

Maria
Borges



Emotion, Reason,
and Action
in Kant

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ACTION IN KANT**

MARIA BORGES

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To Laydes and Paulo Borges (in memoriam)

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ABBREVIATIONS

Kant sources

Kants gesammelte Schriften (Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1900–).

- AntM** *Anthropologie Mrongovius* (1784/85) (AA 25)
- Ant** *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (AA 7)
- AntC** *Anthropologie Collins* (1772/73) (AA 25)
- AntPa** *Anthropologie Parow* (1772/73) (AA 25)
- G** *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (AA 4)
- KpV** *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (AA 5)
- M** *Vorlesungen über Metaphysik* (AA 28, 29)
- MM** *Metaphysik Mrongovius* (AA 28)
- MS** *Metaphysik der Sitten* (AA 6)
- Rek** *Rektoratsrede* (AA 15)
- Rel** *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft* (AA 6)
- TL** *Tugendlehre*
- VE** *Vorlesungen über Ethik* (AA 27)

The Critique of Pure Reason (KrV) will be cited according to the editions A (first edition) and B (second edition).

TRANSLATIONS

I used the translation of the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, with the exception of the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, for which I used Victor Dowdell's translation, in: Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Southern Illinois University Press, 1978.

Introduction

This is a book about practical reason, action, and emotion in Kant. My aim is to answer what is the real importance of emotion for Kant. I will try to show that Kant had considerable views about emotions and that he was not blind to their importance in action in general. My object is not moral action, but action in general, including weak and even evil ones. My purpose is to show that Kant dedicated a considerable part of his work to the study of the relation between reason and emotion.

In Chapter 1, I analyze Kant's theory of action and what can count as a reason for or cause of an action. First, I begin with the distinction between *motiva* and *stimulus* in the pre-critical lessons on ethics and metaphysics. In the *Groundwork*, Kant explains this distinction in terms of objective and subjective grounds for actions: the motive (*Bewegungsgrund*) is the objective ground of an action and the incentive (*Triebfeder*) is the subjective one. Next, I analyze the possibility of the overdetermination of actions, understood as the possibility of two possible causes for the same action. I will argue that according to the incorporation thesis, there is only one motive for an action.

Second, I try to reconcile the weakness of the will and the incorporation thesis. I will show that, according to the incorporation thesis, Kant is committed to a strong thesis concerning causation of actions. Reason and only reason can be the cause of an action. If we accept weakness, however, we must have a humbler solution to the Kantian theory of action: the domain of rational agency does not have the same extension of voluntary action. In the model of rational agency there is no room for weakness, although it is a fact in real actions. The domain of the voluntary is, then, wider than the

domain of rational agency. The weakness of the will applies to the first and the incorporation thesis applies only to the second.

In Chapter 2, I shall analyze whether human beings can act morally without being moved by sensible feelings. I will show that the answer in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *Groundwork*, and the *Critical of Practical Reason* is undoubtedly yes, but that Kant is ambiguous in *The Metaphysics of Morals* and also in the *Anthropology*. In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant claims that there are some sensible conditions for the reception of the concept of duty: moral feeling, conscience, love of one's neighbor, and respect for one self (self-esteem). I examine moral feeling and the love of human beings, trying to figure out whether or not they are necessary sensible preconditions for moral actions.

In Chapter 3, I ask whether there is a place for affects and passions in the Kantian system. I intend to show that this place is the empirical part of morals, which can be understood as anthropology. I follow the development of the idea of anthropology in Kant's moral works, showing the division between a moral metaphysics and a practical anthropology, aiming at exploring the impure part of Kantian ethics. I also try to compare the concepts of practical anthropology, pragmatic anthropology, and transcendental anthropology.

In Chapter 4, I analyze Kant's theory of emotions and what he can teach us about them. I will challenge two models that have been used to explain his theory. I begin with Sabini/Silver's position, according to which emotions for Kant follow the pain model: they are precognitive and involuntary phenomena. Next, I analyze Baron's objection, according to which Kant held that we are responsible for our emotions. I argue that both interpretations are misleading. First, I show that there is not a unique model for emotions in Kant. In his work, there is a *continuum* from uncontrollable emotions, like anger, to those which can be cultivated and rationally controlled. The voluntariness and involuntariness of emotions as well as their capacity for being cultivated depends on their relation to the passive, reactive, or active self. Second, I argue that Kant's account of emotion includes both physiological aspects and

cognitive contents, mainly evaluative beliefs. However, the variety of emotions presents us with different proportions of these two elements. I conclude that Kantian moral theory contributes an outstanding theory of emotions to contemporary debates, one which acknowledges physiological as well as cognitive aspects, without forgetting their diversity.

In Chapter 5, I discuss Kant's theory of affects, particularly the possibility of controlling them. I claim that affects are not easy to control and some are even uncontrollable through the power of the mind. The possibility of controlling affects depends upon a mild temperament. Although in some cases Kant admits cultivation of character, the limits of this cultivation will depend on the natural temperament of the agent. I will argue that Kant's theory of affects is connected to the seventeenth-century physiology idea of excited states, which make affects difficult to control merely by the force of the mind.

In Chapter 6, I analyze virtue as a cure for strong affects, and refinement as a propaedeutic to virtue. Kantian virtue is apart from happiness and does not aim at any *telos*, such as the achievement of a happy life. If virtue does not lead necessarily to happiness or pleasure, what is then virtue? What is the aim of Kantian virtue? Kantian virtue is the fortitude, strength, and self-constraint to attain full rationality. The development of virtue over time will be necessary to control instances of outbursts of feelings that could oppose the accomplishment of moral actions.

In Chapter 7, I investigate the aesthetical conditions for morality. I will begin with *Critique of Judgment* and the thesis of § 59, stating that the beautiful can be considered a symbol of the morally good. After that, I try to sort out the relation between refinement and morality. I also ask about the presence of the feelings of pleasure and displeasure in morality and analyze moral feeling in *The Metaphysics of Morals*. I then examine the relation between the realm of taste and the realm of virtues in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*.

In Chapter 8, my aim is to explore the relations Kant establishes between women, emotions, and morality, in order to show that the female sex is useful

in the moral education of men. Kant has often been criticized for holding a very negative vision of women, according to which they are less rational and less morally valuable than men. In this chapter, I will show that, in spite of some pejorative comments, Kant held that women have some characteristics that can be useful to morality. This is due to some qualities of the female sex, mainly women's capacity for self-control and the capacity to have moral feelings like sympathy and compassion. Moreover, women demonstrate their mastery of emotions and passions when they are able to use their emotional sensitivity and self-control to master the feelings and passions of men. Since the moral agent presupposes the capacity of mastering his/her inclinations in order to follow the moral law, at least in this particular area, women seem to fit this role better than men.

In Chapter 9, I argue that the evil of emotions resides in passions and I try to point to a possible cure for this evil through an ethical community. Kant claims that both affects and passions are illnesses of the mind, because both hinder the sovereignty of reason. I show that passions are worse than affects for the purpose of pure reason. I then relate affects and passions to the degrees of propensity to evil in *Religion* and I analyze the idea of an ethical community as a way to overcome evil, which goes beyond the political and anthropological solutions suggested by Kant.

In Conclusion, I offer an idea of Kantian philosophy that does not deny the reality of human emotion, although it is faithful to the claim that the moral value of an action resides in its being done for the sake of duty.

1

Action, reason, and causes in Kant

In this chapter, I analyze Kant's theory of action and what can count as a reason for or cause of an action. I begin with the distinction between *motiva* and *stimulus* in the pre-critical lessons on ethics and metaphysics. In the *Groundwork*, Kant explains this distinction in terms of objective and subjective grounds for actions: The motive (*Bewegungsgrund*) is the objective ground of an action and the incentive (*Triebfeder*) is the subjective one. Next, I will analyze the possibility of the overdetermination of actions, understood as the possibility of two possible causes for the same action. I argue that according to the incorporation thesis, there is only one motive for an action.

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investigate if an action can be predicted, based on information about the inner states of the agent.

Stimulus and motiva in the precritical Kantian ethics

Is it a reason to act the cause of an action? Or is it only a way to explain it *post factum*? What is the cause of an action? There are two ways of answering this question: one lies in why we perform that action, another in what really pulls us to perform it. Two different concepts apply: a motive is the intellectual reason for doing something; an incentive is what drives one to do it. In the *Groundwork*, Kant explains this distinction in terms of objective and subjective grounds for actions: “The subjective ground of desire is an incentive; the objective ground of volition is a motive” (G, 4: 428). The motive (*Bewegungsgrund*) is the objective ground of an action and the incentive (*Triebfeder*) is the subjective one.

The distinction *Triebfeder/Bewegungsgrund* can also be found in the early Kant lessons on ethics and metaphysics, as a distinction between the Latin words *stimulus* and *motiva*. In the Collin’s *Lectures on Ethics*, one reads

Necessitation (*Nötigung*) is of two kinds, objective and subjective. Subjective necessitation is the idea of the necessity of actions *per stimulus*; or through the *causae impulsivae* of the subject. Objective compulsion (*Zwang*) is the constraining of a person through what has the greatest constraining and moving power in his subject. (LE, 27: 267)

Compulsion can be either pathological or practical, the first is the necessitation of an action *per stimulus*, and the second is the necessitation *per motiva*. Human choice cannot be necessitated *per stimulus*, since it is an *arbitrium liberum*. Animals are necessitated *per stimulus*: “So that a dog must eat if he

is hungry and has something in front of him; but man, in the same situation, can restrain himself” (LE, 27: 267). To claim that human choice is an *arbitrium liberum* is to accept that human beings can only be compelled *per motiva*, not *per stimulus*.

A similar picture is given in the *Lectures of Metaphysics*: “Every act of choice has an impelling cause <*causam impulsivam*>. The impelling causes <*causae impulsivae*> are either sensitive or intellectual. The sensitive are stimuli <*stimuli*> or motive causes, impulses. The intellectual are motives or motive grounds” (*Metaphysik* L1, 28: 254).

The sensitive impelling causes may have a necessitating power (*vim necessitante*) or impelling power (*vim impellentem*). For nonrational animals, the stimuli have a necessitating power, but not in human beings, for whom they have an impelling power.

Both in the *Lectures of Metaphysics* and *Lectures of Ethics* we can see a double level of causation, in the distinction between sensitive and intellectual impelling causes. In human beings, the sensitive impelling causes (*stimuli*) can only have an impelling power, not a necessitating one:

Stimuli (*stimuli*) thus have either necessitating power (*vim necessitantes*) or impelling power (*vim impellentem*). With all non-rational animals, the stimuli (*stimuli*) have necessitating power (*vim necessitantem*) but with human beings the stimuli do not have necessitating power (*vim necessitantem*) but rather only impelling (*impellentem*). (*Metaphysik* L1, 28: 255)

Human choice is called free choice, because it is independent from the necessitation of all stimuli. This freedom of choice is connected to practical freedom:

This practical freedom rests on independence of choice from necessitation by stimuli (*independencia arbitrii a necessitatione per stimulus*). That freedom, however, which is wholly independent of all stimuli (*stimulis*), is

transcendental freedom, which will be spoken of in the Rational Psychology (psychologia rationalis). (*Metaphysik* L1, 28: 257)

Practical freedom is the independence of choice from the necessitation of *stimuli*, while transcendental freedom is independence from all *stimuli*. In the *Lectures on Metaphysics* Kant anticipates what he will claim in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. In the latter, transcendental freedom is defined as a faculty of beginning a state in itself and as “spontaneity, which could start to act from itself, without needing to be preceded by any other cause” (KrV, A 533/B 561) and freedom in the practical sense as “the independence of the power of choice from *necessitation* by impulses of sensibility” (KrV, A 534/B 562). While in the *Dialectic*, the concept of practical freedom is a case of transcendental freedom, in the *Canon of the Critique of Pure Reason* Kant argues that one may have practical freedom without transcendental freedom.

Henry Allison tries to solve this incompatibility by showing that “practical freedom is related to transcendental freedom the same way divine freedom is related to human freedom.”¹

If human beings have practical freedom without having transcendental freedom, then their actions are not completely independent of sensory impulses, although they should be independent of determination by sensory impulses. This point will come later, when we discuss the possibility of acting without feelings.

Incentives, motives, and the overdetermination of maxims

The distinction between *Triebfeder* and *Bewegungsgrund* is crucial in contrasting actions according to duty with actions done from duty, because it underscores the distinction between what constitutes moral motive and incentive. The difference between moral and nonmoral incentives is explored

in the philanthropist example, where we find two agents with different incentives for being benevolent. Neither of them has a motive of vanity or self-interest; nevertheless, the first has a natural inclination to do good for other persons, an inner happiness in making other people happier. Although his action has a moral motive, Kant maintains that “in such a case an action of this kind, however right and however amiable it may be, has still no moral worth” (G, 4: 398). Hence, a moral motive is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for a moral action.

When does an action have moral worth? Kant answers with the case of the second philanthropist (G, 4: 398). Unlike the sympathetic philanthropist, the insensible one performs an action with moral worth; consequently, the absence of sympathy seems to make an action morally worthy. In order to avoid the criticism of insensibility, some authors have discussed what makes an action morally worthy. They were obviously trying to avoid the uncomfortable conclusion that moral insensibility is something good.

One of these authors is Henson. Henson² tries to answer two questions related to this example of the philanthropist: (1) What does it mean to ascribe moral worth to an act? (2) Under what circumstances are we to say that one acts from duty?

There are two possible answers in Kant’s work: (A) an action has no moral worth if, at the time of performance, the agent has an inclination to perform it; (B) the moral action does not require an absence of inclination, provided that respect for duty is present and would suffice to produce the dutiful action. The A answer gives us what Henson calls the *battle citation model*; the B answer provides us with the *fitness report model*. According to the *battle citation model*, an action has moral worth only if respect for duty were the only motive tending to the direction of the dutiful act. In the *fitness report model*, other inclinations could be present, provided that respect for duty was present and would have sufficed by itself, even though other motives were also present and might themselves have sufficed. According to the fitness model, there is no

need to banish all other inclinations toward an action, provided that respect would have been a sufficient reason to cause the action.

Barbara Herman in her book *The Practice of Moral Judgment*³ discusses whether the absence of inclinations is a necessary condition of a moral action: “The apparent consequence of this view . . . is at the least, troubling in that it judges a grudging or resentfully performed dutiful act morally preferable to a similar act done from affection or with pleasure.”⁴ She argues that the presence of a nonmoral motive does not mean a lack of moral worth in an action. However, she points out some problems with the idea of sufficiency employed by Henson in the fitness model. She goes further and proposes to strengthen the interpretation of the fitness model.

Suppose that a shopkeeper had two sufficient motives to be honest: the moral one and the profit one. A shopkeeper with a sufficient moral motive would perform honest actions even if the profit motive were absent. Therefore, according to the fitness model, this would be a moral action. Herman argues that the fact that the moral motive is sufficient in this situation does not imply it would be sufficient in another. Herman claims that a moral action takes place not only if the moral motive is a sufficient one in a specific situation but also if it is strong enough to prevail over other possible inclinations against the moral law that could arise in different situations. “On a greater-strength interpretation of the fitness model, an action can have moral worth”—she says—“only if the moral motive is strong enough to prevail over the other inclinations.” In the strength interpretation of the fitness model, we will praise the individual whose moral motive prevails over nonmoral motives, bringing us back to the battle citation model. Herman explains: “A greater—strength interpretation of sufficiency would then undermine the claim that there are two notions of moral worth in Kant, and leave just with the battle-citation model’s powerful moral motive.”⁵ The idea of sufficiency, however, is not enough to determine if an action has moral worth. Herman points out that even if tomorrow the circumstances change and the dutiful action as a result is

not done, this does not imply that the action that is done today does not have moral worth.

Herman agrees with Henson that it is natural to accept that in a morally worthy action nonmoral motives may be present, as long as they are not the reason for the agent to act. However, she points out that it is not obvious how a motive could be present and yet not operative.

In order to understand Kant's idea of moral worth, Herman makes a distinction between motives, incentives, desires, and causes. Kantian motives are not desires or causes in the sense of vector-like forces. Desires are incentives (*Triebfedern*), not motives for acting. Following this line of reasoning, she concludes that the doctrine of moral worth can accept overdetermination with respect to incentives, not motives.

Paul Guyer disagrees with Herman, in that he sees no reason to admit that we can have overdetermination of incentives: "An incentive cannot coexist or cooperate with any other motive as one sufficient or independent cause might coexist or cooperate with another, but can become a cause of action only by a maxim that makes it into a reason for that action."⁶

Since an incentive is not a cause, it means that there cannot be overdetermination at all, since overdetermination means that you can have two possible causes for the same event. If an incentive is not a cause per se, then the existence of many incentives cannot be seen as overdetermination.

It is very difficult, however, to see how an incentive can be present and not be taken as a motive. Perhaps what Kant really wanted to show in the philanthropist example in the *Groundwork* is that only the complete absence of feelings can assure that a certain act was done from duty. If one is immersed in a sea of feelings, it is a hard task to acknowledge that these feelings haven't played any part in the actual accomplishment of the action. The only way to be sure that a feeling did not have any role as a motive is not to have had it at all. Once love is there, or hatred, or jealousy, or even sympathy, we can never say if the action has a pure motive.

How could we know that we are not acting from friendship, for instance, when we vote in a provost election for a friend of ours? Although we can be persuaded that we are doing so because we really think that this friend has the best platform for the university in mind, it is still the case that perhaps it is not our reason, but our feelings that are inclining us to vote for him/her. Although it is good to have feelings for our friends, the best reason to vote for a provost is not the feeling we have for him, but the fact that we consider him to be the best choice for the university.

I think, however, that Kant is not saying that only the absence of feelings will make the action morally worthy. After a long discussion with commentators, Henson's fitness report model has proved itself to be the correct interpretation of the *Groundwork* example. In a dutiful action, other inclinations may be present, provided that respect for duty is present and would have sufficed by itself for the accomplishment of the dutiful action.

Allen Wood, in the book *Kantian Ethics*, expresses the Kantian position in a correct way, saying that

we have a duty to *strive* for a pure disposition, so that the motive of duty alone is sufficient. We have this duty because it is "hazardous" to rely on motives besides duty, because the performance of duty on such motives besides is always only "contingent and precarious" (G 4: 390; KpV, 5: 73). We have no duty at all, however, to exclude other motives we might have for doing our duty. (MS, 6: 393)⁷

Kantian virtue, in Wood's conception, is not only to have the strength to follow the moral law, but also to strive for the purity of motives that lead to that end. That is not the same as having a duty to be a cold moral person. Other incentives could coexist with the moral one as long as the moral law would have been enough to accomplish the moral action. However, I disagree with Wood when he states that "we are not in the least to blame if we require incentives others than duty, so long as we in fact do it."⁸ I agree that it is better to act according

to duty moved by sensible incentives than to act in opposition to the moral law. However, the philanthropist example undoubtedly shows that the genuine moral action is the one which is done only because of duty and not because of any pleasure the agent may have. Then we could be blamed if we need other incentives besides moral law, since this would not be a pure moral action.

Incorporation thesis and weakness of the will

One problem in any theory that claims that agents act from reasons is weakness of the will. According to the traditional doctrine of the weakness of the will, the agent has a reason to act in a certain way and decide to perform the action A1, but she does A2, because she is driven by a powerful inclination to do it. This apparently contradicts what Kant states in *Religion*:

Freedom of power of choice has the characteristic, entirely peculiar to it, that it cannot be determined through any incentive *except so far as the human being has incorporated it into his maxim* (has made it into a universal rule for himself, according to which he wills to conduct himself); only in this way can an incentive, whatever it may be, coexist with the absolute spontaneity of the power of choice (of freedom). (Rel, 6: 23–24)

And some pages later, while analyzing the three degrees of evil, he mentions the weakness of the will (*fragilitas*):

I incorporate the good (the law) into the maxim of my power of choice; but this good, which is an irresistible incentive objectively or ideally (*in thesi*), is subjectively (*in hypothesi*) the weaker (in comparison with inclination) whenever the maxim is to be followed. (Rel, 6: 29)

The first quotation was baptized by Henry Allison as the incorporation thesis. Allison wrote in *Kant's Theory of Freedom* that there are two theses regarding

freedom, both of which play an important role in Kant's theory of rational agency, the incorporation thesis, and the reciprocity thesis:

The former expresses what I take to be Kant's central insight regarding rational agency. Inclinations and desires do not of themselves constitute a sufficient reason to act. But do so insofar as they are taken up or incorporated into a maxim by the agent. This means that an act of spontaneity or self-determination is involved even in inclinations or desire-based (heteronomous) actions. I view this thesis as the key to both Kant's moral psychology and his conception of agency.⁹

If we accept the incorporation thesis, an incentive can never constitute, by itself, a sufficient reason to act, but only if it is taken into the maxim, or, in another words, if it is taken as a motive. If this is the case, weakness of the will can never occur, since it is exactly the opposite case: we act from an incentive, against the maxim. In weakness of the will, an incentive seems to constitute a sufficient reason to act. If we accept that weakness of the will can be the case sometimes, then, at least in these situations, the incorporation thesis does not hold.

How can one solve this problem in Kant's philosophy? Should we accept the incorporation thesis and deny the possibility of the weakness of the will? Or should we accept the undeniable fact of weakness of the will and accept at least some exceptions to the incorporation thesis.

In a discussion with Marcia Baron, Allison suggested that weakness of the will is not really weakness, but self-deception. When an agent explains her action based on weakness of the will, she is misleading others and herself about what her motive, and her maxim, really was.¹⁰

The contradiction between the incorporation thesis and the weakness of the will can be explained in the following four propositions:

- (1) S knows the principle P1
- (2) S can act according to P1

- (3) S freely chooses P1 as a Maxim M1
- (4) S acts contrary to M1

Allison's choice is to deny 3; that is, the agent S really chose P1 as a Maxim.

I do not think that Kant really presents a solution to this puzzle in his work, although I will try to see what kind of answer could be taken as a Kantian solution.

Rational agency and irrational actions

In his famous article "Action, Reasons and Causes," Donald Davidson argues that actions have causes and these are composed of desires and beliefs. Following Davidson, we are now used to talking about causes of actions.

However, many contemporary authors defend the thesis that actions are not caused by desires and beliefs. In a recent book, *Rationality in Action*, John Searle claims, against the so-called classical model of action, that rational actions are not caused by beliefs and desires and that, in general, only irrational and nonrational actions are caused by beliefs and desires. He writes:

In the normal case of rational action, we have to presuppose that the antecedent set of beliefs and desires is not causally sufficient to determine the action. . . . We presuppose that there is a gap between the causes of the action in the form of beliefs and desires and the "effect" in the form of the action. This gap has a traditional name; it is called "the freedom of the will."¹¹

In Kant's works, the difference between irrational and rational actions is expressed in the well-known distinction between *arbitrium brutum*, *arbitrium sensitivum*, and *arbitrium liberum* in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Human beings have *arbitrium sensitivum*, meaning they can be affected by sensibility,

but the sufficient reason can only be given by reason. This is related to the presupposition of practical freedom, as the capacity for independence of being determined by the inclinations.

If a set of beliefs and desires is not enough to determine the action, should one consider that reason is the cause of an action? If so, how can one admit weakness of the will, when an incentive moves the agent to act contrary to what has determined the will? Although some commentators argue that reasons can be the cause of an action, I will try a different solution.

Kant does not use the expression “cause of an action,” with the term “cause” being reserved for the phenomenal world. When discussing motives and incentives, he talks about the ground of determination of the will (*Bestimmungsgrund*), which is a motive (*Bewegungsgrund*). Incentives (*Triebfedern*) are responsible for the subjective determination of the faculty of desire. In the passage of *Religion* on which the so-called incorporation theory is based, Kant does not state that only motives can be a cause of an action, but that only motives can determine the will.

If I have a strong desire D, but I decide to act for reason R, I will perform the action Ar. In another case, if I decide to perform the action Ar, and nonetheless I act according to my desire and perform the action Ad, I act contrarily to the previous determination of my will. It could be that I changed my mind between the first determination of the will and the action. This will not be a case for weakness, but I just changed my mind about which action I wanted to perform, meaning that the determination of will has changed. But there are cases in which I really decided to perform the action Ar, based on any previous maxim, rationally decided and—in the cases of weakness—I do Ad. If the actual action is not the same as the decided action, it falls off the strict model of rational agency, understood as the domain of actions that are maxim based. If we accept weakness, we must have a more humble solution: the domain of rational agency does not have the same extension as all voluntary action. In the model of rational agency there is no room for weakness, although it is a fact

in real actions. The domain of the voluntary is, then, wider than the domain of rational action and can also contain irrational actions. What are irrational actions? Actions that are accomplished against the determination of the will.

In order to understand rational agency and the possibility of irrational actions, we have to ask whether all actions are accomplished according to maxims.

Do we always act from maxims?

The incorporation thesis states that incentives can only determine the will if incorporated into a maxim. Do we always act from maxims? In the *Reflexionen* on moral philosophy, Kant writes:

Character is the general ruling *principium* in the human being for the use of his talents and qualities. Thus it is the constitution of his will in good or evil. A human being who has no constant *principium* of his actions, hence no uniformity, has no character. . . . The human being can have a good heart, but still have no character, since he is dependent on changing circumstances and does not act in accordance with maxims. (*Reflexionen* 1113, 15: 496)

Character is the capacity to act according to maxims, which means acting with a certain regularity. People who let emotions determine their actions, in the sense that they act contrary to what they have decided, have no character. These people act in a very unpredictable way. In this sense, one can have a human being with a good heart and no character, and another one, with a good character, although he lacks tender emotions. Character, for Kant, is not the same as virtue; however, whoever has character is less likely to act in an irrational way, in the sense of acting without maxims, or against his own maxims.

The idea that an agent cannot have his action determined by incentives unless these are incorporated in his maxim leads to the need to investigate Kant's idea of maxims. I will attempt to investigate what the notion of maxims

consists of and whether the subject always acts according to maxims. This is relevant if we consider that Kant discusses weakness of the will in *Religion*, indicating the possibility that, at certain moments, the agent opts for a maxim and acts contrary to it.

What is a maxim? In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant gives a precise definition of maxims: they are practical principles, which are defined as “propositions that contain a general determination of the will, having under it several practical rules” (KpV, 5: 19). Maxims, as well as the practical law, are principles of will. However, they differ in the extension of their validity: “They are subjective, or *maxims*, when the condition is regarded by the subject as valid only for his own will, but are objective, or practical *laws*, when the condition is recognized as objective, that is, valid for the will of every rational being” (KpV, 5: 19).

According to this definition, maxims are principles which apply to the will of a particular subject, and therefore are not a practical law valid for every rational subject. In the *Groundwork*, Kant offers the definition of maxims at two points: “A maxim is the subjective principle of volition; the objective principle . . . is the practical law” (G, 4: 400n); “a *maxim* is a subjective principle of acting, and must be distinguished from the *objective* principle, namely, practical law” (G, 4: 421n); it is “the principle in accordance with which the subject *acts*; but the law is the objective principle valid for every rational being, and the principle in accordance with which *he ought to act*, i.e., an imperative” (G, 4: 421n).

In the first section of *Groundwork*, we are told that actions are morally judged according to their maxim:

An action done from duty has its moral worth *not in the purpose* which is to be attained by it but in the maxim in accordance with which it is decided upon, and therefore does not depend upon the realization of the object of the action but merely upon the *principle of volition* in accordance with which the action is done without regard to any object of the faculty of desire. (G, 4: 400)

In other words, maxims are principles of action which are judged by the categorical imperative for the ascertainment of their capacity to be considered a law. Thus, the action of the agent who makes a false promise is not judged specifically as an action, but instead as a principle that underlies this action. In this case the principle can be formulated as a maxim *to make a promise with the intention of not keeping it*. It is not the action, but the maxim that is morally judged.

In the second section of the *Groundwork*, Kant submits a few maxims to the categorical imperative, expressed in the formula of nature's law: "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature" (G, AA 4: 421). Again, it is not the specific action of a particular suicide which is judged, but the principle "from self-love I make it my principle to shorten my life when its longer duration threatens more troubles than it promises agreeableness" (G, AA 4: 422).

The difference between the rule of a particular action and a maxim as a subjective practical principle is more easily understood when we examine imperfect duties. An example of an imperfect duty toward others is the duty of benevolence. That being benevolent is an imperfect duty shown in the *Groundwork*, in the example of the philanthropist (G, AA 4: 398). In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, the maxim of benevolence is mentioned as part of a duty to promote the happiness of others (MS, AA 6: 456). However morally right it may be to foster the maxim of benevolence, it does not tell us what specific action should be recommended in a particular case. When and with how much should we help those in need? This question pertains to casuistry: how far should one spend one's resources in practicing beneficence? Surely not to the extent that one would finally come to need the beneficence of others. The maxims of benevolence relate to an imperfect duty and allow a latitude in order to fulfill this duty; consequently, each action should be examined on a case-by-case basis.

If Kantian ethics assesses and judges maxims of action, one assumes that the rational subject acts according to maxims, or subjective practical principles

of action. Maxims express general policies of action, or principles according to which a subject really acts.¹² Maxims can be expressed in the form: in S situations, I should perform A actions. The maxim of fake promises can be expressed in this form: every time I find myself in trouble (S situation) I should make a false promise (A action).

Maxims are principles which a rational subject fosters freely, self-imposed rules valid for his will. Rüdiger Bittner¹³ highlights the difference between empirically determined maxims and regularities of a subject's behavior. He provides the following example: suppose that after each insult aimed at me follows a behavior on my part that is meant to be understood as vengeance toward the subject who insulted me. We can describe this empirical and psychological regularity as "S does not let any insult go unpunished." Even if this regularity really verifies itself and we can in fact predict S's behavior, it is simply a regularity of action, but not a regularity which is desired as such. This is different from the example given by Kant himself when he says that somebody may have as a maxim not letting any insult go unpunished. In this case it is not a question of a mere regularity verified by an external agent, but the subject himself wants this regularity. The maxim, therefore, is a desired regularity, a principle which the subject provides for himself.

The Kantian theory of action presupposes that the rational subject acts through self-imposed principles which dictate the kind of action to be realized in certain situations. Such regularity in his conduct is not an empirical or psychological regularity, but one desired as such. However, a rule desired by my own will is not enough to constitute a maxim. We can think of a rule desired by my own will which establishes only the means to a particular end, for example "I should exercise three times a week." This kind of regularity is desired as a prescription which serves as a means to attain a certain particular end, be it health or good physical shape. One could give another example of rules of this kind: "I want to dine every Monday at friends' houses."¹⁴ Or "I want to look for shelter from the rain so as to not get wet."

Maxims are more than mere regularities of conduct, even if desired by the subject himself. They are connected to life goals, to the comprehension of who I am and what I want for myself. Thus, “Not making false promises when I’m in trouble” is articulated as a rule of life for me: honesty and truth are more important than benefiting from every situation.

