on data concerning the attitude and consumption patterns of a certain group of consumers; in the case of green strategies, the targets are green or ethical consumers.

While not coextensive,¹⁵ ethical and green consumption are often addressed simultaneously. Both refer to the behavior of “people who are influenced by environmental or ethical considerations when choosing products and services” (Crowe & Simon, 2000, p. 04)¹⁶. It is thus possible to make the general claim that ethical or green agents are those whose decision-making incorporates environmental and social considerations. This means that the actions resulting from these agents' decision-making processes are determined by certain considerations, and that in most cases they would be different if their agents had not taken such considerations into account. For example, ethical consumers do pay more for products or services that are explicitly consistent (as an instance, via labeling¹⁷) with their moral commitments (Hainmueller, et al, 2015; Hertel et al. 2009); in the absence of moral commitments, the same consumers would arguably have responded differently towards ethical branding. In other words, green agents' environmental and social concerns are a defining component of their actions and decisions concerning green narratives.

Now, in the environmental and social marketing literature the fact that these concerns may in turn be defined in normative terms remains underexplored, as the literature on those fields seeks to be descriptive. Thus, the claim that green consumers make their decisions out of social and environmental concerns is, now in moral terms, equivalent to the idea that the considerations green agents incorporate when it comes to social and environmental issues *necessitates* their will, meaning that their decisions are constrained by norms or laws they set for themselves. Thus, the stance of deciding whether to engage with such narratives, added to the necessitation generated by the attitude towards green or ethical issues, pushes the phenomenon to the ethical sphere.

To achieve a better understanding of this normative element, it may be helpful to, once again, turn to some ideas concerning our typical moral experience, now through Korsgaard's theory of practical identity.

As said, Korsgaard argues that the necessitation we experience in cases such as decision-making on green issues results from duties we set for ourselves. Her agential identity theory draws on Kant's moral psychology to claim that setting duties for oneself is closely connected

with one's practical identity¹⁸. According to Korsgaard (1996, p. 101), the conception of one's practical identity refers to "a description under which you value yourself and find your life worth living and your actions worth undertaking". It involves an agent endorsing the set of obligations attached to a certain way of identifying oneself (Korsgaard, 2009, pp. 22 - 25).

While Korsgaard concentrates on demonstrating how agency and self-constitution are co-extensive, we do not need to endorse her argument to see that as a matter of fact, our identities are often the sources of obligation, by means of making claims on our actions¹⁹. One whose practical identity comprises the conception of a benevolent person, for example, does not perform actions that involve taking advantage of other people. Similarly, a person who portrays herself as an environmentalist, that is, someone whose environmental protection is incorporated into her practical identity, must refrain from contributing to environmental degradation.²⁰

Our practical identities are, for Korsgaard, merely contingent²¹. We acquire certain practical identities because we are situated in certain places, because we play certain social roles, or because we experience certain situations. They amount to the way *we regard ourselves* and, in many cases, result in obligations we deem as unconditional, that is, obligations whose violation makes us feel as if we are losing our integrity (1996, p. 102).

There is a form of identity upholding our practical and contingent identities viz., the moral identity. It is nevertheless necessary and therefore, once assumed, a normative source of moral obligations that are likewise necessary. To have a moral identity is for Korsgaard (1996, p. 121, my emphasis "to value yourself *just as a human being*").²²

Now, our relationship to our practical identities is, according to Korsgaard, a construct. For her, "every time you decide to act in a way that conforms to your practical identity, you count as re-endorsing that form of identity and making it your own" (2011, p. 09). As such, we can always give up our practical identities and we do so when, for example, we decide to overlook the obligations they generate. However,

so long as you remain committed to a role, and yet fail to meet the obligations it generates, you fail yourself as a human being, as well as failing in that role. And if you fail in all of your roles - if you live at random, without integrity or principle, then you will lose your grip on yourself as one who has any reason to live and to act at all. (KORSGAARD, 1996, p. 121)

This joint failure occurs because of the relationship between practical and moral identities. Our practical identities acquire normative force because of the requirements of our humanity, that is, to the extent that assuming certain practical identities is part of our constitution as beings who value themselves as human beings.

From this, it is rendered explicit that normativity makes up our moral experience. As rational yet sensitive human beings, our will is free to the extent that our actions do not necessarily result from our inclinations. A person who desires to eat meat but regards herself as an environmentalist may wish to engage with SGN, purchasing and consuming, say, "fair meat"; as her will is necessitated by the obligation arising from her practical identity, the

possibility that her deed results from something other than a necessary cause of her desire to eat meat (which happens in the epitomized case of the lion that kills the gazelle) opens up.

The contrast between necessity and necessitation (or more accurately, this fact about our moral nature) is precisely what is at stake with regard to decision-making overall, and especially, with decisions within the moral realm. Chief among these actions are those that result from agents' decisions whether to engage with green narratives that are perceived as symbolic. Once these agents perceive the symbolic character of such narratives, they often ask themselves "What should I do now?" or "What is the best deed in such a scenario?", which in addition to emphasizing that their will is undergoing necessitation, points to the fact that their decision lies in the moral realm.

From what has been discussed, it is possible to evince that, in the context of green narratives, the individual decision process on whether to engage with such narratives is ethical *par excellence*, as the individuals' sense of obligation is triggered by virtue of the normative nature of the issues that emerge from their practical identities.

Additionally, it is worth noting that understanding how marketing strategies that focus on these individuals assists us towards *clarifying* that the decision-making process regarding SGN has an ethical character. As mentioned, green strategies are designed from investigation into the behavioral and attitudinal profile of the consumers to be reached. That granted, take as illustration the increasingly adopted strategy of labeling products as "fair", which reflects the market demand known today as "fair trade", a form of ethical consumption associated with economic and environmental justice²³, as well as animal welfare (Annunziata, 2011). Over the last few decades this terminology has also been used to stress that a product is fair by virtue of one or more (but seldom all) aspects of its supply chain. As an individual who regards the concept of "fair" among the descriptions under which one values oneself in the sense outlined, an agent may feel compelled to engage in a particular way when confronted with SGN. One might for instance decide to consume "fair meat" or, once aware of its merely symbolic character, to boycott this product or brand. The use of an ethical concept such as "fairness" as a green marketing strategy allows us to see that what drives such strategies is precisely the fact that their effectiveness is inscribed in the ethical field. This is the reason why *the way* SGN are produced is relevant, namely, to point towards helping us to better grasp such narratives' normative aspect.

However, SGN manufactured as targeting green/ethical consumers do not always succeed in reaching that audience. That leaves room for cases of collateral consumers, i.e. individuals who end up engaging with such narratives arbitrarily or for essentially contingent reasons, e.g. ignorance or lack of interest. One could argue that the Kantian moral theorizing I bring up here does not succeed in explaining cases of collateral consumers, because for cases like these, it is hard to see how moral motivation could be involved. However, Kantian theory does also allow us to assess collateral consumers' endorsement deeds. Especially, it allows us to see that, *grosso modo*, collateral consumers will not act on these considerations *because* the essential component of green narratives, i.e., the environmental one, does not create obligation in them.²⁴ They may endorse SGN *despite* the fact that those narratives are green.

The fact that moral motivation results from obligation also helps us to understand the apathy of such agents toward green issues, as for when green narratives do generate obligation, consumers tend to feel motivated to perform actions incorporating ethical/green considerations.

For example, I may buy a recycled packaged product and decide not to share this product on social media, once I have learned that it is greenwashed. In the first moment, I endorse, i.e., positively engage with a narrative that portrays a certain product as green. In the second, upon learning that the product is greenwashed, I decide not to platform it, therefore engaging negatively. In both cases, my sense of obligation - in particular, moral obligation with regard to an ethical issue - motivates me to pursue certain courses of action.

Agents' personal identities certainly generate moral obligations, duties as well as inclinations. However, endorsing green narratives must ultimately result from one's own choice to take these obligations as a source of reason to act upon. Thus, following the example, as a person who regards oneself as an environmentalist, one may acknowledge one's duty not to platform a product whose greenwashing is perceived. However, the relationship between representing something as my duty and my actual deed is not a relation of necessity. This means that despite the motivation this duty generates on me, I can still deliberate and act differently, for example by sharing the greenwashed product on social media.

This denotes the importance of the agent's intentionality in *choosing to engage* with certain narratives, which in turn further reinforces the line that divides such behavior (disinterested or apathetic) from the ethical one.

To sum up, while the fact that narratives designed to work in an ethical framework produce decisions and actions of (positive or negative) engagement inscribed precisely in this framework is not surprising, it can still be misleading. Accepting that x is ethical because it is designed to prompt ethical responses does not sufficiently account for the fact that these responses are necessarily ethical. Inscribing actions of endorsement or engagement in the ethical field further depends on elements *internal* to those actions. When we make decisions based on the specific practical identity's conception targeted by green narratives, we bring out this internal element: the normative character our experience acquires when faced with such narratives. Engagement with green issues depends on the moral obligation generated by such narratives; only then are they able to motivate us to pursue actions that incorporate green considerations. Therefore, although the external element does not guarantee that these narratives take place within an ethical framework, it is (through the idea of target audience and thus of practical identity) a key heuristic piece to elucidate the ethical nature of decision-making regarding SGN.

3.2. MORAL DENIAL AND SELF-DECEPTION

Actions stemming from their agents' sense of obligation are actions within the moral field. But that is not to say that they are actions with moral worth in the (Kantian) sense sought above²⁵.

When an agent engages with green narratives, her deed bears moral worth only insofar as it premises the compliance with and respect for the obligation posed. As discussed, an action has moral worth when performed *out of duty*. In contrast, actions that merely conform to duty or go against it bear no moral worth; for an action to have moral worth, the agent's will must be necessitated, restricting sensible impulses, and rendering duty the determining motive of the action.

To elucidate the idea of moral worth, take as illustration the behavior of an agent faced with a SGN, for example, a product labeled as "fair meat". As an ethical consumer, this agent tends to ask herself "what should I do in this situation?", and despite the perception of the merely symbolic aspect, she may decide to endorse it. In light of her awareness that its production inevitably violates ethical and environmental principles, she may decide to purchase the product despite uncertainty as to the validity of attributing "fair" to "meat". As an individual whose conception of practical identity incorporates environmental considerations, she violates the duties and obligations engendered by her practical identity. In Kantian terms, this amounts to saying that she violates moral requirements. Thus, despite awareness of these requirements, that agent allows her will to be determined by *something other than duty*. Her motivation seems to be rooted in the fact that she desires the benefits associated with that product²⁶ in such a way that the pursuit of those perceived benefits drives her behavior. Consequently, by violating moral requirements, her action lacks moral worth. Therefore, when her desire to consume "fair meat" overrides what she acknowledges as her duty, or put another way, the moral demands set upon her practical identity, then she acts out of self-love²⁷.

As such, overall, actions performed out of self-love and despite the agent's acknowledgement that these actions violate their moral requirements, at the same time infringe upon these agents' practical identities.

Now, violating one's conception of practical identity in turn yields a threat to one's moral integrity. Take again the case of green or ethical consumers by imagining that a green consumer regularly breaches the requirements and duties engendered by her identity. As a result of a reflexive process (Powers, 1973), and because such violations are associated with negative self-attributions (Giner-Sorolla, 2001; Kivetz & Zheng, 2006), that individual tends to challenge the validity of her subsumption to such a practical identity's conception. Since that identity is an aspect of one's self (insofar as it represents a description whose value is initially attributed by the individual oneself), its violation simultaneously amounts to a threat to one's own integrity²⁸.

This idea is consistent with contemporary theories of personal identity, which define and typify the conflicts arising from the discrepancy between actions and thoughts, in particular between agents' behavior and what they think about their own identity (Carver & Scheier, 1981; Stets & Burke, 2000). Following the framework, I am outlining here, this is to say that these conflicts emerge from the lack of agreement between actions and decision-making on the one hand and moral requirements on the other.

Now, we can grant that in the context of green symbolic narratives, one may resolve this conflict by means of simply *abandoning* what generates the moral obligation, i.e. a certain conception of one's practical identity. Examples include cases in which individuals forego a plant-based diet on the grounds that the costs associated with that value are too high.

Yet a different path to address this conflict, or rather to cope with the resulting dissonance, depends on the agent's choice to *preserve* the conception of practical identity that leads to the dissonance. Should the agent preserve such a conception while respecting the moral demands it entails, the dissonance dissolves. Conversely, it becomes problematic once that agent chooses to preserve a certain conception of her practical identity *despite* the competing demands it engenders²⁹. Upholding a conception of a practical identity amounts to meeting the obligations that such an identity prompts; doing so while engaging in actions that *violate* that very conception is akin to having the cake and eating it too.

It is within this context of discomfort produced by the lack of consistency between one's actions and obligations that psychological mechanisms of self-preservation emerge. Strategies such as rationalization, wishful thinking and self-deception, are coping mechanisms that aim to preserve the agent's moral unity by reducing the cognitive dissonance entailed by the inconsistency between the awareness of nature and the performance of immoral deeds.

However, despite the typified advantages,³⁰ such strategies hold potential harm. They can play a critical role in distorting one's moral reality, as they can make immoral deeds look like permissible deeds that would otherwise be disallowed.

These phenomena are discussed by Kant under the label of rationalization or self-deception. Moral rationalization or self-deception³¹ is, according to Kant, a form of lie (inner lie) that we tell ourselves for exculpatory intent.

For deeds endorsing SGN, we frequently deceive ourselves in order to preserve our moral integrity. There are different ways of engaging in self-deception, and some of them are discussed by Kant throughout his moral writings. For instance, we deceive ourselves once (after having acknowledged a moral imperative) we create exceptions for ourselves with a view to rendering permissible a deed initially disallowed by that imperative (GMS 4:242)³².

Another instance of self-deception that Kant addresses in his moral theory concerns its epistemic aspect. This form of self-deception emerges once one distracts oneself, i.e., deflects attention from aspects that otherwise would count as morally relevant to the decision whether to engage in a certain action.

Take for instance a green agent who positively engages with a "fair meat" narrative while perceiving its purely symbolic character. Suppose that she motivates her decision on the idea of *preference*, meaning that, for her, this issue is allegedly purely aesthetic such that the decision regarding whether to engage with such a narrative does not require moral scrutiny. Yet, as a green agent, she is aware of the conflict emerging from the deed she is about to perform. It may be that she is provided with information on the impact of meat production upon the rainforest, on the sheer amount of water required to produce 1kg of meat, or data on greenhouse gas emissions related to the livestock industry, and so on. To successfully alleviate discomfort, such

information needs to be suppressed. Focusing on the aesthetic aspect in order to take the issue out of the moral arena, ignoring or selectively interpreting information that points to the moral framework are some strategies agents usually employ to ensure this success. What these moral-epistemic strategies have in common is that self-deception seems pervasive in all of them.

For Kant, this behavior is blameworthy because self-deception renders the agent who performs it incapable of truthfulness regarding one's assessment of that discrete maxim, as well as of one's moral character. By intentionally manipulating the truth, the agent harms her idea of herself as a truthful person. Ultimately, what is at stake here is the agent's interdiction with regard to the proper use of her practical reason³³. This is why Kant, in describing self-deception, does so in contrast to external lying, for both violate the principle of truthfulness.^{34,35}

Now take the behavior of virtue signaling, a typically others-oriented behavior that has been extensively addressed in the literature.³⁶ Agents signal virtue once they provide positive moral information on their alleged virtue to people whom they would like to believe that information. Virtue signaling behavior can be genuine, but it can also be merely symbolic. In the latter case, the information an agent provides to one's peers is *misleading*.³⁷ In this case, it can be construed as an external lie one tells others concerning one's own moral characteristics.

As discussed, competitive altruism theory avails virtue signaling to account for instances of behavior from which actions of engagement with symbolic green narratives are instantiated. Nonetheless, the way competitive altruism theory is typically rendered when it comes to explaining endorsement of narratives such as greenwashing, overlooks an aspect that has recently been shown to be pervasive when it comes to actions within the moral field, which is *self-signaling*.

Parallel to external lying (virtue-signaling), self-signaling can be understood as a lie an agent tells *oneself*, a form of self-deception, or in Kant's terminology, an inner lie. Self-signaling, i.e., the behavior of signaling virtue *to oneself* is, in this sense, analogous to self-deception broadly construed, and, interestingly, to the moral entendre under which Kant's account of the phenomenon is inscribed. Only agents who have some interest (even merely performative) in morality wish to be virtuous.³⁸ Moreover, it seems that virtue-signaling may at the same time embody self-signaling: by signaling virtue to others, an agent *reinforces* her assessment regarding her own moral traits.

In his account of deception in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant gives priority to self-deception over external lying. For him, external lying necessarily runs through a deception of the agent against oneself. In deceiving the other and thus, in making impossible the proper use of other's moral capacities, the agent violates one's own practical reason. These are reasons why immoral actions in general, and actions embodying deception in particular are regarded by Kant as irrational. Such actions imply that the agent is not making proper use of her practical reason insofar as she fails to enact the reasons produced by the rational process. Her rational process is flawed insofar as she fails to take into account the norms of evidence formation, for instance, by shifting focus away from the moral aspect of the information that constructs her beliefs (Papish, 2018)³⁹.

Those familiar with Kant's account of lying in a superficial sense characteristically assume that for Kant, lying is inherently wrong because it (1) amounts to a misuse of one's status as an end in itself while at the same time (2) threatens the possibility of making promises. In the latter sense, an agent who promises falsely precludes the existence of that speech act in a world where falsely promising is a universal maxim. However, this is not the moral problem posed by lying. Lying is morally troublesome because it amounts to the causal manipulation of another's will.⁴⁰ By lying, an agent prevents the deceived person from accessing the reasons that ultimately justify her own action, which in turn incorporates into her action (and thus into her practical reasoning) the result of the deceiving agent's maxim. This shared structure between deceiver and deceived is clearly vicious, for it leads the one who receives the lie to generate a maxim lacking a complete justification.

That said, drawing the parallel between virtue-signaling and lying becomes inescapable. In the same way that virtue-signaling can be regarded as a form of external lying, moral self-signaling is a form of self-deception, that is, an internal lie that we tell ourselves, preventing us from truly accessing and being able to evaluate our practical reasoning.

Insofar as it obscures the exercise of practical reason, self-deception is bound to have negative consequences for the agent who rationalizes away all discomfort caused by the perception of the potential immorality of her actions.

Self-deception can also lead to cognitive losses, such as emotional desensitization (Garrett et al, 2016), and may furthermore decrease the ability of self-deceived agents to successfully pursue informed rational judgements, which can in turn lead to less accurate predictions (Chance et al, 2011). In terms of moral capacities, self-deception is especially pernicious, as it subjects the agent to a distorted view of moral reality. This is problematic because, given the relevance of ethical considerations in consumer decision-making overall (Chowdhury, 2017; Martinez & Jaeger, 2016), self-deception precludes the most critical tool to combat deception promoted by companies making use of green strategies: moral education.

Moral education, for Kant, is an essential tool not only for the pursuit of virtue⁴¹, but also for the formation of a moral community of responsible agents. Without the ability to define and pursue ends, to form informed rational judgements, and to assess one's actions and character, no moral practice is possible. In addition, the absence of moral knowledge precludes moral education and, as a result, the formation of such a moral community is jeopardized.

Most importantly, self-deception represents a critical risk for the very exercise of morality. This is one of Kant's most central contentions in the *Doctrine of Virtue* (MS 6:429 - 431). Along with external deception, self-deception corrupts the ability agents have to use the capacity from which their personality is derived, namely, the ability to properly use practical reason. Both lying and self-deception manipulate the will of the deceived subject, obscuring and preventing the agent from acting from duty. Analogously, actions whose maxim is signaling to oneself one's own supposed virtue pose a similar risk.

In the context of ethical agents' decision-making in regard to SGN, self-signaling renders unnecessary any scrutiny that might eventually lead agents to care more than symbolically

about morality. Moreover, by signaling their virtue to others these agents flag to themselves an alleged conformity to their practical identities in a process of self-deception that may in turn lead them to fail to enact the reasons why they embraced such identities in the first place.

CONCLUSION

From what has been said above, the reasons why it is important for an agent to be able to evaluate one's maxims emerge. By assessing maxims, agents are able to ascertain the conformity between their actions and the practical identities they have embraced. Moreover, they are able to ascertain whether discrete actions conform to what morality requires, that is, whether they have moral worth or, put another way, whether such actions conform to one's moral identity. In this regard, evaluating maxims is especially important because we cannot guarantee that the practical identities we adopt will necessarily generate morally worthy or nonconflicting obligations. That is to say that given the contingent character of whatever practical identities we adopt, one might conceivably adopt identities such as that of an egoist or a mafioso, which in turn would generate obligations accordingly⁴². In this scenario, the process of evaluating maxims is critical to ultimately bringing agents that hold immoral forms of self-identification back into morality⁴³.

Of course, self-deception itself threatens our ability to assess our maxims, another reason why it is dangerous and must be opposed. However, being aware of the existence and the workings of this and other psychological strategies is, paradoxically, the best we have when it comes to produce quality reflexive processes that result in truthful evaluations, to pursue morally worthy actions, as well as to embrace practical identities that are genuinely committed to morality.

In sum, akin to virtue signaling, the self-deception involved in self-signaling is a reinforcing attitude, closely related to the perception and moral assessment an agent makes about oneself. One's view about oneself, about one's own moral identity, and ultimately about one's very interest in morality, make SGN so powerful. Part of their success depends on whether psychological mechanisms aimed at preserving the agent's moral integrity such as self-deception are operational.

This comes to the fore when we approach the problem of adherence to green narratives from a moral standpoint. Lacking moral literacy that ensures quality in forming and assessing the moral judgments underpinning one's decisions and actions, one's practical identities (despite being shaped as a means of providing us guidance in the moral terrain) tend to paradoxically fulfill the very opposite role. They may function as shields of self-deception, hindering the agent's access to one's own maxims, character and will.

Kant's moral psychology allows us to ascertain the underlying reasons as to why this is worrisome, but most importantly, it provides us with elements to delve beyond the virtue signaling broadly construed. These elements not only disclose the normative aspect of decisions surrounding green issues, but also reveal the ethical nuances and the psychological aspects that

lie at the heart of our behavior towards narratives we adhere to in spite of acknowledging them as deceptive.

Abstract. Why do agents, who consider themselves ethical or green consumers, endorse green narratives they acknowledge to be deceptive? In this paper I draw on Kant's moral psychology to propose a conceptual framework that provides us with elements to explain individual-level adherence to symbolic green narratives (SGN). From a theoretical perspective, I show how Kant's moral psychology provides insights consistent with the state of the art in contemporary social psychology regarding why green consumers fail to enact their best judgment when it comes to endorsing such narratives. My approach is complementary to other theories in arguing that many of our actions in the moral field, and particularly actions and decisions concerning green narratives, are typically pursued aiming not merely at virtue signaling but also at *self-affirmation* concerning one's own virtue.

Keywords: symbolic green narratives; moral psychology; practical identity; virtue-signaling; self-deception.

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² Claims that moral reasons offer no rationale for acting. A notable example of claiming that phenomena such as those discussed here should not be analyzed from an ethics framework, see Moeller, H. G., 2009. Although Moeller does not claim to be an amoralist himself, he does attack the main idea behind my argument, i.e., that ethics is a possible or desirable way to address contemporary quandaries.

³ Contemporary literature has generally approached these narratives under the label of *greenwashing*. See also note 04 below.

⁴ In line with the terminology coined by Bowen, F. (2014), I will accordingly employ the concept of symbolic green narratives to delineate all kinds of intentionally produced discourse seeking to mislead the public about practical commitment or involvement toward environmentally related issues, making it appear that this company, good, or service appears more sustainable than it actually is.

- ⁵ The increasing pervasiveness of misleading environmental communication is reviewed by Lyon, T. P & Montgomery, A. W. (2015). For a critical approach to the phenomenon, see Maxwell, R. & Miller, T. (2017).
- ⁶ The concept of moral grandstanding is defined by Tosi & Warmke (2016, p. 200) as involving the desire “that other people recognize her as morally respectable.” In this regard, see also Blackford, R., 2021.
- ⁷ Put in terms of greenwashing: when perceived, greenwashing results in negative attitudes towards those who produce it (Zhang et al, 2018). Thus, for cases where even if perceived, greenwashing maintains its success in deception, it is still necessary that the factors responsible for this success be determined.
- ⁸ Which ultimately refers to the equivalence between will and practical reason. See *GMS* 4: 412.
- ⁹ Kant’s illustrious example of the philanthropist (*GMS* 4: 398) is widely used in the literature when it comes to these distinctions. It deals with a person with a sympathetic temperament - whose compassionate action finds intimate pleasure in performing benevolent actions.
- ¹⁰ Cases of *practical akrasia* (weakness of the will i.e., the performance of deeds against our best judgment), highlight the interference our sensible impulses have on our decisions about what we have most reason to do.
- ¹¹ The concept of a maxim is not widely discussed by Kant, for there was at Kant’s time a certain consensus about its meaning. For a broader understanding regarding the concept of maxims, in particular *practical maxims*, see Kitcheer, P, 2003. She addresses, among other relevant aspects, the apparent contradiction that arises in Kant’s writings as he considers maxims as bearers of moral worth, other accounts on this concept, as well as the understanding of traditions preceding his ethics.
- ¹² Cf *MS*: 409. Kant calls “fantastically virtuous” one who is overly concerned with non-moral details, such as “whether I eat meat or fish”, an example that is however, easily moral, since it involves taking the lives of sentient beings who have an interest in their existence.
- ¹³ In this sense, such norms refer to more abstract ideas and goals, that is, values that guide human behavior and the way individuals assess it.
- ¹⁴ Human freedom can also be hindered by *external*, i.e., juridical or legal laws. Both sorts of duties (internal or external) are capable of imposing norms that necessitate, i.e., create restrictions or constraints on human will.
- ¹⁵ See Sho & Krasser, 2001.
- ¹⁶ Crowe & Simon (2000, p. 04) emphasize that the term ‘ethical’ covers “matters of conscience such as animal welfare and fair trade, social aspects such as labor standards, as well as more self-interested health concerns behind the growth of organic food sales.”
- ¹⁷ Empirical evidence suggests a positive correlation of ecolabelling on consumer purchasing behavior. Teisl et al (2002) highlight this correlation based upon evidence of the impact of the introduction of the ‘dolphin-safe label’ in tuna retail sales. More recently, Dhir et al (2021) found that labeling satisfaction is one of the main drivers of green consumption in the context of apparel.
- ¹⁸ More specifically, she expands Kant’s theory by arguing that practical identities determine moral agents’ choices just as, in Kant’s view, moral principles do.
- ¹⁹ Korsgaard’s notion of practical identity holds a prominently social dimension, since, as she summarizes (2009, p. 20) it includes “roles and relationships, citizenship, membership in ethnic groups, causes, vocations, professions and offices.” It is, in this sense, consistent with empirical evidence about the salience of these social roles and interactions in our moral judgements. In this respect, see Hamilton & Sanders, 1981; Kaspar et al, 2016; and Willemsen et al, 2018.
- ²⁰ Studies on environmental self-identity (Van der Werff et al, 2013) support this idea by showing that there is a positive correlation between environmental self-identity and pro-environmental actions.
- ²¹ There is a form of practical identity that is nevertheless necessary and therefore, once assumed, a normative source of moral obligations that are likewise necessary, viz., the moral identity. To have a moral identity is for Korsgaard (1996, p. 121) “to value yourself just as a human being”, or “valuing humanity in your own person rationally”, which in turn also implies valuing humanity in the other person’s rationality.
- ²² To bear a moral identity amounts to “valuing humanity in your own person rationally” (*ibidem*) which in turn also implies valuing humanity in the other person’s rationality.
- ²³ Overall, fair trade initiatives are committed to challenging “the ecologically and socially exploitative relations” (Schreck, 2002, p. 13) characteristic of industrial production systems, in order to “provide consumers with a guarantee that products are grown by disadvantaged producers *under healthy social and environmental conditions*” (*ibidem*).

²⁴ In terms of marketing strategies, that would be analogous to targeting a shampoo campaign at bald consumers. The theory I outline here maps the behavior of these people to the same extent that the theory of competitive altruism maps the behavior of people who truly don't care about being perceived as non-virtuous, non-altruistic or non-empathic.

²⁵ See section 2.2.

²⁶ Benefits typically perceived by meat eaters are, for example, aesthetic - related to the taste of the meat (Piazza et al, 2015), social - related to the social impact within gendered food consumption ideologies (Adams, 2018; 2007), socio-environmental - aiming at achieving acknowledgement of ecological virtues by her peers, etc.

²⁷ It is to be noted that one does not have to fully endorse a course of action in order to pursue it. Examples are cases of akratic actions, i. e. those one pursues despite the awareness that they violate one's moral requirements.

²⁸ Cf. Korsgaard, 1996, pp. 100 -102.

²⁹ There are multiple reasons why an individual may want to preserve practical identities whose demands are not wholly in agreement with his or her desires. Because they are understood and assessed within cultural contexts, those reasons are typically associated with the social sphere, but they are correspondingly often related to those individuals' self-perceptions. Kant acknowledges the importance of the social sphere in the context of demonstrating virtue. For example, in *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (6: 27), he describes what he calls a predisposition to humanity as a predisposition to "gain worth in the opinion of others," which can become a vice to the extent that the agent comes to desire "superiority for oneself over others."

³⁰ Such as avoiding pain, stress and anxiety generated by the threat to integrity (Goleman, 1985; Smith, 2004).

³¹ I take both terms as coextensive. For a background on the term rationalizing [*Vernünfteln*] in Kant's theory, see Sticker, M. 2021, pp. 08 – 17. For a discussion on the placement of *self-deception* in Kant's work, see Papish, L., 2018, pp. 68 – 69.

³² Instances of such behavior are individuals who classify themselves as vegetarians but violate the dietary requirements for self-attribution of that identity. For an empirical investigation of the factors leading to such dietary violations, see *Rosenfeld & Tomiyama, 2019*. Through a qualitative study, they address the ways in which meat-eating vegetarians cognitively cope with dietary violations, emphasizing the *post-hoc* justifications following from that behavior.

³³ I will get back to this issue later when I discuss the priority of self-deception over external lying.

³⁴ I discuss the relationship between external lying and self-deception elsewhere (AUTHOR, year). In AUTHOR (forthcoming), I argue for the centrality of the duty of truthfulness within Kant's ethical writings.

³⁵ This principle is central to Kant's account of duties that an agent has towards oneself because (among other reasons), the agent's moral improvement depends on it.

³⁶ The practice of virtue signaling is not a practice restricted to individuals. Companies may also engage in virtue signaling (Berthon et al, 2021). As a matter of fact, business models conveying positive signaling stand out due to their potential to improve companies' green credentials (Attah-Boakye et al, 2022).

³⁷ It is worth noting that here the idea of lie does not concern the negative sense of truth by equivalence, that is, it does not necessarily involve verisimilitude. Instead, a lying proposition is one that fails to carry truthfulness. Accordingly, what is relevant here, is that the agent *acknowledges* certain content as misleading.

³⁸ Such a fact is crucial for the emergence of moral self-signaling and it is even more evident when it comes to cases of *virtue* signaling. This is additionally consistent with Kant's views on rational interests. As Sticker, (2021, p. 30) emphasizes, a rational interest that would function as an incentive for moral actions would be the rational interest an agent has to feel rationally justified. This interest, he claims, "is rooted in an agent's acknowledgement of the authority of duty", that is, in morality.

³⁹ In the third chapter of her book, Papish highlights the aspect of rationalizations that concerns the violation of belief formation norms. Once an agent is unable to contradict what she is already aware of, she may resort to psychological strategies to shift her attention to cognitions that are more attractive to her.

⁴⁰ I follow, in this regard, the interpretation outlined by Herman, B., 2022.

⁴¹ MS 6: 477

⁴² This is assumed by Korsgaard as being part of her first-person normative perspective, according to which moral obligations are generated from what *the agent herself* takes to be normative. For the critique about immoral practical identities, see Cohen, 1996, pp. 183 - 187. For Korsgaard's response in this regard, see Korsgaard, 1996, pp. 254 - 258.

⁴³ The precise process of how this is carried out is described by Korsgaard under the name *reflective endorsement*. Drawing on Kant, she maintains that the test of reflective endorsement is precisely the method "used by actual moral agents to establish the normativity of all their particular motives and inclinations (...) [It] is not merely a way of justifying morality. *It is morality itself*". For her argument in this regard, see Korsgaard, 1996, chapter 03: *The Authority of Reflection*.

THE HIDDEN INFLUENCE ON KANT: POPE'S PRESENCE IN KANT'S LIFE AND OEUVRE

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*Könnst' er, der klar bestimmt der Sterne Lauf
die Wege seines Denkens zeigen auf?*³

Alexander Pope⁴

INTRODUCTION

“Es ist gut” (“It is good”), those last words spoken by Kant at his death⁵ echo in my readings with those last words of the first epistle of Alexander Pope’s *Essay on Man* – “*whatever is, is right*”; first translated⁶ into German as “*Alles ist gut*” (“everything is good”). As one can hear the last spoken words from a dying one not so clearly⁷, perhaps the initial “*All*” was overheard and just the “*es*” made its way to comprehension and the Kantian “*Es ist gut*” could in fact be Pope’s “*Alles ist gut*”; nevertheless, they are very similar. A coincidence not to be overseen as we will see to the end of this paper, although Kuehn doubts⁸ this relation that was already suggested by Rudolf Malter⁹, arguing that it would refer merely to Kant’s last gulp of wine.