Maxims and affects

Could actions caused by intense affects,¹⁵ such as anger or dread, be classified as actions which follow a maxim? Defining maxims as practical subjective principles and establishing that the criteria for judging the morality of actions falls upon maxims, Kant allows us two interpretations: either every human action can be expressed through maxims or *only* actions which can be expressed through maxims are appropriate for a test of morality. Allison sustains the first position: with the exception of reflex behavior, every human action can be expressed according to maxims. Onora O’Neill¹⁶ holds the latter:

Because a universality test for autonomous beings does not look at what is wanted, nor at the results of action, but merely demands that certain standards of consistency be observed in action, it has to work with a conception of action that has the sort of formal structure that can meet (or fail to meet) standards of consistency.

According to O’Neil, only actions which express synthetically structured principles or descriptions can be consistent or inconsistent. By demanding that an action be judged only if described according to its maxim, Kant would maintain that an action, in order to be morally accessible, must have a specific formal structure.¹⁷

We should understand the difference between these two possible interpretations: according to the first, non-reflex actions performed by a

rational subject are always expressed through maxims. According to the latter, only acts expressed through maxims can undergo moral investigation, and thus, those which do not present this formal structure fall outside the range of the Kantian theory of action.

In order to resolve this matter, we must first question whether we always act according to maxims. What would be the Kantian position?

According to *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, as we have seen, an inclination can only be the cause of an action so far as the individual has incorporated it into his maxim (Rel, 6: 24), which Allison calls the “incorporation thesis.”¹⁸ According to this thesis, if desires and sensitive inclinations incline an *arbitrium sensitivum* toward an action, they do not, in themselves, constitute a sufficient reason for action. They can only constitute such if the subject freely decides to take them as motive, only if they are taken or incorporated in the individual’s maxim; in other words, taken as motive by an act of freedom. This means that an act of spontaneity or self-determination is involved even in actions based on dispositions and desires. This theory implies that one may, therefore, act through inclination, but that, even so, there was an act of spontaneity by the individual which took this inclination as motive.

Even if the theory of incorporation seems extremely abstract to those who sustain the theory that desires and beliefs are sufficient reasons for action, it reflects the common conflict between reason and sensibility. In order to illustrate this conflict, suppose, for example, that a married man feels desire for another woman. His desire will not be a sufficient reason for action. Between the desired and the concupiscent action there will be a free decision on the individual’s part, in which other reasons, morals, and discretions will be taken into account. Only then will this process of deliberation, or self-determination, result in a decision regarding the action. The theory of incorporation is a little stronger still: it does not simply address a decision regarding a particular action, but the choice of a principle of action. When the individual becomes

determined to cheat on his wife due to desire, he is electing a principle, aside from a particular course of action.

Kant, however, mentions weakness of the will, in which we are aware of the maxim but lack sufficient strength to follow it. Weakness of the will, the first degree of evil, is an example of an action which cannot be submitted to a maxim precisely because it was realized contrary to the maxim consciously assumed. Here we have two possibilities: either we admit that the actions which follow weakness, realized contrary to the maxims previously decided by the agent, such as in the case of strong emotions, are not to be subjected to moral accessibility as they do not have an adequate formal structure, or we admit that there is no such thing as weakness, which is self-deception. The first position brings two consequences: a positive one, as it would solve the alleged contradiction between the incorporation thesis and weakness of will; and a negative one, since it would mean that Kantian morality only has adequate tools for judging actions which have been expressed in a certain formal structure.

The second position answers that weakness itself should be seen as something for which we are responsible; in other words, it is self-imposed. Undoubtedly, this answer is a way of maintaining the internal coherence of the Kantian system. This position was sustained by Allison, who held an insightful discussion about this point with Márcia Baron.¹⁹

In *Idealism and Freedom*, Allison states that weakness should be seen as something for which we are responsible; in other words, it is self-imposed. If the tendency to subordinate the cause of morality to the causes of self-love is evil, weakness must be understood as the opening to temptation. It is only our tendency for self-deception which leads us to see it as a hard fact. Weakness of the will, as a natural error, presents a problem to Allison. One of Baron's objections to this lies precisely in the incompatibility between the theory of incorporation and this first moment of evil. Allison answers by saying that weakness should not be taken as an error or as hard fact, but identified as

an opening to temptation; this opening or susceptibility, on the other hand, is the condition which facilitates something like weakness, which is self-deceptively seen by the individual as hard fact, part of his nature, which he laments but is not responsible for. Baron insists that, in weakness, there is a real commitment to moral law, which would not exist in the other two degrees: impurity and perversity.

If the interpretation of weakness as self-deception elucidates the relation between the theory of incorporation and weakness through the denial of the latter, it faces, however, two problems: the Kantian texts, which really do address the classical issue of moral weakness, and the experience of the common human being, for whom weakness of the will is a fact. I will now attempt to investigate which would be the Kantian answer to these problems. My hypothesis, to be investigated, is that weakness exists, but must be fought with virtue. Then virtue is to be defined as *fortitudo*, as the strength to fight strong inclinations.

Another query relevant to the relation between maxims and affects has to do with the fact that, at times, the agent adopts a maxim and *chooses* to act against it. Now it is no longer a question of weakness of the will, as weakness is an exception not reflected in the maxim. Let us consider, for example, that we have as maxim “Not Lying.” Suppose that in a certain situation we conclude that lying would be profitable to us, and we effectively lie. How would Kant analyze the situation? He would probably claim that our maxim is not “Not lying,” but instead “lying when it is profitable to us.” Thinking that our maxim was “Not lying” was simply the result of an act of self-deception. Kant goes beyond that, expressing in *Religion* that we have a prior commitment toward a disposition to adopt maxims of self-love or moral maxims: “The disposition, i.e., the ultimate subjective ground of the adoption of maxims,”—in other words, the many maxims particularly adopted by an individual—“can be one only and applies universally to the whole use of freedom” (Rel, 6: 25).

Not only does Kant state that actions must be coherent with the chosen maxim, but that the maxims chosen by an individual are not independent from each other in their moral character. To Kant, it would be contradictory

to suppose that an individual might be committed to a universal principle of morality which prescribes a certain kind of action and, at the same time, to another maxim which prescribes an action which is incompatible to the maxim of morality, “nor can a human being be morally good in some parts, and at the same time evil in others” (Rel, 6: 24).

With the exception of the actions which can fall under the description of weakness of the will, the relation between actions and their maxims is one of a previous moral commitment, a commitment which is either one of not making any exceptions of any kind to the moral law, or of doing so, in case one is inclined toward personal gain in some way.

Although the majority of Kantian moral work presupposes the model of an agent who acts according to her will, it leaves open the possibility of an agent who does not have the sufficient strength to do what she has decided to do. Virtue is the only way to make all actions conform to the rationality of the model of rational agency. In analogy with Aristotle, only virtue could heal the akratic. But virtue in Kant, unlike Aristotle, will not be based on habituation and cultivation of good character, but on the effort to build a strong will that could fight against the force of inclinations.

But are all akratic actions irrational? In a line of argument that goes back to Davidson, akratic action has the following characteristics:

- 1 It is intentional. Since the agent acts according to a reason and not by compulsion, one can say that the agent has acted intentionally.
- 2 It is conflicting. Since the agent has a better reason not to have done what she has done, one has a conflict of reasons.
- 3 It is irrational. Since the agent has acted for a reason while having a better reason to have done otherwise, then it is incoherent, and, consequently, irrational.

There are, however, many authors who maintain that akratic actions are not irrational. One of the better arguments for this position is the argument of

internal reasons. For Bernard Williams, the only authentic reasons for action are founded in a motivational system that includes beliefs, preferences, personal projects, and our emotional states. Contrastingly, external reasons are not necessarily based on our personal motivational system and can sometimes be excessively impersonal and abstract. For supporters of this view, since our best judgment is not founded on our motivational personal system, to act against it, is not irrational.

This solution is possible for the non-Kantian philosopher, who admits that our commitment to our rational maxims will be the same as our external reasons. Since sometimes they are not based on our own desires and inclinations, we may end up acting in a different way from how we had decided to act.

For the Kantian point of view, however, the problem is already there.

Trying to solve the puzzle

After the discussion between Allison and Baron, some other Kantian philosophers tried to solve the puzzle from a Kantian point of view: if we cannot act without taking incentives in the maxim, or taking incentives as motives, how is the weakness of the will possible in Kantian terms?

Iain Morrison tries to solve this problem. He addresses the problem by explaining the apparent contradiction in weakness “typically, weakness of the will is understood as the phenomenon whereby an agent is somehow overcome by a desire, upon which she knows she should not act. But such an occurrence does not seem possible when all desires must be incorporated into maxims before they can be acted upon.”²⁰ The contradiction lies in the fact that weakness implies the presence of unmaximed or unprincipled action. He explains that to be committed to a maxim is to regard the actions as justified or good, in some sense, and that maxims seem to make actions good. Morrison proposes the possibility:

Kant can solve this problem by claiming that having a maxim (i.e., committing to a course of action) is not exactly identical to regarding an action as justified or good (in some sense). That is to say, he can reconcile the ubiquity of principled action and the existence of weakness of the will by modifying the notion of principled (i.e., maximed), such there is principled (i.e., maximed), and yet weak, action.²¹

In order to show that a weak action can also be a principled action, Morrison makes a difference between happiness-related maxims and pleasure-related maxims. An agent may fail to follow a happiness-related maxim and follow a pleasure-related maxim instead. Morrison takes the example of an agent who desires to eat a lot of chocolates but also desires to lose weight. She will have to select which desire is more important and will form an interest or a maxim based on that. Suppose that losing weight is more important to this agent, she will form maxims directing her behavior toward her *idea* of happiness. But suppose that the agent eats chocolate, against her maxim of losing weight, will this action lack a maxim? According to Morrison, this action is done according to a pleasure-related maxim. He claims that

on Kant's account, then, weak action is chosen and somewhat rational. . . . We act weakly when we focus on the immediate end of our choice and ignore the sense in which this choice is "not good" for happiness. In short, Kant can reconcile principled action with weakness of the will insofar as there can be, on his account, a difference between being motivated by happiness and by pleasure.²²

Although based on a refined explanation, the solution Morrison offers is not far from the Allison solution. According to Allison, weakness is self-deception, because the agent really chooses the weak action, therefore taking another maxim as her rule. For Morrison, also, the agent chooses the action that will give her immediate pleasure. For both authors, the weak action is not without a maxim, it is a principled action motivated by pleasure. In this sense

Morrison, as well as Allison denies the existence of the weakness in the radical sense of an action without any maxim.

Knowing people and predicting actions

Now I would like to address an important question regarding the philosophy of action in Kant: can we predict people's actions? Sometimes we wish this were possible. We try every day to explain actions and to predict them, based on what we know about the person, her character, her psychological moods, her preferences. But is this a possible task? Of course if we do not know the psychological inner states of a person, then this prediction is at least difficult. But suppose that we know this person deep inside, suppose that we knew, as Leibniz would put it, the "concept" of this person,²³ could accurate prediction then be possible? Kant considers the problem of freedom in human action in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. The aim of this *Critique* is to show

whether pure reason of itself alone suffices to determine the will, or whether it can be a determining ground of the will only as empirically conditioned. Now, there enters here a concept of causality justified by the *Critique of the Pure Reason*, although not capable of being presented empirically, namely that of freedom; and if we can now discover grounds for proving that this property does in fact belong to the human will (and so to the will of all rational beings), then it will not only be shown that pure reason can be practical, but that it alone, and not reason empirically limited, is unconditionally practical. (KpV, 5: 15)

Kant asserts here a notion of causality that is not a natural causality. However, Kant needs to solve the contradiction between freedom and nature. This Kantian contradiction has an analogy with the Leibnizian contradiction between eternal truths and freedom. Kant tries to solve the contradiction

between freedom and the mechanism of nature by stating that the necessity of nature appertains only to the attributes of the thing that is subject to time-conditions, consequently only to those of the acting subject as a phenomenon. Regarding the subject as a phenomenon, the determining principles of action reside in what belongs to past time, and is no longer in his power. Among what is not in his power, his own past actions can be included and the character that these may determine for him in his own eyes as a phenomenon. But the same subject can also view himself as not determined by any law of nature, to whom nothing is antecedent to the determination of his will:

But the very same subject being on the other side conscious of himself as a thing in himself, also views his existence also *in so far as it is not subject to time-conditions*, and regards himself as only determinable by laws which he gives himself through reason; and in this existence of his nothing is, for him, antecedent to the determination of his will, but every action, and in general every determination of his existence, changing conformably with inner sense, even the whole sequence of his existence as a sensible being—is to be regarded in the consciousness of his intelligible existence as nothing but the consequence, and never as the determining ground of his causality as a *noumenon*. (KpV, 5: 97)

The modifications of the subject's existence, varying according to his internal states, are nothing to him as a *noumenon*. They do not give any determining principle to him as a *noumenon*. The only causality here is self-determination. In his conscience of himself as a *noumenon*, his psychological states and external states should be viewed as a result of self-determination.

So considered, a rational being can now rightly say of every unlawful action he performed that he could have omitted it even though as appearance it is sufficiently determined in the past and, so far, is inevitably necessary; for this action, with all the past which determines it, belongs to the one single phenomenon of his character, which he gives to himself and in accordance

with which he imputes to himself, as a cause independent of all sensibility, the causality of those appearances. (KpV, 5: 98)

Although this view could be seen as odd, it agrees perfectly with judicial assumptions, in which nobody can deny responsibility for his own acts and put the responsibility on some physical necessity. If the agent, however, attributes this action to some bad habits, he is still responsible for this. That is why when an immoral action is performed, the subject experiences “a painful feeling produced by the moral sentiment, and which is practically void in so far as it cannot serve to undo what has been done”(KpV). Even if the agent cannot undo what is done, this painful feeling produced by the moral sentiment is right, because it shows that the agent could have done otherwise. Kant accepts that he can regard his error as a natural consequence, as a result of bad habits; however, the subject knows that he cannot deny he was responsible for what he had done. That is why Kant states that the pain is quite legitimate, since

the sensible life has, with respect to the intelligible consciousness of its existence (consciousness of freedom), the absolute unity of a phenomenon, which, so far as it contains merely appearances of the disposition that the moral law is concerned with (appearances of the character) must be appraised not in accordance with the natural necessity that belong to it as appearance but in accordance with the absolute spontaneity of freedom. (KpV, 5: 99)

What is Kant’s position about the predictability of actions? If one has the intellectual intuition of a man, could his action be predicted? Kant states in the *Critique of Practical Reason* one of the most interesting ways to understand psychology and freedom of the will. He claims that

it were possible to have so profound an insight into a man’s mental character as shown by internal as well as external actions, as to know all its motives, even the smallest, we could calculate a human being’s conduct for the future

with as much certainty as a lunar or solar eclipse; and could nevertheless maintain that the human being's conduct is free. If, that is to say, we were capable of another view, namely, an intellectual intuition of the same subject (which is certainly not given to us, and instead of it we have only the rational concept), then we would become aware that this whole chain of appearances, with respect to all that the moral laws is concerned with, depends on the spontaneity of the subject as a thing in itself. (KpV, 5: 99)

This view seems contradictory. How could we foresee the actions of a subject in the same sense that we predict the eclipse of the moon and at the same time attribute his actions to the spontaneity of the subject as a thing in itself, of the determination of which no physical explanation can be given? The answer Kant gives is that character is itself the product of a choice. Even those who show since childhood such early wickedness, that they are taken to be born villains, are judged for what they do or leave undone (KpV, 5: 99–100).

Although there is the possibility of uniformity of conduct, the evil principles were, however, at one point voluntarily adopted. And this was the choice of the noumenal self that will have the character of the subject as a result. To have character, in Kantian terms, is to be predictable. The man of principles has character: of him, we know exactly what to expect, he does not act on the basis of his instinct, but on the basis of his will (Ant, 7: 285).

Character differs from temperament, which is a natural disposition. Temperaments may be influenced by the physical condition of a person; consequently this division follows that of the humoral division:

Thus it follows that the temperaments, which attribute only to the soul, may perhaps also be influenced mysteriously by the physical condition of a person. Furthermore, since, first, they permit principal classification into temperaments of feeling and activity, and since, second, each of them can be linked with excitability (*intensio*) or the slackening (*remissio*) of the vital power, it follows that only four simple temperaments (similar to the four

sylogistic figures through the *medius terminus*) can be established: the sanguine, the melancholy, the choleric, and the phlegmatic. (Ant, 7: 286–87)

The sanguine person is light-blooded, he is disposed to gaiety and always hopes for success, while the melancholic person is heavy blooded and disposed to melancholy, being uneasy, mistrusting, and critical. The choleric person is hot-blooded, the one who is quickly ablaze like a straw fire. He is impetuous, his dominant passion is ambition, and he likes to be involved with public affairs. The fourth temperament is the cold-blooded phlegmatic. This temperament, as we will see later is the one which is most appropriate for morality. He controls his affections very easily, “he does not get angry easily; he first considers whether he should become angry” (Ant, 7: 290).

If temperament can make people predictable, it is not yet character. While temperament means what nature makes of men, character is already what man makes of himself. If temperament gives a natural prediction, character gives a rational prediction of actions, since “a character relates to that property of the will by which the subject has tied himself to certain practical principles which he has unalterably prescribed for himself by his own reason” (Ant, 7: 292).

Kant assumes, however, that there is still a difficulty concerning the relation between the combination of freedom and the mechanism of nature. The difficulty is as follows: even if it is admitted that the supersensible subject can be free with respect to a given action, although as a subject also belonging to the world of sense, he is under mechanical conditions with respect to the same action. But if we allow that *God* as universal first cause is also *the cause of the existence of substance*, it seems as if we must admit that a man’s actions have their determining principle in something which is wholly out of his power, in the causality of a Supreme Being distinct from himself, and on whom his own existence and the whole determination of his causality are absolutely dependent (KpV, 5: 100).

In this case, man would be only a marionette and self-consciousness would not give him freedom, but only make him a thinking automaton. Kant thinks,

then, that Leibniz's answer is misleading: to rely on human freedom and on the decrees of God is not to accept human freedom. If this were the case, then consciousness of his spontaneity would be mere delusion. If space and time were then qualities of things in themselves, then finite beings would be only parts (attributes and modes) of God. If the ideality of time and space is not adopted, nothing remains but *Spinozism*, in which space and time are essential attributes of the Supreme Being himself, and the things dependent on him are not substances, but merely accidents inhering in him.

The only way to escape deterministic views is to say that time and space do not belong to things in themselves but only to appearances.

The difficulty mentioned above is resolved briefly and clearly as follows. If existence in time is only a sensible way of representing things which belongs to thinking beings in the world and consequently does not apply to them as things in themselves, then the creation of these beings is a creation of things in themselves, since the concept of a creation does not belong to the sensible way of representing existence or causality, but can only be referred to noumena. (KpV, 5: 102)

To solve the contradiction, Kant then maintains that God is not a creator of appearances, thus he is not the cause of actions in the sensible world.

2

Can we act without feelings? Respect, sympathy, and other forms of love

Can we act without any sensible incentive?

In his article “Kant and Motivational Externalism,” Karl Ameriks insists that “if a Kantian still wishes to reach a truly cosmopolitan audience, it makes sense to step back beyond the perspective of Kantian scholarship alone, and to reflect on the basic features that contemporary philosophers would insist that any acceptable theory treat with sensitivity.”¹ Iain Morison, in the introduction of the book *Kant and the Role of Pleasure in Moral Action*, also considers this problem in the following terms: “How can Kant account for moral motivation while divorcing the basis of morality from the pathological, and therefore motivational side of human agents?”² I will go back to Kant’s texts, in order to locate where we can find sensibility or sensitivity and in which sense these feelings are necessary to action.

Can we act morally without any sensible incentives? For a traditional reader of the *Critique of Pure Reason* the answer is unequivocally positive. Kant is explicit about this possibility in A 534/B 562:

The human power of choice is indeed an *arbitrium sensitivum*, 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, independent of necessitation by sensible impulses. (KrV, A 534/B 562)

In the *Groundwork*, the answer seems to be also positive. Not only *can* one, but one *should* act without any moral feeling. Sympathy³ for other people's fortune, as a feeling that leads to beneficence, is analyzed in the well-known example of the *Groundwork*. When explaining the difference between acting from duty and according to duty, Kant presents the example of two philanthropists, distinguishing the one who possess a strong pleasure in spreading joy to his fellow human beings from the one who helps other people out of duty:

Suppose, then, that the mind of this philanthropist were overclouded by his own grief, which extinguished all sympathy with the fate of the others, and that while he still had the means to benefit others in distress their troubles did not move him because he had enough to do with his own; and suppose that now, when no longer incited to it by any inclination, he nevertheless tears himself out of this deadly insensibility and does the action without any inclination, simply from duty. (G, 4: 398)

Kant also asks if we should not consider that his action would have a higher worth if nature had put little sympathy in his heart, but the answer is negative: "By all means! It is just then that the worth of character comes out, which is moral and incomparably the highest, namely, that he is beneficent not from inclination but from duty" (G, 4: 399).

We can clearly distinguish in the example of the two philanthropists an action done according to duty and an action done from duty: the first is performed out of compassion and the second is carried out even if the philanthropist does not care about other peoples' misery. The difference between one and the other is that the incentive of the first is sympathy, which is a sensible inclination, while the action of second philanthropist is performed from respect to the

moral law. Kant considers that if compassion for other people's luck is the incentive of an action, then this action does not have a true moral value. If we consider this example in the light of the history of philosophy, we see that it is clearly provocative. To affirm that the benevolent action of a man who is touched by other people's misery does not have any moral value obviously emphasizes the difference between Kant and the Empiricists, such as Hume and Hutcheson, who attribute to the natural feelings of sympathy the role of a virtuous incentive of moral actions.⁴

The example of the philanthropists in the *Groundwork* clearly indicates that the mere presence of moral feelings makes an action without moral value. On the other hand, the analysis of the majority of commentators, as we have seen in Chapter 1, grants that the mere presence of some feelings, such as sympathy, does not make an action morally unworthy, if respect for moral law was a sufficient incentive for the accomplishment of the action. This thesis is corroborated by the difference that Kant establishes between utility and moral feeling. In the *Groundwork*, when analyzing the role played by moral feeling in Hutcheson's philosophy, Kant argues that this feeling is closer to morality than the principle of utility, which only teaches us how to calculate better. Despite the fact that they are both empirical principles and do not give us the necessary pureness and formality of a moral principle, at least the moral feeling remains closer to morality:

On the other hand, moral feeling—this supposed special sense . . . nevertheless remains closer to morality and its dignity inasmuch as it shows virtue the honor of ascribing to her immediately the delight and esteem we have for her and does not, as it were, tell her to her face that it is not her beauty but only our advantage that attaches us to her. (G, 4: 443)

But from the fact that Kant prefers moral feeling to utility as a reason for moral action it does not follow that he claims moral feelings are necessary conditions to moral actions. Both in the *Groundwork* and in the *Critique of the Practical*

Reason, the necessity to support morality in a nonmaterial practical principle leads, obviously, to the refusal to ascribe the role of moral incentives to feelings such as love, benevolence, and affection.

The aim of the *Critique of Practical Reason* is to prove at least the possibility of practical reason; that is, that reason is capable of driving us to act morally, in spite of the good or bad feelings we have. To prove that pure reason can be practical is to prove that it can, alone, determine the will. We would fail to prove it if the will were always dependent on empirical conditions. If the will were always based on feelings or passions, this would mean that the pure reason cannot be practical and that the causality of freedom is impossible. The *Groundwork*, as well as the *Critique of Practical Reason*, has the aim of obtaining, respectively, the categorical imperative and the moral law, in an attempt to prove that reason can determine the will, without the help of empirical incentives. In this context, Kant refuses to ascribe the role of an incentive to benevolent feelings, since these would be empirical and contingent, not being able to be taken as a ground for the determination of the will. In these texts, Kant states clearly that a feeling is a subjective incentive, being inappropriate for the establishment of morality and its foundation upon reason.

In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, however, Kant surprises us with the claim that there are some feelings which are subjective conditions of receptiveness of the concept of duty (MS, 6: 399). These are moral feeling, conscience, love of human beings, and self-respect. Moral feeling is defined as “the susceptibility to feel pleasure or displeasure merely from being aware that our actions are consistent or contrary to the law of duty” (MS, 6: 399). This ambiguous feeling can be pathological or moral: pathological if it “precedes the representation of the law,” moral if it “can only follow upon it” (MS, 6: 399). Moral feeling seems to be a product of the representation of moral law; consequently it is not an incentive to act morally. However, Kant is ambiguous when he claims that moral feeling is not a sense for the morally good, but a susceptibility on

the part of free choice to be moved by pure practical reason. He also asserts that “no human being is entirely without moral feeling, for were he completely lacking in receptivity to it he would be morally dead” (MS, 6: 399). Here it seems that the answer to our question of whether one can act morally without moral feelings is negative, although it does not imply that moral feelings precede the moral action and act as incentives.

What could be the role of moral feeling, if it is not an incentive? Moral feeling can be understood as a satisfaction through the understanding, as a pleasure in the concept of moral law. As Kant writes in the *Nachlaß*, 1020:

The *causa impulsiva* is either an impression or a concept, a representation of satisfaction or dissatisfaction through senses or the understanding, of the agreeable or the good: The first impel per *stimulo*, the second per *motiva*. The *arbitrium immediate determinatum per stimulus* is *brutum*. . . . The *motive intellectualia pura* are what pleases immediately in the concept, now this is nothing other than a good will, since everything else can only please conditionally as a means. (*Nachlaß*, 15: 456)

The pleasure in the concept of moral law, the motive *intellectualia pura*, is not an incentive for moral actions. But what about the respect for moral law? Could this be considered an incentive to moral action? Is Kant presenting us an explanation concerning a sensible motivation for morality?

Kant is a bit ambiguous about that. In the *Groundwork*, he states that “the determination of the will by the law and the consciousness of this determination is respect” (G, 4: 401), apparently encouraging the interpretation that respect is not a feeling. However, he also states that respect is a feeling (*Gefühl*), although not created by an external object.

There are three possibilities to be considered here: (1) respect is not a feeling, but only a consciousness of moral law; (2) respect is a feeling and does not motivate moral action; (3) despite respect being a feeling, it can motivate moral action.

In one of the most complete analyses of respect in Kant, Iain Morrison has argued for the third possibility. He asserts that

it is possible to read Kant as saying that respect is a complex feeling—made up of feelings of pleasure and pain—that is somehow produced or caused by (and therefore, distinct from) the moral law. On this view, respect is not identified with the moral law. Instead, it is a feeling caused by the moral law, and it motivates insofar as it is made up of a combination of feelings of pleasure and pain.⁵

My position here is different from Iain Morrison's. Although I recognize, as he does, that respect is a complex feeling and not only the conscience of moral law, I sustain that this feeling is not what motivates us, because no feeling should motivate us in a pure moral action. And that is what made Kant different from his sentimentalist predecessors. Morrison considers that only the cognitive dimension of respect motivates moral action. For me, what Morrison calls the cognitive dimension of respect is nothing more than the thought of moral law, and not the feeling of respect itself. Then, I am inclined to sustain thesis 2: respect is a feeling caused by moral law and is not the incentive to act morally, but it is only an effect of the acceptance of moral law.

Frierson, in the book *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, calls attention to the debate between "intellectualists" and "affectionists":

Intellectualists (Allison, Guyer,⁶ Reath) claim that morally good action is motivated solely by cognition or consciousness of moral law, with a feeling (of respect) generally seen as an effect of moral motivation rather than its cause. Affectionists (McCarthy, Singleton, Herrera, Morrison, Nauckhoff) argue that the feeling is the immediate cause of moral motivation, the means by which an otherwise inert cognition of the moral law can give rise to an action.⁷

According to Frierson, the intellectualist-affectionist debate presents textual evidence for both sides. However, I maintain that the stronger evidence is on

the side of the intellectualists. In the *Groundwork*, Kant claims that “immediate determination of the will by means of the law and consciousness of this is called respect, so that this is regarded as the *effect* of the law on the subject and not as the *cause* of the law” (G, 4: 402). Also, in chapter III of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant claims the following:

If the determination of the will takes place *conformably* with the moral law but only by means of a feeling, of whatever kind, that has to be presupposed in order for the law to become a sufficient determining ground of the will, so that the action is not done *for the sake of the law*, then the action will contain *legality* indeed, but not *morality*. (KpV, 5: 71)

In this sense, I agree with some commentators, such as Reath, for whom the feeling of respect cannot be a motivation for the moral action. Frierson claims that affectionists have a point if we consider the texts where Kant claims that respect is a feeling produced by an intellectual ground (KpV, 5: 73) or a feeling self-wrought by means of a rational concept (4: 401n). He tries to solve the problem by appealing to a distinction between empirical and transcendental psychology.

I think that there is no contradiction to solve, because to claim that respect is a feeling does not entail that this feeling should have the role of an incentive or motive for a moral action. Also, the fact that respect is a feeling self-wrought by a rational concept does not imply that respect lacks sensible properties. In the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Kant claims that feelings of pleasure and displeasure can be an effect of an idea or concept (Ant, 7: 230). Then, an intellectual feeling, as he calls it, does not mean that a feeling is itself a concept, lacking sensible properties. It means that it is a feeling (*Gefühl*) and has sensible properties, but was caused by an idea. A misunderstanding of the sensible property of something that can be caused by an idea is the source of some Kant scholars’ mistakes.

Kelly Sorensen in his article “Kant’s Taxonomy of Emotions”⁸ explains the nature of respect, when he analyses the relation between desires and feelings:

Desire necessarily involves feelings, but desire is of two sorts, depending on whether the pleasure associated with it is the *cause* of the desire or instead its *effect* (K3 5: 221–2; MM 6: 212). Kant calls *pleasure-caused desire* “desire [*Begierde*] in the narrow sense” (MM6:212). In this case, an agent seeks to bring about the existence of some object or state of affairs because of some antecedent pleasure. When these desires are habitual, Kant gives them their own term: inclinations. In the case of the other sort of desire, pleasure is the *effect* of the desire. Here it is *reason* that causes the desire, which in turn results in pleasure. As early as the *Groundwork*, Kant recognizes the existence of at least one such *reason-caused desire*: he calls the feeling necessarily connected with it “respect” or “moral feeling.”⁹

He also shows that the treatment of respect and moral feeling in Kant’s treatment of respect in the third *Critique* is consistent with the characterization of these emotions in the *Groundwork* and the second *Critique*. In the *Critique of Judgment* (KU, 5: 289), Kant claims that when an *a priori* principle determines the will, there is pleasure associated with that, the moral feeling, that is the consequence of that determination. This is not in contradiction with what is stated in the *Groundwork*, where respect is said to be “a feeling self-wrought by means of a rational concept” (4: 401n).