Until now, Pope is indeed recognized as Kant’s favorite poet¹⁰, but the amount of Kantian research addressed to him or to his correlated main themes – namely the concepts of *chain of being* and *optimism* –, if searched on De Gruyter database and Google, is not that expressive and has had its peak in the 1980’s with Hintikka, Knuutila, Cunha and others after being brought into daylight by Lovejoy in 1936 presenting a study on the history of the idea of the Great Chain of Being that reached out to the Greeks and included Kant, closely related to Pope; perhaps this lack of interest can be credited to the common contemporary reception that the essay with its chain of being and its neoplatonic plenitude are bad ideas, as Solomon mentioned Lovejoy’s assess of the essay¹¹. Optimism, on the other hand, is a concept more often connected to Leibniz than to Pope and is commonly treated as a minor Kantian topic; perhaps because it was only mentioned in three *Reflexionen* from 1753/1754 and in one work of 1759. Although the term optimism vanished from Kant’s oeuvre, the concept of the

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best of all possible worlds endured as stated in the Kant Lexikon¹², being equally important throughout his work, altering its form to fit Kant's philosophical development reaching out to his concept of highest good, i.e.. The two less focused themes of the essay, an ontological status of love (being the chain of being the chain of love) and the limitation of pride, have had until now no researched linked to Kant. Pope, as an historical reference is not even mentioned at the *Kant im Context* III's timeline and Kuehn's timeline, whereas other authors like Haller and Hume and Kants professors are. Pope is mentioned six times in the most relevant *Kant on poetry*, edited 2023 by Fernando Silva and Bernd Dörflinger, but again, with minor expression than Virgil (see Sánchez) and mostly in examples being one amongst other poets. Although stating the right importance of poetry (see Santos) and emotions (see Guyer) for Kant and in his oeuvre, especially in relation to aesthetic ideas, and taking in account Kant's regard on Pope's serious work on poetry that "bring virtue and its sensations into harmonious play" (also Guyer), this outstanding collection fails in pointing out the breadth and depth of Pope's influence on Kant and his philosophy.

My claim in this article, the first of a three-part series, is that Kant had a hidden influence right from the start that molded his philosophy and accompanied him throughout his life until his last words: Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*. To unveil the influence that the poem *Essay on Man* had on Kant and his philosophy, setting the adequate context for this article to unfold, I will prove that A) Kant had contact with the poem before even publishing his first article in 1746; B) there is sufficient evidence to confirm its direct influence on the initial phase of Kants work; C) Pope's presence can be tracked throughout Kant's life as an unshakeable and steady estate of personal reference; and that D) Popes mentions are equally distributed throughout Kants entire work. I will conclude evaluating the presented data and leave the presence of the four core ideas of the poem in Kants philosophy, namely the two more known – Optimism and Chain of being – and the two often ignored ones – the limitation of pride and the chain of love – and a deeper exploration of Kants work as a planned interconnected continuum to the other two article of the series that this one starts.

EARLY READING

So let us confirm that A) Kant had contact with the poem before even publishing his first article in 1746. The first German translation of the poem *Essay on Man* was made by Barthold Heinrich Brockes¹³, published in 1740 and probably used by Carl Heinrich Rappolt along the original at his classes of 1741 and 1742, probably attended by Kant. Probably, because there is – as long as of my concern – no bureaucratic confirmation of his matriculation and no written reference to the use of this translation, but although Rappolt was also an English teacher at the university – where he also taught on Culture, Hume and Newton (three topics of interest for Kant) – it is hardly unlike that he hold this reading on English since it was not the common language that it is nowadays. So, we may presume that Rappolt read to his students from Brockes' translation comparing with Pope's original – this would amplify the problematization of the controversial translation in French, made by Du Resnel in 1737, and followed in German by Brockes in 1740, where in both cases the retranslation into English

turns out to be ‘everything is good’ and not the original “everything is right”. Aside from the impossibility of its confirmation because of the lack of bureaucratic evidence, it will be evident from the following elements, specifically those related to his own text and correspondence, that Kant was present to Rappolt’s lectures. Opponents could argue that Rappolt was not of great influence on Kant, because he is indeed mentioned not even once in Kants work or even correspondence, and that this could be an argument against Kant being present to the classes or at least that the classes were of any significance to him. But this shouldn’t be taken in account, since even Kants metaphysics teacher that is renowned to be his most influential teacher, Martin Knutzen, is mentioned just three times throughout Kant’s entire work and correspondence: once in a correspondence to the King¹⁴, where Kant asks for the recently deceased Knutzens job, and twice in lectures, eternalized by his students in the *Wiener Logik*¹⁵ – where he is mentioned *une passant* as being part of a lineage of logic, having although less expression than Reusch in Kants text– and the *Vorlesungen über Metaphysik*¹⁶, where he is mentioned as being one who passes along the metaphysics of Baumgarten. In other words: there is no great reference, no compliment or demonstration of proximity or reverence – not for Rappolt and not even for Knutzen.¹⁷ On the other hand, Kant mentioned the will to travel to England as confirmed in a letter from Wielkes to Kant from March, 18th, 1771; although this desire could also be influenced¹⁸ by the friendship to Englishmen Motherby and Green, since their friendship was established prior to 1763 as confirmed by a glass engraved with the friends signatures, it is not without interest that Rappolt traveled to England¹⁹ to study Physics and Mathematic in 1729 and 1730 and got elected outstanding member at the *Königlich Preussischen Sozietät der Wissenschaften* in 1735. A man of science and grace or, as Hamann wrote with words that could fit Kant as well:

“ein Mann, der eine besondere Scharfsinnigkeit besaß natürliche Dinge zu beurteilen mit der Andacht und Einfalt und Bescheidenheit eines christlichen Weltweisen, und eine ungemeyne Stärke den Geist der römischen Schriftsteller und ihrer Sprache nachzuahmen²⁰“²¹.

Rappolt’s impact on the young Kant is yet to be fully reconstructed. But there is already some data on it. „Rappolt had traveled and studied in England, and apparently delighted in opening these new intellectual vistas to his students” – so here is a very certain source of contact from Kant with Hume and, specifically, Pope.²² And, as presented in Kuehn’s Kant biography, it was Rappolt that drew Kants attention and delight to Pope’s work – especially for *Essay on man*. Although there is, as I already said, no bureaucratic confirmation that Kant studied with Rappolt, there is much room to assume that Kant had studied with him more than once in the years between 1740 and 1746 – precisely after the German translation of *Essay on Man* by Brockes was published (1740) Rappolt hold lectures²³ on *Essay on Man* in 1741 and announced two courses in 1742: *Theodicaeam e contemplatione hominis praeunte Pope* and *De vividissima naturae humanae imagine coloribus Popii adornata*. “In 1741, Carl Heinrich Rappolt, a professor at the University of Königsberg, explained the ideas of the *Essay on Man* to his class, and the following year he announced Pope’s “Théodicee” as the subject of his course.”²⁴ And, as suggested by Victor Delbos in 1905²⁵, it is likely that “Kant first derived his admiration for the philosophy of Pope from Rappolt”. Let us remember that Kant entered

the University in 1740, so he had contact to Pope right from his very beginning. And although there was great criticism against Pope – especially of Spinozism – it was Warburton's defense that influenced²⁶ Rappolt hence the poem was shown as consistent and Christian offering no resistance for both major influences of the young Kant – his keen interest on science and his mother's pietism:

“The Poet begins in telling us his Subject is An Essay on Man --- His End of Writing is, to vindicate Providence. -Tells us against whom he wrote, the Atheists. -From whence he intends to fetch his Arguments, from the visible Things of God seen in this System. -Lays down this Proposition as the Foundation of his Thesis, that of all possible Systems, infinite Wisdom has formed the best. - Draws from thence two Consequences; 1. That there must needs be somewhere such a Creature as Man; 2. That the moral Evil which He is the Author of, is productive of the Good of the Whole. This is his general Thesis; from whence he draws this Conclusion, That Man should rest submissive and content, and make the Hopes of Futurity his Comfort, -but not suffer this to be the Occasion of PRIDE, which is the Cause of all his impious Complaints.”²⁷

Rogers gives us a better context for Warburton's role in Pope's continental reception:

“Because of the confusion over the exact nature of Pope's poem and the interpretation of it, Warburton's views were important and authoritative for readers on the Continent. These readers, after all, were not too certain about the nature of English thought; and the remarks of an Englishman on the work of a fellow countryman were especially influential with them.”²⁸

INFLUENCE ON THE INITIAL PHASE

After having proved that A) Kant had contact with the poem before even publishing his first article in 1746, let us confirm that there is B) sufficient evidence on Pope's direct influence on the initial phase of Kants work, beginning with Kants first writing, *Gedanken von der wahren Schätzung der lebendigen Kräfte*, where Kant supports a “middle way” between the views of Leibniz and Newton about the vivid force which exists in movement.

„Die Kenntniß dieser zwei äußersten Grenzen mußte ohne Schwierigkeit den Punkt bestimmen, darin das Wahre von beiden Seiten zusammen fiel. Diesen anzutreffen, war nichts weniger als eine große Scharfsinnigkeit nöthig, es bedurfte nur einer kleinen Abwesenheit des Parteieneifers und ein kurzes Gleichgewicht der Gemüthsneigungen, so war die Beschwerde sofort abgethan.”²⁹³⁰

Pope wrote following in his design:

“If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of Doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over Terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a temperate yet not inconsistent, and a short yet not imperfect System of Ethics.”³¹

The influence is explicit: not only on this writing of Kant, but on his whole philosophy since it is precisely the overcoming and recombination of previously opposite doctrines. Kant made this in epistemology where he founded his critical philosophy betwixt the extremes of empiricism and rationalism; in moral, betwixt stoicism and epicureanism; in aesthetic, betwixt Burke, Hume, Hutcheson, Baumgarten and others. Even the developing of his work withholds this pattern, beginning with natural science and then moving to metaphysics developing them on parallel to finally establish the critical view and path that leads to his anthropology and to

the invitation to live his view, manifesting the *Übergang* (transition) from ‘Philosophy’ to ‘To philosophize’, to combine God and the World.

In a letter to Haller³² from August 1749, Kant already mentions a forthcoming work as a continuation of his reflections on vivid forces. We can pledge that he refers to his *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels* (ANTH) since he there reduces everything to two fundamental forces of attraction and rejection³³, which he further on in his *Tugendlehre* (TL) will compare to love and respect³⁴. In ANTH, which was initially anonymously published, same strategy used by Pope as he published his Essay on Man, Kant quotes Pope six times – three of which are epigraphs and suggest the topics from Pope’s poem with which Kant was thinking³⁵:

I. The great chain of being

Seht jene große Wunderkette, die alle Theile dieser Welt
Vereinert und zusammenzieht und die das große Ganz³⁶ erhält.³⁷
Pope.³⁸

Not mentioned at all in the Eisler Kant Lexikon and although almost not mentioned in the newest Kant Lexikon being referenced just to the 1766 “*Träume*” (*Träume eines Geistersehers*), in relation to Swedenborg’s invisible realm, the concept of the great chain of being stretches far beyond and impacts Kant’s notion of Nature, world and the interconnection of phenomena in human mind: in the beginning with his ANTH as is being shown, in the period of the critics (in all three critics, where in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (KrV) it is used to debunk the physicotheological proof³⁹; in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (KpV) and the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (KU) it appears just as chain of appearances⁴⁰, whereas in the KU the concept is used also to question taste as “*Mittelglied der Kette der menschlichen Vermögen a priori*”⁴¹); the concept of chain of being even made its way to Kant’s *Opus Postumum*⁴². So, we see it perpetrated as the chain of beings in nature and as a way to concept human mind’s operation to structure the phenomenal world. It is attachment that enslaves us in those links we create in our mind to deal with the outer magnitudes of which Nature consists, turning our very essence, love, into self-inflicted chains. The way to liberate oneself is through respect to the whole of the law.

II. The attraction of all matter

Schau dich die bildende Natur zu ihrem großen Zweck bewegen,
Ein jedes Sonnenstäubchen sich zu einem andern Stäubchen regen,
Ein jedes, das gezogen wird, das andere wieder an sich ziehn,
Das nächste wieder zu umfassen, es zu formiren sich bemühn.
Beschau die Materie auf tausend Art und Weise sich
Zum allgemeinen Centro drängen.⁴³
Pope.⁴⁴

By following nature's rules and being able to describe its unfolding without having to recure to God, both pay tribute to Newton. It is important to notice the convergence force to a center – applying it to moral, Pope will state the ruling sentiment, and that it should be love, whereas Kant will state the respect, as the moral (ruling) sentiment, the force that impedes collapse of contraction, being love the force that binds us all, from creation to atomic forces and animation of matter.

III. The medial position of humans and their capacity to infer the systematic nature of the universe without being able to comprehend the extent or limits of the system.

Wer das Verhältniß aller Welten von einem Theil zum andern weiß,
Wer aller Sonnen Menge kennet und jeglichen Planetenkreis,
Wer die verschiedenen Bewohner von einem jeden Stern erkennt,
Dem ist allein, warum die Dinge so sind, als wie sie sind, vergönnet,
Zu fassen und uns zu erklären.⁴⁵

Pope.⁴⁶

Pope's human as an Isthmus, a narrow passage connecting to larger areas – the animal and the divine, the self and the social –, is like Kant's human: a *Numero Idem*, simultaneously *homo noumenon* and *homo phaenomenon*, a non-dual passage between worlds. Kant precisely tried to structure the system presenting human limits. Opponents could correctly argue that this is cultural common ground – like the figure of Jesus Christ to stick with the handiest example –, but my point is first precisely gathering all the elements. The fact that it is a common ground does not impede the influence of the poem on this topic, nor exclude other sources – on this topic as of the whole of the research. The point is to secure Pope's long neglected presence and after having gathered all the elements demonstrate their interconnectedness. There are of course plenty and multiple sources and interlocutors of Kant during his lifetime – what I want to stress out is that Pope is the initial mainframe used by Kant and sticks with him until the end.

The other three quotations reinforce these topics and expand the comprehension of Pope's influence:

i. Plenitude that includes transitoriness

Der stets mit einem gleichen Auge, weil er der Schöpfer ja von allen,
Sieht einen Helden untergehn und einen kleinen Sperling fallen,
Sieht eine Wasserblase springen und eine ganze Welt vergehn.⁴⁷

Pope nach Brockes' Übersetzung.⁴⁸

The focus relies on the compatibility of transitoriness and plenitude otherwise thought of contradictory, especially to finite human beings. Kant, quoted by Jones:

“if a world-system exhausts in the long course of its duration all variety which its arrangement can hold, if it now has become a superfluous member in the chain of being, then nothing is more befitting than that in the theater of the universe that [factor should] play the last role which taxes each finite being, namely, that each should bring its levy to transitoriness.”⁴⁹

Here we can see clearly the very notion of progress presented throughout Kant’s work, as *Zum ewigen Frieden (ZeF)* of 1797, for example, confirms. Progress that does not diminish plenitude of creation moreover reassures its abundance, actualizing appearances.

ii. Limitation of pride

Da jüngst die obern Wesen sahn,
Was unlängst recht verwunderlich
Ein Sterblicher bei uns gethan,
Und wie er der Natur Gesetz entfaltet: wunderten sie sich,
Daß durch ein irdisches Geschöpf dergleichen möglich zu geschehn,
Und sahen unsern Newton an, so wie wir einen Affen sehn.⁵⁰
Pope.⁵¹

We can read the same comparison in Kant’s *Vorlesungen über Metaphysik*, compiled by Herder in the years of 1762 to 1764: “Newton statt ein Mensch zu sein - wurde ein Affe der Engel⁵²”⁵³. Reinforcing our awareness of the limitation of our knowledge helps us to limit our pride.

Welch eine Kette, die von Gott den Anfang nimmt, was für Naturen
Von himmlischen und irdischen, von Engeln, Menschen bis zum Vieh,
Vom Seraphim bis zum Gewürm! O Weite, die das Auge nie
Erreichen und betrachten kann,
Von dem Unendlichen zu dir, von dir zum Nichts!⁵⁴
Pope.⁵⁵

The limitation of pride is of utmost relevance for kantian ethics as we get to know in the *KpV*⁵⁶ that it is precisely the humiliation of the self that makes room for morality, annihilating arrogance (*Eigendünkel*) and letting selflove (*Eigenliebe*) in conformity with the law, thus cultivating rational self-love (*vernünftige Selbstliebe*)⁵⁷, a love that has always been in conformity to the law, but had outgrown its healthy limits bringing the whole to collapse⁵⁸. Here we can think of a direct link to the natural dispositions to good and the radical evil presented by Kant in his *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft (Religion)*. As one can remember, it is the personality, the image of humanity in oneself that is the key to withdraw of corruption and decay into manipulation, oppression and the state of war; personality that connects outer and inner world through freedom and grants us the possibility of higher experiences. We see the importance of limiting pride also in the *KU*⁵⁹, where Kant adverts against the decay and

corruption to which pride leads, turning theology into theosophy or demonology and religion into theurgy or idolatry.

To think with Jones:

“It might not be unreasonable to suggest that Pope’s Essay was one of the tools Kant used in formulating his problematic of the comprehensibility of absolute rational truths that transcend the limits of what humans know of their world through sense, and that he did so through applying Pope’s ideas of interrelated systems to the technicalities (and fantasies) of cosmogony”.