Sympathy in *The Metaphysics of Morals*

Sympathy, an affect that does not have any intrinsic moral value in the *Groundwork*, comes out in the *Doctrine of Virtue* as a feeling of pleasure and displeasure that should be used to promote benevolence, being itself an incentive for moral actions:

Sympathetic joy and sadness (*sympathia moralis*) are sensible feelings of pleasure and displeasure (which are therefore to be called “aesthetic”) at

another's state of joy or pain (shared feelings, sympathetic feeling). Nature has already implanted in human beings receptivity to these feelings. But to use this as a means to promoting active and rational benevolence is still a particular, though only a conditional, duty. (MS, 6: 456)

In this quotation, Kant explicitly admits the possibility of using the feeling of sympathy as an incentive, a way to activate benevolent actions. More than that, to use sensible feelings is a conditional duty called humanity. It seems that here we are confronted with a modification in the understanding of the role of feelings as incentives. Does Kant change his mind about the role of feelings in the later texts, such as the *Doctrine of Virtue* (1797)? A provisional answer can be found in the remark he makes about the duty of humanity: "It is called the duty of humanity (*humanitas*) because a human being is regarded here not merely as a rational being but also as an animal endowed with reason" (MS, 6: 457). In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant seems to have abandoned the pure *a priori* domain of practical reason. It is not anymore a matter of incentives that work for pure rational beings, but incentives that work for animals endowed by reason. If one is not anymore in the pure practical domain, why call this work *The Metaphysics of Morals*?

Kant admits that a *Doctrine of Virtue*, as part of *The Metaphysics of Morals*, should be built upon a system of concepts, which are independent of empirical intuitions: "A *philosophy* of any subject (a system of rational cognition from concepts) requires a system of *pure rational* concepts independent of any conditions of intuition, that is, a *metaphysics*" (MS, 6: 375).

The philosopher who wants to construct a metaphysics of morals looks for rational pure concepts, unconstrained by empirical conditions. To be faithful to the spirit of *The Metaphysics of Morals*, the *Doctrine of Virtue* should give us a system of rational pure concepts:

If one departs from this principle and begins with pathological or pure aesthetic or even moral *feeling* (with what is subjective rather than

objectively practical); if, that is, one brings to the matter of the will, the end, instead of with the form of the will, the *law*, in order to determine duties on this basis, then there will indeed be no *metaphysical first principles* of the doctrine of virtue, since feeling, whatever may arouse it, always belong to the order of nature. (TL, 6: 376–77)

A *Doctrine of Virtue*, being a part of *The Metaphysics of Morals*, cannot be based on feelings, since feelings are always physical, related to pain and pleasure. Although in the Preface of *The Metaphysics of Morals* Kant clearly states that morality cannot be based on empirical feelings, here we come across the duty to love in the first chapter (*Of the Duty to Love other Men*) of the second part (*Of the Duties of Virtue in Relation to other Men*) of the *Doctrine of Virtue*.

In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant intends to build a system of duties, which are free from pathological feelings. In this context, how can we have a duty to love? Another problem that occurs here is the possibility of a *a priori* construction that leads to a theory of virtue, since virtue is usually defined as habits that belong to the empirical domain. Aristotle defines virtue as a *héxis proairetiké*—that is, a habit to act deliberately. If we accept this definition, a theory of virtues would belong to the technical-practical domain. But Kant seems to look for a way to establish a metaphysics of morals in the pure practical domain. Does he actually do so?

To answer this question, it will be necessary to correctly understand the conception of a metaphysics of morals, as that doctrine that contains in it principles of application of the universal law to the “particular nature of the human beings, which is only known by experience” (MS, 6: 217). The other side of the metaphysics of morals is a moral anthropology, which gives the conditions of the acceptance or rejection of the moral law by human beings. Kant claims that “a metaphysics of morals cannot be based upon anthropology,” “but can still be applied to this” (MS, 6: 217). In the *Groundwork*, Kant clearly distinguishes between a twofold metaphysics: a

metaphysics of nature and a metaphysics of morals (G, 4: 388). Both parts of metaphysics belong to pure philosophy and refer to *a priori* principles. Twelve years later, however, the idea of a metaphysics of morals includes in itself an empirical knowledge on the nature of human beings, without which it would not be possible to determine a concrete system of duties for the human beings. Allen Wood correctly analyzes this displacement in the conception of a metaphysics of morals that occurs between 1785 and 1797, regarding the separation between the empirical and pure part of the ethics.¹⁰

According to Wood, when Kant alters the content of a metaphysics of morals in order to encompass the empirical nature of human beings, he is not abandoning or modifying his basic thesis, that the basic principle of morality is totally *a priori*. He is only restricting its previous thesis that a metaphysics of morals is only related to the ideas and principles of a possible pure will. In other words, Kant does not consider anymore that a metaphysics of morals is composed only of a set of pure moral principles, but it is a system of duties that result when the pure moral principle is applied to the empirical nature of the man.

The application of the pure moral principle to the empirical nature of the man gives us a system of virtues, defined as ends that are also duties. Kant enumerates two ends that should be considered as duties: self-perfection and other people's happiness. These two ends lead to two different kinds of duties: the duties of man related to him, and duties related to others, among which we find the duty to love, which consists in promoting the happiness of others. However, this virtuous love is not a love related to the pleasure experienced in the presence of other person, but it is a principle to do benevolent actions:

In this context, however, *love* is not to be understood as *feeling*, that is, as a pleasure in the perfection of others, love is not to be understood as *delight* in them (since others cannot put one under obligation to have feelings). It must rather be thought as the maxim of *benevolence* (practical love), which results in beneficence. (TL, 6: 449)

By the duty to love, Kant means, not the love of delight (*complacentia*), but the love of benevolence (*Wohlwollen, benevolentia*), since the latter could be demanded from someone, but not the former, given that it would be a contradiction that somebody should have the obligation to feel pleasure. The love of benevolence, since it is not a feeling of pleasure, is something close to Aristotelian cultivation, a disposition that can be awakened by habit. Kant writes:

So the saying “you ought to love your neighbor as yourself” does not mean that you ought immediately (first) to love him and (afterwards) by means of this love do good to him. It means, rather, *do good* to your fellow human beings, and your beneficence will produce love of them in you (as an aptitude of the inclination to beneficence in general). (TL, 6: 402)

For this reason, Kant distinguishes the virtue of love from the love in which one feels pleasure or satisfaction. Moreover, we cannot have a duty to love, if love is understood as a feeling or pleasure, because a duty cannot constrain someone to have pathological feelings, nor can moral law induce someone to love somebody.

The duty to love must be understood as a principle of benevolence, which consists not in wanting the good of others without practically contributing to this, but in a practical benevolence, or beneficence, which consists in considering the good of others as end in itself. *The benevolence principle* will produce, in turn, *duties of beneficence* (to help the ones in need to find happiness) and of *recognition* (to honor a person due to a favor that was received) and of *affection* (*Teilnehmung*). Kant accepts that to participate in the pain or joy of others is, without a doubt, a feeling, apparently falling again in a material determination for morality. The introduction of this feeling of sympathy must be, however, interpreted, not as a ground of determination for the action, but as a natural feeling that we must use in order to accomplish benevolent actions. It will be our duty, therefore, to cultivate in us those

sympathetic feelings, although the moral law should not be based on that, but on the pure reason.

In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant presents a more complex moral theory on the role of the feelings related to moral actions. Even though sympathy can be an incentive to the accomplishment of a moral action (or an incitement to practical love), this does not mean that all sharing of feelings is positive. We can see it in the division of humanity in *humanitas practica*, “the capacity and the will to share in others’ feelings” and *humanitas aesthetica*, “the receptivity, given by nature itself, to the feel of joy and sadness in common with others” (TL, 6: 456). The first is desirable, but not the second, because the first is free and depends on the will, while second is spread among people “as the susceptibility to heat or the contagious diseases” (TL, 6: 457).

The reason for praising *humanitas practica* and disapproving of *humanitas aesthetica* is that compassion, when not followed by a practical action, is a way to increase the evil in the world. If a friend is suffering and I can do nothing to diminish his pain, I do not have a duty to be sympathetic to his feelings, because this would only make me increase the suffering and troubles of the world.

Kant without a doubt recognizes that feelings of sympathy may play the role of a moral incentive, when the representation of duty by itself is not enough, “for this is still one of the impulses that nature has implanted in us to do what the representation of duty alone might not accomplish” (TL, 6: 457). If the representation of the law will not be enough to bring about the action, it is a duty to promote our natural good feelings to add a natural incentive to a rational moral one. Going, therefore, beyond the spirit of the *Groundwork*, Kant admits that sympathy, duly cultivated to answer to the correct situations, can be the incentive of a correct action. In this case, this duty must be understood on two levels: first, one to carry out moral actions; second, a derived duty to use natural feelings when consideration about the moral correction of the action is not enough to start the action.

The role that Kant attributes to sympathy is, therefore, of a provisory moral feeling, which can assist in the accomplishment of good actions, when the feeling of respect for the moral law is not yet developed enough. As Nancy Sherman notes, this is a morality *faute de mieux*, that is, a kind of provisory morality: it is a morality of an inferior kind, an immature morality that finally will be substituted in the progress of the individual. Nancy Sherman, however, admits that feelings such as sympathy, compassion, and love possess a perceptive moral role in Kant, that is, that “we still need the pathological emotions to decide where and when these ends (of the moral law and its spheres of justice and the virtue) are appropriate.”¹¹

Sherman seems to be correct and faithful to the texts when she examines the provisory role of feelings such as compassion, love, and affection, since Kant really admits a function for these in the accomplishment of moral actions, when mere respect for the law is not strong enough to trigger the action. The perceptive role, however, is more doubtful, since the idea that emotions are blind seems to remain a constant in Kant’s work, without variations from the *Groundwork* to the *Doctrine of Virtue*. The critique of sympathy as a possible incentive for a moral action was based, in the case of the philanthropist, not on the contempt for sympathy in itself, but on the idea that sympathy alone could not show us which course of action is the moral one. A good example given in contemporary literature is supplied by Barbara Herman: we hear somebody crying out for aid to load something heavy, we help this person, and later we come to know that a sculpture at an art museum was stolen by a thief. In this example, one ended up helping a thief to carry out his wrong act. And this was done out of sympathy.

In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, sympathy can play the role of a moral incentive, if it is trained and controlled by the will, which will also inform us when this feeling must be activated. This is the reason why humanity is divided into free and non-free humanity. Free humanity (*humanitas practica*) is the capacity and the will to use the feeling of sympathy to promote the happiness of others, which includes a procedure to decide in which cases I must set in motion

this feeling. A stoic who decides that he will not set in motion his feelings of sympathy acts in such a way because he knows he cannot do anything to help his friend; however, if he had something practical that he could do, he would activate his feelings of compassion, since these would have as a consequence a real beneficent action. Consequently, in this new vision of sympathy presented in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, this feeling is controlled by reason, which differs from the negative approach of sympathy presented in the *Groundwork*, that is confirmed by the Mrongovius notes on anthropology (84/85), according to which one of the reasons that sympathy is inappropriate as an incentive is its sensible register: “If [sympathy with the joy and pain] becomes an affect, then the human being becomes unhappy. The human being becomes, through sympathy, only sensible and he does not help the others” (AntM, 25: 1348).

So, in order to make sympathy effective and turn it into beneficence, one should go to hospitals and other places, in order to see other people’s suffering; it is a duty, says Kant “not to avoid the places where the poor who lack the most basic necessities are to be found but rather to seek them out, and not to shun sickrooms or debtors’ prisons and so forth in order to avoid sharing painful feelings one may not be able to resist”(TL, 6: 457). This *habitus* does not aim at developing compassionate personalities, but at training our feelings of compassion and sympathy so that they can be used as a means to accomplish good actions. However, the feelings of love, sympathy, and compassion are, in themselves, morally blind, depending on moral principles to be set in motion in the correct situation.

Desire, affect, and passion: The anthropologic modalities of love

In the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), Kant presents his division of faculties: the faculty of knowledge, the faculty of pleasure, and the

faculty of desire. In his division, affects, appetites, or inclinations in general belong either to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, or to the faculty of desire. To the faculty of desire belong the instincts, propensities, inclinations, and passions (Ant, 7: 265); affects belong to the faculty of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure.

A first and primitive level of love could be attributed to instinct, a second division of the faculty of desire. The mating instinct is common to human beings and animals, and sexual desire in itself does not possess anything related to morality or to the promotion of dignity. In the *Doctrine of the Right*, Kant defines the sexual union as a use that a human being makes of the sexual capacities of the other; “in this act,” he claims, “a human being makes himself into a thing, which conflicts with the right of humanity” in his own person (MS, 6: 278). The only way to reconstitute his personality is to possess the other equally as a thing. The difference between prostitution and marriage consists in the fact that marriage preserves the right of humanity in one’s own person only by adding the contractual aspect, that of the right to use the other in turn. Both husband and wife have the right to use each other’s sexual organs, and they also have the exclusive right to use them. But this is not the case, for instance, in prostitution and that is one of the reasons why Kant condemns it. The only possibility of making sexual relations a relationship according to the principle of right is the warranty of the exclusive use of one another’s sexual organs.

After this first instinctive and natural level of love, there is a second one, which belongs to the category of affects, stormy and temporary feelings, which make reflection and deliberation on action difficult. The love-affect must be distinguished from the love-passion, since passion, even if it is violent, may coexist with reason and it is deliberative in order to reach its purpose. Kant metaphorically explains the differences between affect and passion:

Affect works on health like a stroke of apoplexy; passion works like consumption or atrophy, affect like an intoxicant which one has to sleep off,

although it is still followed by a headache; but passion is looked upon as an illness having resulted from swallowing poison. (Ant, 7: 252)

It can be seen here that love-affect differs from love-passion regarding the intensity, duration, and degree of danger of each emotion. The first is more intense, however, it is shorter lasting and less dangerous than passion. For this reason, Kant affirms that, where there is much affect, there is little passion, since stormy emotions deplete quickly, and do not allow the cold evaluation of the lived situation and deliberation: “Affects are honorable and unconcealed, while passions are deceitful and hidden” (Ant, 7: 253). The innocence of the love-affect and its incapacity to control its manifestations can be evidenced in the following situation:

A serious lover is often restrained, awkward, and uncaptivating in the presence of his beloved. But he who only pretends to be madly in love, and who has no other talent, can play his role so naturally that he lures the poor, deceived maiden wholly into his snare, just because his heart is uninhibited and his head clear. (Ant, 6: 264)

The love-affect resembles the feeling of falling in love with someone, denoting a romantic, uncontrollable love, whose manifestation can make the person blind to the defects of the objects of desire: “Whoever loves can keep his vision intact; but the person who is in love is inevitably blind to the mistakes of the beloved object, although the latter will usually regain his vision a week after the wedding” (Ant, 7: 253). The emotion of this passionate person is an affect, in Kantian terms. The term passion is reserved for more deliberative attitudes, being able to coexist with a cunning dissimulation, since this, as shown in the example above, can contribute to possessing the object of desire. Therefore, Kant affirms that passions are not like affects; affects, at least, may coexist with good intention, while passions reject any attempt of improvement. Such is the case when a person acts moved by a strong affect, what Kant characterizes as weakness of the will. Passion, on the contrary, chooses a principle in accordance

with inclination. The passion of love, however, possesses an advantage regarding other passions, such as ambition, vanity, or greed, which are illnesses of reason because they possess a permanent character, since, according to Kant, “they are never satisfied” (Ant, 7: 266). The passion of love ceases when the desire, or the physical love, is satisfied. If it is possible to go crazy due to obsession caused by other passions, such as ambition, vanity, and greed, the saying one “became crazy because of love” contains something implausible, because the one who goes crazy due to refusal of the loved being, was already disturbed to have chosen the wrong person as the object of his affect and desires. Such was the case, very common at the time of Kant, of people who fall in love for others with a superior social standing: “To get passionate themselves for a person of a higher social class and to wait of this the madness of a marriage is not the cause, but the consequence of a previous disturbance” (Ant, 7: 217).

Love, in the form of affect or passion, even in its most violent manifestation, is not as harmful as the passions of ambition, vanity, and greed. However, it is not as helpful to morality as the feeling of sympathy, since love implies a feeling between dissimilar people. Or, Kant writes in one of the *Reflexionen* grouped in the *Nachlass* on anthropology: “We need more to be honored than to be loved, but we also need something to love with who we are not in rivalry. Then we love birds, dogs or a young, fickle and darling person” (R 1471, *Nachlass* 15: 649).

Apparently, this claim denounces a prejudice of the time regarding women. However, in another *Reflexion*, Kant affirms that “men and women possess a reciprocal superiority one in relation to the other” (R 1100, *Nachlass* 15: 490). Despite the fact that this superiority of each one is relative to different aspects, the reciprocal inequality is what stimulates and promotes love as affect or passion. The fact that these feelings need a reciprocal moral inequality indicates that their place is strange to morality, which consists of considering the other as equal and promoting her happiness.

The figures of love assume different positions in Kant’s philosophy—some have moral value, others do not. Love as benevolence can be considered a

practical principle: to do good and to help people, from which the love for others can also be awakened. This was clear in the analysis of the Kant's texts, where it is said that it was not necessary to love and, due to this, to do good to human beings, but to act morally, and through this habit, to promote feelings for human beings. The feeling of sympathy can also be used by the agent to stimulate moral actions in which the respect for the moral law was not strong enough as an incentive. This is not in opposition to what is explained in the *Groundwork*, in which the moral value of an action resides in the respect for the law. To use the feeling of sympathy is only a provisional morality that, empirically, can and must use these feelings of pleasure and displeasure for other people's luck to encourage good actions, until our respect for the law is sufficiently strong to be a possible incentive.

Relative to affects and passions, even if both were criticized as illnesses of the reason, the negative effect of the love-affect would be less dangerous than the persistence and inversion of principles in the love-passion. However, since the passion of love ceases when its physical desire is satisfied, it does not have the persistence of other cultural passions. But such feelings of love are not useful to morality, since the love-affect or love-passion is awakened from an idea of inequality alien to morality.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the analysis of feelings, inclinations, and passions in the *Doctrine of Virtue* and *Anthropology* does not contradict the spirit of the *Groundwork*, since the action with true moral value is still the one whose incentive is respect for the law, which does not hinder us in using our sensible feelings, such as sympathy, for the purposes of reason.

What should we take for granted?

In his book *Kant and the historical turn*, Karl Ameriks argues that Kantians should prove moral law can move the agent to act, because action is not a

matter of mere judgment. If one has an impulse to do something, this could not be a mere thought.¹²

If we take for granted that only feeling could move us to action, Kantians should explain what kind of feeling moves the agent, or how can we act without feelings. As Ameriks himself stressed in an earlier work, “Since the ground of duty is defined independently of all our natural inclination, it seems that Kantian morality leaves the very motivation of moral activity unexplainable.”¹³ However, if we do not take for granted that one should act from feelings, then we do not have to prove anything.

In fact, Kant does not take for granted that we need feelings in order to accomplish moral actions. On the contrary, tender feelings make the heart weaker and not stronger. Since virtue for Kant is before anything else strength, teaching tender feelings will build a weak character, which cannot meet the exigencies of morality:

In our times, when one hopes to have more influence on the mind through melting, tender feelings or high-flown, puffed-up pretensions, which make the heart languid instead of strengthening it, than by a dry and earnest representation of duty, which is more suited to human imperfection and to progress in goodness, it is more necessary than ever to direct attention to this method. (KpV, 5: 157)

The method mentioned here is the moral education of young men. In order to really develop moral character in children, it is not useful to tell stories about magnanimous and noble actions. Is it worthwhile to call attention to the holiness of duty alone? In pedagogical terms, this is more useful, because feelings do not develop character since they calm down and the organism tends to go back to its natural vital motion.

All feelings, especially those that are to produce unusual exertions, must accomplish their effect at the moment they are at their height and before they calm down; otherwise they accomplish nothing because the heart

naturally returns to its natural moderate vital motion and accordingly falls back into the langor that was proper to it before, since something was applied that indeed stimulated it, but nothing that strengthened it. (KpV, 5: 158)

A possible objection from a sentimentalist would refer, not to the duration of the incentive, but to its force. Even if feelings cannot last for a long time, they give us a more intense incentive to the moral action. Kant would not disagree with that, he would even give us an example of someone who tries in extreme danger to save people from a shipwreck, finally losing their own life in the attempt. In this case, there is more “subjective moving force as an incentive if the action is represented as a noble and magnanimous one than if it is represented merely as a duty in relation to the earnest moral law” (KpV, 5: 158). However, the incentive presented in the pure law of duty is the most elevated of all.

Not only it is possible to act from the motive of duty alone, but it is also desirable. And the conscience of moral law should be a sufficient motive for us to act from it.

What is wrong in acting morally out of emotions?

People usually make a portrait of Kant’s philosophy and the relation between action and emotion as if Kant has said that we know what to do, but sometimes, because of the weakness of the will, we can fail to accomplish doing the right thing. But is this always true? First, is it a good picture of human nature? Does Kant really say that?

Here there are two different situations. We can act out of emotions that are commonly taken as anti-moral emotions, such as rage, envy, ambition, jealousy, or greed. First, we have the possibility of someone taken by a strong emotion who cannot figure out what is the right thing to do. People taken by

the strong emotion of rage not only have the tendency to fight someone, but also think that revenge is the right thing to do.

But we can also have emotions that lead us to moral actions, such as sympathy. Although Kant acknowledges that sympathy can be part of a morality *faute de mieux*, the benevolent action done out of sympathy does not have intrinsic moral value.

Kant has been criticized by many authors who support the view that acting from duty is repugnant. The anti-Kantian literature has illustrated this assumption with a well-known example: the example of someone who visits her friend in the hospital out of duty.

This example was first formulated by Stocker and discussed, among others, in Baron's book *Kantian Ethics Almost without Apology*.¹⁴ Suppose that someone goes to the hospital to visit a friend and, when asked by her friend why she is doing that, she answers that she is visiting her friend out of duty. This example is supposed to be a critique of Kantian system, in which it is supposed that to be cold or insensible is a virtue.

But is it really so? In fact, Kant is not concerned with what is more comfortable or warm in a psychological way, he is asking what is the right thing to do and what should be a right motive. In saying that the right motive is duty, Kant is not condemning warm feelings, but is only saying that we should visit our friends in the hospital even if we do not have any inclination to go to the hospital. In fact, few people really like to go to hospitals. If going to the hospital should be dependent upon a feeling of friendship, compared to the bad feeling of entering a hospital, perhaps in most cases the feeling of sympathy for a friend will not be enough to counterbalance the feeling to avoid being in a hospital.

One of the main criticisms against the supposed coldness of Kantian morality has come from feminist philosophy. According to this critique, some ingredients that are important to female identity, such as emotion, love, empathy, and cooperation, are not in consideration in Kantian ethics.

Sally Sedwick expresses this criticism when she says that because moral agency in Kant's view is a function of acting from reason rather than from feeling, it is said to reflect features more of a male than of a female identity.¹⁵ She, however, supports Kant against the critique of a misunderstanding of human psychology. What Kant is saying is not that we are—or should be—cold people without any feeling or that in our meaningful relations feelings should not play an important part. What he is claiming is that empirical motives do not have moral weight.

Only motivations motivate?

Paul Guyer offers a challenging version of Kant's philosophy.¹⁶ He acknowledges that Hume and Kant offer two opposing views on moral matters. While for Hume reason cannot give a motive or end for action, only a means for the realization of ends, Kant admits that pure reason can provide a sufficient motive. For Guyer, however, even if they are considered antagonists in moral matters, they share the internalist principle, according to which a principle can give us a motive to action:

Hume and Kant share the "internalist principle" that any genuine moral principle must be a motive for action: that principle is the premise for Hume's argument that reason cannot be the source of genuine moral principles, because he does not see how reason can be motivating, but it is equally the basis for Kant's conviction that reason must be capable of producing a distinctive moral feeling, because he also assumes that some sort of what Hume would call an "affection" must be the proximate phenomenal or empirical cause of any action, and therefore infers that pure reason must produce a moral feeling that can in turn cause the action that reason requires.¹⁷

The internalism in Kant is given, according to Guyer, by the fact that pure practical reason motivates us to act *through* feelings, such as respect for moral law or moral feeling. Guyer explains:

Although Kant's *Metaphysics* could have allowed him to argue that pure practical reason sets moral ends and principles and determines us to act in accordance with them entirely independently of any feelings or desires, he does not do so, but instead supposes that pure practical reason motivates us to act precisely by creating a feeling, namely moral feeling or the feeling of respect for moral law, which can then move us to act.¹⁸

Guyer reconstructs Kant's arguments in a way that indicates that feelings play the role of motivations in Kant, as well as in Hume, narrowing the difference between them. The feelings that could play the role of moral motives are not only respect or moral feelings, but sympathy as well. In this sense Kant would be an internalist, because pure practical reason will produce a feeling that operates as a motivation in Hume's sense.

Iain Morrison shares this conception with Guyer. For Morrison, respect for the law is the incentive for moral action. In this interpretation, respect is not only the effect of the moral law, but what determines the moral action.¹⁹ Patrick Frierson, in discussing the role of respect in the motivation of a moral action, classifies commentators as "intellectualists" and "affectionists," and erroneously puts Guyer among the former. In the quotation just cited, Guyer undoubtedly takes the latter position, since he acknowledges that only respect, as a feeling, can trigger a moral action.²⁰

Paul Guyer understands the Kantian theory of action as if the motive of the law produces its own incentive and this incentive is what really determines the moral action. However, in Kant we do not need an incentive to motivate. The mere thought that something is right is sufficient to trigger the right action.

In his criticism against Kant, Bernard Williams²¹ points out that Kant does not have a place for emotions and blames him for the suspicions moral philosophers

have against emotions. In my view, the first criticism is wrong. Kant has a place for emotions, and even for moral emotions. He explores the role of emotions in *The Metaphysics of Morals*, when he analyses the role of sympathy and moral feeling. It is true that most emotions for Kant are considered bad for the tasks of morality, mainly affects such as anger or passions such as ambition, greed, or vanity. It is even true that in some texts, he says that we would like to get rid of all our inclinations or that affects and passions are sores of reason. However, in *The Metaphysics of Morals* and in the *Anthropology* he acknowledges that some feelings can work as a morality *faute de mieux*.

The second criticism, however, is right: Kant could have been a strong influence on moral philosophers to despise emotions. Kant is not against emotions in morality, he only aims at constructing a morality which does not depend upon emotions. Emotions are fickle, they are dependent on aspects such as humor, or temperament, or even contingent facts of our daily lives, and consequently they cannot be a stable basis for morality.

Williams is also right in pointing out that Kant does not attribute to emotions the role of moral incentive and supports the view that an action can be done without any empirical motivation. Williams claims that a desire or a disposition should be present as an antecedent of any action and holds that intentional actions, even those which accomplishes moral ends, should be motivated by something else than mere beliefs, since beliefs alone do not motivate.

This is undoubtedly a criticism against Kant, who supports the view that pure reason—without any help from emotions or desires—can be immediately practical.

Where might Kant fall on the map of contemporary positions regarding moral motivation? It is interesting to understand how philosophers answer to the following questions: (1) Are emotions and feelings necessary for the determination of the morally right? (2) Are emotions and feelings necessary for moral motivation? Kant will certainly answer “no” to these two questions.

Jesse Prinz, in the book *The Emotional Construction of Morals*,²² states that perhaps the most fundamental division in moral philosophy is between those who think that feelings and emotions are essential to morality and those who think they are not. Kant stands among the second; Prinz, among the first. He calls his theory “Emotionism,” according to which morality is based on emotions.

There are two versions of *emotionism*. According to the first, the *metaphysical emotionism*, moral properties are essentially related to emotions;²³ according to the second, *epistemic emotionism*,²⁴ moral concepts and judgments are essentially related to emotions.

Classical utilitarianism denies *epistemic emotionism*, because they deny that moral concepts are related to emotions. However, they define the good according to happiness, what lead Prinz to classify them as metaphysical emotionists. Emotivists are the reverse of utilitarians, because they do not accept *metaphysical emotionism*, while endorsing *epistemic emotionism*. For emotivists, to judge that something is wrong is the same as expressing an emotional rejection to it.

A Kantian would reject both forms of *emotionism*. According to Kant, nonmoral actions are those that I cannot universalize and not those that arouse my sensible rejection. Moral properties are not related to emotions, but to the possibility of being universalized in a coherent way, or, in Kantian terms, without contradiction. Kantians also reject *epistemic emotionism* because the concept of right and wrong is not based on emotional states. In fact, moral judgments would be better if we ignored our emotions.

3

A place for affects and passion in the Kantian system

An empirical psychology in an *a priori* moral theory?

What is the role of empirical knowledge in an *a priori* theory? If the question is posed in such a way, the answer is easy: none. However, even though a moral theory may be able to obtain its supreme moral principle without considering human nature, it cannot fail to question the application of these principles to sensitive rational beings. The object of what can be called empirical psychology is the empirical nature of man. This object is addressed by Kant in *Anthropology* and *Lectures on Metaphysics*. Without a doubt, the empirical description of the faculties of the human being is not part of the description of the *a priori* principles of morality, and nor do the particular laws of nature provide *a priori* concepts. However, just as in physics, the empirical study of the laws of nature must agree with the *a priori* knowledge obtained in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the empirical science of man must show the same for the law of morality obtained in the *Groundwork* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*.

The relation between moral metaphysics and empirical Kantian philosophy can be enunciated in two theories: a strong one and a weaker one. The strong

theory proposes that the content of moral philosophy should be submitted to empirical verification, and the weaker theory would be that, at least, they should not be contradictory. Kant in many passages vigorously opposes the strong theory. In the *Groundwork*, he warns us about the damage caused by those who presume to extract morality from experience: “If we have so far drawn our concept of duty from the common use of our practical reason”—Kant points out, referring to the method in the first section of the *Groundwork*—“it is by no means to be inferred from this that we have treated it as a concept of experience” (G, 4: 406). Indeed, the philosopher warns, “No one could give worse advice to morality than by wanting to derive it from examples” (G, 4: 408).

Aside from this, Kant’s works are filled with references to the impossibility of empirically determining the morality of actions, since we do not have access to others’ motives and incentives. The mere observation of actions will not give us access to their morality: the grocer can fail to increase the price of goods out of a sense of duty or self-interest, just as the philanthropist can help those in need due to compassion and not out of duty. Not only are others’ intentions opaque, also we do not have complete access to our empirical selves. According to Allen Wood, this is one of the reasons for the need for a theory regarding the noumenal self in Kant: “Kant’s conjectures about noumenal freedom are possible only because we can never have satisfactory empirical knowledge of the mind. If we had reliable access to the natural causes of our behavior, then it would be quite untenable to claim that the real causes are different from these and transcend all experience.”¹ Wood’s position is interesting because it shows that one of the reasons we talk about a noumenal self is precisely because we cannot have access to our empirical selves and their motivations.

If we cannot have proof of morality through empirical investigation, we are left with the weak theory: the empirical investigation of man cannot contradict *a priori* moral philosophy. Human inclinations, emotions, and passions, in other words, all that separates the rational sensitive being from a divine will, cannot constitute an obstacle to morality.

Between the properly empirical investigation of the human being, his peculiarities, inclinations, and tendencies, and the supreme principle of morality, there exists what we can call principles of application. As well as having principles of application of the *a priori* principles of experience to objects of experience, we should have an analogy in a theory of the principles of application for morality.

In an interesting text on friendship by Paton,² originally from 1956 and thus much earlier than the publication of the *Vorlesungen über Anthropologie* and the comments regarding these student notes, this traditional commentator had already pointed out the importance of anthropology in Kant. He emphasizes that Kant taught anthropology for thirty years and that he considered this as an important part of his role as a professor of pure philosophy. Paton recalls even that the philosopher considered the anthropology and physical geography classes as important for the knowledge of the world and human nature, without which the duty prescribed by reason cannot be put into practice. However, as Paton highlights, Kant distinguished three levels: one of moral principles, one of application principles, and one of psychology itself.³

Even if we can agree with Paton regarding the necessity of distinguishing these three levels, Kant was not always clear on this. The identity or difference of psychology and anthropology, the place of anthropology in the system, and even the late conception of a pragmatic anthropology show us that the distinction between these levels is not so precise in Kant. Our purpose now will be to examine some of the moments of this distinction.

The provisory refuge of empirical psychology in metaphysics

Kant exposed the doctrines of rational psychology and empirical psychology as a part of his course during the classes on metaphysics he taught in the

1770s. The students' notes grouped as *Metaphysik* L1 expose the analogy that physics maintains with psychology. Both are part of what is called physiology, known in Kant's day as the knowledge of the object of the senses. The sum of all the objects of the senses is nature, thus, physiology is the knowledge of nature. Physiology can be either empirical or rational: "Empirical physiology is the cognition of the object of the senses insofar as it is obtained from principles of experience. Rational physiology is the cognition of objects insofar as it is obtained not from experience, but rather from a concept of reason" (ML1, 28: 221). Here Kant clarifies that the division between the empirical and the rational refers only to the form of knowledge, not to its object:

The *object* is always an object of the senses and experience; only the cognition of it can be attained through pure concepts of reason, for thereby physiology is distinguished from transcendental philosophy, where the object is also borrowed not from experience, but from rather from pure reason. (ML1, 28: 221–22)

An example of rational physiology (*physiologia rationalis*) is given by the study of the doctrine of movement through the concept of the body: a body is infinitely divisible; a quantity of matter belongs to it. Matter occupies space, matter has inertia, thus it can only move through an external power. In this we understand an object of the senses—the movement of bodies—through a concept, the concept of body. Other properties of the bodies would be studied by empirical physiology (*physiologia empirica*): bodies attract one another, are heavy, and so on.

The classification of physiology can be made according to form (rational and empirical) and also according to the object or matter. We then have the division according to objects of external sense and of internal sense: physics is the physiology of external sense, and psychology of internal sense. Both are divided in a rational and an empirical part.

Metaphysics is considered a science of pure reason; thus, neither empirical physics nor empirical psychology should have a place in it. However, empirical psychology is taken into account within metaphysics. What is the reason for this? Kant answers the following:

The cause as to why empirical psychology <*psychologia empirica*> has been placed in metaphysics is clearly this: one never really knew what metaphysics is, although it was expounded on for so long. One did not know how to determine its boundaries, therefore one placed much in it that did not belong there; this rested on the definition, in what one defined it by the first principles of human cognition. . . . The second cause was this: the doctrine of experience of the appearances of the soul has not arrived at any system such as that it could have constituted a separate discipline. (ML1, 28: 223)

There was, therefore, a habit of placing empirical psychology within the study of metaphysics due to the lack of definition of the latter's limits, as well as its still incipient state as a complete doctrine. However, Kant predicts, "With time there will accordingly be trips undertaken in order to cognize human beings, such as have been undertaken to become acquainted to plants and animals" (ML1, 28: 224).

What is interesting is that Kant tells us we do not know why empirical psychology should have a place in metaphysics and, if it does, it is due to the vagueness of the term "metaphysics" and to the fact that psychology has not yet been developed as a science.

One of the central concepts of empirical psychology is the concept of the self: "The substrate which underlies and which expresses the consciousness of inner sense is the concept of the I, which is merely a concept of empirical psychology" (ML1, 28: 224). The analysis of this concept is done through the analysis of faculties. I can feel myself, I have the intuition of myself: what belongs to my faculty while I am passive belongs to my inferior faculty;

what belongs to myself while I am active belongs to my superior faculty. We have three faculties according to the three things that belong to the self: representations, desires (appetites), and pleasure and displeasure. The self is therefore composed of three faculties (cognitive, desire and pleasure, and displeasure), and each is divided into inferior and superior. Through the inferior cognitive faculty there are representations of the objects which affect us; the superior cognitive faculty is the power to have representations from ourselves. The inferior faculty of desire is the power to desire objects which affect us; the superior is the power to desire something by ourselves, regardless of the affection of the objects. Analogously, the inferior faculty of pleasure and displeasure is the ability to feel satisfaction (*Wohlgefallen/complacentia*) or non-satisfaction through the objects which affect us. The inferior faculties have the property to be affected by the objects; instead, the superior faculties have as a characteristic independence from this affection.

In relation to this exposition, it is interesting to make a few observations. First, what could be denominated, in general, as a doctrine of the faculties is treated as empirical psychology in the context of these *Lessons*. Empirical psychology is opposed to rational psychology, which deals with substantiality, immortality, and the interaction of the soul with other substances. Second, it is worth pointing out that critical philosophy tries to refute rational psychology, but not empirical psychology. The substantiality of the soul and what accompanies it (simplicity, unity, etc.) is refuted in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, especially in the paralogisms. Critical philosophy is the refutation of the attempt to know objects of the internal sense through concepts (of substance, of one, etc.), and not the attempt to get to know the objects of the internal sense through experience. The conception of the transcendental self is distinct from the substantialized self of rational psychology, but is not incompatible with the study of the empirical self as an object of the internal sense. This would perhaps explain why empirical psychology is tolerated and even accepted as part of metaphysics.

It is imperative to note the fact that the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which intends to destroy the foundations of rational psychology, by reducing it to the logic of illusion, still concedes temporary shelter to empirical psychology:

Nevertheless, in accord with the customary scholastic usage, one must still concede it a little place (although only as episode) in metaphysics, and indeed from economic motives, since it is not yet rich enough to comprise a subject on his own and yet it is too important for one to expel it entirely or attach it somewhere else where it may well have less affinity than in metaphysics. (B 876/7)

Werner Starck stresses that Kant's *Lectures on Anthropology* are divided into two parts: the first one consists of empirical psychology, according to the third part of Baumgarten's metaphysics.⁴ Rudolf Makkreel also explains the use and definition of empirical psychology in the eighteenth century: "Empirical psychology in the eighteenth century regarded the soul as the *locus* of certain capacities of the human being as a living animate being. Kant used the *psychologia empirica* of Alexander Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* as the text for his lectures on Anthropology, and the early lectures reflect this by making more references to the soul than do the later ones."⁵

Groundwork: The radical separation between practical anthropology and moral metaphysics

In the introduction to *Groundwork of The Metaphysics of Morals*, we are confronted by a clear separation between metaphysics and empirical psychology. Ethics is divided into metaphysics of morals and practical anthropology. After introducing the three basic sciences since the Greeks, physics, ethics, and logic, Kant states that the first and second ones deal with objects, while the third is formal. We have a science of the laws of nature and a science of the laws

of freedom, both admitting a pure and empirical part. Physics has an empirical part but also a rational one: metaphysics of nature. In ethics, its empirical side is named practical anthropology and its pure side metaphysics of morals (G, 4: 388). The latter provides us with the law according to which everything must happen, while the former provides us with information regarding human nature, which should be obtained by another professional (not a philosopher) who should search only for the first principles.

Two observations should be made here. First, in this text from 1785, the empirical realm does not refer to an empirical psychology such as in the 1770s *Lectures on Metaphysics*. This does not mean that empirical psychology was banned from the realm of moral philosophy, but instead that it was incorporated into practical anthropology. One of the proofs of this incorporation is the statement in *Critique of Pure Reason* regarding the probable destiny of an empirical psychology, as long as it could abandon its provisory refuge: “It is thus merely a long-accepted foreigner, to whom one grants refuge for a while until it can establish its own domicile in a complete anthropology” (KrV, A 849/B 877). If the different groups of notes in the *Lectures on Metaphysics* are compared, we can see that same difference.⁶ In the *Lectures on Anthropology* from 1772 to 1773 (Ant, 25: 8), there is synonymy between empirical anthropology and psychology; in the *Lectures on Anthropology* from 1780 (Ant, 25: 243) and in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, empirical psychology is part of anthropology and its object is the internal sense.

The division of philosophy into a pure and an empirical part is described as well in Mrongovius’s notes from 1785,⁷ the same year as the *Groundwork*’s publication. However, as Allen Wood has pointed out,⁸ Kant did not yet know, at the time *Groundwork* was published, how his *The Metaphysics of Morals*, nor a practical anthropology, would look. The *Groundwork* is not yet *The Metaphysics of Morals* and the project of the latter as something absolutely apart from anything empirical still is to be built. The *Groundwork* is about the justification of the principle of morality—that is, the categorical imperative.

Even using examples in which a few elements relating to human nature can be verified, it is possible to affirm that the procedure of obtaining the categorical imperative is achieved without a substantial contribution of these elements. If the attainment of that which should be done is obtained without empirical elements, nowhere does Kant state that moral philosophy does not include an empirical part. On the contrary, moral philosophy is composed of metaphysics of morals and a practical anthropology.

Metaphysics of Morals and principles of application

If, in the 1770s, empirical psychology was able to find a place in metaphysics, even if temporarily, as with the publication of *Groundwork* (1785), there was a clear separation between the *a priori* realm and the empirical realm of moral philosophy, *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797) presents us with a panorama which is slightly more complex than temporary refuge or radical separation. Let us see its introduction:

But just as there must be principles in a metaphysics of nature for applying those highest universal principles of a nature in general to objects of experience, a metaphysics of morals cannot dispense with principles of application, and we shall often have to take as our objects the particular nature of human beings, which is cognized only by experience, in order to show in it what can be inferred from universal principles. . . . This is to say, in effect, that a metaphysics of morals cannot be based upon anthropology but can still be applied to it. (MS, 6: 217)

Here we clearly have an analogy between a metaphysics of morals and metaphysics of nature: both bring application principles which can be applied to particular objects. In the case of the *Metaphysics of Morals*, this particular object is human nature. The first principles of metaphysics of morals cannot

be based on anthropology, but should be able to be applied to it. Kant seems to implicitly answer the later critique addressed to him regarding the ineffectiveness of his practical theory: he really had no intention of creating principles which could not be applied to human nature; although the source of the principle should be based on reason alone. The application of the moral principle to the human being, so as to determine, for example, particular duties of virtue, requires the examination of a few particularities of human nature. The determination of these particularities which are morally relevant to human nature will tell us whether or not moral law can be effective. “The counterpart of a metaphysics of morals, the other member of the division of practical philosophy as a whole”—Kant states—“would be moral anthropology, which, however, would deal only with the subjective conditions in human nature that hinder people or help them in fulfilling the laws of a metaphysics of morals” (MS, 6: 217).

The concept of pragmatic anthropology

The *Anthropology*, published in 1798, presents the knowledge of human nature as a pragmatic anthropology. We will begin with the question: what is this anthropology *not*? It is not physiological, but pragmatic. Knowledge of men can be given from a pragmatic or physiological point of view. “Physiological knowledge of man, aims at the investigation of what nature makes of man, whereas pragmatic knowledge of man aims at what man makes, can or should make of himself as a freely acting being” (Ant, 7: 119).

Apart from being knowledge of men in the exercise of his freedom, it is also known as knowledge of the world (*Weltkenntnis*), as it contains knowledge of the things in the world: animals, plants, minerals of several places. Apart from that, it incorporates knowledge of man as a citizen of the world. Such knowledge can be acquired through travel or even travel books. Even literature

can be a good source of knowledge of man as a citizen of the world: Richardson and Molière's characters are models of understanding of human nature, even if their traits may become more intense.

Comments on race and sex occupy the second part, called characteristic. Kant now abandons the academic style and attempts to imitate the manner of the salons. He attempts to talk about the correct style of hosting, subjects that should be avoided, the ideal number of people at the dining table, and risks a few witty remarks on the temperaments of the sexes and the characteristics of different races. Some are quite curious. In the book regarding the faculty of desire, Kant, while speaking about emotions which are good for the health, says that crying accompanied by convulsive sobbing and shedding of tears is good for one's health. Thus, a widow who is inconsolable, who does not want to know how to dry her tears, is, without realizing it, caring for her health (Ant, 5: 263). In another passage, referring to laughter, he advocates that children, especially girls, be accustomed to broad and frank smiles, because joy expressed in the facial features will gradually imprint in their interior a disposition to joy and sociability (Ant, 7: 265). Another curious and perhaps very innovative comment as regards the feminine sex: he accepts *coqueterie*, in other words, the social flirtation between a married woman and other men, since a young wife always runs the risk of becoming widowed, which leads to her distributing her charms to would-be suitors in case such a fact occurred (Ant, 7: 219).

Some other comments are quite illustrative concerning the sociability of the time. Such is the case of the rules to be followed during a reception. For a good reception, the guests must be a minimum of three and a maximum of ten people; conversation during dinner must follow three stages: narration, argumentation, and pleasantries. This third stage is appropriate, since the guests have already eaten plentifully and argumentation requires a lot of energy, no longer available due to the requirements of digestion.

In the *Anthropology*, Kant re-elaborates the contents presented in *Lectures on Metaphysics* and in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*.

The former ceases to be the mere doctrine of the appearance of internal sense and the discourse regarding the faculties evolves from the concept of the transcendental self. The idea of construction through liberty and the allusion to *Weltkenntnis* are innovative in respect of the discourse regarding races and genders, presented in the characteristic.

The intention here was to show the different moments which the definition of anthropological and empirical psychology passed through. As we were able to see, empirical psychology as explained in the *Lessons on Metaphysics* is not displaced of meaning by the advent of critical philosophy. It is taken in what Kant called “anthropology,” which receives the adjectives of moral, practical, or pragmatic. Thus, its contents, such as the content relative to the pure principles of morality, are part of a practical philosophy. In the same way that experience cannot lend to principles of morality, the latter, without knowledge of human nature, would be inefficient.

What is not made clear in the Kantian system is what really the complement to moral metaphysics is, in other words, what the amplitude of practical anthropology is. Would it be composed solely by that which was an object of *Anthropology*? A viable answer would be that there is no specific text which fully explicates practical anthropology. It is discussed in the published *Anthropology*, in *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason* and in *The Metaphysics of Morals* itself, spanning over the contents regarding human nature which appears in *Doctrine of Virtues* and in *Doctrine of Right*. All these texts discuss, not exhaustively, that which seems to be the object of a moral metaphysics: a practical anthropology, in other words, the nature of the rational sensitive being.

The impure part of ethics

Kantian moral theory has a pure part and another part which, by contrast, we may call impure.⁹ We are able to verify this union of two parts in the

Mrongovius's transcriptions¹⁰ of Kant's courses on ethics. According to those lectures, *metaphysica pura* is only the first part of morals—the second part is *philosophia moralis applicata*, moral anthropology, to which the empirical principles belong. The particular nature of the human being and the laws upon which it is based provide the content of a moral anthropology.

Once these two parts of Kantian ethics have been accepted, our problem becomes finding the texts which discuss *metaphysica pura* and those which express *philosophia moralis applicata*.

The book *Anthropology* is not about physiological knowledge of man, as explained in the *Introduction* (Ant, 7: 119), but about what man, through a certain sensible construction, has become in the use of his freedom. In turn, *The Metaphysics of Morals* exemplifies the sensible conditions of human beings for the effective reception and application of moral law, which was obtained through the *Faktum der Vernunft*.

If the proof of the moral law is obtained *a priori* in *Critique of Practical Reason*, in *The Metaphysics of Morals* the sensible conditions which allow its application are especially expressed. In it we can say that we are facing what Mrongovius named, according to Kant's lessons, *philosophia moralis applicata*, whose objective is precisely to determine the limits of the validity of that which is obtained in the part referring to *moralia pura* by a specific object, such as human nature. The former would provide us the principles of application of morality to human's nature. According to Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals* cannot waive the principles of application to the particular nature of human beings, which is known by experience (MS, 6: 217). The *Pedagogy* and the *Religion*, in turn, also expound on the peculiarities of the human being and how he can be educated toward virtue and morality.

If, in general, all of these works address the constitution of the rational sensitive being and the conditions of morality's possibilities, would they have the same level of particularity? Or can some be classified as belonging to

what Paton had already referred to as principles of application, and others to empirical psychology?

In his recent book, *Kant's Impure Ethics*, Robert Louden provides an important contribution to this discussion. Louden's book comes to show that aside from pure, nonempirical principles, Kant offers an ethics which is not pure. This part was named, by Kant himself, as "moral anthropology," "practical anthropology," or "moral applied philosophy." These terms refer to the empirical study of the human being, which Louden refers to as "impure ethics," in order to contrast with "pure ethics," consisting of *a priori*, nonempirical principles. Louden does not deny that the pure part of ethics provides the foundation to practical Kantian philosophy and is, thus, more important than the "impure" part. However, the author calls attention to the fact that Kant dedicated many of his writings and lessons to the empirical study of the human being, which would be necessary for the application of those principles.

Contrasting with this interpretation, we have Patrick Frierson's idea that Kant has a transcendental anthropology. This expression, taken from Kant's handwritten notes, does not appear in other texts. Frierson admits that Kant often uses the term "anthropology" to refer to pragmatic anthropology and "transcendental" for the conditions of possibility of experience; however, he explains his use of the term: transcendental anthropology "provides a useful term to contrast Kant's approach to human being in his *a priori* philosophical works with empirical and pragmatic approaches elsewhere."¹¹

Frierson understands the three critiques as parts of transcendental anthropology: the first critique would give us a "transcendental anthropology of cognition," the second critique will be the "transcendental anthropology of volition," and the *Critique of Judgment* will supply us with "transcendental anthropology of feeling."¹² He considers that the answer to the question: "What is the human being?" is given in his transcendental philosophy, "where he develops his metaphysical account of humans' free and finite natures and lays out norms that should govern cognition, feelings, and volitions," and in

his empirical anthropology, “where he provides detailed descriptions of how human beings actually think, feel, and choose.”¹³ Pragmatic anthropology will integrate, in Frierson’s view, both aspects.

Although the *Anthropology* has granted an importance in Kant scholarship since the publication of the *Vorlesungen*,¹⁴ I consider that a transcendental anthropology exceeds any reasonable understanding of Kant’s philosophy, since anthropology is always related to the empirical part of the human being, and not to the *a priori* domain. There is no *a priori* anthropology, which makes the term transcendental anthropology a little bit odd. In this sense, Louden’s approach of a pure and impure part of ethics seems more reasonable as an interpretation of Kant’s philosophy than an idea of a transcendental anthropology.

The pure and impure parts of Kantian ethics, according to Louden, are both necessary and complementary. Disregarding the latter would not only be to disregard an important part of Kant’s work, but also to offer material to critique and irony in relation to a practical philosophy blind to the peculiarities of the human being and, therefore, to the applicability of his principles. Louden is not, however, unaware of those who defend strict formality in Kantian ethics. He asks himself,¹⁵ how can an anti-naturalist such as Kant support an empirical ethics or a moral anthropology, since he does not admit anything more than pure, *a priori* moral principles. At the same time, Kant explicitly admits that moral anthropology is based on experience as the complement to *The Metaphysics of Morals* (MS, 6: 217, 385, 406). How to harmonize moral metaphysics with anthropology, when both seem necessary to the Kantian ethical project?

Let’s start by answering *what impure ethics is not*. Impure ethics is not empirical content which should be mixed with *a priori* principles. Louden reinforces the idea that there is an indispensable duty of exposing the pure part of ethics separately and completely distinctly from the empirical part of ethics, because, as Kant already enunciated in *Groundwork*, a theory in which

the pure and empirical parts mix up does not deserve to be called moral philosophy, since such a mixture perverts the purity of morality (G, 4: 390). The empirical elements are also not responsible for the obtainment of the pure principles, even if at times they may illustrate these principles, such as in the examples provided in the *Groundwork*, where suicidal humans, philanthropic people, and shop owners illustrate the application of the principle of morality. Impure ethics is necessary when it regards the application of pure principles in empirical circumstances, in which we have sensitive rational beings as moral subjects. In order for an action to be moral, however, the pure principle, in other words, nonempirical, must be the foundation of the determination of the will.

Louden presents a classification which he named “fields of impurity”: education, anthropology, art, religion, and history. These fields of impurity are not about the physiological or psychological study of man, as Kant had already forewarned in *Anthropology*, but refer to what man has done with his own nature through the use of his freedom. Thus, the study of pedagogy refers to the strategy of moral education through the training of the abilities required for practical judging. In the *Anthropology*, we can also see the importance of the universality of Kantian ethics, even in the studies of the racial and gender subgroups. In the Kantian account of art and religion, we see how aesthetic appreciation serves the purposes of morality and how religious institutions help to create a global moral community. In history, the concept of historical progress as a development toward a cosmopolitan society is emphasized.

One of the most brilliant points of Louden’s approach is the idea of levels of impurity of Kantian ethics, since Kant’s ethics is not composed only of a pure and an impure level, but also by the application of principles of the former toward the latter, and by the determination of specific duties of rational sensitive beings.

The first level of Kantian ethics, according to Louden, is pure ethics. According to Kant’s statement in *Critique of Pure Reason*, “pure morality . . .

contains merely the necessary moral law of free will in general” (KrV, A 55). On this level of total abstraction, no information regarding the peculiar nature of the human being or of another rational being is given. However, not even the *Groundwork* itself would fit into a pure ethics in this more strict sense, since this text discusses subjective limitations and obstacles, as well as the way in which moral law should be received as an imperative, which is not valid for every rational being.

The second level, present in the *Groundwork*, would be named *morality for finite rational beings*. In this case, none of the enunciated principles depend on specific information regarding human culture and nature, even if the categorical imperative is valid for rational finite subjects, who are conscious of the moral principle but whose inclinations oppose it. We then have a third level, represented by *The Metaphysics of Morals*, whose objective is to determine moral duties for human beings as such. Determining duties, as human duties, is only possible when we know the constitution of human beings (MS, 6: 217), which requires minimal empirical information about human nature. Which empirical information would be required to determine human duties? In order to apply the moral law to human beings, we should have general knowledge regarding human nature, such as the instincts, tendencies, abilities, and faculties of such beings. The project of determining specific duties to human beings is still a part of metaphysics, since empirical knowledge is not incorporated in the system (MS, 6: 205).

If the determination of the specific duties of human beings is an object of metaphysics, however, the specific study of the human peculiarities which assist or hinder the exercise of morality will be the object of a practical or moral anthropology, as the text establishes at various moments (MS, 6: 217).

What is the specific *locus* of moral anthropology? In order to answer that, we should first answer the following questions: What are the passions and tendencies which hinder or assist adherence to moral principles? How should these principles be taught to human beings? How can political, cultural, and

religious institutions be organized so that they can realize moral objectives? Are there specific aspects of modern time which assist in the establishment and development of morality?

The Anthropology, especially in its first part, answers the first question. The pedagogical texts, along with the texts on religion and history, appear to be the right place to answer the other questions of moral anthropology. On the other hand, the second part of the *Anthropology* presents a more specific description of subgroups within the human species, which implies a more detailed empirical knowledge than what is necessary in a moral anthropology.

The most specific degree of empirical knowledge in Kant is given when we ask what to do in a particular situation. Kantian philosophy, as we know, does not tell us what to do in particular cases; in that sense, we are now already outside the Kantian system. However, he occupies himself with these questions in at least two texts. In the *Lessons on Pedagogy*, he recommends that the teacher should teach a moral catechism to the students, through casuistic questions. Such practice would serve to the development of the capacity for moral judgment in young people. Kant equally dedicates a few passages of *Metaphysics of Morals* to casuistry. He then discusses matters relative to sexuality, consumption of toxic substances, alcohol abuse, and the correct degree of inebriation allowed at parties. Even if casuistry is not a part of science or a moral doctrine, it assists in the practice of moral judgment, which is especially needed for the fulfillment of imperfect duties.

Impure ethics and sensibility

In order to analyze the relation between reason and emotion, three central moments of the impure part of ethics deserve special attention, in their relation to sensibility. First, the Kantian claim that one should cultivate natural feelings, such as sympathy, in order to realize benevolent actions, which appears to

contradict the praise of the cold philanthropist found in *Groundwork*. Second, the relation between morality and feelings, especially the idea of aesthetical presuppositions of the reception of duty. And the third, a theory regarding emotions and how to handle them—be it through cultivation or control. In order for such, we ought to have a specific model for emotions and think about how Kant intends to control them through the strength of virtue.

The sensitive aspects of morality can be noticed in the conditional duty of promoting sympathy. Kant defines sympathy in the same way that an Empiricist would define it: “Sympathetic joy and sadness (*Mitfreunde und Mitleid*) (*sympathia moralis*) are sensible feelings of pleasure and displeasure (which are therefore to be called ‘aesthetic’) at another’s state of joy or pain” (MS, 6: 456). We have a duty to cultivate these sympathetic feelings in order to promote benevolence. If the moral law cannot be an objectively sufficient motive and a subjectively sufficient incentive, there is the indirect duty of strengthening a few natural sentiments which can help in acting according to duty.

It is therefore a duty not to avoid the places where the poor who lack the most basic necessities are to be found, but rather to seek them out, and not to shun sickrooms or debtors’s prisons and so forth in order to avoid sharing painful feelings one may not be able to resist. For this is still one of the impulses that nature has implanted in us to do what the representation of duty alone might not accomplish. (TL, 6: 457)

The cultivation of sympathy seems to fulfill the role of a moral incentive when the law is not sufficient to promote the moral action. In the impure part of ethics, therefore, a few sentiments which did not have moral value in *Groundwork* now have it. Part of this is due to the distinction between active and passive sympathy. The active sympathy of the *Doctrine of Virtues* may correspond to what in the *Anthropology* is denominated sensitivity (*Empfindsamkeit*). Apparently, it is suggested that sympathetic feelings

connected to sensitivity can be cultivated,¹⁶ while their passive version, the affects (*Affekten*), are uncontrollable by reason and would just hinder the realization of the moral action.

Besides sympathy, there is also, as discussed earlier, the idea of aesthetical presuppositions for the susceptibility of the mind to the concept of duty (*Ästhetische Vorbegriffe der Empfänglichkeit des Gemuts für Pflichtbegriffe überhaupt*) that appears in the introduction to *Doctrine of Virtues*, paragraph XII. These aesthetical presuppositions include moral sentiments (*das moralischen Gefühl*), conscience (*das Gewissen*), love to one's neighbors (*die Liebe des Nächsten*), and self-respect (*Achtung für Sich selbst*) or self-esteem. The most important of these presuppositions is moral feeling, defined as "the susceptibility to feel pleasure and displeasure merely from being aware that our actions are consistent with or contrary to the law of duty" (TL, 6: 399). This feeling can be pathological or moral; in the first case, it seems to precede the representation of law. In the second, it is posterior to the law, and is an effect of a concept regarding the faculty of feeling pleasure or displeasure.

Since it refers to a natural predisposition of the mind to be affected by the concept of duty, we are in the realm of practical anthropology and no longer of *metaphysica pura*. This natural predisposition is a fact about human nature: "No human being is entirely without moral feeling, for were he completely lacking in receptivity to it he would be morally dead" (MS, 6: 399).

Moral feeling is distinct from both respect and from the *moral sense* of the Empiricists. The feeling of respect is just a feeling of fear and displeasure, while the moral feeling can be a feeling of pleasure, when our actions are in conformity with the law of duty. This aspect of pleasure answers, in a way, Schiller's famous jocular poem, in which he states that Kant taught him to do with repulsion the good he used to do with pleasure. What is not explained, however, is whether moral feeling is the feeling of respect through the feeling of pleasure, or whether it is a new feeling. Regardless, it is not the Empiricists' moral feeling (*moral sense*), because it does not give us the moral law, but follows

the law given by reason. We have the obligation to cultivate and strengthen this feeling as part of virtue, but it will never tell us what we should do.

The third important aspect is the interpretation of passions and affects as illnesses of the mind. This would be compatible with the idea that we have strong inclinations—be they affects (*Affekten*) or passions (*Leidenschaften*)—which are not liable to being easily cultivated as in Aristotelian texts, or excised, according to Stoic apathy. If a few feelings—such as sympathy—allow for cultivation, this is an exception, since passions and affects usually constitute hindrances to the will. Moreover, as we have seen, Kant seems to tell us about a double sympathy, a sympathy-affection and a sympathy-sensitivity, since only the latter would be capable of cultivation. Regarding passions and affects, we have interesting comments and metaphors of the *Anthropology*: Passions and affects are considered illnesses of the mind (*Krankheit des Gemüts*) (Ant, 7: 251) and exclude the sovereignty of reason; affects make reflection impossible, while passion is stated to be malign tumors (*Krebsschäden*) to pure practical reason (Ant, 7: 266). Then, regarding the degree of strength and permanence: affect acts like water rupturing a barrage (Ant, 7: 252), renders the subject blind (Ant, 7: 253), while passion is a river which digs ever deeper into its riverbed, and it is a permanent atrophy (7: 252).

In paragraph XIV of the *Doctrine of Virtue*, it is explained that affections and passions encumber moral reflection and deliberation:

Affects belong to feeling (*Gefühl*) insofar as, preceding reflection, it makes this impossible or more difficult. . . . A passion is a sensible desire that has become a lasting inclination (e.g., hatred as opposed to anger). The calm with which one gives oneself up to it permits reflection and allows the mind to form principles upon it and so, if inclination lights upon something contrary to the law, to brood upon it, to get it rooted deeply, and so to take up what is evil (as something premeditated) into its maxim. And the evil is then properly evil, that is, a true vice. (MS, XV, 6: 407–08)

Affects and passions are impediments to the moral life; however, if affects, such as anger, momentarily hinder and impede reflection, passions, such as hatred, with the calmness of reflection, form maxims which are contrary to the law, making us have a real vice, an evil which does not only accrue from weakness but from consciously taking up nonmoral motives in maxims.