For Kant, the issue was to perceive the beauty of an interconnected whole. As Tom Jones states:

“Pope’s images of system piled on system might have stimulated Kant’s imagination. The poem [...] confronts a question very similar to that which Kant sets himself in his text, attempting to reconcile the mechanistic and the providential universe”.⁶⁰ [...] If Kant took seriously Pope’s instruction to “Observe how system into system runs”, we may regard the poem as contributing to his insight about the Milky Way as an independent star system. [...] In the Critique of Judgement (1790) Kant points out that all claims to magnitude based on sense are relative; but that we nonetheless make claims about magnitude with reference to an absolute realm. This absolute realm is the realm of reason that transcends any sensory experience. To experience the mathematically sublime is to experience mingled pleasure and pain; pain at the insufficiency of our sensory apparatus for conceiving extremes of magnitude, and pleasure at the conformity of our nature to a rule of reason that determines absolutes. [...] The Milky Way is an object that exquites this rational idea of absolute magnitude in the face of the incapacity of the senses to conceive of the magnitudes concerned.”⁶¹

Jones refers himself in the quote above to *ANTH* and to the third critique (*KU*), the sublime and its relation to expanding our existence through the awe of experience and its relation to morality being evident, but everyone familiar with the *Beschluss*⁶² from *KpV* has to remember the “worlds upon worlds and systems of systems” and how it “destroys, as it were, my importance as an animal creature” and puts us in the position of connecting the outer conditioned and constantly actualizing combinations with the inner freedom that disposes an infinite world and eternal value through our personality, the very image of humanity in oneself. Almost a prelude to his *Opus Postumum*, where humankind is invited to link God and World⁶³, triad that constitutes the *Universum*. Jones notes how close Kant is to Pope, who argues, according to Jones that:

“We know only what concerns the human system, but that our middle nature determines and obliges us to conjecture outward from that system to a greater and divinely governed universe in which all discord is harmony.”⁶⁴

The two initial lines⁶⁵ of the second epistle of the poem – “Know then thyself, presume not God to scan; The proper study of mankind is man” – are a guiding motto for Kant since his plan evolves to respond to the question ‘what is man?’ after delimiting our knowledge on god, while contemplating the three other questions that were answered with his philosophy: What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope for? Commonly the first question is correlated to the first critique, the second to the second and the third question to the third critique and other works of the period, like *Religion* and *ZeF*, being Kant’s Anthropology related to the fourth question of what human being is, but with reassurance of the use of the other

works in support to. It occurs that we can relate Pope's four epistles to Kant's four questions. I shall give a slight overview, retaining a more profound and direct correlation for the third article of our series: Pope's first epistle is about man in the abstract with respect to the Universe, "that we can judge only with regard to our own System, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things" – the relation to the limits of human knowledge as presented in the *KrV* being easily sustainable also with the presence of the concept of chain of beings in the first critique; in the second epistle, "of the Nature and State of Man, with respect to Himself, as an Individual and the business of Man not to pry into God, but to study himself" – we can think of an influence to determine our responsibility towards what we ought to do after being aware and knowing what we know, especially when we read in the second epistle's opening that virtue and vices are joined in our mixed nature and that the limits are near, yet the things separate and evident, calling out for what is the office of Reason. Human's "middle nature; his powers and frailties and the limits of his capacity" of the second epistle's opening remember the *Beschluss* of the *KpV*. The third epistle and its theme "of the nature and state of man, with respect to society" brings the thematic of politics, religion, society and can be related to what we can taste and expect from that what we do out of what we know. The last epistle is about "the nature and state of man, with respect to happiness" and can be related to the fourth question of what the human being is: a being that just attains perfection in and through his species; or, as we read in the opening of this epistle "all particular Happiness depends on general".

For Kant, philosophy begins with the *Nosce te ipsum*⁶⁶ and all three questions lead to the fourth and final question of what the human being is, whereas Pope's poem ends like this: "all our knowledge is, ourselves to know". Let us remember that Kant wrote in 1769⁶⁷ on the importance of a science of the subject, that metaphysic as critique of pure reason is. And that in the *KrV* the self (*Ich*) is reduced to an empty form, a mere consciousness that accompanies all concepts. Makes sense, if we understand that the unenlightened self, blinded with separateness and attached to its transitional phenomenon – or, simple, drowned in ignorance –, is the obstacle to love on its passage from self to social, that Pope sees as a continuum⁶⁸; nevertheless, is the essay a poem of love. "Love expressed in the act of creating a world; love for ourselves, in the form of our appetites; love for others, from sexual partners to children to those with whom we constitute a political body".⁶⁹ Apparently, Kant is dealing with the purification of the self during his *stumme Jahre*, the years between his 1770 dissertation and the 1781 *KrV*, dissecting from his subjective experience and theoretical knowledge the structure a priori that enables human knowledge. According to Willaschek's *Kant Lexikon*⁷⁰, the table of categories was already present in the 1770ies with some terminology differences. It goes not without interest that Cassirer, one of the most outstanding neokantians, named one of his major works after Pope's poem. According to Jones, Cassirer "finds in Pope the Enlightenment encouragement to return from boundless speculation to human science: "Time and again thought returns to its point of departure from its various journeys of exploration intended to broaden the horizon of objective reality. Pope gave brief and pregnant expression to this deep-seated feeling of the age in the line: "The proper study of mankind is man."⁷¹ Could this movement of returning from boundless speculation to human science not be a description of Kant's intent?

The above six presented quotations make the year of 1755 the most Popean year of all: both quantity and quality, since no other year concentrates as many quotations and there are no other epigraphs using Pope throughout Kants work. It is also an emblematic year because of the two writings in Latin that granted Kant his Magister – with *De igne (DI)* – and his habilitation – with *Nova Dilucidatio (ND)*. Symbolically it is the year where Kant, starting with the fire (DI) separates physics (represented by the ANTH) and metaphysics (represented by ND). That our solar system has a fireball in its center and that Kant writes in the same year about the element and this system is a coincidence – is it not? In Chemistry fire and centrifuge rotation are used to combine and separate elements; in Alchemy, in the process of spagyric, it is to gain the Arkanum – the quintessence of an element –, the purified element. Let us remember that Kant called his reason *pura ratio (reine Vernunft)* and not *recta ratio* and defines it as a faculty of principles (and not of concepts, which he envisages for the understanding) that allows us to speculate on metaphysical ideas (such as the soul or God) and to justify morality; whereby pure reason discovers of its own accord that it has a practical purpose. And since ratio is latin for calculation, it should serve us to fit adequately, or better said sustainable, into the whole out of which we emerge and into which we get back through every single interaction. This is why we may propose that the chain of being is very present within the three postulates of the practical reason as of three axis of minds sustainable ground: God, immortality of the soul and the world. Here we have plenitude, continuity and gradation, constitutes of the chain of being concept. If one does not base oneself on plenitude, one's mind will fall into scarcity and more likely decay its actions to a state of war. If one does not base oneself on continuity, one's mind will loose into erratic movements that lead to what is commonly called madness. If one does not base oneself on gradation, one's mind will not be able to appreciate the whole of existence and therefore will not be able to reinforce its plenitude.

In the correspondence of this period Kant mentions Pope once in a letter to Herder from 1768 that we will look at in the next topic. It is important to mention that although there is much material of the later correspondence – there are 20 letters from 1781, for example – we only know 5 letters from the period of 1747 to 1755, the early Popean period. Pope is especially the theme of some *Reflexionen zu Metaphysik*⁷², namely those⁷³ where Kant reflects about the propositions of Pope and Leibniz on optimism since he was willing to take part of the 1755's Berliner Akademie Award. Albeit he never took part of this contest – apparently because of his 1755 dissertations – those *Reflexions* and the 1759's semester prelections invitation, the essay on optimism,⁷⁴ are sufficient prove of the amount of time and effort dedicated to Pope and his Essay on Man and therefore to the ideas of Chain of being, Optimism, limitation of pride and love. It is also interesting to consider that Pope wrote the Moral essays and the Essay on Criticism, essays on two terms especially important to Kant: moral and critic. The *Übergang*⁷⁵, another particularly important concept to Kant, remembers the Isthmus that we humans are in Pope's words. A quote of Kant's 1798 *Anthropology* confirms Kants long dated influence, especially if taken in account that *De igne* evokes electromagnetism and Kant influenced Oersted, the discoverer of electromagnetism: „nämlich mit Pope zu sagen: »Ist die Vernunft nun ein Magnet, so sind die Leidenschaften Winde⁷⁶«⁷⁷ This is one of the last quotations of Pope in Kants work and goes along with an important statement by Kant:

Die Sinne machen darauf keinen Anspruch und sind wie das gemeine Volk, welches, wenn es nicht Pöbel ist (*ignobile vulgus*), seinem Obern, dem Verstande, sich zwar gern unterwirft, aber doch gehört werden will^{78,79}.

What is the use of orientation, if we have no movement? What is the use of the movement, if we have no orientation? So, there must be an idea of the whole to guide oneself. These quotes indicate that Kant never lessened the role of the senses. And Kant himself indicated a way to accomplish that more easily as we see from the following quote:

Certe datur adhuc [certa] quaedam sensus fallendi ratio, qua ars poetica [inter ceteris] quam plurimis aliis palmam praeripere videtur et propterea vel a Philosopho [meriti summis] laudibus extollenda est, quippe promovens mentis in ignobile sensuum vulgus imperium legibusque sapientiae [tanto obse] quodammodo obsequium parans^{80,81}.

This 1777 quote indicates that Kant never diminished the importance of poetry for the human evolution. It is quite the contrary: poetry should “be praised by the philosopher himself, because it strengthens the dominance of the understanding over the lower people of the senses and ensures a certain degree of obedience to the laws of wisdom”. Perhaps Kant is narrating what happened to him as he read the *Essay on man* in the early 1740ies. Somewhere between 1764 and 1768 – after all that 1755 quarrel about Pope and Leibniz, with Kant’s preference of the former⁸², and the defenestration of poetical philosophy by Lessing and Mendelssohn –, Kant states that “according to Newton and Rousseau, God is justified, and Pope’s theorem is now true”⁸³. I address this topic in my thesis and will address it in the third article of the serie, but here it is important to stress out Pope’s privileged position.

PERSONAL REFERENCE THROUGHOUT KANT’S LIFE

Having proved the influence on his work, let us move on proving that C) Pope’s presence can be tracked throughout Kant’s life as an unshakeable and steady estate of personal reference. It was in this emblematic year of 1755 that Kant foresaw the *Vorgebirge*⁸⁴ (foothills or Cap) of new lands⁸⁵ after a dangerous undertake. How far did he see? These same *Vorgebirge* appear again at the preface⁸⁶ of the already mentioned second edition of the *KrV*. The same that uses Bacon as a motto. As Pope did. In the 1760 *Gedanken bey dem frühzeitigen Ableben des Herrn Johann Friedrich von Funk* Kant quotes Haller and Pope to honor his deceased listener Funk and comfort his mother, Agnes. “Daß jeder seinen Kreis vollende, den ihm der Himmel ausersehn.”⁸⁷ (Pope.)⁸⁸ A poetic reference that should be enriched taking the 1755 ANTH in account: we live like and in accordance with the whole above. Nevertheless, Pope is Kants all-time favorite poet⁸⁹: „mit welchem Vergnügen liest man des Pope Verse wo die Reime natürlich und der Sache nach selbst scheinen geflossen zu seyn”⁹⁰⁹¹. In a letter to Herder from 9th of May 1768, Kant wrote: „...Dichtkunst, welche die Grazie der Weisheit ist, und worinn Pope noch allein glänzt.”⁹²⁹³

There is no poet more revered in Kant writings and correspondence than Pope⁹⁴. Milton, but specially Haller are the two other candidates, but Pope is definitely *hors-concours*.

Milton, who influenced both poets, is mentioned 31 times throughout Kant's *oeuvre*, while Haller is mentioned 35 times and Pope 36 – the difference relying on the quality of the quotations: Haller appears 13 times in Kant's students' annotations, while Pope nine times; from the 27 remaining quotations in work and correspondence, Pope appears three times as epigraph, while none of Haller's 22 remaining mentions do. Nonetheless it is the idea of the Chain of being and its concepts of plenitude, continuity/succession and gradation that unifies them all. And although Pope is revered 'til the end of Kant's life, this is not the case with Haller, from whom Kant thinks the following around 1793 or 1794: „*Der sonst große Haller zeigt durch sein moralisches Diarium eine sehr große Schwäche.*“⁹⁵⁹⁶ The critic about the great weakness is precisely Haller's fear guided actions. In contrast, 1791 Kant continued revering Pope:

„Merkwürdig war es bey meinem Freunde *Green*, daß dieses Unvermögen sich auch auf die Poësie erstreckte, deren Unterschied von der Prose er niemals woran anders als, daß die erstere eine gezwunge[ne] und geschrobene Sylbenstellung sey, erkennen konnte; daher er des Pope *Essays on Man* wohl gerne las, es aber unangenehm fand, daß sie in Versen geschrieben waren.“⁹⁷⁹⁸

In other words, by pointing out Green's unpleasantness with the poetic style and reinforcing the praise for the content, Kant is reindorsing its ideas and proposition. Brookes' translation was the best of his time, acknowledged by Pope himself, according to Heinzelmann⁹⁹, who's article presents the fact that “unlike Milton and Shakespeare, Pope was studied and admired”. Heinzelmann also highlights the different points-of-view about Pope's influence upon German literature – a good paper where Kant is completely missing. Why is there no evidence of relation between those brilliant exponents of the 18th century, even if there is so much text evidence as I am proving with this article? I like to think that this influence of Pope was just not considered because of prejudice after the debunking of philosophical poetry: how can a poem be the source of one of the greatest philosophies of our time? But being honest, how could one pledge this, if Kant also did not reveal any clue of Pope's influence? And, although Kant refers to his own work as a philosophical plan as a whole, the history of the *Studia Kantiana* shows us that Kant is studied like a corpse, being torn apart in pieces, often having neglected its integrity, parallels and interconnectedness. It is a necessary approach to sharpen our comprehension of each part and its understanding, but we should always bear in mind what Kant did: to better oneself and humanity. Hamann, who attended the class of Rappolt for sure¹⁰⁰ and presumably has had Kant as a colleague in this class, wrote the following to Kant mentioning Pope in 1759:

„Es ist angenehm und nützlich eine Seite des Pope zu übersetzen - in die Fibern des Gehirnes und des Herzens - Eitelkeit und Fluch hingegen einen Theil der Encyclopedie durchzublätern.“¹⁰¹¹⁰²

Through the writing of Hamann we can have a glimpse of the reverence emerged from their encounter with Pope in those two years with Rappolt – and this in 1759, four years after Lessing and Mendelssohn having published *Pope, ein Metaphysiker!*, debunking philosophical poetry and Pope himself as a philosopher, and after the earthquake of Lisbon that shuck the reputation of any kind of theodicy. Pleasant and useful are the qualities addressed to Pope's

writings and the locus of its translation the fibers of the brain and the heart – this reference is particularly interesting when confronted with some passages of Kant's late writings, like *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*¹⁰³, *Religion*¹⁰⁴ and *Metaphysik der Sitten*¹⁰⁵, where the heart gains public importance in his writings as the place of moral revolution, while the reformation is that of the mind and its habits; public, because in his *Nachlass* of the years between 1776 and 1778, the heart is, together with the Understanding (*Verstand*), the subjective cause of morality¹⁰⁶. But let us stick to the track of Pope's influence on Kant. It is evident that Pope is outstanding in Kant's appreciation. As a last comparison in this article, Shakespeare, also revered as a genius¹⁰⁷, is mentioned ten¹⁰⁸ times altogether. While Milton and Shakespeare are mentioned as geniuses in the same passage¹⁰⁹, Kant refers to Pope as a genius while citing Aristotle and Socrates and making a remark on their short height – “*alle Genies sind von kleiner Statur*”¹⁰⁹¹¹¹ – let us remember that Kant measured 1,59m. In the 1768's correspondence with Herder Kant puts Pope next to Montaigne and Hume¹¹². Pope is also quoted once next to Locke and Homer¹¹³. Pope also appears in direct debate with Leibniz in the already quoted *Reflexionen*¹¹⁴ *zu Metaphysik* from 1753 or 1754, where Kant prefers Pope's theorem as to Leibniz' Optimism, and in the winter of 1759 prelection¹¹⁵ about Optimism. There is a controversy about this text because Kant apparently ordered Borowski, his long-dated friend and first biographer, to recall this writing and destroy it. I stick to Vaihinger who exclaims¹¹⁶: *scripta manent*. If it is included in his works, why shouldn't it be taken in account? And, as he states, it is precisely because Kant ordered the destruction of the text, and it nevertheless made its way to the *Sämtlichen Werken*, that we should be interested in. It's like: “don't look at this endnote”¹¹⁷. I wrote about this on my commentaries to the translation I made for the 260th anniversary of the text¹¹⁸ – an article yet to be published.