Kant appears to be skeptical regarding the possibility of cultivating emotions. We can see it both in the jocular comment in *Anthropology* regarding Socrates,¹⁷ as in the *Doctrine of Virtue* itself: “For moral maxims, unlike technical ones, cannot be based on habit” (TL, 6: 409). The idea of strength thus ends up replacing the impossible cultivation and apathy: virtue contains a positive demand; to place all of your abilities under the control of reason, which goes beyond forbidding that the subject be governed by his feelings and inclinations, as these may dominate him if virtue does not take control of them. Aristotelian cultivation and Stoic apathy are not enough to fight inclinations. A strong adversary, who does not merely let itself be tamed, must be commanded and controlled. For this reason, virtue is not apathy, but the capability and reflected-upon decision to resist the temptations of sensibility.

The proof that beings with will and reason, whoever they may be, are subjected to moral law is independent of specific considerations regarding how the human being is affected. However, in order to show that *ought implies can*, in other words, that rational beings can act according to what duty orders, Kant needs to show how the moral law affects them.

The ability to be a moral agent for humans implies that our sensibility is affected, which is caused by respect and moral emotion. Without these emotions we would be, according to the Kantian expression, morally dead. Being a moral agent is the possibility of placing feelings such as sympathy in the service of morality, when the mere respect for the law is not capable of being a sufficient motive. And, in order to fight inclinations which oppose themselves to morality, one must train virtue as an interior strength capable of making one resist the temptations of sensibility, fighting an inherent weakness

to a pathologically affected will. The pure part of ethics must be, however, complemented by its conditions of validity to human beings, which can only be found in a doctrine of moral sensibility.

Is Kant closer to the Empiricists than he believed? No, since even recognizing the necessary sensitive presuppositions of moral law's effectiveness for human beings, what is correct in each case is always determined by reason and not by emotion. This is the final separation between the theorists of moral emotion and Kant: the latter's conviction that feelings are blind if they are not cultivated and trained by reason and, primarily, submitted to reason.

Since we have already examined reason, let us then move on to emotion.

4

What can Kant teach us about emotions?¹

The pain model

It is a hard task to support my thesis that Kant can teach us something about emotions and bring important contributions to the contemporary debate about this issue. Kant has long been seen as the philosopher who denies any important role to emotions. To those who read just the first section of the *Groundwork*, it seems to be a clear-cut case that emotions do not possess intrinsic moral value. For instance, Kant writes that while the sympathetic philanthropist performs an action without moral worth, the absence of sympathy in the heart of the insensible one makes his action morally worthy.² This fact presumably inspired Sabini and Silver to claim in their article “Emotions, Responsibility and Character” that “a Kantian chapter on emotion and responsibility is easy to write and quick to read. The domain of the moral is the domain of the will expressed in action: it is the domain of that for which we are responsible. Emotions are beyond the will, and for this reason have no intrinsic moral value.”³

According to these authors, emotions have no moral value because they follow the pain model.⁴ Just like pain, which is a fact about us, regardless of values or other aspects of our character, emotions, even the most complex

ones, do not fall under the command of reason. Kant, just like more recent psychologists and physiologists, is said to embrace a model in which emotions are precognitive,⁵ mere perceptions of unspecified bodily states,⁶ or undifferentiated states of the sympathetic nervous system. Emotions, like pain, would be nothing more than the stimulation of nerves, disconnected from values, character, or reason. A supporter of the pain-like conception of emotions is Zajonc. In his paper “Feeling and Thinking, Preferences Need No Inference” he shows that there is a direct pathway from perceptual system to emotional responses. Accordingly, emotions are not connected with reasoning and values. According to Sabini and Silver, Zajonc’s model is the same as Kant’s. Both place the emotions completely out of the moral domain. Hence, we could be held responsible for the expression of our mental states, but not for having them. Besides this, in Sabini and Silver’s view, certain emotional states are like the pain of withdrawal for a drug addict, in which any responsibility for action is attenuated by the intensity of the stimuli.⁷

Marcia Baron, in her book *Kantian Ethics Almost without Apology*, criticizes the Sabini/Silver position, objecting that the pain model is not the one Kant uses for explaining emotion:

This [Kantian] model, with its very strong notion of agency, is diametrically opposed to the picture drawn by Sabini and Silver, according to which emotions function, on Kant’s view, much as pain does. It is a serious mistake to think that Kant’s psychology even approximately fits the model of pain and that feelings such as sympathy “move us to act without our rational assent or assessment.” . . . Similarly, it would be more plausible to criticize Kant for attributing to us too much responsibility for our feelings and emotions than to attribute to him the position that we are not responsible for them.⁸

Baron’s position is radically distinct from Sabini and Silver’s: we are not passive regarding our feelings; we are responsible for the way we feel. Even if

the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Groundwork* could justify a negative conception of emotions, as phenomena incapable of being controlled by reason, Baron claims that this conception requires revision when later texts are taken into consideration, such as *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, and *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*.

I shall try to show that neither model can fully explain Kant's view of emotions. Baron has a point in saying that we cannot explain some emotions through the pain model, like sympathy and gratitude, which can be cultivated. However, Kant does describe some affects as involuntary and passive, such as fright in battles, which overcomes the agent regardless of his will, causing disagreeable physical effects. In this case, Baron's claim that we are not passive regarding our emotions does not apply to Kantian morality. I will argue that Kant does have a robust conception of agency, in spite of our being passive regarding some emotions. However, if emotions are not in our power, this does not imply that they lack cognitive elements. People can feel anger without wanting it, but they in fact feel anger because they think something unfair or harmful has been done. Baron is right that there are some feelings like sympathy that are not beyond rational control; however, they cannot be a model for all feelings.

My claim is that Kant presents us with a very colorful, wide range of emotions, which cannot be captured in one model type, be it a pain or a sympathy model. This diversity does not allow a simple answer concerning their voluntary or involuntary nature, or concerning the influence of physiological factors. Kant makes room for this complex picture when he connects them to our passive, active, or reactive self, as well as to superior and inferior faculties. My strategy will be, first, to present the taxonomy of emotions, and then place them in what I call a map of the self. After this first presentation of the Kantian picture, I will address some philosophical issues and relate Kant's theory to contemporary discussion on emotions.

Emotions in the map of the self

First of all, Kant does not use the term “emotion.”⁹ What we pre-analytically call emotion refers to at least three different kinds of phenomena: affects,¹⁰ moral feelings, and passions. These inclinations¹¹ can be mainly related to two faculties: the faculty of feeling pleasure and displeasure and the faculty of desire. Feelings of pleasure or displeasure caused by an object can be sensible or intellectual. The former are caused by sensation or imagination; the latter are triggered by a concept or idea (Ant, 7: 230). Pleasure and displeasure given by sensibility alone are feelings of gratification and pain. Sensible pleasure and displeasure admit also two other kinds of inclination, caused by imagination: sympathy and affects. The difference between them is that sympathy can be cultivated, while we are passive with respect to affects.¹²

Affects are feelings of pleasure or displeasure that hinder the reflection through which inclinations were to be submitted to rational maxims; they are sudden and rash, making reflection impossible (TL, 6: 408), such as water that breaks through a dam or a stroke of apoplexy (Ant, 7: 252). They can lead the agent to moral blindness, since they hinder deliberation, with the consolation that this tempest easily goes away and calms itself, allowing the subject to go back to a state where reflection is possible again. He cites the example of someone who marries out of love and is blind to the flaws in the character of her beloved, but regains her vision a week after marriage (Ant, 7: 253). The Kantian paradigmatic example for affect is anger, a tempestuous feeling by nature, and fickle like love. Sympathy, although it is a sensible feeling (TL, 6: 456), can be trained in order to help the accomplishment of moral actions, when respect for the moral law is not a sufficient incentive.

However, pleasures and displeasures are not all sensible; we also have the intellectual ones, caused by an idea or concept. These include feelings that make the mind receptive to the concept of duty, such as moral feeling, which is defined as “a susceptibility to feel pleasure or displeasure from the

consciousness that our actions are consistent or contrary to the laws of duty” (TL, 6: 399).¹³ Love for human beings belongs also to the receptivity of the mind to the concept of duty. Intellectual pleasures include love of benevolence, but not love of satisfaction. The former but not the latter could be ordered as a duty, since it would be contradictory to have a duty to feel pleasure. Love of benevolence admits of something like Aristotelian cultivation, for it is a disposition that can be awakened by habit.¹⁴

Kant’s realm of inclinations also includes passion, which is related to the faculty of desire and refers to a strong desire for something. Passions exhibit a contradictory nature. On the one hand, Kant says that they hinder the control of reason to compare at a particular moment, a specific inclination against the sum of all inclinations (Ant, 7: 265). On the other hand, they admit some rational deliberation about the means to obtain what the agent desires. One good case is given in the *Anthropology*, where Kant compares the inability of a man who feels the affect of love to seduce someone, to the skill of one who is taken by the passion of love. The first will not be successful, while the second can easily trap the helpless victim (Ant, 6: 265). The difference is that one is immersed in a full agitation of the mind, while the other keeps a cold blood to plot the way to obtain it. This case depicts the difference Kant makes between the meaning of affects and passion, a difference that is also illustrated in outstanding literary works, such as *Dangerous Liaisons*.¹⁵ While affects are outbursts of feelings, which cannot coexist even with a prudential rationality, passions show their cunning. The same difference can be seen when one compares the affect of hate with the passion of anger: while the latter is fickle, the former is a permanent disposition, which inclines the agent to plot a cold blood vengeance.

In order to improve our understanding of Kant’s model or models for emotions, it is helpful to locate them in relation to a Kantian sketch of the self.¹⁶ Kant claims there are three instances of soul¹⁷ in a generic sense, whose reference in each case is the self. The self can be observed in a triple

perspective: as passive, reactive, or purely active. This tripartite division of the self is connected with the superior and inferior faculties. The inferior faculty corresponds to the passive part; the superior faculty, as active, corresponds to the perspective of both a purely active self and a reactive one.

The superior/inferior distinction applies to all three faculties: the cognitive faculty, the faculty of desire, and the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. As regards the faculty of feeling, we have pleasure or displeasure of sensibility alone through the inferior faculty, while the pleasures, given by imagination and understanding, belong to the superior faculty. This difference can be illustrated when one contrasts pain, which belongs to the inferior faculty of feeling, to the feelings of pleasure and displeasure in the superior faculty, such as moral feeling. Physical pain seems not to allow a rational control, because it is displeasure of the animal or appetitive soul. Pain is defined as “displeasure of sensation,” and is explained by the effect produced in the mind by the sensation of one’s physical condition. Totally opposed to physical pain, we have the pleasure or displeasure due to a concept, such as the moral feeling of *The Metaphysics of Morals*. This feeling is an effect of the concept of duty: the moral feeling “is the susceptibility to feel pleasure or displeasure merely from being aware that our actions are consistent with or contrary to the law of duty” (MS, 6: 399). Hence, there is a big contrast between pain and moral sentiments, even though they could both be classified as feelings: the first one is related to the inferior faculty of feeling, connected with sensibility; the second one is related to the superior one, connected with reason. While physical pain is an involuntary, precognitive feeling, moral feeling includes the concept of a right action. We cannot decide whether we will feel pain or not, while we can decide whether we will feel a moral pleasure, because this requires just that we act according to the moral law.

The inferior faculty of pleasure is responsible for purely sensible phenomena such as pain, hunger, and thirst. The superior faculty of pleasure relates to the reactive and active self. The sensation of displeasure that we feel when

we know that our actions are wrong is associated with the active self, since it is a feeling connected with a concept: the concept of duty. Between the pure passive and the pure active part of the self, abide the reactive feelings, which still belong to the superior faculty of feeling, and refer to affects and sensibility.

Kant, who was a well-known hypochondriac, illustrates in his *Lectures on Anthropology* the difference between passive, reactive, and active feelings with a case of a man who suffers from gout:

I cannot prevent the pain inflicted on my body from passing into my soul. I can only prevent that my soul reflects over this, e.g., when I have gout and think what will become of me in the future, how I will acquire my bread and this causes sadness over the state of my health, here *animus* agitates. The sickness of the mind is also what makes me miserable. Because such reflection never attaches to animals, they are never miserable. But finally the highest degree of sadness arises when my spirit abstracts from all pain and awakens in me a self-reproach, when it imagines to itself how I brought this illness upon myself and became unhappy through my own fault. (AntPa, 25: 247–48)

We can clearly see, in this quotation, the difference between three levels of displeasure. The first one is purely physical, beyond control, even indirectly. Since it is purely sensible, it is independent of any cognitive content; the subject feels a certain wound as pain. This is an example of the inferior faculty of pleasure and displeasure, where the feeling is given through sensation alone.

The second level relates to the displeasure of an affect, sadness, and allows a nonphysical cause: sadness is caused by the imagination that agitates the mind when the agent worries about the future. Here we have the reactive part of the self, which relates to the superior faculty of feeling. Sadness is aroused by imagination, which agitates the mind. Animals, Kant argues, are never miserable, although they can feel the pain of a wound. However, Kant claims in another lecture, “On Philosophers’ Medicine of the Body,” that animals do

have imagination, although in cattle “this force [of imagination] is not directed by any choice or deliberate intention of animal.” Since some animals do have imagination, Kant can conceive that a certain illness may oppress the mind of the animal when it is brought into captivity, “yet the black anxiety that afflicts the miserable human race escapes the animal, which knows nothing of worry.”¹⁸ To mention animal mind, which can be affected by sadness, ipso facto refutes the idea that Kantian affects fit the pain model, since even animals are supposed to have affects triggered by imagination. The very idea of being in captivity can trigger in their minds some emotions of sadness. In human beings, this faculty is supposed to be even stronger, giving a deeper force to affects. Animals may feel sadness, although their weaker imagination does not allow for deep anxiety. Their emotions, according to Kant’s account, are not always involuntary, nor are they always precognitive. The idea of captivity brings them the idea of a miserable future, which triggers the affect of sadness. Thus, the pain model will not even explain the emotions Kant ascribes to animals.

Humans have another level of emotions, the one connected with moral judgments. This third level, the displeasure of spirit, the pure active part of the self, is completely absent in animals, since it depends on reason that awakes self-reproach. The moral conscience would create in the agent the feeling of displeasure because she knows that she has not acted well. Self-reproach is, then, an illustration of an intellectual displeasure, caused just by a concept. As we have seen, in the classification of the faculty of pleasure and displeasure (*Ant*, 7: 230), we have the division between sensuous and intellectual pleasure. While the former can be produced by sensation or imagination, the latter is conceived by concepts or by ideas. In the case of self-reproach, displeasure is produced by the idea of moral law.

Passions, which belong to the faculty of desire, are also related to the active self, since agents form maxims according to their passions. The thirst for vengeance, evil as it may appear, is still a maxim of reason, developed out of an

injustice suffered. History gives many illustrations of plotted murders based on hatred, sometimes based on the ambition and lust of power. Such passions lead the mind to accept evil maxims, in order to accomplish its ends. That is why Kant claims that passions manifest certain characteristics of reason (Ant, 7: 270).

What should we conclude from this taxonomy of emotions? Since the pain model is obviously ruled out, should we assume that Baron is right? Are we, according to Kant, responsible for our emotions? Since Kant supposes that humans can have moral feelings of displeasure according to the rightness or wrongness of our actions, is it the case that we do have control over all emotions? The answer is negative, moral feelings are but one part of the wide range of emotions. The nature of moral feelings, as something produced by the concept of moral correctness, hence controllable, arises from its belonging to the active part of the self. Nevertheless, between the purely passive part, where the feeling of pleasure depends on the form through which the object affects sensibility, and the purely active part, in which the satisfaction should relate directly to a concept, we have a variety of intermediary phenomena, such as sympathy and affects.

This reconstruction gives us the following table, where emotions are in bold letters:

Faculty of feeling pleasure or displeasure			Faculty of desire			
Inferior faculty of feeling	Superior faculty of feeling		Propensity	Instinct	Inclinations	Passions (hate, greed, lust of power, ambition)
Passive self: soul, <i>anima</i> , <i>Seele</i>	Reactive self: mind, <i>animus</i> , <i>Gemüth</i>	Active self: spirit, <i>mens</i> , <i>Geist</i>				
Pain, hunger	Affects (anger, sadness, joy)	Moral feelings				

Sympathy and affects belong to the reactive realm of the soul. They are phenomena that are different from pain, in that they require other faculties

besides sensation, and they are different from moral feelings, in that they are not provoked by a concept. That is why neither the pain model nor Baron's model can explain them.

The affects are typically reactive agitations, or reactions to something that has affected our mind. Kant's view of these feelings, which include anger, joy, sadness, and fear, is usually negative: affect acts like a surprise through sensation, suspending the composure of mind. Therefore, emotions are precipitate and also have the unwanted property of growing to a degree of feeling that makes reflection impossible (Ant, 7: 252).

Being like a surprise, this kind of feeling cannot be directly controlled by the will. We can decide whether or not to perform a correct action, and hence whether we will feel moral pleasure or displeasure resulting from such action. But we cannot decide whether it is appropriate to feel anger in a particular situation. Sometimes, we feel anger, even if we do not desire to feel it, other times we can think it would be fair to feel it, although we are insensible in the situation. Kant illustrates this possibility in the *Anthropology*, mentioning Socrates, who was in doubt whether it would be good to be angry sometimes, since it is paradoxical to have emotion so much under control that one can cold-bloodedly deliberate whether or not one ought to be angry (Ant, 7: 253). We cannot deliberate about feeling angry, although anger does not lack cognitive content. The affects have fewer cognitive elements than moral feelings; however, they have more cognitive elements than pain or other mere physical feelings. Anger involves the perception that something unfair was done, which hurts the agent or is against her conception of justice. We do not feel anger the way we feel pain; we feel anger when we realize that something in a situation is offensive or unfair.

Sympathy is a sensible feeling that admits of choice. It can be cultivated, in order to give a correct response in situations where we need practical benevolence. It is a phenomenon of the reactive part of the soul, which can be changed by the active part. Sympathy, as referred to by Kant in the *Doctrine*

of *Virtue*, fits the conception of sensitivity mentioned in the *Anthropology*. It is a natural feeling, which should be cultivated and used when the respect for moral law is not sufficient to trigger moral actions.

Feelings from the animal (or passive) part of the self are involuntary, and cannot have their sensation controlled. This is the case with pain, thirst, hunger, and so on. In the other extreme, we have the pleasure and displeasure of the active self, such as moral feelings and the feeling of respect, which are controllable through our actions, since they are outcomes of good or evil actions. In between lies affect, a phenomenon of the reactive part of the self, which is connected with the imagination.

When we mention reactive feelings, such as affects, we should consider also that some strong affects have involuntary outcomes, which involve strong physiological arousal. Kant cites two highly illustrative cases in this connection, related to anger and fright. About anger, he mentions the situation of a man who enters one's room in anger in order to say harsh words:

If a person comes to your room in anger in order to say harsh words in great wrath, politely ask him to be seated, and, if you succeed in this, his scolding will already be milder because the comfort of sitting is a relaxation which does not really conform to the menacing gesticulations and screaming while one is standing. (Ant, 7: 252)

In this case, one should make the angry man sit down, because the comfort of sitting is a relaxation, which does not conform to a great wrath. As for fright, he mentions the disagreeable digestive effects that can affect soldiers before a battle (Ant, 7: 257). Kant's account of the uncontrollable and even highly undesirable outcomes of these emotions agrees with contemporary findings in physiology, according to which emotions may cause effects related to the autonomic neural system.¹⁹ These physiological components of emotions are responsible for the difficulty to controlling them,²⁰ since they have an inertial component, which is not easy to handle.

Between the propositional attitude school and the feeling theory

For Kant, emotions do have evaluative components, but, with the exception of passion, they are also feelings, which have physiological features. This is why Kant recommends that we should soothe the movements of a mad man, making him sit down and relax. The soothing of movements will help to calm the affect of anger itself.

We can say that Kant is between the propositional attitude school and the feeling theory.²¹ According to Griffiths,²² the former explains emotional phenomena mainly by beliefs and desires,²³ while the latter claims that emotions are characterized by a quality and intensity of sensation. Kant proposes a view of the emotions according to which they are intentional states as well as feelings. They are intentional states²⁴ in so far as they are about something, or directed to something in the world beyond themselves. We are not only mad, as we feel pain, but we are mad with someone or at something, we are not in love without an intentional object, we are in love with someone. As intentional states, they have a propositional content, and also bring evaluation and cognitive elements, as feelings they present physiological arousal. In this way, he can overcome the dichotomy of thought and feeling. Kant will not deny that an emotion has mental content. However, it is not only a desire for, or a judgment *about* something. Physiological processes also accompany it.

He would agree with the propositional attitude school, in that there is no sense in attributing sadness without the idea that something valuable was lost, or anger without the idea of something offensive done by someone. We are angry *with* a specific person or *at* a determinate situation; anger consequently has an intentional object. However, he seems to acknowledge that for some strong emotions, such as anger, a physiological arousal seems to be a necessary condition for emotion. In the case of anger, the man has to sit in order to calm himself, because anger is accompanied by a strong

physiological arousal, which cannot be instantly overcome by the sole reasoning about the emotion.

Will this physiological arousal also accompany emotions related to the active part of the self, such as moral feelings? The answer is yes. Although moral feelings are ultimately caused by an idea, the idea of moral correction of an action, they are still feelings of pleasure and displeasure. Although here the physiological arousal is not as strong as in anger, the idea of feelings brings with it pleasure and displeasure, which is impossible without any physiological component.

All emotions that are feelings of pleasure and displeasure have both components: evaluative contents and physiological arousal. Emotions express beliefs. In the case of the man who suffers from gout, his sadness is related to the belief that a gloomy future is waiting for him. His feeling guilty is related to the belief that he has contributed to his actual misery. The pain model does not apply to the Kantian account of emotions, because beliefs and desires are constitutive of these mental states. However, Baron's picture is not accurate either, since emotions are also composed by physiological components, which are scarcely under our control.

What kind of cognition is involved in emotions? Kant will certainly deny that emotions are mere reflexes, like pain, without any moral evaluation of a state of affairs. Some affects involve moral assessment, and they can be valuable in giving us information about the moral salience of a situation.²⁵ Sympathy can give us information about someone in distress. However, to ascribe cognitive value to emotions is not to say they have normative value. Emotions cannot tell us what to do; this is the task only of reason. Sympathy could inform us about the existence of someone in need, but only reason can tell if it is morally correct to help this person in that situation. Sympathy is connected with the belief that someone needs our help. Yet this emotion cannot validate for itself that it is right to help that person. A student can feel sympathy for a colleague who cannot do his own assignment, and want to

do it for him. Reason will tell him this is not the right thing to do. Anger could inform us that someone did us some harm and trigger the desire of vengeance. Yet reason will tell that vengeance is not the right thing to do. As Michael Moore correctly remarks, for Kantian morality “the emotions that generate a moral belief are irrelevant to the truth of that belief.”²⁶ In that sense, good emotions could give rise to false as well as to true moral beliefs. This does not imply that emotions are not connected with beliefs. In the end, what Kant offers us is the more subtle idea that emotions are connected with moral assessment, yet a moral command based solely on emotion cannot be validated without further rational considerations. Our compassion for a murderer who has had an awful childhood could let us forgive his crimes; our sympathy for a friend who suffers could lead us to not telling her a sad truth. Yet these are not morally right courses of action.

If we take into account that passions can also be put under the *label* of emotions, then here we have a different relation between emotions and morality. While affects hinder momentarily the sound use of reason, passions are always evil. They also have a different relation with physiological arousal, and seem not to exhibit them just like feelings do. Thirst of vengeance, greed, lust of power, ambition can be accompanied by no physiological arousal, since they have characteristics of a cold-blooded reason. They are more desires than feelings, having a salient intentional object and lacking physiological disturbances.

We can still say that the majority of emotions usually have both intentional object and physiological arousal, since for the most part they are feelings. However, passions lack physiological arousal and can be conceived rather as a strong desire of something, being then defined more specifically as propositional attitudes than as internal feelings. Kant shows sophistication in dividing what we usually call emotions into two kinds of events: feelings of pleasure and displeasure and passions, both of which are composed by different components.

Are emotions useless for Kantian morality?

Emotions have cognitive and evaluative content; however, they are not trustworthy in showing us what to do. Is the cognitive content of emotions therefore useless for morality? I don't think this is Kant's answer, since he recommends, for instance, that one should visit places where people suffer in order to awake our natural sympathy. He presents a more sophisticated approach, where the content of our emotions should be scrutinized by reason.

What does the Kantian account of emotions teach us about the relations between feelings and morality? First, emotions do not constitute a radically different realm from cognition and morality. For Sabini and Silver, on the other hand, morality and emotions constitute two different realms, and for Baron they are concurrent domains. Radical difference, supported by Sabini and Silver, would make emotions irrational feelings; the total coincidence (Baron) would imply both that we can be considered responsible for what we feel, and that emotions can be easily controlled by reason. The former conception is wrong because texts such as the *Doctrine of Virtue* explicitly show how we could and should cultivate some emotions in order to accomplish benevolent actions, when respect for the moral law is not a sufficient incentive. But Baron's statement that we are responsible for the way we feel is also not true, because there are some emotions like fright and anger, that arise in our self without permission and do not permit easy control. Hence, the relations Kant establishes between morality and emotion are more complex than total distinction or total similarity.

There is no unique answer regarding the role of emotions in morality, since they have a multiple reference to a *continuum* ranging from reactive phenomena to active phenomena of the self. An example of the latter is moral feeling, which is generated by the consciousness of the moral value of an action. Most of what we call emotions, however, lies in the reactive part of the soul. But here also we have a *continuum*: from affects, which are the most

uncontrollable, such as anger or fright, to sympathy, which can be modulated by the will in order to help the accomplishment of moral actions. At one extreme, we have anger and fright, at the other, sympathy and moral feelings.

The mistake of commentators is to consider that emotions in Kant have only one model and refer to only one kind of event, when, in fact, they refer to a multiplicity of different phenomena, which demand different explanations. These mistakes in defining a correct concept of emotion result in a misunderstanding of its role in morality. Anger can bring with it moral assessment about the unfairness of a situation; however, since it is an affect, it will make deliberation more difficult and will be a hindrance to moral action. Sympathy, although sharing with affects some features, because it is still a feeling of the reactive self, can be shaped by the will in order to help morality. Moral feeling, as a feeling of the active self, is directly connected with morality and with the moral evaluation of a situation.

Passions have a special relation with morality: they are, with no exception, evil. They are not, like affects, only agitations of the soul, which hinder reflection and moral deliberation. Moreover, some affects can give us moral information about the situation, although they are immoderate and difficult to control. Passions, however, are quite the opposite: they are immoral desires for something. Thirst for vengeance and power, greed and ambition present a perversion of moral goodness, since they are related to an evil deliberation of a mind that is not disturbed by affections.

The role of imagination

One of the problems regarding the propositional attitude theory is that it cannot fully acknowledge the role imagination plays in the production of emotions. Kant makes room for imagination in his account. Emotions are not feelings without any cognitive content; therefore, they do not belong to the

realm of total involuntariness. They are feelings that can be awakened in us through imagination or reason, produced by the reactive or active self.

Imagination plays an important role in the arousal of reactive affects. Sadness, as we saw, results from the imagination of a future unwanted occurrence. It is related, like joy, to the reproduction or anticipation of events. Kant cites the homesickness of the Swiss as an illustration of the role of imagination: the Swiss, when transferred to other lands, have the feeling of homesickness, which is aroused by the recollection of places where they enjoyed the very simple pleasures of life (Ant, 7: 178). Here, the recollection of good moments in the past can produce this feeling. In the case of the sick man, he becomes sad when he imagines a bad future and worries how he will make a living. Imagination can intensify the feeling of sadness, as the example of animals that are sad, but never miserable, shows, because they don't have the intensity of imagination human beings have.

In the text "On the Philosophers' Medicine of the Body," Kant ascribes to imagination an even stronger force: the power of imagination can heal or produce a disease. On the one hand, the confidence sick people put in their doctors helps them through the imagination that they will be healed. On the other hand, imagination could spread diseases like epilepsy, since it is able to alter bodily movements.²⁷ Since affects are movements of the mind that agitate the body (Rek, 15: 940) and imagination can alter bodily movements, it can also interfere with affects. However, this alteration should not be considered as an effect of the direct power of the will.

Imagination can modify affects by bringing images to mind that cause agreeable or disagreeable sensations. The role of imagination is clear in the case of fear: just like sadness, which is caused by the anticipation of a bad future, fear is caused by the anticipation of danger. These feelings, even though they belong to the reactive part of the soul, have some cognitive elements that go into the evaluation of images that come before the mind. The idea that affects are blind and completely precognitive is wrong. Feelings of sadness,

joy, anger, and fear depend upon an appraisal of a situation reproduced or anticipated by imagination.

However, from the fact that there is a cognitive judgment of images, we cannot infer that they are easily controllable, which is a mistake of other commentators who take sympathy as a model for all affects. Taking again the case of the *Lectures on Anthropology*: I could decide that a state of sadness is bad for my disease, even though, each time I think about my future, I become sad, against my will. However, if the sick man suddenly remembers that he has a million dollars in health insurance for gout, his future would suddenly appear to him as a nicer one, and these images of a good and nice future will arouse in him the feeling of relief. Moral feelings, like the pleasure or displeasure in the rightness or wrongness of our conduct, can be more related to judgment than to imagination. If the sick man were to reproach himself for his situation in the former case, now that he remembers he has health insurance, he could feel pleasure and self-satisfaction in being prudent and wise.

Can we be held responsible for our emotions and actions?

Can we be held responsible for our emotions? It is true that some emotions of the reactive self, such as joy, sadness, and longing, are intimately connected with imagination and this faculty does have the power to modulate affects. However, the power of imagination cannot deny the evidence for my belief in a bad or good future. Although we can modulate some affects through imagination, we cannot decide not to have them or to have them at ease. Imagination of a future state of pleasure or displeasure should be connected with a possible state of affairs. If the sick man could not work in the future because of his gout, he cannot prevent the feeling of sadness for the bad future he imagines. Or, he can even trigger for some moments the affect of joy when

he remembers his past moments, but as soon as he focuses on his future situation, this joy will be quickly turned into sadness.

If we are not responsible for our emotions, can we be responsible for our actions? Emotions are said to be an obstacle to moral deliberation, and Kant uses phrases such as *water that breaks a dam* in order to show the irrational force of these feelings. However, he also draws on a strong picture of freedom, which does not allow for pathological compulsion.²⁸ We have strong emotions, difficult to control, but we have means to tame them in order to act the way we want. Virtue is one of these means. We are not responsible for emotions, although we can be held responsible for actions, since the strength of emotions cannot be equated to compulsion, such as the compulsion for drugs. Recently, some philosophers have tried to establish this kind of parallel between strong emotions and addiction.²⁹ Kant would not accept this picture, because as strong as emotions can be, and as much of a problem for morality they can portray, the very idea of practical reason presupposes that agents can decide how to act. In fact, the Kantian picture here is more likely to be accepted by moral common sense, since a strong emotion can never be taken as a total excuse for a bad action. Agents can mention strong anger to explain their violent acts, yet not to forgive them. People are held responsible for wrong actions due to strong emotions, because it is presupposed that they could have acted otherwise.

What can Kant really teach us about emotions?

In order to explain emotions, philosophers have tried, with few exceptions,³⁰ to build a single model for something that they supposed was a single kind of mental event. But perhaps the key to the understanding of emotions is to grasp their complexity and the different weight of rational and irrational components each one has. Although Kant did not write one specific book on emotion, I

think he was very attentive to this variety of emotional events, particularly in his anthropological works.

In this brief reconstruction of what could be a Kantian theory of emotion and its relation to the passive, reactive, and active self, I have showed that this kind of feeling presents different relations with our passive and active self. Emotions cannot be explained by the pain model, because they are not outside the rational domain, since they are also composed of evaluative beliefs and judgments. They are not involuntary, nor are we responsible for feeling them. They are phenomena of the reactive and active self, which can be modulated by imagination or by reason, but we cannot provoke or extirpate them by the sole power of the will. We can be held responsible for our acts, but not for our emotions, which is what makes Baron's model mistaken.

Kant's model accepts features of both the propositional attitude model and the feeling model. From the first, it takes the idea that emotions have an intentional object, and from the feeling model, it takes the idea that emotions are accompanied by physiological arousal. Emotions involve evaluative beliefs and also physiological disturbances. The degree of physiological arousal depends on whether emotions belong to the active or reactive self. And among the later ones, there are emotions whose physiological arousals are stronger than others. This is the case with anger, if compared to the mild affect of longing or sadness.

Kant's theory is more likely to be accepted by our common moral sense, because it explains emotions as people actually feel them. It is a very sophisticated theory that confirms the complexity of its object and does not allow for unrefined explanations. And perhaps he shows his cunning in not using the word emotion, but instead, other terms such as "affects," "sympathy," "moral feelings," and "passions," in order to show that what we pre-analytically call emotions refer to a wide variety of states, which call for different philosophical categories. This insight agrees with some contemporary philosophers who have recently challenged the idea that emotions form a unique class of events.

5

Physiology and the controlling of affects in Kant's philosophy

In this chapter,¹ I discuss Kant's theory of emotions, particularly the possibility of controlling affects. I also address the following questions: Is the Aristotelian cultivation of emotions an unreachable end? Does Kant acknowledge the possibility of cultivation of a character in an Aristotelian way? My aim is to criticize some Aristotelian readings of Kant. I argue that Kant's theory of affects is connected with the eighteenth-century physiology and the concept of excited states, which make affects difficult to control merely by the force of mind. The possibility of controlling affects depends upon a mild temperament. Although in some cases Kant allows for cultivation of character, the limits of this cultivation will depend on the natural temperament of the agent. Kant presents some indirect—or even medical—ways to deal with the strong affects that are not under our control, since apathy is essential for Kantian virtue.

I conclude that Kantian philosophy not only is a matter of *a priori* principles, but is also dependent on empirical anthropology. The task of Kantian ethics is to attain freedom of strong affects, in order to better attain virtue.

Virtue and the controlling of inclinations

Kant is categorical about the relation between virtue and the controlling of inclinations:

Since virtue is based on inner freedom it contains a positive command to a human being, namely to bring all his capacities and inclinations under his reason's control and so to rule over himself.²

Virtue presupposes apathy, in the sense of absence of affects.³ Kant brings around the stoic ideal of *tranquilitas* as a necessary condition for virtue: "The true strength of virtue is a *tranquil mind*."⁴ In the *Anthropology* and the *Doctrine of Virtue*, apathy is taken in the sense of freedom from affects.⁵ In these texts, Kant maintains that we must strive toward a state in which affects are absent. Kant praises the stoic aim of apathy, as a desired state of self-control and self-possession when emotions are suppressed:

The principle of apathy, that is, that the prudent man must at no time be in a state of affect, not even in that of sympathy with the woes of his best friend, is an entirely correct and sublime moral precept of the stoic school, because affect makes one (more or less) blind.⁶

Although Kant undoubtedly sides with the stoic moral aim, he points out that to control affects is a difficult task. I will show that his strategies for controlling affects rely on a special physiology of emotions, in which they are related to certain bodily movements that cannot be directly controlled by reason. This is so because these movements, once they begin, depend upon physical causation that acts on organs and fluids. Such a standpoint can be found, for instance, in Descartes's *Passions of the Soul*.⁷ According to Descartes, an essential ingredient of passions is the movement of fluids called spirits, contained in the cavities of the brain. In the passion of fear, for instance, the spirits go from the brain to the nerves that move the legs and allow us to run. The soul

cannot have full control over its passions because they are accompanied by disturbances, which take place in the heart and through the blood and spirits: “Until the disturbance ceases, they remain present to our mind in the same way as the objects of the senses are present to it while they are acting upon our sense organs.”⁸

The soul can overcome the lesser passions, but not the violent ones, and it can also prevent itself from feeling a slight pain; however, it cannot stop the pain caused by a fire that burns the hand. We can only overcome strong passions after the disturbance of blood and spirits has gone away. While the disturbance is still agitating the blood and spirits, the only thing the will can do is to inhibit the movements of which the disturbance disposes the body: in anger, it can stop the hand to strike a blow, in fear, it can stop the legs.

I suggest that Kant’s aim is similar to that of the stoic: he believes that the extirpation of the emotions is an ideal that human beings can only rarely achieve. Having or not having emotions is not under our control, although Kant sometimes acknowledges that reason can cultivate some moral feelings, such as sympathy, or even attenuate some emotions, such as the fear related to shyness. However, he endorses the physiological model connected to most of our affects. If Kant, like the stoics, thinks that emotions are bad for the health of the soul, he nevertheless remains pessimistic about the possibility of extirpating them.

Kant endorses apathy and the stoic extirpation of emotions as the appropriate direction for one who wants to obtain both moral and nonmoral ends. Nevertheless, the controlling of emotions is a hard task and depends on natural character or temperament: some people are blessed by nature with pale emotions that can be tamed by reason; some are not. Kant distinguishes two kinds of character: “Sometimes people say that a certain person has this or that (physical) character; and sometimes people say that a person has simply character (a moral character) which defines him as an individual and no one else.”⁹ To the first sense of character belongs his/her nature and

temperament; to the moral character belongs his mode of thinking. The nature and temperament of a person indicate “what can be made of a person,” the moral character indicates “what man is prepared to make of himself.”¹⁰

Kant distinguishes four different temperaments: the sanguine, the melancholy, the choleric, and the phlegmatic, and he also admits that “temperaments, which we attribute only to the soul, may perhaps be influenced mysteriously by the physical condition of a person” (Ant, 7: 286).

The account of four temperaments is not only an early distinction in Kant, since it appears also in the *Anthropology* published in 1797. In the *Anthropology*, Kant continues to accept the existence of temperament, although he distinguishes it from character: “What Nature makes of man belongs to temperament, and only what man makes of himself reveals whether he has character” (Ant, 7: 292).

The idea that temperaments are influenced by the physical condition of a person makes the stoic aim, if not impossible, at least very difficult. Emotions cannot be reduced to beliefs, because they carry a physiological inertial component. There are temperaments, which can count on a natural gift of apathy, such as the phlegmatic: the phlegmatic person “has been equipped by nature with a rather average share of reason” and “his fortunate temperament takes the place of reason.” Kant agrees that apathy, as the freedom of affects, is a natural gift:

Nature’s gift of apathy, in the case of sufficient spiritual strength, is, as has been said already, happy self-possession (in the moral sense). He who is gifted with it, is not yet a wise man, but he enjoys the favour of Nature to become wise more easily than others.¹¹

When Kant refers to this natural gift of a mild character, he is referring to someone’s temperament or natural character—that is, an incentive to the use of sound reason. Kant does not deny moral character as the possibility of choice-making. However, natural temperament may sometimes be an impediment

or incentive to deliberation. Whoever has a phlegmatic temperament is gifted with apathy. While the person who has a choleric temperament is quickly ablaze like a straw fire (Ant, 7: 289), the phlegmatic person “warms up slowly” (Ant, 7: 290).

Not only natural temperament has a physiological component; affects have them as well—mainly the strong ones, such as anger or fright. Kant follows here a physiological account, according to which these feelings get out of our control in connection with certain bodily movements. The example of anger is a good one: a man’s anger will decrease if we prevent him from screaming and gesticulating.¹²

The way to control affects proposed here is the relaxation of the body. If the movements are lessened, so are the feelings. For stronger emotions, when even the control of bodily movements is useless, we should wait until they go away, since our rational mastery is impotent.

Physiology in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Although there is no evidence that Kant read *The Passions of the Soul*, my hypothesis is that Descartes and Kant share a common background whose roots lie in the physiology of emotions. I will also argue that Kant’s discrepancy between the aim of apathy and his doubts about our ability to attain it finds an interesting analogy in the polemic between two main schools of physiology in the eighteenth century: the animists and mechanists. I argue that, even if Kant explicitly supported the first against the second, mechanist elements are present in his account of emotions.

Kant’s discussion concerning the power of the mind over affects is encompassed in a more general discussion on the power of the mind over the body. It is not without reason that the *Anthropology* and the *Doctrine of Virtue*

include a number of medical references. The main physiological debate in the eighteenth century involves animists and mechanists. Kant was aware of this discussion, and explains quite well the difference between the two schools as to whether the art of medicine should be practiced on man in the same way as on cattle:

Those who pursue purely mechanical medicine, such as doctors trained in the school of Hoffman, maintain that it should be practiced in the same way, in so far, to be sure, as the similar constitution of the body in either kind of living being allows. The followers of Stahl, who decide in favor of treating man differently, proclaim the remarkable force of the mind in curing diseases or bringing them to head. It is for the philosopher to turn his mind to the latter.¹³

Here Kant refers to two doctors who held the Chair of Medicine at Halle at different times: Georg Ernst Stahl (1660–1754) and Friedrich Hoffmann (1660–1742).¹⁴ Hoffman was a proponent of the mechanist view. His most important work is *Medicina Rationalis Systematica*, where he claims that the human body is like a hydraulic machine.¹⁵ A nervous fluid whose features are similar to Descartes's spirit produces the activity of the body: it is an ether-like fluid, secreted by the brain and distributed through the body by the nerves and the blood. If the fluid is excessive there will be a spasm; if the fluid is not enough there will be atony. Hoffman divides diseases into spasmic and atonic and prescribes antispasmodics and sedatives for the first and stimulating remedies for the second.¹⁶

Stahl holds a different viewpoint. In *Theoria medica Vera*, he argues for the theory of animism. According to Ralph Major's *History of medicine*, "Disagreeing with Descartes, who distinguished sharply between the life of the soul and that of the body, Stahl taught the important role of the *anima*, the supreme life principle, which in health regulates all the functions of the body but which disappears at death."¹⁷ Kant shows that he is aware of the medical

debates of his time. Apart from the references to the Hoffmann and Stahl, he also cites John Brown in the *Anthropology*:

Affects are generally morbid occurrences (symptoms) and may be divided (according to analogy with Brown's system) into *sthenic* affects as to strength and *asthenic* affects as to weakness. Sthenic affects are of the exciting and frequently exhausting nature; asthenic affects are of a sedative nature which often prepare for relaxation.¹⁸

Many eighteenth-century medical writers had recognized that the causes of diseases are excesses or irregularities in human activity. Boerhaave (1668–1701)—who, with Stahl and Hoffmann, dominated the medical scene of the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century¹⁹—cited the case of a man who was ordered to carry letters to Utrecht. By excessive running, he forced the grosser parts of his fluids into the vessels, and rendered the obstruction of the vessels incorrigible.²⁰

John Brown (1735–88), toward the end of the century, also thought that the same external powers of nature that produce life and health also produce sickness and death. He saw the decline of the organism in quantitative terms, as a loss of excitability, which decreases slowly in quantity everywhere in the body from childhood to old age.

John Brown was a Scottish doctor who worked with William Cullen. Cullen (1710–90) agrees with the mechanist Hoffman, in that life is a function of nervous energy. In *Elementa Medicinae*, Brown presents a system that is supposed to compete with Cullen's, although it shares some features with Hoffmann's. Brown explains his theory of life as derived from external and internal exciting powers. Life is nothing but a forced state; if the exciting powers are withdrawn, death necessarily follows. The cause of diseases is an increase or decrease of excitability. Sthenic diseases are caused by an excess of exciting powers; asthenic diseases by a loss of exciting powers. The sthenic diseases can be illustrated by the explanation of its symptoms:

The increase of the force of the senses, of motions, of the intellectual faculty, and the passions, depends upon the increase of excitement in every one of their organs, by which, beside other effects, the motion of the blood through them is quickened.²¹

The symptoms of asthenic diseases, in contrast, show a lack of exciting powers:

All the senses are dull, the motions, both voluntary and involuntary, are slow; the acuteness of genius is impaired; the sensibility and passions become languid. The following functions are all in a state of languor, as is discoverable from the annexed marks: The languor of the heart and arteries is discernible in the pulse; as is also that of the extreme vessels on the surface, from the paleness, the dryness of the skin, the shrinking of tumours, the drying up of the ulcers, and the manifest absence of sthenic diathesis, to produce any symptoms like these.²²

Therapy consists in giving sedatives for sthenic diseases and stimulants for asthenic ones.²³ Brown's division of diseases parallels Hoffmann's account of the spasmic/atonic states, although they disagree with each other on the ultimate cause of excitability. For Hoffman, the exciting agent is the nervous fluid, for Brown, it could be physical or mental.

Like Brown, Kant talks about affects as physiological states of excitement or release. Laughing with emotion (a sthenic affect) is an example of the first; weeping with emotion (an asthenic affect) is an example of the second. Furthermore, many other affects are related to bodily functions: anger, if one can scold freely, is a way to aid digestion (Ant, 7: 261) and fear in battle could be related to acid indigestion.²⁴

Both Hoffman and Brown share the idea that we have excited states. Even if, for Brown, mental forces can produce these states, one needs to interfere with sedatives or stimulants to correct states of excessive or deficient excitement. Excited states can be produced by the mind, but they have a physiological component, which calls for chemical intervention. Kant, following Brown's

division in his classification of affects, also borrows this inertial physiological feature. Once affects are activated, we may not have control over the process.

Kant, as a philosopher-doctor, would like to control the physiological aspects of the body. He claims, inverting the famous saying of Epicurus, that the doctor's business is "to help the ailing mind by caring for the body," while the philosopher's business is "to assist the afflicted body by a mental regimen."²⁵ However, he should also acknowledge that some mental phenomena are beyond his control:

In many diseases of the mind, when imagination turns savage and the patient's head resounds with great, unheard of things, or he is cast into the depths of depression and tormented by empty terrors, the mind has been dethroned and bleeding the patient is likely to produce better results than reasoning with him.²⁶

When the mind is assaulted by strong affects like a profound sorrow or a strong fright, the possibility of controlling these emotions by the discipline of the mind should give room to physiological intervention. The same applies to strong affects like anger. That is the reason why Kant proposes to calm the angry man by making him sit and relax and does not propose a direct control of this affect by the will.²⁷ This example from *Anthropology* has an interesting parallel with *Passions of the Soul*, where Descartes argues that we can easily overcome the lesser passions, but not the violent ones, except after the disturbance of the blood and spirits has died down. The most the will can do while this disturbance is at its full strength is to inhibit many of the movements to which it disposes the body.²⁸

In the example of the angry man, Kant seems to accept the inertial component of affects. This example shows us something about the functioning of a strong affect in general: while we are taken by these strong feelings, we cannot do anything but wait for them to go away. Evidently, what Kant says about anger cannot be generalized to all affects. As we have seen in the previous

chapter, he presents a *continuum* of emotions, one that goes from the most strong and irrational affects, like anger, to those that are less passive and likely to be modulated by reason. This is also the case with moral feelings in general, including sympathy, moral courage, and enthusiasm for the moral law (Ant, 7: 254). Another example of an emotion created by reason is the astonishment felt by men while contemplating the wisdom in Nature. This is an emotion that can only be aroused by nature: “It is a kind of sacred awe at seeing the abyss of the supersensible opening before one’s feet” (Ant, 7: 261).

As a general term, “emotions” refers to a wide variety of states, which Kant calls affects, sympathy, moral feelings, and passions. In general, they all have intentional objects, which is to say, they are about something. Besides, they are also connected with physiological arousals. Even among affects there are some whose physiological arousals are stronger than others. This is the case of anger if compared with shyness. If it is possible to control shyness by habituation, Kant is not that optimist regarding affects whose physiological arousals are very strong. This is the case with anger, fear in battle, and so on.

Cultivation of emotions

In the last decades, many commentators have pointed out that Kant makes room for cultivation of emotions, in the Aristotelian tradition. If we cannot rid ourselves of passions and affects, perhaps we can cultivate and modulate them, in accordance with the Aristotelian viewpoint, by trying to have the *right* feeling about the *right* things in the most appropriate way. I shall argue that the idea of cultivation appears only in relation to a few feelings, which can be cultivated to respond adequately in the right context. Strictly speaking, the only feelings that could be modified in an Aristotelian way are sympathy and moral feelings, which can be trained and cultivated in an Aristotelian way, and shyness, which can be diminished through habit. But even so we always have

the burden of temperament. The one who is gifted by nature with a phlegmatic temperament, for instance, can control his anger better than the one who has a choleric temperament.

Nancy Sherman, in her article “The Place of Emotions in Kantian Morality,”²⁹ curiously sees in the example of the angry man a proof of the possibility of cultivation of emotions. From the possibility of diminishing the anger of a person who enters a room shouting, by making him sit, Sherman draws the conclusion that “the natural emotions can be cultivated and it is suggested that there is a measure of responsibility in their cultivation.”³⁰ Although in a later passage, Kant claims that “hot temper can be controlled gradually by inner discipline of the mind,”³¹ the example where anger is moderated by decreasing the force of movements attests rather to the view that affects have their own physiological causation, which can be indirectly modified only by means of another physical movement. This is different from the classical idea of cultivation through habit, which presupposes the possibility of a trained, correct emotional response. Moreover, in this example we are only attenuating someone’s emotion. The man who enters the room is supposed to be taken by the emotion of anger and to be incapable of self-control, which is the reason why the other person makes him sit and relax.

One of the most common strategies for controlling the emotions is found in Aristotle’s theory of virtue. Aristotle claims that to be virtuous is to have the appropriate emotion befitting the situation, that is, to have these emotions “at the right time, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end and in the right way.”³² In order to become virtuous, we should cultivate emotions in such a way that they become appropriate for each situation. The implication here is that we have the ability to rationally control them through habituation. Concerning this first position, Kant thinks it is nonsensical to deliberate about something that is not entirely rational. He illustrates this point when he mentions Socrates’s doubt about intentionally having or not having the emotion of anger as a paradoxical task:

Socrates was in doubt whether it would not be good to be angry sometimes, but to have emotion so much under control that one could cold-bloodedly deliberate whether or not one ought to be angry appears to be something paradoxical.³³

We can surely deliberate about what to do, in spite of our anger, but the occurrence of this affect escapes the rational control of the will. With respect to such a feeling we are passive, and it is beyond our power to control it. Is it always the case? Is the Aristotelian cultivation of emotions an unreachable end in Kant's theory? Does Kant acknowledge the possibility of cultivation of a character in an Aristotelian way?

The possibility of the classical idea of cultivation is not completely absent in Kant's approach, but it can be found only in his discussions of sympathy, moral feelings, and shyness. The cultivation of sympathy is expressed in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, where Kant maintains that sympathy can be an incentive of moral action, even if it is related to feelings of joy and sorrow:

Sympathetic joy and sadness (*sympathia moralis*) are sensible feelings of pleasure or displeasure (which are therefore to be called "aesthetic") at another's state of joy or pain (shared feeling, sympathetic feeling). Nature has already implanted in human beings receptivity to those feelings. But to use this as a means to promoting active and rational benevolence is still a particular, though only a conditional, duty.³⁴

In relation to sympathy, Kant states that we can and should cultivate sympathetic feelings to help us carry out what the moral law dictates, when the mere respect for the law is not sufficient to trigger the obligatory action. He also mentions cultivation regarding moral feeling³⁵ and practical love.³⁶ Although they are feelings, they are not to be called affects. The only affect that can be trained by habituation is the fear connected to shyness of talking in public: we can practice with persons whose judgment we care less about, before we talk in the presence of people for whom we have a greater respect. But even if Kant

does indicate a way of getting rid of the fear of talking in public, this is not the case regarding strong fear in battle, which cannot be controlled. When Kant talks about it, he mentions disagreeable outcomes, which implies that fright is out of control: “Fright in battle even produces salutary evacuations which have proverbially given rise to jesting (not having one’s heart in the right place).”³⁷

The possible cultivation of sympathy or shyness has led some commentators to overstate the possibility of controlling emotions in general. Marcia Baron,³⁸ for instance, maintains that “it’s evident that Kant’s position in his later ethical works—the *Religion*, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, and the *Anthropology*—is not that inclinations are in themselves bad, but only that we must control them rather than let them control us and must not ever subordinate duty to inclination.”³⁹ It is true that in the *Religion*, Kant states that “considered in themselves,” inclination are not bad, consequently we should not mistake Kant’s praise of apathy for hostility to all inclinations. However, it does not follow from this that passions are bad and affects are not, as Baron claims:

There are passages in the *Anthropology* which, if read in isolation from the surrounding text, might seem to confirm the view that Kant thinks everything affective is bad. . . . But passions are, in Kant’s taxonomy, but one type of affect, so we cannot read off his view of affect in general from his remarks about passions.⁴⁰

I agree with Baron that passions are worse than affects in Kant’s philosophy, because we can form maxims upon passions and that is not the case with affects. I also do not deny that passions are worse than affects. However, I would like to emphasize that there is also a problem with affects. They are not as harmless—let alone as useful—as Baron and Sherman claim. Kant states clearly that “to be subject to affect (*Affekt*) and passion (*Leidenschaft*) is probably always an illness of mind, because both affect and passion exclude the sovereignty of reason.”⁴¹ Although Kant sometimes is ambiguous when he speaks of apathy,⁴² in the *Doctrine of Virtue* he argues for moral apathy, which

is not freedom from moral feelings, but absence of affects. Kant's account of apathy differs from the stoic one in the sense that, for the stoic, all feelings are harmful to morality, while Kant acknowledges that some feelings can be produced by reason and are subjective conditions of the receptiveness to the concept of duty (TL, 6: 399). These feelings are moral feeling, conscience, love of one's neighbor, and self-esteem. However, I would put them under the label of moral feelings, instead of affects.

In the *Religion*, Kant claims that there are three levels of evil. Undoubtedly passion is worse than affect because it is related to the third degree of evil, while affect is related to the first one, called weakness of the will or frailty (*fragilitas*). Although affects are not that harmful, they are still puzzling, since we can decide what to do and which maxim to follow and fail to follow it, because that "which is an irresistible incentive objectively or ideally (*in thesi*), is subjectively (*in hypothesi*) the weaker (in comparison with inclination) whenever the maxim is to be followed."⁴³ Were inclinations and affects under complete control, there would not be a first degree of evil—that is, the weakness of the will. In Kant's view, both passions and affects are diseases of the will. The only difference between them is that the former is a persistent perversion of reason while the latter is ephemeral.

Kant gives examples in the *Anthropology*, mainly about women, where the expression of emotions can be good for health: "A widow who, as the saying explains, will not allow herself to be comforted, that is, who does not want to know how to dry up the flow of tears, unknowingly or unintentionally takes care of her health."⁴⁴ This example does not lead to the conclusion that emotions are good in themselves or that we can control them; it only points out that, if it so happens that someone has strong emotions, it is better for her/his health to express them. Furthermore, affects are only good for health if they are moderate. Even unrestrained joy, which could be commonly considered a good feeling, is said in the *Anthropology* to kill more people than grief, showing the life threatening aspect of immoderate emotions.

I agree that passion is the main problem for Kant, but since he acknowledges the weakness of the will, the uncontrollable outcome of at least a strong affect *is also* a problem for a philosophy that states we are always able to follow the dictates of reason.

The Kantian viewpoint to the effect that emotions in general play an important role in the moral life is usually drawn from passages about sympathy in the *Doctrine of Virtue*. The statements and conclusions about this feeling should not be taken as a general remark about all emotions. Moreover, even in the passages about sympathy, the conclusion drawn by contemporary commentators is, sometimes, clearly beyond what is stated in the text. An example could be Sherman's⁴⁵ reference to Kant's statement according to which we should cultivate sympathetic and natural (aesthetic) feelings and, for this reason, we should not avoid places where we shall find poor and sick people because this is one of the "impulses nature has implanted in us to do what the thought of duty alone might not accomplish" (DV, 6: 457). She calls this function the "perceptual claim of emotions": "Certain states of emotions—she argues—such as sympathy, compassion and love, enable us to apply moral principles by alerting us to circumstances that have a moral dimension and may require moral actions."⁴⁶ Although Kant really encourages us to cultivate sympathetic feelings in order to use them as provisional incentives to accomplish the ends of moral law and virtue, Sherman goes too far by stating that "we still require the pathological emotions to know when and where these ends are appropriate."⁴⁷

It seems to me that Kant's point is not that pathological emotions do enable us to know when and where to apply moral principles, but that such an application is judged by the duty of humanity, which rationally decides in which cases we should activate our natural sympathy and in which cases we should prevent it from happening. Thus, as far as the "Place of Emotions in Kantian Morality" is concerned, it is a clear overstatement to claim, as Sherman does, that "for a practical interest in the moral law to be truly practical, the interest must work through emotional (pathological) sensitivities."⁴⁸

As I see it, though, Sherman's remark is a misconception of Kant's real intentions. Emotions, according to Kant, will always have a secondary role in morality. Kant does claim that we should cultivate sympathetic and natural feelings to accomplish what the thought of duty alone might not accomplish, but it is still a *faute de mieux* morality. We should use these sympathetic feelings when the thought and respect for duty are not yet mature enough to lead us to moral actions. To maintain that Kant endorses the view that emotions are an important part of our moral life is tempting, since it presupposes the possibility of our taking responsibility for having power of the will over emotions, which would certainly facilitate the task of practical reason. We cannot deny, however, that the physiological development of affects and the evil effects of passions really installs a gap between practical reason and the emotions, a gap that is difficult to overcome. Although it is true that the critique of formalism does not take into account important parts of Kant's theory, as both Baron and Sherman point out, it is misleading to try and bridge the gap between the Kantian project of practical reason and inclinations by an overall cultivation of emotions.

I am not claiming that affects cannot be controlled at all. Kant, it is true, gives examples of moderating one's shyness and to use one's sympathy in the right contexts to help people. In some texts, he even gives examples of feelings that can be aroused by reason. The best-known feeling that is aroused by reason is the respect for the moral law, but Kant also gives the examples of moral courage (*Ant*, 7: 257). These feelings can be called moral or virtuous—feelings—and belong only partially to sensuality. The courage that can be aroused by reason is called virtuous strength and is different from bravery in a battlefield or in a duel.

Kant's account of apathy should not be interpreted as an endorsement of the idea that all feelings are bad, since he accepts that some moral feelings can be produced by reason. In this sense, Kant distinguishes himself from the stoic hostility to all inclinations. However, to be subject to affects and passions

is “always an illness of mind” because both affect and passion exclude the sovereignty of reason (Ant, 7: 251).

Apathy and temperaments

I would like to address a possible criticism concerning my viewpoint about the difficulty of cultivation and the impossibility of apathy in the stoic sense, or rather, the impossibility of getting rid of affects and passion: namely, that the temperament/character distinction is an early distinction in Kant, and was gradually replaced by a notion of character like Aristotle's. It is true that Kant in the *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime* tends to analyze the concept of character in terms of four temperaments (phlegmatic, melancholic, choleric, and sanguine), while in later texts, such as the *Doctrine of Virtue*, he offers an idea of moral character that is related to virtue as *fortitudo*. However, the Kantian notion of virtue is different from the Aristotelian one. The first is the strength to fight against inclinations that oppose the accomplishment of moral law; the latter is the capacity of controlling emotions by habituation. Kant strongly denies that virtue can be attained through habituation.

Is Kant's account of temperament replaced by character in later texts, in the sense of the capacity of choice-making? Kant did not deny the existence of a natural character in his later anthropological works. In the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, the doctrine of the four temperaments is still present.⁴⁹ Although Kant, while examining certain effects, refers to the possibility of cultivation of temperament, it is still the case, for instance, that the anger of someone who has a choleric temperament is very difficult to control.

The idea of having a cultivation of affects, in the Aristotelian way of having the correct feeling in the correct situation, seems to be unattainable

for Kant, at least as regards strong affects like anger. We cannot cultivate the appropriate affects through habit; the best we can do is to have palliatives to reduce their inadequate outcomes whenever they come about. By contrast, the stoics held that we are able to cure emotions (affects in Kant's vocabulary) because emotions are mainly constituted by judgments. As Sorabji explains in *Emotions and Peace of Mind*,

It was the Stoic Chrysippus (c.280–c.206 BC) who developed the standard Stoic view on what emotion is. . . . It is important that emotion is not a felt inner contraction or expansion, as Zeno had supposed. Nor it is any kind of physical reaction. Such contractions and bodily changes may follow emotion. Later, Seneca pointed out they may also precede it, and they are then called “first movements.” But emotions itself consists of judgements.⁵⁰

Emotions are not due to nature, at least in Seneca's view, but to our own judgments, which involves voluntary assent. In this way, emotions for the Stoics will contrast with the sensation of pain, which cannot be avoided. We can be held responsible for emotions because we can avoid and heal them by changing our judgments. And the stoic therapy is mostly a therapy for changing beliefs. The idea of changing an emotion by changing beliefs is also the strategy of Aristotle, although he has a different aim, which is moderation, instead of the stoic extirpation. It does not seem that a change in beliefs will work out in Kant's example of anger, at least not after the agent is overtaken by this affect.