PRESENT THROUGHOUT KANT'S OEUVRE

Let us get back and assure that D) Pope's influence is equally distributed throughout his entire work. The 36 direct mentions¹¹⁹ considering Pope at the *Personenregister* of the *Kant im Kontext III* Software are distributed chronologically as follows.

Thirty mentions are contained in Kant's work: one mention¹²⁰ in the *b¹ phase*¹²¹ of 1752-1789's *Reflexionen zu Logik*, two mentions¹²² in the 1753-1754's *Reflexionen zu Metaphysik*, six mentions¹²³ (three of them epigraphs¹²⁴) in the 1755's *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels*, one mention¹²⁵ in 1760's *reflection upon Herr Funk's death*, one mention¹²⁶ in the 1762-1764's *Herder Metaphysik*, one mention¹²⁷ is a footnote in 1763's *Beweisgrund*, two mentions¹²⁸ in the 1764-1768's *Nachlass* of *Bemerkungen zu den Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen*, two mentions¹²⁹ in the 1772's *Philippi Logik*, one mention¹³⁰ in the 1780-1791 *Reflexionen zur Anthropologie*, two mentions¹³¹ in the 1781's *Starke Anthropology*, one mention¹³² in the 1784's *Feyerabend Naturrecht*, three mentions¹³³ in the 1791-1792's *Dohna Anthropology*, one mention¹³⁴ in 1794's *Religion*, one mention¹³⁵ in 1795's *Zum ewigen Frieden* and five mentions¹³⁶ in the 1798's *Anthropology*.

Six mentions are made in Kant's correspondence – from his own writing are two mentions: one¹³⁷ 1968 to Herder and the other¹³⁸ 1791 to Hellwag; the other mentions are from Herder, who mentioned Pope twice¹³⁹ in 1968 in a letter to Kant, and from Hamann, who mentioned Pope also twice¹⁴⁰ in a letter of 1759.

Now that we have already confirmed that Pope was very present in Kant's early writings and made his way through Kant's life and work, being mentioned at the beginning as to the end, both if analyzed quantity and quality of the mentions, I will conclude evaluating the data that I brought up, especially the distribution of the quotations, being the period of the three critics – 1781 to 1790 – the reference point. In the 35 years of the pre-critics period, from 1746 to 1781, there are 21 mentions which are 5 letters distributed as explained above and 16 quotations from which three are *Reflexionen*, other three are students' annotations, one is a footnote in a published work, two are mentions in a non-published material, one is a condolence and six are quotations in a published work, three of them being epigraphs. During the decade of the three Critics there are only four mentions, three in students' annotations and one in Kant's *Nachlass of Reflexionen zur Anthropologie*. In the 14 years long post-critic's period, there are eleven mentions: one correspondence, seven mentions in works and three mentions in student's annotations.

What at a first glimpse looks like an unequal distribution, having the first part almost 2/3 of the mentions, when considering the critics period and analyzing the relation quote/year it turns out that we have 0,79 quotes per year in the post critic's period and 0,6 quotes per year in the pre-critic's period; the critic's period having 0,4 quotes per year. Dividing in just two periods makes the distribution even more equal: 0,6 quotes per year in the first period from 1746 to 1781 (35 years) and 0,65 quotes per year from 1781 to 1804 (23 years). In fact, it is the critic's period that is clearly outstanding.

Why there is a gap during the nine years of the critics' period is something that I discuss in my doctoral dissertation and in the forthcoming article "The critical gap". The actual design of Kant's philosophical plan and the relation between the four epistles and the four Kantian questions will be addressed in the forthcoming article "Kant's design by Pope".

CONCLUSION

This article pretends to contribute to value Kant's philosophy as a progressive and interconnected whole, with Kant's announced plan developing under a hidden influence aligning all efforts to combat a disclosed target: human's pride. The article presented sufficient examples to illustrate the arguments that sustain a necessary approach of Kant's oeuvre as a whole and not as a fragmented or sectary work with no direct relevance, importance or interconnection of the different areas researched and works published. Comprehending Pope's influence and its resulting patterns helps us to think Kant's philosophy in a way that Kant himself wished for: not reading philosophy, but philosophizing.

I hope to have unveiled the presence and confirmed the influence of Pope and his *Essay on Man* on Kant and his philosophy, revealing the hidden influence behind Kant's not so hidden agenda: to better oneself and humanity through enlightenment.

Sapere Aude: Kant had a plan. And it had Pope's design.

Abstract: Midst of the recently growing attention and importance that poetry is gaining in the *Studia Kantiana* there is a hidden influence on Kant that this article unveils: Alexander Pope's presence throughout Kant's life and the influence of his *Essay on Man* on Kant's philosophy. The relation between Kant and Pope is clarified based upon comparative examples of both works and their commentators, targeting specially Pope's direct mentions; personal reference from Kant to Pope will be used to reassure the size of his admiration and therefore his subjective predisposition to be influenced by. The article unfolds proving that A) Kant had contact with the poem before even publishing his first article in 1746; B) there is sufficient evidence to confirm its direct influence on the initial phase of Kant's work; C) Pope's presence can be tracked throughout Kant's life as an unshakeable and steady estate of personal reference; and that D) Pope's mentions are equally distributed throughout Kant's entire work. The paper concludes an undeniable and yet neglected influence of Pope on Kant and argues for an approach of Kant's philosophy as a progressive and interconnected whole based on a plan to combat human's pride.

Keywords: Kant, Pope, *Essay on man*, *Gesamtwerk*, poetry

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NOTAS / NOTES

¹ PhD Student at Philosophy Department of PUC-Rio. To Leonel Ribeiro dos Santos with gratitude.

² Sponsorship CAPES

³ Eberhard Breidert's translation for Felix Meiner Verlag of Pope's original. The original in English at Jones, p.32: Could He, whose rules the rapid comet bind/Describe, or fix, one Movement of his mind? Brockes' version had in its original in English the word "whirling", while the newer edition of Felix Meiner Verlag has the word "rapid" instead as Jones published version. The two translations are very different, but sustain the same meaning – much of the translation work in this case has to be co-creation. Brockes in his more literal translation of 1740: Kann der, durch dessen Regeln sich die drehenden Cometen binden,/ nur ein Bewegen unsers Geists, befestigen, beschreiben, finden? Anyway, the idea of Pope's verse tributed to Newton fits precisely with Kant, who wrote the *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels (ANTH)* and described the movement of the human mind.

⁴ Essay on Man, Brief II, Zeile 35-36

⁵ Vorländer S.332

⁶ A controversial translation of 1740 by Brockes, probably influenced by the French translation "*tout est bien*" that would be very criticized more than a decade later, especially in occasion of the *Berliner Akademie* Award of 1755 and after Lisbons earthquake at the end of the same year; "*Alles ist gut*" is also the name of the book of Marion Hellwig – a good study about the XVIIIth Century Optimism.

⁷ Even if Wasianski assures the opposite, through his statements it is clear how emotionally moved he was. Wasianski, p. 267

⁸ Kuehn, p. 488

⁹ Malter, *Kant in Rede und Gespräch*, p.592

¹⁰ Kuehn, p.488

¹¹ P. 35

¹² P. 2622

¹³ B. H. Brockes was a German writer and poet of the early German Enlightenment and wrote poems in which nature is reflected in its beauty and usefulness as a mediator between man and God.

¹⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:3

¹⁵ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxiv:796u

¹⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxviii:1519

¹⁷ Kuehn gives important insights on the relationship between Kant and his teachers, especially on the outcome of Kant's work.

¹⁸ Since Kants Family emigrated from Scotland, this is not taking in account here, also because of lack of reference.

¹⁹ Kuehn, p.97

²⁰ A man who had a special keenness to judge natural things with the reverence and simplicity and modesty of a Christian worldly sage, and an uncommon strength to imitate the spirit of the Roman writers and their language.

²¹ Kuehn, p.522

²² SWAIN, C.W. *Hamann and the Philosophy of David Hume*. Journal of the History of Philosophy, vol. 5, no. 4, 1967, p. 343-351. Project MUSE.

²³ Kant Lexikon, page 1876

²⁴ ROGERS, R.W. *Critiques of the Essay on Man in France and Germany 1736-1755*. ELH, vol. 15, no.3 (Sep., 1948), pp. 176-193

²⁵ Victor Delbos, *La Philosophie pratique de Kant* (Paris, 1905), p. 85, has suggested that Kant probably first derived his admiration for the philosophy of Pope from Rappolt.

- ²⁶ ROGERS, R.W. *Critiques of the Essay on Man in France and Germany 1736-1755*. ELH, vol. 15, no.3 (Sep., 1948), pp. 176-193
- ²⁷ ROGERS, R.W. *Critiques of the Essay on Man in France and Germany 1736-1755*. ELH, vol. 15, no.3 (Sep., 1948), pp. 176-193
- ²⁸ ROGERS, R.W. *Critiques of the Essay on Man in France and Germany 1736-1755*. ELH, vol. 15, no.3 (Sep., 1948), pp. 176-193
- ²⁹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:181
- ³⁰ “The knowledge of these two extreme limits must have determined without difficulty the point at which the truth on both sides coincided. Finding this required nothing less than great insight; all that was needed was a small absence of party zeal and a brief balance of emotional inclinations, and the complaint was immediately dismissed.”
- ³¹ Pope, A. *Vom Menschen*, p.14
- ³² Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:1u
- ³³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:234
- ³⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:234
- ³⁵ JONES, T. *Essay on man*. p. CIV and CV
- ³⁶ In his *Opus Postumum* it is the ether that sustains and grants the whole.
- ³⁷ [Is] the great chain, that draws all to agree and drawn supports [...] p.9
- ³⁸ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:241
- ³⁹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. B:649. (Kap.Nr.: 573)
- ⁴⁰ Akad. (1905ff.), S. V:98. (Kap.Nr.: 757)
- ⁴¹ Middle link in the chain of human assets a priori
- ⁴² Akad. (1905ff.), S. XXI:344. (Kap.Nr.: 3375); Akad. (1905ff.), S. XXII:549
- ⁴³ See plastic Nature working to this end, The single atoms each to other tend, Attract, attracted to, the next in place Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace. See Matter next, with various life endu'd, Press to one centre still, the gen'ral Good. p.52
- ⁴⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:259
- ⁴⁵ He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce, See worlds on worlds compose one universe, Observe how system into system runs, What other planets circle other suns, What vary'd being peoples ev'ry star, May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are. p.9
- ⁴⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:349
- ⁴⁷ Who sees with equal eye, as God of all, A hero perish, or a sparrow fall, Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd, And now a bubble burst, and now a world. p.12
- ⁴⁸ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:318
- ⁴⁹ JONES, T. *Essay on man*. p. CV
- ⁵⁰ Superior beings, when of late they saw A mortal Man unfold all Nature's law, Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape, And shew'd a Newton as we shew an Ape. p.32
- ⁵¹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:360
- ⁵² Newton instead of being a human being - became an angelic ape.
- ⁵³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxviii:110
- ⁵⁴ Vast chain of being, which from God began, Natures aethereal, human, angel, man, Beast, bird, fish, insect! what no eye can see, No glass can reach! from Infinite to thee, From thee to Nothing! p.22-23
- ⁵⁵ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:365
- ⁵⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. V:73
- ⁵⁷ My master's degree was obtained researching on how Self-love can be a moral disposition
- ⁵⁸ This is a point where one can argue that Kant should be fostered to dialogue with the Anthropocene.

⁵⁹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. V:459u. Bis: S. V:460

⁶⁰ CV and CVI

⁶¹ CVI

⁶² Akad. (1905ff.), S. V:162

⁶³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XXI:22

⁶⁴ CVI

⁶⁵ II, I,2.

⁶⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XXI:492

⁶⁷ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XVII:360. Bis: S. XVII:361.

⁶⁸ CVIII

⁶⁹ CVIII

⁷⁰ P.2244

⁷¹ CVIII

⁷² Akad. (1905ff.), S. XVII:230

⁷³ R3703 to R3705

⁷⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. II:27

⁷⁵ the passage, crossing, transition

⁷⁶ namely to say with Pope: "If reason is a magnet, the passions are winds."

⁷⁷ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VII:267.

⁷⁸ The senses make no claim to this and are like the common people, who, when they are not a mob (*ignobile vulgus*), are happy to submit to their superior, the understanding, but still want to be heard.

⁷⁹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VII:145

⁸⁰ Certainly there is, besides that, a kind of illusion, through the use of which, it seems to me, poetry wins the palm over most other arts; This must therefore be praised by the philosopher himself, because it strengthens the dominance of the understanding over the lower people of the senses and ensures a certain degree of obedience to the laws of wisdom.

⁸¹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XV:909

⁸² Akad. (1905ff.), S. XVII:233

⁸³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xx:59

⁸⁴ Humanity lives on the land, but the metaphors of life always recure to the sea as Blumenberg acknowledged. With this geographical reference Kant, who himself initiated the teaching of geography at the university, probably wanted to point out that he was reaching solid ground. The Vorgebirge metaphor also connects both moments and works.

⁸⁵ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:221

⁸⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. B:X. (Kap.Nr.: 34)

⁸⁷ "That everyone completes the circle that heaven has chosen for him."

⁸⁸ Akad. (1905ff.), S. II:42

⁸⁹ Kuehn, p. 488

⁹⁰ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxiv:371

⁹¹ With what pleasure one reads Pope's verses where the rhymes seem to have flowed naturally and according to the matter itself.

⁹² Poetry, which is the grace of wisdom and where Pope still shines bright alone.

⁹³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:73uu

⁹⁴ The already mentioned Virgil appears just 26 times in Kant's correspondence and work and with lots of clustered mentions.

- ⁹⁵ "The otherwise great Haller shows through his moral diary a great weakness."
- ⁹⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxvii:608.
- ⁹⁷ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XI:245
- ⁹⁸ "It was strange with my friend Green that this inability also extended to poetry, the difference between which and prose he could never recognize other than that the former was a forced and distorted syllable position; that's why he enjoyed reading Pope's Essays on Man, but found it unpleasant that they were written in verse."
- ⁹⁹ Heinzelmann, J.H. *Pope in Germany in the eighteenth century*, Modern Philology, January, 1913
- ¹⁰⁰ SWAIN, C.W. Hamann and the Philosophy of David Hume. Journal of the History of Philosophy, vol. 5, no. 4, 1967, p. 343-351. Project MUSE.
- ¹⁰¹ It is pleasant and useful to translate a page of Pope - into the fibers of the brain and the heart - Vanity and Curse, but to leaf through a part of the encyclopedia.
- ¹⁰² Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:8.
- ¹⁰³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. IV:410 to S. IV:411
- ¹⁰⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VI:84u; Akad. (1905ff.), S. VI:145. and Akad. (1905ff.), S. VI:51
- ¹⁰⁵ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VI:485 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. VI:441
- ¹⁰⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XIX:200
- ¹⁰⁷ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VMe:234.
- ¹⁰⁸ Although there are twelve entrances at the Personenregister of the Kant im Kontext III, one is misleading and the other points to Hamlet. So I am rectifying it to stick to the same criteria used with the other authors.
- ¹⁰⁹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. Ko:171.
- ¹¹⁰ All geniuses are small in stature.
- ¹¹¹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VMe:236.
- ¹¹² Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:76.
- ¹¹³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XVI:167. (Kap.Nr.: 3013)
- ¹¹⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XVII:229. (Kap.Nr.: 3189)
- ¹¹⁵ Akad. (1905ff.), S. II:27. (Kap.Nr.: 169)
- ¹¹⁶ Vaihinger, H. *Pessimismus und Optimismus vom Kantischen Standpunkt aus*.
- ¹¹⁷ You see, you came here to look. Probably with more curiosity as into other footnotes. Q.E.D.
- ¹¹⁸ I thank NUPEM PUC-Rio for the invitation to translate it, the colleagues that helped with it and Prof. Edgard J. J. Filho for the kind support and meticulous review.
- ¹¹⁹ While accessing the Personenregister you will see just 35 mentions, but please be aware that the last entrance, XVII:233, leads to two mentions and not just to one. Everything was double checked with the search results.
- ¹²⁰ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XVI:167
- ¹²¹ Adickes categorizes the *b^I* phase between 1952 and 1956
- ¹²² Akad. (1905ff.), S. XVII:233
- ¹²³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:318; Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:360 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:365
- ¹²⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:241; Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:259 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. I:349
- ¹²⁵ Akad. (1905ff.), S. II:42
- ¹²⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxviii:37
- ¹²⁷ Akad. (1905ff.), S. II:137Fu
- ¹²⁸ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xx:59 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. xx:141
- ¹²⁹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxiv:371 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxiv:446

¹³⁰ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XV:825

¹³¹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VMe:236 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. VMe:360

¹³² Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxvii:1319

¹³³ Akad. (1905ff.), S. Ko:239; Akad. (1905ff.), S. Ko:252 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. Ko:320

¹³⁴ Akad. (1905ff.), S. xxiii:98

¹³⁵ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VIII:353Fu

¹³⁶ Akad. (1905ff.), S. VII:210; Akad. (1905ff.), S. VII:267; Akad. (1905ff.), S. VII:274Fu; Akad. (1905ff.), S. VII:305 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. VII:397

¹³⁷ Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:73uu

¹³⁸ Akad. (1905ff.), S. XI:245

¹³⁹ Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:76. and S. X:77

¹⁴⁰ Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:8 and Akad. (1905ff.), S. X:13

KANT ON THE COGNITIVE VALUE OF POETRY

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It is natural to interpret Kant's claim that the poet, while playing "with ideas", provides "nourishment to the understanding" (KU § 51, AA 05: 321) as an attribution of cognitive value to poetry². Given that he ascribes to poetry "the highest rank of all" among the arts (KU § 53, AA 05:326), it is also natural to assume that having that value contributes to the high artistic value of works of poetry. That Kant really endorsed this view would appear to be disputable, however, since he explicitly claims that art "has the reflecting power of judgment [...] as its standard" (KU § 43, AA 05: 306) and that, both in nature and art, "*that is beautiful which pleases in the mere judging* (neither in sensation nor through a concept)" (KU § 44, AA 05: 306).³ His conception of aesthetics (oriented towards the non-cognitive judgment of taste and its predicate of beauty) and the assumption that beauty "is nothing by itself, without relation to the feeling of the subject" (KU § 9, AA 05: 218), and that it "properly concern[s] merely form" (KU § 13, AA 05: 223) may have prevented him from assigning a role to cognitive values in promoting the overall aesthetic value of works of poetry. In this paper, I will argue that Kant should have been less decided on this, all the more so because the poetic verses he discusses in the *Critique of the Power of Judgement* are cases where aesthetic value and cognitive value relate to one another – or at least this is what I aim to show.