Contrasting with this voluntaristic approach found in Aristotle and in the Stoics, there is the physiological one, which goes back to Gallen, who was an opponent of the stoic voluntary approach of emotions. Galen has an interesting example (in fact it was borrowed from Chrysippus): emotions are like a downhill runner carried away by his own momentum and unable to stop at will. Once he begins moving he cannot control himself or stop voluntarily. A similar approach can be found in Descartes and in Kant, mainly in connection

with anger and fear. Once anger is activated, we cannot stop it by a change of judgment about the situation. This is precisely what the stoic claims to be his strategy. However, such a change in my beliefs about the situation cannot persuade me that I haven't suffered a real harm or that anger is not useful to my purposes. Kant's strategy for anger is not a changing of beliefs, since this would be ineffective, but a modification of the physiological state. In Kant's example about anger, something should be noticed: it is not the agent who calms himself, but another person who calms the agent, exactly because the agent is not in possession of his capacity of determining his behavior. It is not the agent who says, "If I am angered, then I have to sit and calm my nerves," but it is the other person who calms down the angered one. This distinction makes an important difference, because it is evident that the one who is possessed by a strong emotion is not in a sound mind.

After analyzing Kant's theory of emotions and the ways to control it, we may ask: "Where is Kant in the map of contemporary positions regarding emotions?" The contemporary debate is in a broad way a dispute between cognitivists and noncognitivists. According to cognitivists, emotions are or express beliefs. Examples of this position could be found in Solomon and Martha Nussbaum. For Solomon, emotions are judgments about us and our place in the world,⁵¹ while Nussbaum regards her own theory as a neo-stoicism.⁵²

On the other side, we have non-cognitivists, according to whom emotions are expressions of bodily movements or states. They are not judgments, consequently they cannot be controlled by the discipline of the mind. This position is well expressed in the William James famous claim "we don't cry because we are sad, but we are sad because we cry."⁵³

I think Kant would agree with some aspects of the propositional attitude theory, which is at the cognitivist side. One of first philosophers to express this position was Anthony Kenny,⁵⁴ for whom emotions are propositional attitudes that have intentional objects. This is also true for Kant, in the sense that

emotions are about something. There is no sense to say we are angry, without saying that we are angry with something or at someone. However, Kant would not to reduce emotions to judgments, because they are all related to the faculty of feeling, and as feelings they have physiological components, that are even difficult to control. Since emotions have cognitive as well as physiological elements, Kant is in the middle between cognitivists and non-cognitivists.

6

Kantian virtue as a cure for affects and passions

In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant presents virtue not as an easy task, but as an endeavor that costs a lot for the agent. In order to explain what moral content consists of, Kant tells a story of an honest man who is offered great gifts if he joins in with the calumniators of an innocent person. When he refuses to do so, he is threatened by his friends, who deny him friendship, by his relatives, who deny him his inheritance, and a prince who threatens him with loss of freedom and even life. If the man, whatever loss or pain he is threatened with, decides to be truthful, then he shows here the value of virtue. Moreover, “yet virtue here is worth so much only because it costs so much, not because it brings any profit” (KpV, 5: 156). Virtue shows its worth, because of its pureness, and deserves approval and admiration because moral actions are performed without any pretension to happiness or even magnanimity.¹

In this chapter, I analyze the idea of virtue in Kant and how it relates to the controlling of affects and passions. I begin by showing the relation between virtue and happiness and then I explore virtue as strength.

Virtue is not happiness

In the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, while discussing the faculty of desire and its relation to the feelings of joy and sorrow,

Kant recommends moderation of feelings. His Stoic advice, however, is accompanied by a particularly awkward vision: an intemperate joy is worse than an extreme sorrow:

Exuberant joy (untempered by any concern for grief) and absorbing sadness (unmitigated by any hope), or sorrow, are emotions which threaten life. Nevertheless, one can see from the death lists that more persons have lost their lives suddenly on account of exuberant joy than on account of sorrow. (Ant, 7: 255)

Kant is one of the first philosophers not to associate happiness with moral life. In the *Groundwork*, he draws a radical distinction between the realm of happiness and the realm of virtue. Although Kant may be following the Stoics in their recommendation for controlling emotions, Stoic philosophy is still a eudemonistic ethics, as are all the ancient moral theories.² The intricate relation between happiness and morality is solved by the definition of happiness as a virtuous life. According to the Stoic philosophers, only virtue has moral worth and *eudaimonia* can be reached independently of things that are beyond the control of the agent. By making external goods like wealth, health, friendship, and love unnecessary for a happy and worthy life, the Stoics prevent happiness from being ruined by the contingencies of life.³

Kant gave up answering the old sophist question—why be moral if morality does not bring happiness?—by redefining happiness in terms of virtue. The Kantian definition is the commonsensical one: “*Happiness* is the state of a rational being in the world in the whole of whose existence *everything goes according to his wish and will*, and rests, therefore, on the harmony of nature with his whole end as well as with the essential determining ground of his will” (KpV, 5: 124). The accomplishment of happiness will come from the satisfaction of our desires.

Schneewind points out that the problem of how to attain happiness is the problem of how to satisfy our desires, which is not within our power to do:

“Since happiness for Kant comes from the satisfaction of desires, the range of components out of which we can choose to flesh out our conception of happiness is not up to us.”⁴ He also shows in the same article that the conception of happiness as being beyond our control accords to the modern lack of confidence in the natural world. In that pessimistic “lack of confidence” he would disagree with a major metaphysical Stoic position:

The metaphysics of Stoicism is profoundly important for its ethics. Regardless of the extent to which any particular moral principle is derived from the metaphysics, Stoic metaphysics grounds at least the a priori assurance that when we act from reason as far as we can, everything of concern to us will be well. Kant simply takes for granted an anti-Leibnizian, anti-Stoic acceptance of the indifference of the natural world to human concerns.⁵

The accomplishment of the demands of moral law will not necessarily bring us any happiness, for the connection between morality and happiness is only contingent. According to Kant, for a finite being, there is no correspondence between happiness and morality, because such a being cannot be a cause of nature:

Consequently, there is not the least ground in the moral law for a necessary connection between the morality and the proportionate happiness of a being belonging to the world as part of it and hence dependent upon it, who for that reason cannot by his will be a cause of this nature and, as far as his happiness is concerned, cannot by his own powers make it harmonize thoroughly with his practical principles. (5: 125)

A finite being that belongs to the world and is dependent on it cannot be a cause of nature, nor can it harmonize its happiness with morality. If pure reason needs the latter connection for the pursuit of the highest good, a being which is the cause of nature and also connected to morality should be postulated. The second postulate of pure practical reason, the existence of God, is advanced as

a result of the need for a connection which finite beings would not be able to produce: the attachment of happiness to morality.

In the definition given in the KpV, external goods are certainly essential parts of happiness for Kant. Happiness is attained when events in the world conform to our wishes. As a result, happiness cannot be the aim of a moral life, because happiness is dependent on contingent goods, which makes it a fragile and unstable base on which to ground morality. That happiness is contingent, however, is not its sole difficulty. Kant claims the following:

- 1 Happiness cannot be universally defined
- 2 Even if happiness could be universally defined, it will lead to disagreement and not to harmony

Happiness cannot have a universal definition

In the *Groundwork*, Kant distinguishes imperatives of skill from imperatives of prudence: the former command an action as necessary to accomplish an end; for the latter, this end is happiness. Although happiness is undoubtedly the end of all rational beings, unfortunately for the eudaemonist philosopher, it is impossible to give a determinate concept of happiness: “But it is a misfortune that the concept of happiness is such an indeterminate concept that, although every human being wishes to attain this, he can still never say determinately and consistently with himself what he really wishes and wills” (G, 4: 419).

The claim that one is not able to produce one’s own happiness seems more acceptable than the claim that we do not know what can count as happiness. It is reasonable to think that even if we do not have the power to produce the ends we want, we do know what we want and what counts as a good and worthy life. Kant objects to many issues that have, traditionally in philosophy, been considered a part of happiness, like health, wealth, and knowledge. For example, Kant disagrees with the view that, all things being equal, it is better to be rich than poor. He writes, “If he wills riches, how much anxiety, envy and

intrigue might he not bring upon himself in this way!” (G, 4: 418). Against the unconditional claim that it is better to have more knowledge of the world than less, he avers that “if he wills a great deal of cognition and insight, that might become only an eye all the more acute to show him, as all the more dreadful.” Even the widely held opinion that the healthier one is, the better is brought into question: “If he at least wills health, how often has not bodily discomfort kept someone from excess into which unlimited health would have let him fall.”

Another reason why happiness cannot be universally defined is given in the *Critique of Practical Reason*: Kant explains that each person’s happiness depends upon his particular sources of pleasure. Therefore, what counts as an object of pleasure for someone may not be a source of pleasure for someone else. Besides, what brings pleasure or displeasure to the same person can change over time.⁶

Even if the feelings of pleasure and displeasure were universal, there would be no harmony

The absence of a consensus on what is desirable is not the only reason why happiness cannot be an object of morality. Suppose that people had the same feelings of pleasure and displeasure and that they desired the same objects, an absence of harmony could still exist. Kant illustrates this situation with the “unanimity between a married couple bent on going to ruin” and with the pledge of King Francis I to the Emperor Charles V: “What my brother Charles would have (Milan), that I would also have” (KpV, 5: 28).

A consensus on what is pleasurable could very well be worse than disagreement: “For whereas elsewhere a universal law of nature makes everything harmonious, here, if one wanted to give the maxim of the universality of a law, the most extreme opposite of harmony would follow, the worst conflict, and the complete annihilation of the maxim itself and its purpose” (KrV, 5: 28).

Happiness cannot give us a universal law, whether the object of pleasure for multiple parties is the same or different. Happiness proves to be an inadequate basis for the moral life. Its relation to the empirical and particular object of pleasure and joy, the incapacity of finite beings to promote their own desired ends, and the conflict that would still result if we overcame these difficulties seem to banish forever the term happiness from the moral domain.

Nevertheless, Kant redefines happiness as an object of duty in the second part of *The Metaphysics of Morals*, the *Doctrine of Virtue*. In this book, Kant introduces the concept of virtue as an end that is also a duty. There are two ends that are also duties: one's own perfection and the happiness of others.

That happiness of others should be prescribed as an end that is also a duty is not, at first glance, clear. Wouldn't it be more reasonable to assign some moral end as a duty? Shouldn't we expect something like "promote others' moral lives" as a final virtuous aim? Kant remains consistent with his earlier stated view in which he refuses to define happiness in terms of a virtuous life and to reduce natural happiness to moral happiness.

Were we talking about persons whose desires were identical to moral actions, we would have perfect moral beings. We have, however, sensible rational beings for whom happiness follows from the correspondence between events and their will, as expressed in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. Their will could be anything. When we talk about promoting someone's happiness, it is her task to decide what her happiness consists of. Of course, I could refuse to satisfy desires that are not permitted or contrary to the moral law.

When it comes to my promoting happiness as an end that is also a duty, this must therefore be the happiness of *other* human beings, *whose* (permitted) *end I thus make my own end as well*. It is for them to decide what they count as belonging to their happiness, but it's open to me to refuse them many things they *think* that will make them happy but I do not, as long as they have no right from demand me as what is theirs. (MS, 6: 388)

The choice of the happiness of others as an end for moral life, along with the refusal to identify happiness with virtue leads to a problem for a Kantian moral theory. If happiness is not defined in terms of virtue (but in terms of pleasure or displeasure), someone's happiness is what gives him pleasure. If my moral aim is to promote the happiness of others, I should promote what gives him pleasure, but this could be opposed to moral demands.

A consequence of the refusal to follow the Stoic path and identify happiness with virtue is the need for the following additional theses. In order to promote happiness and the pleasure of the other, her pleasure should not contain anything against the law, because the other does not have the right to demand that I do something wrong. Additionally, I do not have a theoretical tool to decide between two competing desires.

The effort to solve this problem appears in the latitude ascribed to duties of virtue. However, the attribution of latitude means that we do not have an exact answer to the question: What should I do to accomplish the other's happiness? Kant tries to solve this problem by establishing that ethics does not give laws for actions, only for maxims for action. A maxim, while subjective, should not be in conflict with a universal law. The ends given by virtue (one's own perfection and the happiness of others), only give maxims, but not actions. They leave room to be fulfilled with different actions:

For if the law can prescribe only the maxims of actions, not actions themselves, this is a sign that it leaves a playroom (*latitude*) for free choice in following (complying with) the law, that is, that the law cannot specify precisely in what way one is to act and how much one is to do by the action for an end that is also a duty. (MS, 6: 390)

Let's illustrate Kant's relation between the law and the maxims of action with his own examples. One such maxim is to love one's neighbor; another is to love one's parents. According to Kant, to be a wide duty is not to permit exceptions to these maxims. Rather the agent can limit one maxim by another. If an action

performed from the maxim “to love of one’s neighbor or friend,” for instance, to house a jobless, homeless, and noisy friend in your parents’ home, would damage the well-being of one’s parents, then we are permitted not to carry out this action, because one maxim (the love of one’s parents) would limit the other (the love of one’s friends).

If someone failed to fulfill the duties of love, this would not be considered a vice, but only a lack of virtue.

Failure to fulfill mere duties of love is lack of virtue (*peccatum*). But failure to fulfill the duty arising from the respect owed to every human being as such is a vice (*vitium*). For no one is wronged if duties of love are neglected; but failure in the duty of respect infringes upon one’s lawful claim. (MS, 6: 465)

This quote suggests that the priority of the right over the good should probably be the correct interpretation of Kant’s philosophy, even if some recent authors have claimed to leave deontology behind.⁷ In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant goes further than the mere formal negative view that is sometimes attributed to him. Kant did provide us with a theory of virtue, although his theory does not provide us with an exhaustive list of virtues, as the Aristotelian-type theory does. He certainly recognizes that there is moral merit in doing more than the negative commands of the categorical imperative, that being benevolent and beneficent is certainly better than not being so. Nevertheless, there is room to decide how our own values will accord with the demands of virtue and to follow these demands. If a person is beneficent in her acts, she is undoubtedly following the demands of virtue. However, if she decides not to be so, she is not doing something wrong because nobody is wronged by her actions.

The duty to promote others’ happiness, as a wide duty, is subordinate to the negative demands of the moral law and to the narrow obligations of the duties of right. This entails two things: First, the latter should be satisfied prior to the former; one should not lie to promote the happiness of a friend, for instance,

because the duty to promote others' happiness is subordinate to the narrow obligation not to lie. Second, once the narrow obligations are fulfilled, we have space to choose what to do to fulfill the demands of virtue. If we decided to do nothing, at least in a particular situation, to promote others' happiness, it would mean a lack of moral worth, but not culpability.

The duty of love, understood as practical love, shows that blaming a mere formal theory is wrong, since Kant shows the directions of the virtuous life. However, it does not lead to the abandonment of deontology, because the good (the wide duty) will always be subordinate to the right (the strict duties).

Virtue and pleasure

In Introduction of *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant explains that metaphysics is a system of *a priori* cognition and, if the doctrine of morals were the doctrine of happiness, it would be impossible to obtain those *a priori* principles. The reason is given in the *Introduction to The Metaphysics of Morals*; happiness is empirical joy that means nothing more than the fulfillment of each one's desires:

Only experience can teach what brings us joy. Only the natural drives for food, sex, rest, and movement, and (as our natural predisposition develop) for honor, for enlarging our cognition and so forth, can tell each of us, and each only in his particular way, in what he will find those joys. (MS, 6: 215)

In this Introduction, Kant remains faithful to his idea of happiness expressed twelve years before. Happiness is related to joy, and each one has his particular way of getting it. Moreover, he does not differentiate between superior and inferior pleasures; the drives for sex and food are put in the same category as the drives for honor and enhancing our cognition, against a tradition that separates the bodily pleasure from the virtuous one. In the *Critique of*

Practical Reason Kant stresses this point, showing that there are not superior and inferior pleasures:

It is surprising that men, otherwise acute, believe they can find a distinction between the lower and the higher faculty of desire according to whether the representations that are connected with the feeling of pleasure have their origin in the senses or in the understanding. (KpV, 5: 23)

One could, of course, call some pleasures more refined than others, but this does not imply that they come from a different source or are more virtuous because of that. A man who likes refined and cultivated pleasures could refuse to give money to a beggar in need, because he has only enough money to pay for his theater ticket. This act would not be morally different from someone who leaves an intellectual conversation to enjoy a meal. In matters of pleasure, what is most important is “how intense, how long, how easily acquired and how often repeated” (KpV, 5: 23) the gratification is. With these remarks, he aims at showing that all eudemonistic ethics would have to agree with Epicurus’s conclusion that gratification of virtue is the same as gratification of the senses:

If, with Epicurus, we have virtue determine the will only by means of the gratification it promises, we cannot afterward find fault with him for holding that this is of exactly the same kind as those of the coarsest senses. (KpV, 5: 24)

The idea of a shared ideal of happiness, implied in all eudemonistic ethics, is abandoned. Reason cannot teach us what happiness is, because there cannot be an *a priori* definition that is independent from experience. Moreover, even a general synthetic *a posteriori* judgment will be unsatisfactory, because happiness in the modern world is the radical realm of singularity. One could be happy with a healthy, wealthy life, or with a life without any external goods, it depends on how one feels joy and pleasure. Kant recognizes that each individual has his own rational plan of life, based on his own values. However, Kant does not think that we can define a collection of primary goods, goods

that anyone would want in order to advance his own rational plan of life, whatever that plan is.

If Kant sustains the same thesis in the *Groundwork* and in the Preface of *Metaphysical of Morals*, why is happiness one of the ends of virtue?

We should consider that benevolence (as the promotion of others' happiness) is obtained as a generalization of the maxim of being helped in case of need:

The reason that it is a duty to be beneficent is this: since our self-love cannot be separated from our need to be loved (helped in case of need) by others as well, we therefore make ourselves an end for others; and the only way this maxim can be binding is through its qualification as a universal law, hence through our will to make others our ends as well. The happiness of others is therefore an end that is also a duty. (MS, 6: 393)

The need to be helped, in order to be a universal obligation, should be transformed into a general rule of beneficence. Moreover, to choose the happiness of others as an end is a way to indicate that we should do more than we are morally bound to do, in order to be fully virtuous:

If someone does more in the way of duty than he can be constrained by law to do, what he does is meritorious (*meritum*); if what he does is just exactly what the law requires, he does what is owed; finally, if he does is less than the law requires, it is morally culpable (*demeritum*). (MS, 6: 227)

However, if the duties of virtue specify that we should do more⁸ than what the moral law commands, it fails to specify how much we should do and how far we should go in order to renounce our own well-being to promote the happiness of other people. It means that we have a basis not to do it, if we consider the sacrifice to be too great.

The center of Kantian theory will comprise the moral law and the narrow duties. This is nothing but morality in a narrow sense of right and wrong. In this central nucleus, the end of promoting others' happiness plays no role. The happiness of others operates in a wider realm of morality.⁹ But the wide duties

of virtue are subordinate to the duties of right, showing that we cannot forget the essential deontological character of the Kantian ethics. If the *Doctrine of Virtue* shows how to go beyond the formalism of the moral law, it does not go so far as to transgress the limits of deontology.

Kant has been criticized¹⁰ for being incapable of providing an ethics with moral content. The *Doctrine of Virtue* is an effort to provide this content; however, it is nothing more than general outlines that will guide us to promote others happiness or our moral perfection. Virtues like courage, prudence, justice, and wisdom give place to virtues related to these two ends. We have mostly a list of vices rather than a list of virtues. Lewdness, excessive eating or drinking, lying, avarice, and servility are vices opposed to our virtuous purpose to search for our natural and moral perfection. Arrogance, defamation, and ridicule are vices opposed to the respect of others. In any case, the Kantian theory of virtue comprises mostly interdictions rather than prescriptions.

The indetermination of what is a good life is related to the changing of the definition of happiness. Happiness is not defined by virtue, but in terms of pleasure and joy, which makes it variable according to personal preferences.

Virtue as fortitude against the inclinations

Kantian virtue does not aim at any *telos* as the achievement of happiness, even if it is only the happiness of the Stoic *tranquillitas*. If virtue does not lead necessarily to happiness or pleasure, what is then virtue? What is the aim of Kantian virtue? The Kantian answer will be: virtue is self-constraint in order to attain full rationality. For holy beings there will be no doctrine of virtue, because they are never tempted to violate duty. Virtue is autocracy of practical reason, and entails “consciousness of the capacity to master one’s inclinations when they rebel against the law” (TL, 6: 383).

Virtue is perfection in choice, where one can freely determine oneself. For inner freedom two things are required: “Being one’s own master in a given case (*animus sui compos*), and ruling oneself (*imperium in semetipsum*), that is, subduing one’s affect and governing one’s passions” (TL, 6: 407). The first task is easier than the second. Since affects are precipitate or rash, they can be taken as something childish or weak. Affects do not lead to real vice, but only to weakness of the will, when man cannot control himself in order to accomplish what his will has determined to do. As we saw in Chapter 2, weakness is to act contrarily to what has been determined by the will. If it is a sign of rational agency to act according to the motives which determined the will, weakness can lead to irrational action, actions which the agent had decided not to perform.

In the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant proposes a cure to heal weakness of the will—this momentary inability to act according to reason—and this therapy is attained through the duty of apathy:

Since virtue is based on inner freedom it contains a positive command to a human being namely to bring all his capacities and inclinations under his reason’s control and so to rule over himself, which goes beyond forbidding him to let himself be governed by his feelings and inclinations (the duty of *apathy*); for unless reason holds the reins of government in its own hands, his feelings and inclinations play the master over him. (TL, 6: 408)

Kantian apathy should not be taken as indifference to the objects of choice. That is the reason why Kant calls it moral apathy:

This misunderstanding can be prevented by giving the name “*moral apathy*” to that absence of affects which is to be distinguished from indifference because in the case of moral apathy feelings arise from sensible impressions lose their influence on moral feeling only because respect for the law is more powerful than all such feelings together. (TL, 6. 409)

Virtue as a process, but not an Aristotelian habit

Kant points out that virtue is a process, that occurs over time through which man reaches the highest stage in human morality; however, it is an ideal and unattainable:

Virtue is always *in progress* and yet always starts *from the beginning*. It is always in progress because, considered objectively, while yet in constant approximation to it is a duty. That it always starts from the beginning has a *subjective* basis in human nature, which is affected by inclinations because of which virtue can never settle down in peace and quiet with its maxims adopted once and for all but, if it is not rising, is unavoidably sinking. (TL, 6: 409)

Here it seems that the Kantian virtue is nothing more than an Aristotelian habit, a second nature attained by practice. However, Kant denies that virtue is habituation in the Aristotelian sense. Were virtue a habit, man would lose the power to freely choose maxims for his conduct:

For moral maxims, unlike technical ones, cannot be based on habit (since this belongs to the natural constitution of the will's determination): on the contrary, if the practice of virtue were to become a habit the subject would suffer loss to that *freedom* in adopting his maxims which distinguishes an action one from duty. (TL, 6: 409)

Virtue is a process in time, in which the agent fortifies his will in order to do what he has decided to accomplish. But how can virtue, as fortitude, be a cure for inclinations? Since weakness is a momentary lack of control, it is not difficult to see how virtue could be a cure for this. Virtue increases the force of the will and helps to prevent affects leading the agent to irrational actions.

7

The beautiful and the good: Refinement as a propaedeutic to morality

In this chapter, I would like to explore the connection between refinement and morality, both in its closest relation between the judgment of the beautiful and moral judgments, and in the presence of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure in morality. I will begin with *Critique of Judgment* and the thesis of § 59, which claims that the beautiful can be considered a symbol of the morally good. I will move on to the examination of moral emotion in *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797) and, lastly, I will examine the relation between the realms of taste and of virtue in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798). I will try to show, ultimately, that there is a Kantian consideration of aesthetic aspects in morality, which contrasts with those formalities presented in the *Groundwork* and in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. I will ask whether there is a possible change in opinion between these two books, or if it is merely a different form of presentation in the various works.

The Beautiful as a symbol of the good

Ted Cohen, in a text called “Why Beauty Is a Symbol of Morality,” claimed that Kant has achieved an unprecedented level of abstraction in the relation

between beauty and morality: “Although Kant believes that ethics and aesthetics have concrete and pedestrian connections as well, he locates a purely formal comparison of good things with beautiful things. It is a comparison which reflects a truly deep insight, illuminating both a profound similarity and a radical difference.”¹

Let’s begin with Ted Cohen’s question: Is a beautiful thing a good thing for Kant? If the reader of *Groundwork* became used to thinking about moral value as something disconnected from feelings of pleasure and displeasure, the reader of *The Metaphysics of Morals* finds, already in the introduction, something that seems to contradict the spirit of Kantian morality. In this work from 1797, Kant mentions the aesthetic prenotions² needed for the receptivity of the idea of respect. Such aesthetic elements would be present in moral action as long as they did not serve as a motive for moral action. The presence of these aesthetic elements leads us to the conclusion that feelings of pleasure and displeasure are indissociable from the process of observance of morality. The contrast between *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797) and the *Groundwork* (1785) is at least mitigated if we notice that the *Critique of Judgment* (1790), presents, undoubtedly, a way to approximate the aesthetic and moral realms, as can be found in paragraph 59, entitled “Of the Beautiful as a Symbol of Morality”:

Now I say that the beautiful is the symbol of the morally good, and also that only in this respect . . . does it please with a claim to the assent of everyone else, in which the mind is at the same time aware of a certain ennoblement and elevation above the mere receptivity for a pleasure from sensible impressions, and also esteems the value of others in accordance with a similar maxim of their Power of judgment.³

What is the meaning of the beautiful as a symbol of morality? Kant explains that the relation between intuition and concepts can be schematic, in which intuition corresponds to a concept, or symbolic, in which the symbol is related to a concept that can only be derived from reason. The schemes are intuitions

related to the categories of pure understanding; since we cannot have adequate intuitions for the concepts of reason, the reality of these concepts requires a symbol, in other words, an indirect presentation of the concept. Paul Guyer clarifies the difference between intuitions corresponding to an empirical concept, a category (a concept of understanding) and an idea (a concept of reason):

For empirical concepts, examples may be furnished—for the concept dog, we may provide an actual example of a dog. For pure concepts of understanding, schemata may be furnished—for the pure concept of causation, we may supply the appropriately defined schema of temporal succession. Finally, for a concept of reason or an Idea, we may furnish a symbol—an intuition which is an indirect representation of a concept.⁴

If we may present real examples of empirical concepts and if, moreover, we can present schemes of the categories of understanding, the same does not occur with the ideas of reason, which need a symbol in order to make their content indirectly sensitive. Francesca Menegoni calls attention to the difference between symbol, example, and schemes: “We cannot take a symbol as a simple example that shows the necessary intuition to prove the reality of an empirical concept, nor can we take it as a schema, whose reference to the concepts of understanding is direct.”⁵ Proving the objective reality of the ideas of reason is an impossible task, since there is no intuition which corresponds to them; however, there is a possibility to exhibit these ideas, even if indirectly. The scheme is a direct exhibition; the symbol is an indirect exhibition; while the first operates demonstratively, the second operates through an analogy.

Allison explains what the indirect exhibition of a concept comprises:

According to this account, what is directly presented (*darstellt*) in a case of indirect exhibition or “symbolic *hypotyposis*” is not the idea to be symbolized but some other (schematizable) concept. The representation of the object, which is the sensible realization of this latter concept, then

functions as the symbolic exhibition of the initial (unschematizable) idea just in case judgment's reflection on it is formally analogous to the form of reflection on the original idea.⁶

Reasoning through analogy constitutes a theoretical proof to which one may resort when there is no need for rigorous reasoning. However, even if it is not a rigorous reasoning, the level of proof is superior to mere hypothesis or reasonable opinion.⁷ In reasoning through analogy, the faculty of judging, by means of a universal law and a particular principle, accomplishes two distinct operations: first, it applies a concept to the object of a sensitive institution; second, it applies the rule of reflection, under this first relation, to a diverse object, in respect to which the first accomplishes only the function of a symbol. Allison stresses that as Kant indicates, this procedure involves a double function of judgment: one is quasi-determinative and the other is reflective.

Thus, a living organism is a symbol of constitutional monarchy and a mill is a symbol of absolute monarchy. What is the relation between the idea of absolute monarchy and a mill? It is a mere analogical relation: in both cases, we think of the same kind of process, of objects (grains or people) being submitted to powers which are external to themselves (the mill or monarchic power). The structure of reflection, when we consider the way the mill operates, is analogous to the structure of reflection when we think about monarchy; however, there is no relation between the content of the symbol and its object. The determined symbol, in this case, the mill, is not even the only possibility. According to Paul Guyer,

This fact suggests that the connection between a symbol and its referent will be looser than that between examples or schemata and their respective referents. Nothing but a dog can serve as an example of the concept dog, and given the nature of your sensible intuition, nothing but an objectively valid temporal succession can serve as a schema for the pure concept of ground and consequence. But anything which allows one to relate ideas

in the same way as does the handmill—some other mechanical device, perhaps, or other form of human relation—could serve equally well as a symbol of despotism.⁸

In claiming that the beautiful is the symbol of good does not mean that beauty has a moral content or can serve as a scheme for morality, nor does the thesis imply a sensible intuition of morality. The analogy between aesthetics and morals is due not to a similarity of content (be it a moral content of beauty or sensible intuition of morality), but only to the common elements of both judgments, a similarity in the laws of reflection.

Aesthetic and moral judgments present similar structures of reflection, as indicated in § 59 of the *Critique of Judgment*: (1) the beautiful and the morally good please immediately; (2) they please independently of all interest (in morality's case, apart from an interest which precedes judgment); (3) both express the accord of certain faculties; (4) they are equally universal.

Such analogy does not imply an identity, because the beautiful and the good equally display differences. Regarding the first aspect (1), beauty immediately pleases in the reflexive intuition, while the morally good pleases in the concept. As regards the independence of interest in the object (2), the good pleases independently of the interest which precedes the judgment, but not in the sense that it anticipates it, such as in the case of the interest of reason as regards its objects. The accord of the faculties in question in both judgments (3) also differs between themselves: in the judgment of beautiful, it regards harmony between imagination and understanding; in the morally good, it regards the concordance of the will with itself according to the universal laws of reason. Finally, universality (4) in the judgment of beautiful does not refer to a universal concept, such as in moral judgment.

The mere thesis that the beautiful is the symbol of the morally good, in itself, would not leave us a viable passage between one and the other from the point of view of their content, since "being a symbol of" simply means an analogy in the reflection of both types of judgment. However, at the end of

§ 59, Kant affirms that taste can be used as assistance for the passage between the sensitive and the moral: “Taste as it were, makes possible the transition from sensible charm to habitual moral interest without too violent a leap.”⁹ Kant goes further than that and attributes to taste the turning of moral ideas into sensible ones: “Taste is, at bottom, a faculty for the judging of the sensible rendering of moral ideas.”¹⁰

Such conception would seem problematic for a reader of the *Groundwork* and *Critique of Practical Reason*, texts which forbid the possibility of a sensitive appeal of morality. In the *Critique of Judgment*, not only is purity in morality’s realm questioned, but also is the independence of beauty as regards morality. An aesthetic education may become propaedeutic to moral education, as long as it refines the sensibility and exerts the meaning of disinterest. In a way, the aesthetic experience develops the disinterest required for morality; in another, the cultivation of moral feeling develops the sense of universality required by taste.