The paper proceeds as follows. After offering preliminary remarks aimed at clarifying the question at issue, I will sketch the conception of poetry presented by Kant in the third *Critique*, supplemented with remarks from his lectures on anthropology. I will then focus on his comments on verses by Friedrich II. These comments are pivotal to my argument, since they allow me to show that these verses actually convey a kind of cognition – the cognition that we now call 'perspectival knowledge'. Kant does not use the term 'knowledge' in this context. After all, he was a propositionalist, and perspectival knowledge – or better, the aspect of it at issue in the lines he quotes – is essentially non-propositional. In speaking of knowledge, I will go beyond the letter of Kant's text and perhaps also depart from his view. However, in doing so I am simply taking advantage of conceptual resources that are implied by what he says on poetry.

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A final clarification: although Kant speaks in general terms, I prefer to read the thesis that poetry has cognitive value not as a general claim but as amounting to the statement that some poetic works convey knowledge. As for the kind of knowledge at issue, Kant's examples, as I have said, suggest that it is perspectival knowledge. Although this is not the only kind of knowledge that may be at issue, what Kant says about poetry is of help for understanding that this knowledge is to be distinguished from scientific or philosophical knowledge in part because the relation between text and knowledge is not that of communication or information, but of *Darstellung* or presentation.⁴ Poetic knowledge – if I may use this expression – is conveyed less through a propositional *saying* than through a demonstrative *showing*.

1. POETRY AND AESTHETIC COGNITIVISM

Before I deal with Kant's conception of poetry, some clarifications are in order. His claim does not concern the possible cognitive value of poetry or art in general. Kant likely would not have denied that one can learn something about human psychology or behaviour by reading a novel, a drama or a comedy, given that he himself viewed novels and plays as *Hilfsmittel* for anthropology. In fact, he claims that, although novels and plays are based not on experience and truth but on fiction (*Erdichtung*) and that it therefore seems that nothing can be learned from them about human beings, they may nevertheless be of help, as the main features of the characters are extrapolated from the observation of real human behaviour. In this regard, he is thinking about works by Samuel Richardson and Molière (cf. Anthr, Vorrede, 07: 121). Therefore, what is controversial with regard to Kant's view is not whether art can have cognitive value but whether that value contributes to a work's *artistic* value. This is because Kant emphasizes the exclusive relevance of the formal features of artworks for our appreciation of them as beautiful and insists that the aesthetic evaluation of a work is not cognitive in nature (cf. KU §§ 1 and 15).

Kant clearly acknowledges that part of the significance that beauty and art have for us depends on their relation to central interests of reason (cf. KU §§ 42, 52, 59), but he seems to draw a clear distinction between aesthetic value and other kinds of value, such as cognitive and moral value. It is therefore natural to read his claim that “beautiful art must be free” and that the mind, in contemplating it, “must feel itself to be satisfied and stimulated [...] without looking beyond to another end” (KU § 51, AA 05: 321) as meaning that a work, insofar as it is created *as* art, cannot have any further end beyond the pleasure of reflection: this pleasure is the standard of art.

Put differently, Kant seems to locate the value of a work *as* art – let us call it its intrinsic value – in the value of the experience of pleasure that is intimately bound up with it and to link this experience to the intrinsic properties of the work, which are primarily formal properties such as structure and composition. As we have seen, this does not mean that a work cannot have cognitive value, but such value would be extrinsic to the work, if anything a beneficial consequence of experiencing it, rather than part of its intrinsic value.⁵ Poetry puts this view under pressure since a cognitive effect seems to be built into Kant's very definition of poetry

and, above all, since there can be cases where not only are both aesthetic and cognitive value present, but the latter is present *in virtue* of the former, at times even increasing a work's aesthetic value. As I have said, this is what I hope to show in my analysis of Kant's comments on certain verses. First, however, let us turn to his definition of poetry.

1.1 THE DEFINITION OF POETRY

In his tentative classification of the beautiful arts,⁶ Kant locates poetry, together with rhetoric, within the “arts of speech”. Rhetoric, he claims, “is the art of conducting a business (*Geschäft*) of the understanding as a free play of the imagination; poetry that of carrying out a free play of the imagination as a business of the understanding”. Shifting from the art to the artist, Kant then adds: “the orator [...] announces a matter of business and carries it out as if it were merely a play with ideas in order to entertain the audience. The poet announces merely an entertaining play with ideas, and yet as much results for the understanding as if he had merely had the intention of carrying on its business” (KU § 51, AA 05: 320-321).

Interestingly, even though Kant acknowledges the formal differences between poetry and rhetoric (in particular, poetry's use of verse [cf. V-Anth/Mron, AA 25: 1282; cf. also V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25: 992; Anth § 71, AA 07, 248]), he does not distinguish between them on this basis, instead focusing on the different aims they pursue. The orator “announces a matter of business”; his aim, one can conjecture, is to instruct, to produce some sort of belief, but in order to entertain the audience he carries it out “as if it were merely a play with ideas”. By contrast, the poet aims at “a mere play with ideas, but accomplishes something that is worthy of business, namely providing nourishment to the understanding in play, and giving life to its concepts through the imagination” (KU § 51, AA 05: 321).

These last expressions are rather intriguing. The claim that the poet aims to provide nourishment to the understanding in play seems to echo Horace's famous claim in his *Ars poetica*: “*Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci, Lectorem delectando pariterque monendo*” (342-343). Horace was imagining a competition between different kinds of poetry. In fact, immediately before the line just quoted, he writes: “*Aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae*” (335-337). Assuming that this categorization is not evaluative, the “*Omne tulit punctum*” sentence could be read as Horace's answer to the question “What is the best option?”. He is suggesting that, given these three options, the best choice is that which does both things, i.e., a blend of practical advice and beautiful writing. Kant's view seems to be slightly different. He does not assume that poetry should pursue both aims, namely to instruct and to entertain. Rather, he claims that the poet aims at one thing, that is, a mere play with ideas, but in doing so she also achieves something else, namely providing nourishment to the understanding, offering content on which to reflect.

Kant clearly acknowledges that poetry can have cognitive benefits but seems to consider these a side effect: the poet's aim is not a cognitive one, but through her work the interests of the understanding are also pursued. Therefore, it seems that the more obvious way to construct poetry's cognitive value is to think of it as external to aesthetic value, as a sort of beneficial side

effect. Nevertheless, some passages from his lectures on anthropology seem to point towards a closer connection between aesthetic and cognitive value. In the *Menschenkunde* (WS 1781/82), for example, we read that the understanding “must be [...] secretly and unnoticedly instructed” by a poem, for otherwise the poem will not be appreciated; if the understanding is not present, then even though our senses are entertained, the poem will be “insipid and tasteless (*fade und unschmackhaft*)” (V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25: 986-987).

Tellingly, we also encounter a reformulation of the dictum from the first *Critique* to the effect that “[i]ntuitions without thoughts yield no knowledge, but thoughts without intuition are reflections without a subject, therefore both of them must be united (*Ananschauen ohne Gedanken giebt keine Erkennyniß, aber Gedanken ohne Anschauung sind Betrachtungen ohne Stoff, daher muß beides vereinigt werden*)” (V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25: 987). The suggestion is that intuitions and thoughts must be combined; however, it is also pointed out that “one of them must shine out (*hervorleuchten*)”, that is, “the main thing must be placed in one of them”. Either the understanding or the imagination must set the end; since in poetry the most important thing is to engage the imagination, the understanding must always “come along (*hinzukommen*)”, if only incidentally (*nebenbei*). The point is then exemplified as follows: “when the poet adorns (*ausschmückt*) a whole succession of thoughts with images (*Bildern*), the beautiful must immediately shine, but the understanding must only come later (*hinterher kommen*) and the thought must not immediately shine through (*hervorscheinen*), but only in the aftertaste” (V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25: 987-988; see also Anth § 71, AA 07: 246).

This passage is slightly ambiguous. On the one hand, it seems to attribute to images a mere decorative function, but on the other it hints at the presence of thought in them, as if thought contents were conveyed through them. While playing with the imagination, the poet affects the understanding by means of concepts and thereby “improves and enlivens (*cultiviert und belebt*) it”. What is beautiful, we read in the notes from a course dated 1788/89, must at the same time be a “strengthening (*Stärkung*) of our concepts” (V-Anth/Busolt, AA 25: 1465-1466).

In the third *Critique*, these views are rephrased. As we have seen, Kant claims that the poet aims at “a mere play with ideas” but accomplishes something that is beneficial for the understanding, giving “life” to its concepts through the imagination. The sensible, intuitive element evoked in the lecture notes is now traced back to the aesthetic ideas, as the ideas with which the poet plays.

2. POETRY, AESTHETIC IDEAS, AND SPIRIT

As is well known, Kant calls the representations of the imagination that artists find for the presentation (*Darstellung*) of the concept they have in mind ‘aesthetic ideas’. Presumably, ‘concept’ refers here not only to the particular object that the artist wants to realize – say, a portrait, an epic poem, a sonata etc. – but also either to the subject that the artist wants to present or to the theme she will deal with by presenting that subject. I think that a more natural reading is to take ‘concept’ as referring to the subject that the artist wants to present

through the medium of her art. In any case, the important point is that aesthetic ideas do not offer a mere exemplification of the concept. They concord with the concept with which they are associated, but beyond this they provide, as Kant writes, “unsought extensive undeveloped material for the understanding” (KU § 49, AA 05: 317).

On this intuitive richness rests the distinctive feature of these representations of the imagination, namely their occasioning “much thinking though without it being possible for any determinate thought, i.e., concept, to be adequate to” them. It is not that no determinate thought is occasioned by this intuitive material, but rather that no determinate thought is adequate to it or can exhaust it, i.e. make it completely distinct (KU § 49, AA 05: 314).⁷

In itself, that an intuition – and an aesthetic idea is an internal intuition – is not completely grasped through concepts may not be surprising given the categorical difference between intuition and concept, which makes it impossible to translate intuitions through concepts, and above all to capture through concepts the phenomenal aspect of intuitions.⁸ However, Kant seems to hint at the particular richness or fullness of these ideas. On one occasion, he describes them as ideas “which are fantastic and yet at the same time rich in thought” (KU § 47, AA 05: 309). It is as if the intuitional content to which the concept is related somehow were increased or made more dense by the imagination. He describes this richness by saying that the intuition “aesthetically enlarges the concept itself in an unbounded way” (KU § 49, AA 05: 315), with the result that it “stimulates so much thinking that it can never be grasped in a determinate concept”. Here, Kant claims, the imagination “is creative, and sets the faculty of intellectual ideas (reason) into motion, that is, at the instigation of a representation it gives more to think about than can be grasped and made distinct in it (although it does, to be sure, belong to the concept of the object)” (KU § 49, AA 05: 315).

Presumably, this is why we are not frustrated by our incapacity to exhaustively grasp aesthetic ideas but are somehow invited to persist in our attempts to bring their content under concepts. There is something that makes them interesting⁹. Kant emphasizes the pleasing side of this effort, claiming that the fact that we cannot make an aesthetic idea fully intelligible “allows the addition to a concept of much that is unnameable, the feeling of which animates the cognitive faculties and combines spirit with the mere letter of language” (KU § 49, AA 05: 316). Rather paradoxically, that spirit is combined with the latter depends on the fact that the content of a representation of the imagination cannot be fully attained by language (cf. KU § 49, AA 05: 314), cannot be encapsulated by the ‘letter’. Kant’s idea that the poet can give “life” to concepts is connected to this combination, which has its source in the expressive talent that he calls ‘spirit’ and that he views as a necessary condition of art, beyond mere accordance with taste.

2.1 THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER

The use of the terms ‘spirit’ and ‘letter’ in the passage just quoted is revealing. The background to Kant’s claim is likely the well-known Pauline distinction between letter and spirit – “the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Cor 3, 6; see also Rm 2, 29 and 7, 6). This

Pauline trope is multifaceted, but the aspect that is most relevant here is the suggestion of a meaning ('spirit') that exceeds the surface sense of a text and therefore prompts (hermeneutical) reflection.¹⁰ Kant seems to have in mind this prompting of thought when he speaks of the addition to a concept of much that is unnameable, the feeling of which "combines spirit with the mere letter of language". He inflects the Pauline idea of the life-giving Spirit in aesthetic terms and explains that this "animating principle in the mind" operates through aesthetic ideas.

It is indicative of the importance of this principle that, when Kant sums up his conception of genius, he emphasizes that genius consists on the one hand in the capacity to find ideas for a given concept and on the other in "hitting upon the *expression* for these, through which the subjective disposition of the mind that is thereby produced, as an accompaniment of a concept, can be communicated to others". Kant then adds that the talent of hitting upon the *expression* for aesthetic ideas

is really that which is called spirit, for to express what is unnameable in the mental state in the case of a certain representation and to make it universally communicable, whether the expression consist in language, or painting, or in plastic art – that requires a faculty for apprehending the rapidly passing play of the imagination and unifying it into a concept (which for that very reason is original and at the same time discloses a new rule, which could not have been deduced from any antecedent principles or examples), which can be communicated without the constraint of rules.

Kant connects spirit to two crucial features of genius, namely originality and exemplarity, that is, the features in virtue of which its products are such that while no determinate rule can be given for them – thereof their originality – they can nonetheless serve as models (cf. KU § 46, AA 05: 308), i.e., as a rule for emulation (cf. KU § 49, AA 05: 318). Spirit seems to be the faculty of apprehending the play of imagination that yields an aesthetic idea and unifying it into a concept. That this concept, as Kant claims, can be communicated "without the constraint of rules" may be another way of saying that in our encounter with a work of genius our cognitive powers, namely "*imagination* for the composition of the manifold of intuition and *understanding* for the unity of the concept that unifies the representations", are harmonized without a determinate concept's "restrict[ing] them to a particular rule of cognition" (KU § 9, AA 05: 217). In other words, no rule determines our intuition according to a determinate concept. This does not mean that nothing is communicated, since a concept is, after all, communicated. Rather, this suggests that no determinate meaning is communicated in the sense that what is communicated, though related to a rule, remains open.

I will not comment further on this part of the passage. As for the first part, I will simply note that the disposition of mind that Kant is thinking of is presumably just that play of the cognitive powers that is required for knowledge in general, on which, according to him, pleasure in the beautiful rests. He describes it as "unnameable", I suppose, because it is a subjective condition of knowledge and therefore, so to speak, upstream with regard to our use of concepts. As I have said, what I hope to show is that there can be cases in which the apprehension of the aesthetic idea expressed by a work not only puts the mind in the harmonic disposition required for knowledge in general but also produces a kind of knowledge, that is, cases in which cognitive value is present within aesthetic value.

First, however, I want to say something about an intriguing passage in which Kant explains why, among the arts, he attributes “the highest rank of all” to poetry.

3. POETRY AND TRUTH

The passage at issue may initially seem to speak against what I want to argue for, because it seems to reiterate the view that poetry can have cognitive value as a side effect. However, it also provides us with the occasion to bring into focus how Kant conceives of the relationship between poetry and truth. This is an important aspect of his view, and it is also relevant to my point. Let us look at the text. Poetry, Kant claims,

expands the mind by setting the imagination free and presenting, within the limits of a given concept and among the unbounded manifold of forms possibly agreeing with it, the one that connects its presentation with a fullness of thought to which no linguistic expression is fully adequate, and thus elevates itself aesthetically to the level of ideas. It strengthens the mind by letting it feel its capacity to consider and judge of nature, as appearance, freely, self-actively, and independently of determination by nature, in accordance with points of view that nature does not present by itself in experience either for sense or for the understanding, and thus to use it for the sake of and as it were as the schema of the supersensible. It plays with the illusion which it produces at will, yet without thereby being deceitful; for it itself declares its occupation to be mere play, which can nevertheless be purposively employed by the understanding for its own business. (KU § 53, AA 05: 326-327)¹¹

Kant puts forward three reasons for poetry’s high standing. The first is phrased in a way that retraces the description of aesthetic ideas. The second recalls and expands on Kant’s explanation that these representations of the imagination or “inner intuition” are called ‘ideas’

on the one hand because they at least strive toward something lying beyond the bounds of experience, and thus seek to approximate a presentation of concepts of reason (of intellectual ideas), which gives them the appearance of an objective reality; on the other hand, and indeed principally, because no concept can be fully adequate to them [...]. (KU § 49, AA 05: 314)

Both points show that Kant sees the value of poetry as rooted in its particular connection to aesthetic ideas, which is no surprise given his claim that “the faculty of aesthetic ideas can reveal itself in its full measure” in the art of poetry (KU § 49, AA 05: 314).

The third reason mentioned by Kant should be read against the background of his distinction between poetry and rhetoric, understood as the deceptive “art of persuasion” (KU § 53, AA 05: 327). Kant recalls that poetry produces representations that, while perhaps untrue, are not falsehoods.

The distinction between ‘untrue’ and ‘false’ is related to that between illusion and deception (*Betrug*). Illusion, we read in the notes from one of Kant’s lectures on anthropology, is an appearance that does not deceive but may please (V-Anth/Pillau, AA 25: 745 [WS 1777/78]) and that remains after it has been revealed, whereas a (fraudulent) deception disappears when it is unmasked. Furthermore, while in the case of illusion “we often do not want to know the truth”,¹² in the case of deception “we do indeed want to know the truth, but are not always acquainted with it”. “We often want illusion, but never deception” (cf. V-Anth/Mron, AA 25: 1253 [WS 1784/85]). On the basis of this distinction, Kant suggests that there

is a difference between fictionalizing (*dichten*) in lying and in poetry. The poet goes along with the convention that he is supposed to tell us untruths, but this is a completely different type of untruth than that of the liar or the deceiver (cf. V-Anth/Parow, AA 25: 322 [WS 1772/73]). Poetry does not claim to be true nor to assert, and therefore the poet is cleared of the accusation of lying. Poetry, we read in the *Anthropologie Mrongovius*, “does not trick, for its aim is directed not at the understanding but at entertainment, and in the case of poetry I even want to be tricked” (V-Anth/Mron, AA 25: 1279). Poets do not lie, because they do not assert.

Kant here identifies crucial elements of fictionality that allow us to distinguish lies from fictions, namely the author’s intention and the way a literary text is received. In fact, the claim that poetry is not directed at the understanding can be read as meaning that it is not produced with the aim of having the audience believe what it says; rather, the intention is for the audience to represent what the poem says in their imagination. This way of saying something is what we now call a *fictive utterance*. When we read in the lecture that “in the case of poetry I even want to be tricked”, this seems to be an acknowledgment that such utterances exist because there is a social framework of conventions that makes them possible. Within this framework, an author can write with the intention of having the reader take in her text without believing in the truth of what is said.

This is why, in addition to distinguishing between illusion and deception, Kant can also point to the difference between poetic untruth and error: “In poetic representations, cognitions (*Erkenntnisse*) are untrue (*unwahr*) but are not errors, for one knows that they are untrue”. An error is “set in opposition to truth as a contrary”, for it is not “a mere lack of cognition and of truth, but a hindrance to these as well”, like a space in the soul that is filled up with “erroneous cognitions” (V-Anth/Mron, AA 25: 1224). Since poetic representations do not aim at truth, they do not occupy, as it were, a space in the cognitive storehouse of the mind; they do not belong to it and therefore are not an obstacle to knowledge. On the contrary, as Kant claims, the mere play of poetry can be purposively employed by the understanding for its own business, which is knowledge, because that play harmonizes the powers of cognition as required for cognition in general.

All these observations suggest that, when considering the relation between poetry and cognition, Kant is focused on propositional knowledge and on the concept of truth. As we will see, however, in identifying knowledge with propositional knowledge, he does not appreciate a cognitive possibility that his own comments on Friedrich’s verses seem to imply.

4. AESTHETIC ATTRIBUTES AND PERSPECTIVAL KNOWLEDGE

In § 49, to illustrate his conception of aesthetic ideas, Kant quotes the following verses, attributed to Friedrich II of Prussia:

“Let us depart from life without grumbling and without regretting anything, leaving the world behind us replete with good deeds. Thus does the sun, after it has completed its daily course, still spread a gentle light across the heavens; and the last rays that it sends forth into the sky are its last sighs for the well-being of the world”. (KU § 49, AA 05: 315-316)

Commenting on these lines, he then underscores how “the great king”

animates his idea of reason of a cosmopolitan disposition even at the end of life by means of an attribute that the imagination (in the recollection of everything agreeable in a beautiful summer day, drawn to a close, which a bright evening calls to mind) associates with that representation, and which arouses a multitude of sensations and supplementary representations for which no expression is found. (KU § 49, AA 05: 316)

As we have seen, in Kant’s view, an aesthetic idea that, while seeking to approximate a presentation of an idea of reason, really serves “only to animate the mind by opening up for it the prospect of an immeasurable field of related representations” (KU § 49, AA 05: 315). In the passage just quoted, the ‘animation’ is transferred from the mind to a content of the mind as an idea of reason. Furthermore, the animating function is attributed to an aesthetic attribute, thereby recalling that what yields an aesthetic idea is just an attribute that does not constitute the presentation of a given concept itself but expresses only “the implications connected with it and its affinity with others” and thus represents something “which gives the imagination cause to spread itself over a multitude of related (*verwandten*) representations, which let one think more than one can express in a concept determined by words” (KU § 49, AA 05: 315).

The animation of the poetic speaker’s idea of reason of a cosmopolitan disposition even at the end of life is the result of this imaginative spreading over a multitude of related (*verwandten*) representations. If we look at what the poet actually does, however, it is not misleading to say that, at base, he offers a way to apprehend an aspect of life. The quoted verses are the closing lines of a poem in the title of which it is claimed that it is an imitation of the third book of Lucretius’ *De rerum natura*, a book that deals with fear of death.¹³ Kant seems to suggest that by associating the attitude the virtuous person holds at the end of his life with a sunset on a beautiful day, the poetic speaker invites the reader to imaginatively adopt a way of thinking about this event; he suggests what we might call a “frame” for it that Kant seems to consider both apt and aesthetically pleasurable as a way of characterizing the (focal) subject.¹⁴

The king’s verses may not seem particularly original or inspiring to us; the context in which they are quoted, however, suggests that Kant may have had a different opinion. We are in a section devoted to the concept of genius, and Kant has just stated that poetry derives “the spirit” that animates its works “solely from the aesthetic attributes of the objects, which [...] give the imagination an impetus to think more, although in an undeveloped way, than can be comprehended in a concept, and hence in a determinate linguistic expression” (KU § 49, AA 05: 315).

Kant thus seems to assume that part of the value of these verses depends on the experiential and emotional responses that the framing situation (a sunset on a beautiful summer’s day) evokes and causes us to transfer to the focal subject – a wealth of thoughts and feelings that, while not fully determined by the poem, are “adequate to what it expresses”.¹⁵ If this is the case, then Kant is making a good point here, as in many cases the value of a poem consists, at least in part, in the value of following the thought process that it initiates by offering a perspective on its subject,¹⁶ which also means that that value is not separate from our trying to say what the poem shows, that is, from our trying to determine predicatively the aesthetic presentation of

the poem's theme, even if its connotative richness, its meaningfulness, cannot be conceptually exhausted. I think that this is part of what Kant calls the "animation" of a concept by means of a representation of the imagination.¹⁷

Kant seems to have chosen his example from the repertoire of didactic poetry, a genre that is particularly apt for explaining the relevance of aesthetic ideas, as in that genre the use of images is important for conveying and illustrating abstract content. Friedrich's verses offer us a way of apprehending the theme they deal with. However, it should also be noted that they invite us to adopt that way of apprehending, and in this sense they work as a catalyst for widening the reader's horizon, her relation to herself and the world, and the way in which she perceives, thinks about, and reacts emotionally to an aspect of life. If we read the expression 'subjective perspective' as meaning the way in which one directs oneself toward the world, that is, what one considers important, how one relates to others, etc., we might claim that these verses bring to light aspects of a basic attitude towards the world. Therefore, I would suggest that they promote what we might call 'perspectival knowledge', or, more precisely, knowledge of an experiential aspect that marks the subjective character of human experience as an experience that is always from a point of view.

I admit that this conclusion is open to debate. First, we might question whether Friedrich's verses convey a non-propositional kind of knowledge or, in particular given that they likely belong to the genre of didactic poetry, whether we should look at them as a type of non-propositional forms of communication of knowledge, that is, practical knowledge conveyed via a series of images. This distinction is important, but I will leave the question open.

Second, the use of the term 'knowledge' in the expression 'perspectival knowledge' could be disputed. I have already expressed my doubt that Kant would have been happy to speak of knowledge in this case, since he seems to identify knowledge with propositional knowledge. He prudently claims that aesthetic ideas are indirectly applied to cognition (*zu Erkenntnissen*) (cf. KU § 49, AA 05: 317), but I think that the fact that a poem initiates in readers or listeners a reflective process that makes them explicitly aware of aspects or implications of concepts (or of experiences) that they formerly knew (or grasped) in a more unarticulated way could be considered a cognitive achievement, even if of a non-propositional kind. By associating the abstract concept of reason of a cosmopolitan attitude held at the end of life with the intuition of a sunset on a beautiful summer's day, Friedrich's verses have the capacity to make me think and feel about an aspect of virtuous life in a way that improves my comprehension of it. After all, our understanding of the idea of a virtuous life inevitably has limits that derive from the way in which our concepts and experience make it available to us; part of the meaning of that idea may be left unelaborated.¹⁸ Thus, it might well be that I have never thought about the attitude that the virtuous person would hold when faced with the end of her life. If the king's verses make me feel and think about it as a virtuous person would see it, this should count as an improvement of my understanding of a virtuous life, and if it is, I think that the concept of knowledge should be widened to include non-propositional knowledge (of which perspectival knowledge is a case).

Thus far I have used the term ‘knowledge’ in a rather generic reference to our contemporary notion of knowledge. Kant has a quite specific notion of knowledge (*Wissen*) that he disjuncts from that of cognition (*Erkenntnis*) and this makes it possible to rephrase my point in more Kantian terms, using the word ‘cognition’ instead of ‘knowledge’. As Marcus Willaschek and Eric Watkins have shown, cognition, which in the basic kind of case is “a mental state through which we are aware of the existence and (some of the) general features of objects”, cannot be equated with knowledge, “since it is not an assent” – in Kant’s term a *Fürwahrhalten* – and does not require justification.¹⁹

In the so-called *Jäsche Logik* Kant distinguishes seven “degrees of cognition”, the second of which is “to represent something with consciousness, or *to perceive*”, while the fourth, that stands out from the other insofar as it is labeled ‘to cognize (*cognoscere*)’, is described as “to be acquainted with something with consciousness”, where to be acquainted with something (*noscere*) means “to represent something in comparison with other things, both as to *sameness* and as to *difference*” (LJ, AA 09: 64-65).

In the so-called *Stufenleiter* passage of the first *Critique*, Kant introduces a slightly different conception of cognition. Here, having defined ‘perception’ as a “representation with consciousness”, he describes as cognition (*cognitio*) “an objective perception”, which is “either an intuition or a concept (*intuitus vel conceptus*). The former is immediately related to the object and is singular; the latter is mediate, by means of a mark, which can be common to several things” (A 320/B 376-377).

According to this passage, a cognition is any conscious representation that is “objective”, namely related to an object either immediately or mediately. A narrower conception of cognition is introduced prior to the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories. Kant writes: “there are two conditions under which alone the cognition of an object is possible: first, *intuition*, through which it is given, but only as appearance; second, *concept*, through which an object is thought that corresponds to this intuition” (A 92/B 125).

Maybe in a loose sense, the poetic example that I have discussed satisfies the two conditions that Willaschek and Watkins call “a *givenness-condition*” and a “*thought-condition*”.²⁰ Admittedly, one can have some doubts in particular about the givenness-condition. In its most general sense ‘givenness’ seems to mean “that an object is made available to the mind so that one can be aware of the existence of the object and (at least of) its features”.²¹ The paradigmatic case of givenness is that in which an empirical object is represented in empirical intuition. However, I think that we can apply this condition in a more relaxed way, e.g., making room for the possibility of an encounter with the object not only through our senses, but also through imagination, which would allow a kind of ‘object’ such as a particular attitude of another person to be given to us.²²

There would be another advantage in conceiving of the cognitive benefits of poetry in terms of (Kantian) cognition instead of knowledge. It concerns the issue of truth. Propositional knowledge is assessed in terms of truth and falsity, where truth is conceived of as correspondence with reality. Yet truth and falsity are properties of propositions and seem to be out of place in the

case of non-propositional knowledge or better of non-conceptual representational content.²³ But they do not seem to be at issue with regard to Kantian cognition as well, since Kant does not seem to draw “any explicit connection between cognition in the narrow sense and truth”.²⁴ In speaking of perspectival cognition instead of perspectival knowledge we would preserve the sense of contact with reality that we connect to knowledge, while making inappropriate the question about the truth-criteria for this cognition. Obviously, this does not mean that we have no criteria for evaluating this contact.

Let us go back to Friedrich's verses to clarify this point. They present what it would be like to leave the world the way a virtuous person would, how such an event might be lived from the position of such a person; that is, they try to convey cognition of the emotional quality of that point of view. If truth and falsity are out of place in cases like this but they nevertheless involve contact with an aspect of reality, one way to assess this contact may be in terms of the appropriateness of the cognition conveyed by the text, by which I mean the extent to which the presentation of the situation goes well, such that it becomes accessible to others through imagination.²⁵ If the presentation of the ‘object’ is accurate enough to allow reference to it and to make it available to one's mind, then cognition results from it.

This brings us to an important point about Kant's poetic example, that is, the central role played by the imagination. The imagination is involved not only in finding the aesthetic attribute that gives the aesthetic idea but also, this time on the part of the reader, in making present the experience suggested by the verses – for example the peacefulness, the absence of fear with which a person who is conscious of having done her duty can depart from life. By associating this human situation with a sunset on a beautiful summer's day, the text suggests a type of experience that the reader should complete and reproduce through the imagination, through her background knowledge and her stock of experiences. This makes it possible to present this experience in its liveliness. To be sure, to imaginatively present to oneself an experience that the text makes accessible is not to live it.²⁶ On this imaginative basis, one cannot claim knowledge by acquaintance. Nevertheless, in the “multitude of sensations and supplementary representations” evoked by the aesthetic attribute there is epistemic value, because through them one is put in contact with a subjective aspect of reality that may not have been cognized to one before or of which one was not aware.

To sum up, given that Kant quotes Friedrich's verses in a section devoted to genius and to describing a talent of the imagination, he presumably viewed them as aesthetically valuable. However, it seems possible to view them as epistemically valuable as well; by making an experience accessible, they offer a possibly new way of looking at a decisive moment in life. Crucially, they do this in a way that is peculiar to poetry, namely, through an aesthetic attribute. Therefore, it does not seem misleading to suppose that their aesthetic value fosters their cognitive value, and vice versa.²⁷ After all, the more I engage in the process of thinking and feeling occasioned by the aesthetic attribute, the more my mind is animated, and the more deeply I access an ethical perspective on life.

5. ON POETIC MEANING AND PROSODY

Before concluding, I would like to add something regarding Kant's conception of poetry. Friedrich's verses help to illuminate an important aspect of poetry that is implied in what I have just said. I'm thinking of the fact that the meaning of a poem cannot be reduced to sentence meaning: poetry (often) communicates meaning figuratively, imaginatively. Also for this reason we tend to say that poetry indirectly *shows* more than it directly *says*. Kant was well aware of this feature of poetry, given his conception of the poet as a "painter of ideas". In the third *Critique*, this view, which echoes the ancient *topos* that assimilates poetry and painting, is not directly stated. Explaining the pictorial arts as involving "the expression of ideas in sensible intuition", Kant adds in brackets: "not through representations of the mere imagination, which are evoked through words" (KU § 51, AA 05: 321-322). As the preceding paragraphs deal with the arts of speech, this remark can reasonably be taken as referring to them.²⁸ If this is correct, then Kant is assuming that in poetry words function as a sort of trigger of inner representations of the imagination, conjuring meaning-rich images that evoke thoughts and feelings and that promote a search for meaning which, to use Kant's words, "sets the faculty of intellectual ideas (reason) into motion" (KU § 49, AA 05: 315). Of course, the activation of the imagination does not imply that it generates mental images. Understanding a poem may involve generating images, but it does not depend on it. However, Kant seems to assume that the images evoked by the words of a poem are bearers of poetic meaning.

While the evocation of intuitions through words is important, Kant does not overlook the fact that poetry also has musical features. If only in passing, I wish to recall that Kant was fully aware of the role of prosody. In fact, he claims that each poem requires two things, namely "syllabic meter (*Sylbenmaas*)" – that is, the dynamic relation between sounds, through which poetry imitates music – and "rhyme (*Reim*)".²⁹ On his view, rhyme and rhythm make poetry (at least insofar as it is read aloud) similar to music.³⁰ Thus, the art to which he attributes "the highest rank of all" and whose value does not lie in its perceptual properties alone may also offer the "enjoyment" of music, that is, of the art that, more than any other, "moves the mind in more manifold and, though only temporarily, in deeper ways" (KU § 53, AA 05: 328).³¹

This suggests two things. The first is that, in the case of poetry, both the transitive and the intransitive use of the term 'expression' play a role. Kant could therefore subscribe to Angela Leighton's claim that "a poem expresses something [...] and at the same time [...] is expressive, as if with musical dynamic".³² The second thing that is suggested by this consideration of the musical aspect of poetry is that this aspect, no less than the "ideas" both "fantastic" and "rich in thought" evoked by the words of a poem, may impinge on the nature of the thought process that a poem can prompt. What I mean is that this process, rather than being one of logical connection, may be one of affinity of representations and, to use Leighton's words, "of sound and syntax, rhythm and accent, of sense sparked by the collocation and connotation of words".³³ If, as Kant is reported to have said, "rhyme is a melody" and gives verses more interconnection (V-Anth/Mron, AA 25: 1282), then it contributes, as melody does in music, to expressing "the aesthetic ideas of a coherent whole of an unutterable fullness of thought" (KU § 49, AA 05: 329). In other words, it may be part of what gives a poem its aesthetic value

and perhaps, moving the mind “in deeper ways”, its capacity to make a subjective experience accessible.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As noted at the beginning of this paper, according to Kant’s view the question is not whether poetry can be used as a source of information or can convey cognitive content. The question is whether having this value contributes to its value *qua* art. Kant claims nothing of the sort. However, his conception permits a cautiously affirmative answer to the question, given that the source of the aesthetic value of a work, namely the aesthetic ideas it expresses, may also be the source of possible cognitive content. Kant describes the mental disposition effected by an aesthetic idea in terms akin to those he uses to describe the state of mind on which taking pleasure in the beautiful rests (cf. KU §12, AA 05: 222 and § 49, AA 05: 313), and this allows him to equate beauty with the expression of aesthetic ideas (cf. KU § 51, AA 05: 320). However, as I hope to have shown by considering Friedrich’s verses, there are cases in which the pleasure in the beautiful rests on the mental activity of making present the experience the verses are about.

In cases like this, for a work to strike us as beautiful is for it to make available a wealth of thoughts and feelings that convey a form of cognition – not propositional knowledge, but that imaginative thought³⁴ that puts us in contact with, or engages us in reflection on, aspects of reality that would otherwise remain hidden. Does this cognitive value affect aesthetic value? Does it contribute to the value of the work *qua* art? I would very tentatively claim that it does, but also insofar as this involvement in the imaginative presentation of an experience is precisely that fuller engagement in the activity of the mind that Kant considers the source of the pleasure offered by poetry.

Abstract: It is natural to interpret Kant’s claim that the poet, while playing “with ideas”, provides “nourishment to the understanding” (KU § 51, AA 05: 321) as an attribution of cognitive value to poetry. Given that he ascribes to poetry “the highest rank of all” among the arts (KU § 53, AA 05:326), it is also natural to assume that having that value contributes to the high artistic value of works of poetry. However, that Kant really endorsed this view would appear to be disputable, on the one hand because he explicitly claims that both in nature and art, “that is beautiful which pleases in the mere judging (neither in sensation nor through a concept)” (KU § 44, AA 05: 306), and this may have prevented him from assigning a role to cognitive values in promoting the overall aesthetic value of works of poetry; on the other hand, because he maintains that “an *aesthetic idea* cannot become a cognition, because it is an *intuition* (of the imagination) for which a concept can never be found adequate” (KU § 57 Anm. I, AA 05: 342).

In this paper, it will be argued that Kant should have been less decided on this, all the more so because the poetic examples that he discusses seem to be cases where aesthetic value and cognitive value relate to one another. In particular, Kant’s comments on verses by Friedrich II show that poetry can convey a kind of cognition – in the case in question, the cognition that we now call ‘perspectival knowledge’. In the paper, the thesis that poetry has cognitive value is not presented as a general claim but as amounting to the statement that some poetic works can convey knowledge and this contributes to their overall value. As for the kind of knowledge at issue, what Kant says about poetry is of help for understanding that this knowledge is to be distinguished from scientific or philosophical knowledge in part because the relation between text and knowledge is not that of communication or information, but of *Darstellung* or presentation. Poetic knowledge – if it is allowed to use this expression – is conveyed less through a propositional saying than through a demonstrative showing.

Keywords: Kant, poetry, aesthetic ideas, knowledge, artistic value.

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NOTAS / NOTES

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² Kant's works are quoted according to the usual abbreviations. References to the *Critique of Pure Reason* are given to the A and/ or B texts; in all the other cases they are to the Akademie-Ausgabe page numbers. Translations are from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* (general editors: Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood).

³ This latter claim suggests that Kant partly advocated an essentialist conception of artistic value, namely the view that artistic value is a unitary kind of value – the kind of value that he summed up in the expression "pleasure of reflection" (ibid.) – and that this value is shared by all works that are valued as art across all artforms. I say "partly" because an essentialist would also claim that the value at issue is unique to art, while Kant, although he distinguishes between the beauty of nature as "a beautiful thing" and the beauty of art as "a beautiful representation of a thing" (KU § 48, AA 05: 311), thinks that in both cases beauty is attributed to the object on account of its form.

⁴ I owe this point to Gabriel 2015, p. 131.

⁵ I have here adapted to Kant an argument borrowed from Lamarque 2009, p. 265.

⁶ On Kant's division of the arts, see Mathisen 2008.

⁷ What risks going unnoticed in this way of explaining things is that insofar as we try to conceptualize what is intuitively given, cognition is brought about, or, to use Kant's expression with regard to poetry, "food" is given for thought. It is worth recalling that Kant's claim is that an aesthetic idea is a representation of the imagination "that occasions much thinking though without it being possible for any determinate thought, i.e., *concept*, to be adequate to it, which, consequently, no language fully attains or can make intelligible" (KU § 49, AA 05: 314). One cannot rule out the possibility that, as a result of the effort of making an aesthetic idea intelligible, one might also arrive at propositions that are capable of truth. In or through the process of thought occasioned by it, a truth can be discovered or communicated. This is a possibility that I do not pursue here.

⁸ A part of a concept is a note (*Merkmal*) of a concept ('living being' is a note of the concept 'human being'; it is more general and therefore more comprehensive than the concept of which it is a note; in fact, 'living being' contains all other living beings besides human beings). By contrast, a part of an intuition is a real part of an intuition. As Gottfried Gabriel points out, while concepts are subject to the logic of super- and subordination, intuitions are subject to the logic of part and whole (cf. Gabriel 2015, p. 103).

⁹ I use 'interesting' in a loose sense. However, as Alessandro Nannini has shown, the term had a rather precise meaning in coeval philosophy. The capacity of something to stimulate much thinking represented the aesthetic ground of the interesting (cfr. Nannini 2022, pp. 93-151).

¹⁰ On this see Fiddes and Bader (ed. by), 2013.

¹¹ A further reason for the high ranking of poetry could be the following. When introducing the principle of his division of the arts, Kant observes that "only the combination" of words, gesture and tone "constitutes the speaker's complete communication. For thought, intuition, and sensation are thereby conveyed to the other simultaneously and united" (KU § 51, AA 05: 320). As we will see, poetic language also has figurative and musical features. Therefore, poetry can come close to complete communication on the part of the (poetic) speaker. In *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), Kant points out that poetry wins the prize "over rhetoric" because it is "at the same time music (singable) and tone; a sound that is pleasant in itself, which mere speech is not". But, he adds, "poetry wins the prize [...] over every other beautiful art" because "poets also speak to the understanding [...]. A good poem is the most penetrating means of enlivening the mind" (Anth § 71, AA 07: 247).

¹² "From poets I want only entertainment; but whether the thing is true or not does not concern me" (V-Anth/Mron, AA 25: 1281).

¹³ As is recalled in the editorial notes of the English translation of the third *Critique*, the lines quoted by Kant (in German) are the conclusion of Friedrich's poem *Au Maréchal Keith, Imitation du troisième livre de Lucrèce: "Sur les vaines terreurs de la mort et les frayeurs d'une autre vie"*. The original reads: "Oui, finissons sans trouble, et mourons sans regrets, / En laissant l'Univers comblé de nos bienfaits. / Ainsi l'Astre du jour, au bout de sa carrière, / Répand sur l'horizon une douce lumière, / Et les derniers rayons qu'il darde dans les air/Sont les derniers soupirs qu'il donne à l'Univers" (Kant 2000, p. 382).

¹⁴ I am here applying concepts and terms suggested by Camp 2009, pp. 110-111, 118.

¹⁵ Angela Breitenbach uses this expression when referring to art in general (see Breitenbach 2020, p. 74).

¹⁶ Lamarque 2015, p. 31 makes this point.

¹⁷ Kant also quotes the following lines by the poet Johann Philipp Lorenz Withof: "The sun streamed forth, as tranquillity streams from virtue". In this case, he wants to show the opposite, namely that "even an intellectual concept can serve as the attribute of a representation of sense, and so animate the latter by means of the idea of the supersensible", but it can do this, he adds, "only insofar as the aesthetic, which is subjectively attached to the consciousness of the latter, is used to this end". What Kant claims is that thinking of the rising sun in light of the idea of tranquillity streaming from virtue makes the former representation more lively, but only if we use the "aesthetic", which is subjectively attached to consciousness of the supersensible, namely the "multitude of sublime and calming feelings" that consciousness of virtue, "when one puts oneself, even if only in thought, in the place of a virtuous person, spreads in the mind" (KU § 49, AA 05: 316). If I'm not wrong, on Kant's view the poet offers a particularly vivid image of the rising sun by suggesting that one sees it in a way that is similar to the rising of inner peace from consciousness of virtue, namely by spreading over the natural scene the feelings that accompany consciousness of virtue.

¹⁸ In general, when we try to describe what it is like to grasp a particular moral value or moral attitude, and what follows from it, we can arrive at detailed descriptions, but the corresponding perspective, and the experience of living according to that value or that attitude, is not to be equated with these descriptions. Descriptions are doomed to be gappy at least for two reasons: first, because the phenomenon may be richer than the description; second, because a description, although accurate, is not equivalent to the phenomenon.

¹⁹ Willaschek and Watkins 2020, pp. 3196-3197. According to Willaschek and Watkins for Kant knowledge is "a kind of assent, or taking to be true, and that assent must be based on an objective ground, since knowledge is a mental act that requires justification. In addition, the kind of justification the assent is based on must be such that it guarantees truth" (ivi, p. 3208).

²⁰ Both conditions are mirrored in the passage from the *Menschenkunde* that I have quoted in the first section of the paper, where it is stated that both intuitions and thoughts must be combined in poetry.

²¹ Willaschek and Watkins 2020, p. 3200.

²² Kant himself somehow relaxes the givenness-condition, when, as Willaschek and Watkins note, he allows objects such as mathematical objects and empirical objects, like magnetic matter, that we cannot perceive, to be given (cf. Willaschek and Watkins 2020, p. 3202).

²³ It is also worth recalling that the term ‘truth’ may be out of place in literature in general, since literature aims not to represent reality but to shape a new reality that includes imagination. As we have seen, Kant endorses this view. For Kant, literature does just what the imagination “as a productive cognitive faculty” does – namely it creates “as it were, another nature, out of the material which the real one gives it” (KU § 49, AA 05: 314). When a fictional work presents the world from a particular point of view, structuring it according to a different model in which, e.g., certain qualities and nuances are given prominence, it is engaged in a similar operation. On a very small scale, this is also what Friedrich’s verses do. On Kant’s concept of creative imagination, see Matherne 2016 and Zöller 2019.

²⁴ Willaschek and Watkins 2020, p. 3202.

²⁵ I here follow Gabriel 2015, pp. 130-140, and Vendrell Ferran 2018, p. 217.

²⁶ That this presentation does not amount to the production of a real presence is emphasized by Gabriel 2015, p. 137 and Vendrell Ferran 2018, p. 213. The poetic presentation of feelings or moods is rather different from causally arousing them. It is a fictionally making-present that enables reflection and that can make these mental states understandable.

²⁷ Whereas, according to Kant, the verses by Friedrich II invite us to imagine a situation which, by arousing a multitude of sensations and supplementary representations, animates an idea of reason, those by Withof involve a different use of the imagination, namely imaginatively putting oneself “in the place of a virtuous person” (KU § 49, AA 05: 316). In this case, the reader is invited to broaden her experiential horizon, imagining the perspective of a virtuous person and then assuming it, that is, taking up her internal point of view, under the particular aspect of the feeling it arouses – or, in Kant’s words, under the aspect of “the aesthetic, which is subjectively attached to the consciousness” of an intellectual concept (KU § 49, AA 05: 316). This feeling is then spread over the sense representation to animate it.

²⁸ In the *Anthropology*, Kant claims that “the painter of ideas alone is the master of beautiful art” (Anth § 71, AA 07: 248), and in the *Anthropologie* Busolt (WS 1788/89) the poet is described as trying to find images “to approximate more and more the concepts of the understanding” (V-Anth/Busolt, AA 25: 1446). This approximation is presented as a perfection (*Vollkommenheit*) that greatly helps the understanding: examples and intuitions enliven concepts, giving them force and clarity, and can thereby make them interesting (cf. V-Anth/Busolt, AA 25: 1444). To be sure, “aesthetic distinctness through examples” may improve “understandability”, but it is “of a completely different kind than distinctness through concepts as marks”; “examples are simply not marks and do not belong to the concept as parts but, as intuitions, to the use of the concept” (Log, AA 9: 62). It is worth recalling that one of the reasons why Kant admires Milton is that the latter always strove to provide intuitions. When he claims in the third *Critique* that the poet “ventures to make sensible rational ideas of invisible beings, the kingdom of the blessed, the kingdom of hell, eternity, creation, etc.” (KU § 49, AA 05: 314), he is presumably thinking of Milton, whom he considered a genius and associated with Shakespeare: “Milton, Shakespeare are geniuses” (V-Anth/Busolt, AA 25: 1497).

²⁹ Kant was perfectly aware that the quantity of syllables is less determined in modern languages, and this contributed to the importance given to rhyme: “Rhyme is a melody, but only in the West”, where it is now “indispensable[.] for we have no orderly prosody, but instead can arbitrarily use various words. Hence rhyme serves to give our verses more interconnection. Rhyme also helps the memory”. However, Kant acknowledged that it is also possible to compose (*dichten*) without rhyme and “syllabic measure”, as in “poetic prose” (V-Anth/Mron, AA 25: 1282; cf. also V-Anth/Mensch, AA 25: 992; Anth § 71, AA 07, 248).

³⁰ He also suggests that the “art of tone (*Tonkunst*)” may “very naturally be united with” poetry (KU § 53, AA 05: 328).

³¹ As already noted, that musicality contributes to the aesthetic value of poetry is claimed in Anth § 71, AA 07: 247.

³² Leighton 2015, p. 174.

³³ Ivi, p. 178.

³⁴ I borrow the expression ‘imaginative thought’ from John 2007, p. 229.

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EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

The Journal *Estudos Kantianos* publishes articles, translations and reviews, always related with Kant’s thinking and Kantianism.

All submitted papers will be addressed attached to an e-mail to journal’s editors [cpek@marilia.unesp.br] in word or rtf. **The evaluation system adopted by the journal is the so-called “double-blind peer review”**. Papers in German, Spanish, French, English and Portuguese are accepted, edited in TNR size 12, with spacing 1,5 and with an approximated length of 30 pages. Footnotes of the texts should appear at the end of the text, after the bibliography, in TNR size 10 and with simple spacing. Quotations longer than three lines will be edited in TNR size 11, with simple spacing and 4 cm. left indentation.

Author’s name and a brief biographical note in footnote should appear below the title. In the case of articles, abstract and keywords will be set at the end of the text, after the conclusion. When the paper is written in Spanish, Italian or Portuguese, the biographical note, abstract and keywords will appear in the original language of the paper, followed by a translation into English.

Quotations and bibliography will follow the guidelines of the “Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas” [ABNT]: “ABNT/NBR 10520/2002” and “ABNT/NBR 6023/2002”.