Morality’s and aesthetics’ realms are interconnected in a double-propaedeutic, which surpasses the mere analogy between both types of judgments, broaching common elements in respect to the content of both. Going beyond pointing out analogical elements between aesthetic and moral experience, the *Critique of Judgment* begins the analysis of aesthetic elements constituent of morality—a reflection which becomes clearer in *The Metaphysics of Morals*.

Aesthetical conditions necessary to morality

In the *Introduction to The Metaphysics of Morals*, we are presented with what could be called a radicalization of the project to sensitize morality. The realms of the aesthetic and moral no longer present a viable symbolic or propaedeutic relationship, but Kant speaks to us about sensible conditions necessary for

the reception of morality. While in *Groundwork* only respect for the law is considered a feeling that can work as an incentive of moral action, in the 1797 text several sensitive aspects necessary to the reception of duty are added. The feelings of pleasure and displeasure experienced in relation to morality are not, however, the pleasure of taste, even if the latter, as we have seen, can assist in the development of a greater receptivity of moral sensibility.

After explaining that pleasure and displeasure express what is merely subjective as regards the object, the former is divided, on one side, as an emotion connected to a desire, called practical pleasure, and on the other, a pleasure which is not connected to a desire for the object, but simply with its representation, referred to as contemplative pleasure or taste (MS, 6: 212). In turn, practical pleasure acknowledges another division: if pleasure precedes desire, it regards the interest of inclination; if it succeeds it, this is the interest of reason. In other words, the interest of reason is the pleasure which succeeds the determination of the faculty of desire toward reason. We then have a clear separation between moral pleasure/displeasure, which is related to a desire for the object (even if it succeeds the desire), and an aesthetic pleasure, relative not to the desire of the object but merely to its representation.

In the introduction to the *Doctrine of Virtue* (TL, 6: 399), Kant explains that there are aesthetic Preconditions of the susceptibility of the mind (*Gemüth*) relative to respect (*Ästhetische Vorbegriffe der Empfänglichkeit des Gemüts Achtung*). They are as follows: moral emotion, conscience, love, and self-esteem. They regard not the obtainment *a priori* of moral law or its conditions, but the analysis of the moral agent, the human being and his natural predispositions, which facilitates the effective reception of the moral imperative.

The importance of sensibility for the conscience of duty is attested by moral feeling (*das moralische Gefühl*), defined as “a susceptibility to feel pleasure and displeasure merely from being aware that our actions are consistent with or contrary to the law of virtue” (TL, 6: 399). It is this feeling which gives us conscience of obligation, because it makes us aware of the coercion present in

the mere thought of duty. We do not have any duty to feel such an emotion, since it is in us as moral beings. Someone completely deprived of this feeling would be morally dead:

No human being is entirely without moral feeling, for were he completely lacking in receptivity to it he would be morally dead; and if (to speak in medical terms) the moral vital force could no longer excite this feeling, then humanity would dissolve (by chemical laws, as it were) into mere animality and be mixed irretrievably with the mass of other natural beings. (TL, 6: 400)

Moral feeling is not, however, moral sense (*Sinn*) understood as a feeling that, by itself, indicates what is correct and what is not: in other words, moral feeling does not have any theoretical ability to directly perceive the correctness of an action, since this must be given to us by reason. It simply refers to the internal perception of the coercion duty exerts, provoking a feeling of pleasure when our actions are according to the law and of displeasure when they are against it. Moral feeling, however, while a feeling (*Gefühl*), is not an affect, since the latter is uncontrolled and hinders reflection. In this sense, Kant clarifies that the apathy he proclaims is not absence of all feelings, since this would be a moral indifference and thereby a weakness. Apathy sought as an ideal is absence of affect (*Affekt*), and, consequently, a beneficial strength in the practice of virtue.

The clear separation proclaimed in the *Groundwork* and the *Critique of Practical Reason* between the realms of morality and aesthetics in general—understood as the feeling of pleasure and displeasure—is questioned in some passages of *Critique of Judgment* and *The Metaphysics of Morals* which talk about the possibility of, and even the need for, moral feeling. One of the greatest differences between these two approaches comes from the necessity of feeling pleasure and displeasure to receive the concept of duty. Without a doubt, moral emotion goes beyond the feeling of respect. This becomes clear when it is considered necessary for the mind to be affected by the feeling of

respect. If the mind (*animus*, *Gemüth*) is the reactive instance of the soul (*Seele*),¹¹ it seems that the possibility of the former being empirically affected is decisive for the effective realization of moral action, while respect seems to be a feeling which affects the spirit (*mens*, *Geist*) more than the mind. In order for the action to take place, it is necessary that the mind be affected, which is done through moral feeling. Gisela Munzel accurately analyses the importance of aesthetical capacities in the effective practice of morality.¹²

Beyond this, in moral feeling there is a regard for pleasure thus far non-existent. As Guyer¹³ highlights, the feeling of respect in *Groundwork* is a feeling of displeasure proportional to the coercion of the law, or, at most, as a feeling of self-approval, which radically differs from the feeling of pleasure in the Third Critique and the *Doctrine of Virtue*. A result of the determination of will which opts for the moral action, such a feeling seems to be one of reward. That morality can give us a sort of satisfaction, and, moreover, that were we to lack this capacity—the *Doctrine of Virtue* tell us—we would be morally dead, seems to invite us to question the role of pleasure in Kantian morality. We should ask if moral feeling is a motive for a moral action. As we have seen, some commentators, such as Morrison, think respect is the incentive to moral action. My position, as explained earlier, is that respect is a consequence of the determination of the will by the moral law, not a motive itself. I think the same works for moral feeling: it's not a motive or incentive, but a consequence of the moral determination of the will.

Aesthetic and moral pleasures

The development of the relation between aesthetic and moral pleasure, as well as the propaedeutic function of aesthetic as regards morality, appears in *Anthropology*, a work from 1798, which is based on the courses taught on the subject of anthropology from the semesters of 72/73 to 95/96. In the Book

II of the first part of the *Anthropology*, namely *The feeling of pleasure and displeasure*, we are shown in what sense one may relate the pleasure of taste to moral pleasure.

The feelings of pleasure and displeasure are divided into sensitive pleasure and intellectual pleasure. The former, in turn, can be obtained through sensibility or imagination, as in the case of taste. The second can be obtained through concepts or ideas. The feeling of properly moral pleasure can be classified as belonging to this last division: it is an intellectual pleasure, obtained from an idea, in this case, the idea of duty. How can a type of pleasure obtained through imagination serve as preparation for intellectual pleasure?

Even if there is a distinction between aesthetic and moral pleasure, the idea of satisfaction from the sharing of a feeling of pleasure is what brings the two realms together.

Taste (*Geschmack*) (as a formal sense) concerns the communication of one's feeling of pleasure or displeasure to someone else. It includes a susceptibility, which through this communication affects others with the pleasure of sharing a satisfaction (*complacentia*) with other persons (that is, sociably). (Ant, 7: 244)

This satisfaction of taste derives from an agreement between the feelings of pleasure among agents whose origin is reason, according to a general law. The choice of this satisfaction is in accordance with the *form* of the principle of duty, due to its accordance with a general law. Thus, the exercise of aesthetic taste is a preparation for morality. This idea of the *Anthropology* follows the spirit of the *Critique of Judgment*, but with some interesting additions.

One of the curiosities in the *Anthropology* is the presentation of good manners as a transition between taste and morality. The rules of etiquette, of good hosting, prepare one for virtue. A good host manifests his aesthetic taste when choosing food and beverages, not only according to his/her personal taste but having in mind his guests' tastes. In the composition of these various

tastes, the procedure of constructing a common taste which satisfies all those present has a universal validity (Ant, 7: 242). Something similar takes place in how the host conducts the conversation, in the choice of topic, as in the number of guests, which according to the Chesterfield's rules should not be fewer than the number of graces (3) or more than the number of muses (10). Such a rule is not arbitrary, but seeks to construct an ideal group for communication, which would partake not only of the pleasure of table but of good ideas. The procedures of sociability according to the rules of good manners belong to the realm of taste, but prepare us for morality, in the sense that they construct a community which shares a common discourse:

No matter how insignificant these laws of refined humanity may seem, especially if you compare them with purely moral laws, then everything that furthers companionship, even if it consists only of pleasant maxims or manners, is a dress that properly clothes virtue. (Ant, 7: 282)

Kant refers to the rules of good conversation at the table, probably present in the enlightened European salons of the eighteenth century: choosing topics which interest all; not allowing a somber silence in conversations, but only small pauses; not changing the subject; not discussing any dogmatic matter, but introducing a jest (*Scherz*) to lighten up the discussion. Such rules are not arbitrary, but have the purpose of promoting culture: "Meanwhile the participants in the dinners (how many, I don't know) fancy that they have found culture in the intellect—one wonders how much!-in the purpose of nature" (Ant, 7: 281).

Alix Cohen explains the reason for praising this kind of social interaction in the article "The Ultimate Kantian Experience: Kant on Dinner Parties."

One of the functions of civilized social intercourse is that it leads to the love of virtue. . . . One way of looking at this issue is to focus on the workings of politeness itself. If one love the illusion of the good and enacts this illusion

in social intercourse, one might come to appreciate its worth and to love the good itself for its own sake.¹⁴

The rules of social refinement serve as good drapery for virtue, especially for the construction of common ideas. Such a result does not possess the universality of beauty or morality, but, while a transaction, it has a comparative universality. The *Anthropology* indicates, through examples regarding good manners and the rules of social refinement, how the relation between aesthetic and moral cultivation takes place.

In examining moral and aesthetic educations, one can understand how the cultivation of taste relates to the civilizing process and to the formation of moral character; this would be due to taste's main trait of being imminently communicable. Kant claims (Ant, 7: 244) that this characteristic of the aesthetic sense stimulates only the *external* promotion of morality, thereby not yet being the formation of its *internal* aspect. However, it could be said that his analysis is only partially correct: if it is true that the social rules function as a simulacrum of real virtue, then the simulation of virtue encourages the production of virtue itself. The *performance* of virtues leads not to hypocrisy but to the development of virtue itself. Here we have something that reminds us of Aristotelian virtue and its development through habit, with the difference that, in the Kantian version, the events which were simply a simulacrum of virtue will still lead to the effective practice of morality.

It should be noted through the emphasis given to the relation between aesthetic and moral aspects in the texts from the 1790s, that there is a difference in the consideration of the necessity of sensitive aspects for the effective realization of morality. The analysis of the subject does not allow us to give a definitive answer as regards the Kantian change of direction from the 1780s to the 1790s texts. However, we clearly see that, if in the *Groundwork* there was an explicit repudiation of the connection between the feeling of pleasure and moral action, such as the condemnation of sympathy, in *The Metaphysics of Morals* feelings of pleasure and displeasure are considered essential parts

of morality, since without them—Kant affirms—we would be morally dead. Apart from that, the aesthetic preconditions go beyond the feeling of respect in the *Groundwork*.

However, the hypothesis of a discovery or change relative to the theme is questionable if we consider that part of this relation between the cultivation of taste and moral cultivation was published in the *Anthropology*, which reflects the courses given since the semesters of 1772–73, thereby previously to *Groundwork*. What is most likely is that in the 1790s, after discussing the themes of the faculty of pleasure and displeasure in *Critique of Judgment*, Kant developed the philosophical tools required for the unification of the *a priori* obtainment of moral law and his practical anthropology, concluding in *The Metaphysics of Morals*, which shows how moral law can have a definitively motivating power on rational sensible beings.

8

Women and emotion

Kant has often been criticized for holding very negative views of women, according to which they are less rational and less morally valuable than men. In the chapter “Kant” in the *Blackwell Companion to Feminist Philosophy*, Robin May Schott asks, “Why do feminist philosophers read Kant? Because of his misogyny and disdain of the body, Barbara Hermann has described Kant as the moral philosopher whom feminists find most objectionable.”¹

In this chapter, I will show that, in spite of some undeniably sexist comments, Kant held that women have moral features, although these are understood as a beautiful morality rather than a rational one. Also, Kant points out some moral qualities of the female sex, mainly women’s capacity for self-control and their capacity to experience moral emotions such as sympathy and compassion. Moreover, women show their mastery of emotions and passions when they are able to use their emotional sensitivity and self-control to master the feelings and passions of men. Morality presupposes the capacity of mastering inclinations in order to act morally and in women this moral feature seems to be more developed than in men.

Kant implicitly acknowledges this in the first statement of the section “The Character of Sex” of the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*:

All machines designed to accomplish with little power as much as those with great power, must be designed with art. Consequently, one can assume

beforehand that Nature's foresight has put more art into the design of female than the male. (Ant, 7: 303)

Indisputably, Kant thinks men are superior to women in physical power, which is the reason why he claims that under uncivilized conditions, superiority is on the man's side only. Yet in civilization the (so-called) weakness of the feminine sex calls for deeper inquiry. She has the power to control men's inclinations and she brings men to moral behavior.

Kant shows indeed his old-fashioned sexism when he claims that one of the ends of nature regarding women is the preservation of species. However, he also attributes another end to women: the improvement of society and its refinement. She is endowed with finer sensations, since nature "made this sex the ruler of men through modesty and eloquence in speech and expression" (Ant, 7: 306). She demands gentle and polite treatment from men; by doing so, they are brought to moral behavior, which is not morality itself, but is a preparation and introduction to morality.

My aim is to explore these relations Kant establishes between women, emotions, and morality, in order to show that the female sex is useful to moral education and has some moral interesting features.

Beautiful morality

Much has been said about Kant's prejudice against woman. One of the most striking examples is in *The Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, when, after stating that women could be successful in science, Kant advises them against it, because they will lose their power over men:

Laborious learning or painful grubbing, even if a woman could get very far with them, destroy the merits that are proper to her sex, and on account of their rarity may well make her into an object of cold admiration, but at the

same time they will weaken the charms by means of which she exercises her great power over the other sex. (Observations, 2: 229)

Men are sublime, woman are beautiful. Surprising as it is for our contemporary feminist moral sensibility, I will show that the attribution of the beautiful to women has some important consequences.

According to Kant, refinement in social life is very important for morality. In a passage of the *Anthropology*, Kant censures the hermit way of life and praises social good living:

The *cynic's purism* and the *hermit's mortification of the flesh*, without social good-living, are distorted interpretations of virtue and do not make virtue attractive; rather, being forsaken by the graces, they can make no claim to humanity. (Ant, 7: 282)

As Alix Cohen remarks, "These zealous individuals may appear virtuous; but for Kant, they are not." One of the reasons is that "humanity requires both good living and virtue; one without the other is not true humanity."² In this effort to develop morality through sociability, the good living which still seems to harmonize best with virtue is a good meal in good company. A good dinner has to obey some rules, among them not to allow deadly silence to fall, but permit only momentary pauses in the conversation. If a sudden silence threatens the conversation, a woman, usually the lady of the house can often save the day:

A single person, particularly the lady of the house, can often all by herself avoid such a stagnation and keep the conversation flowing, so that, as at a concert, the conversation can conclude with general and complete joyfulness, which makes it all so much more wholesome. (Ant, 7: 278n)

Women are then important in keeping alive what Alix Cohen has called "The Ultimate Kantian Experience." Not only do they contribute to the success of the conversation, but their presence is also a constraint to impoliteness. Kant

claims that “there are occasions at a festive table, where the presence of ladies automatically limits the freedom of the conversation to what is polite” (Ant, 7: 279). Besides that, women have a strong aesthetic sense; even her morality is primarily aesthetic. Her judgment of a good or wrong action is related to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure:

The virtue of a woman is a *beautiful virtue*. That of a male sex should be a noble virtue. Women will avoid the wicked, not because it is unjust, but because it is repulsive; and to them virtuous actions mean morally beautiful ones. (Observations, 2: 231)

Although this morality does not have the moral worth that Kant attributes to actions done from duty, it can indeed help morality, since it can identify situations in which respect and politeness are being neglected, and women are exceedingly precise to notice the most trifling lack of attention and respect toward them.

Women’s social virtues

In spite of some awful comments about women, Kant accepts that they have many virtues. Although some of these virtues appear to relate to a submissive character, they are well worth analyzing. One of these virtues is patience, although one could object that this is a very old-fashioned and submissive virtue, it is still proof of self-control.

Feminine virtue or vice is very different from masculine virtue or vice, not only in kind but also in motive. She is expected to be patient; he must be tolerant. She is sensitive; he is perceptive. The man’s business is to earn, the woman’s is to save. (Ant, 7: 307)

Through patience, women can control men, even for their own purposes. They do not use strength, but charm. While explaining what one of the social

passions, the lust for authority, comprises, Kant explains that while men use the direct art of domination, women use the indirect art:

This is not to say that the feminine part of our species is free from wanting to rule over the masculine element (just the opposite is true), but it does not use the same means to this end as the masculine. The feminine sex does not use the quality of strength (which refers in this context to domination), but rather the quality of charm which directs itself toward the inclination of the other sex to submit. (Ant, 7: 273)

Women are more cunning than men; they have more capacity to obtain their ends using the appropriate means. Since they are not assaulted by strong emotions and passions, they are more capable of controlling themselves and to get what they are looking for. Their weakness is only a disguise of an artful power to dominate without using force:

Feminine traits are called weakness. People joke about them; but reasonable persons see very well that those traits are just the tools for management of men, and for the use of men for female designs. (Ant, 7: 303)

Because men like domestic peace, they prefer to submit to women in the domestic sphere, since they do not want to be hindered in their own affairs. “The woman wants to dominate, the man wants to be dominated” (Ant, 7: 306): although Kant sometimes attributes the capacity to dominate to some submissive and traditional capacities such as the ability to please (Ant, 7: 306), he acknowledges that women can better master some abilities required in society.

By controlling the rude manners of men, women can win them over. For this, they use politeness and the art of pleasing. They can also use some expressions of emotion, such as crying, which the rules of society allow them to have. Women can use their tears to control men, disarming them with their “tears of exasperation” (Ant, 7: 304). The end of this showing (or pretending)

of emotions is the refinement of men's rude manners, so, it is a moral purpose. Women are allowed in society to show their emotions through tears, contrary to men, who can only be excused crying if they do not make any noise. However, these feminine tears have a moral purpose, and it is not contrary to morality.

Women are also more polite in social interaction. Kant surely is a moralist who condemns all lies and false promises. However, this does not imply that we should always be completely sincere to the point of being rude. Even in the text "On a Supposed Right to Lie for Love of Humanity," he acknowledges that we should tell the truth only if we are asked for it. In the same way, we should not make false promises. It is a sign of character neither to break one's promise nor to speak an untruth intentionally (Ant, 7: 294).

However, in social life man should abstain from always telling the truth, when he is not asked to do so. Politeness is also an art of dissimulation and Kant attributes total sincerity to uncivilized people. To know how to be an actor is a sign of education and refinement:

Collectively, the more civilized men are, the more they are actors. They assume the appearance of attachment, of esteem for others, of modesty, and of disinterestedness, without ever deceiving since nothing sincere is meant: Persons are familiar with this and it is even a good thing that this is so in this world, for when man plays this roles, virtues are gradually established, whose appearance had until now only been affected. (Ant, 7: 151)

In this civilized art of deceiving, women are better than men. They are trained from early in life to smile, to please, and not to reveal their inner secrets, while men are easy to fathom (Ant, 7: 304). This aptitude is not immoral, but helps to develop politeness and a good social life. A woman put a veil around her secrets, as well as the secrets of nature. Her modesty and sensitivity to shame show that capacity to veil the coarsest secrets of sexuality:

Sensitivity to shame is a secrecy of nature addressed to setting bounds to a very intractable inclination, and since it has the voice of nature on its side,

seems always to agree with good moral qualities even if it yields to excess. . . . But at the same time it serves to draw a curtain of mystery before even the most appropriate and necessary purposes of nature, so that a too familiar acquaintance with them might not occasion disgust, or indifference at least, in respect to the final purpose of an impulse onto which the finest and liveliest inclinations of human nature are grafted. This quality is especially peculiar to the fair sex and very becoming to it. (Observations, 2: 234)

Women and passions

One of the main criticisms against Kant has come from feminist philosophy. According to this critique, some ingredients that are important to female identity, such as emotion, love, empathy, and cooperation, are not in consideration in Kantian ethics. Sally Sedgwick expresses this criticism when she says that “because moral agency on the Kantian view is a function of acting from reason rather than from feeling, it is said to reflect features more of male than of female identity.”³ She, however, supports Kant against the critique of a misunderstanding of human psychology. What Kant is saying is not that we are—or should be—cold people without any feeling or that in our meaningful relationships feelings should not play an important part. What he is claiming is that empirical motives cannot be the foundation of moral worth.

Kantian and anti-Kantian feminists usually agree in one point: for Kant women are more emotional than men.⁴ Kantian feminists, such as Marcia Baron, support that the ideas of reason, autonomy, and freedom are the foundation of women liberation and should be cherished by women as important tools for their autonomy. She claims that while Kant “certainly was not thinking about women and the moral outrageousness of the roles into which they traditionally have been cajoled or forced, his ethical theory is far more able to provide the tools for challenging the roles than many other theories.”⁵ However, women were excluded from this idea of reason when they were considered mainly

emotional beings. She also accepts that Kantian virtues are mostly male virtues. Kant could be blamed for by “the tendency to equate male virtue with generic human virtue.” For Baron, then, the problem with Kant is not only that “he didn’t recognize that women are full-fledged rational beings, but also that he has too narrow—too masculine—a picture of the virtuous person.”⁶ Marcia Baron does not deny that women are mostly emotional in Kant’s assessment, but she tries to respond to the feminist critique, by denying that all affective is bad in Kant’s view.

Another way to refer to this problem is to challenge the rationality of Kantian morality as the only possible way to be moral, showing that women can have a different voice regarding morality, a voice that cherishes care and emotions. This view was first argued by Carol Gilligan and gave rise to the ethics of care.⁷ Allen Wood follows the same line of reasoning when he claims that to say women are more emotional is not to regard them as generally inferior to men considered as moral agents, because for Kant “it is one thing to have a *temperament* that makes the moral life more difficult and quite a different thing to be worse as a moral agent.”⁸ Anti-Kantian feminists also criticize his idea of autonomy as independence, because this shows the isolation of his morality, which is not appropriate for women.⁹

Pro- and anti-enlightenment feminists agree that women are mainly emotional in Kant’s view; however, I think that there is not a definite position that women are more emotional than men in the Kantian texts. I will sustain the opposite, that according to Kant women are less emotional than men, because women’s emotions are less harmful and women’s passions are weaker than men’s. Female passions are weaker and their mild affects are not an obstacle to morality.

In one of the few passages where Kant says good words about emotions, he claims that there are some emotions “by which nature mechanically strengthens Health” (Ant, 7: 261): among them are laughing and weeping. One can understand that in this sense: when one is taken by a strong emotion

of sadness, it is better to express that and come back to a normal state of excitement. Laughter can help digestion, because it is always an exercise of the muscles which are used for digestion.

Another expression of feeling which is good for health is weeping: "A widow, who, as the saying explains, will not allow herself to be comforted, that is, who does not want to know how to dry up the flow of tears, unknowingly or unintentionally takes care of her health" (Ant, 7: 262). However, this eloquent expression of sadness is only allowed in the feminine sex. If men are moved to the point of crying, their expression should be more discrete: "This expression of tenderness, as a weakness of the sex, however, must not permit the male involved to be moved to shedding tears, but only to have tears in his eyes" (Ant, 7: 263).

These minor comments about affects in women do not imply that they are more emotional than men. Kant claims that they have more moral feelings, but not more affects in general. One of the paradigmatic Kant affects is anger, and all the examples Kant mentions of a person taken by this emotion are examples of men, not women. Also, Kant considers that passions are worse than affects for the purposes of morality and women are less likely to have passions in the Kantian sense. One of the natural passions is the passion for sex, which is deficient or more subtle in women. Regarding sex, women seem to have a natural self-control that is absent in the masculine gender. Inversely, they are endowed with modesty and with a natural capacity to refrain from men's bold initiatives. Allen Wood is one of the few commentators who acknowledge that for Kant men are more emotionally vulnerable than women. In a remark about marriage, he claims that while "men take advantage of women through their greater physical, intellectual, social, and economic power," "women take advantage of men through their manipulation of the man's emotional vulnerability and lack of self-control."¹⁰ He also points to men's lack of self-control. The fact that Kant claims that women are less rational does not imply that they are more emotional than men.

Even women's vanity is less harmful than the masculine one. If all vanity should be considered bad for morality, at least women's vanity is not as dangerous as men's vanity: it is only a beautiful fault. Men's vanity, on the other hand, takes the form of the three main passions: lust for honor, lust for power, and lust for money. A woman's vanity, on the contrary, manifests itself in the enjoyment of adornments and dressing, which is not meant to attract the attention of men. Kant believes that women dress for their own sex, while men dress for women, "if this can be called dressing, it goes so far as not to shame his wife by his clothes" (Ant, 7: 307). Women are more inclined to some affects than men, but these are harmless affects, which are even good for the health (Ant, 7: 262).

The Kantian picture of women is not as bad as what commentators usually believe. In the text *Re-Visions of Agency in Kant's Moral Theory*, Jean Rumsey claims that Kant's concept of human agency excludes women, because "women are characterized in both the *Observations* and the *Anthropology* as creatures led by their emotions and incapable of grasping principles; as naturally sympathetic, benevolent, and complaisant, possessing feminine virtues complementary to those of men (having patience rather than tolerance, being sensitive rather than responsive, saving rather than acquiring)."¹¹ Contrary to Rumsey, I consider that it would not be fair to say women are led by their emotions, because the Kantian portrait of the fairer sex is not painted with the bold colors of passions and affects. Women are rather represented as endowed with a subtle morality, where we can observe the mild color of moral feelings, such as sympathy, or virtues such as benevolence. This is certainly not a morality of principles, but indubitably a beautiful morality.

Patrick Frierson is one of the few commentators who are sensitive to a positive aspect of a beautiful morality of women. He admits that although "Kant's account might seem to preclude virtue in women," they are capable of virtue, but a beautiful one. Since virtue is also difficult for men, "whereas few men will attain sublime virtue, women are well equipped for beautiful virtue."¹²

Frierson also admits that the apparent weakness of women helps the moral progress of human being: “The apparent weakness and timidity of women ends up becoming one of the driving forces behind cultural and even proto-moral progress in the human species.”¹³ Mari Mikkola has also showed that Kant’s view on women is less unsettling than the one attributed to him by feminists and has challenged the view that he claims women are morally deficient.¹⁴

However, Frierson claims that the Kantian interest in women as a driving force toward morality changed from the *Observations* to the mature critical philosophy. According to him, Kant changed from an empirical and sentimentalistic moral theory in the 1760s to a more rigorous rationalist morality in the *Groundwork* and later works.

I disagree with Frierson in two aspects. First, I think that Kant never supported a sentimentalist view about morality. In the *Observations* he only acknowledges that women may have a morality, even if they are not capable of principles. Second, a later text such as the *Anthropology* also indicates that women may play a role in the cultural education of mankind through a beautiful morality.

Kant clearly attributes a moral role to women. Even if they do not fit an ideal of a morality of principles as individuals, their role in society will certainly help to build a more civilized world, which is a condition to morality.

The liberal tradition that goes back to Kant has divided feminists between the ones who think that autonomy and rationality are essential for women, and the ones who think these are mainly male ways of reasoning and should be replaced by another way of thinking. Martha Nussbaum is a supporter of the view that the enlightenment ideas of autonomy and freedom are positive aspects of the Kantian doctrine that can be valuable for the emancipation of women. She also claims that many elements of liberalism are important for women in their struggle to become full citizens and human beings that could totally enjoy their capacities.

In the book *Sex and Social Justice*, Nussbaum clarifies what she calls liberalism: “When I speak of ‘liberalism,’ then, I shall have in mind, above all,

the tradition of Kantian liberalism represented today in the political thought of John Rawls.”¹⁵ According to her, this tradition brings a twofold intuition that are essential for feminism: first, that all human beings are of equal dignity and worth; second, that the primary source of this worth is a power of moral choice within them, consisting of the ability to plan a life in accordance to one’s end.

9

Evil and passions¹

Affects and passions

If we disregard, for the moment, the difference in how they are related to objects, we find that both affects and passions are considered illnesses of the mind, because both affect and passion hinder the sovereignty of reason. However, the former is less harmful than the latter. This can be demonstrated if one compares anger (affect) with hate (passion). Anger intensifies quickly and subsides in an equally instantaneous manner. Hatred, because it is a passion, does not allow for such control.

Since the passions can be coupled with the calmest reflection, one can easily see that they must neither be rash like the emotions, nor stormy and transitory; instead, they must take roots gradually and even be able to coexist with reason. (Ant, 7: 265)

Passions are more closely related to the will; nevertheless, this does not imply that they can be brought under greater control by reason. The inverse is suggested, namely, that they “take root” in reason and coexist with rational decision. Curiously the irrational aspects of affects make them preferable to passions. And Kant uses many medical metaphors to stress just this distinction: an affect is an intoxicant that causes a headache while a passion is a poison that causes a permanent illness (Ant, 7: 252), affect is a delirium (7:

266) or a “stroke of apoplexy” (7: 252), while passion “works like consumption or atrophy” (7: 252) or an illness that abhors all medication (7: 266), passions are “cancerous sores for pure practical reason” (7: 266) to which the physician of the soul could only prescribe palliative cures (7: 252). The metaphorical bundle of infirmity of emotions speaks to their degree of evil. Affect, the least dangerous of the “illnesses of mind,” is related to weakness which can still coexist with a good will:

Affects belong to *feeling* insofar as, preceding reflection; it makes this impossible or more difficult. Hence an affect is called *precipitate* or *rash* (*animus praeceps*), and reason says, through the concept of virtue, that one should *get hold* of oneself. Yet this weakness is the use of one’s understanding coupled with the strength of one’s affects is only a *lack of virtue* and, as it were, something childish and weak, which can indeed coexist with the best will. (TL, 6: 408)

Affects make the work of understanding more difficult. If one has a weak understanding united with a strong affect, one momentarily loses control. But such a lack of control is not, properly speaking, a vice, but, as already discussed, a lack of virtue. In the *Religion*, this loss of control is called the frailty (*fragilitas*) of human nature, and consists in taking the moral law as the objective ground of action. However, it lacks sufficient subjective force when compared to inclinations (Rel, 6: 30). Passions, on the other hand, are beyond the weak adjectives of “childish,” because they are not just signs of weakness, but of true evil:

A *passion* is a sensible *desire* that has become a lasting inclination (e.g., *hatred*, as opposed to anger). The calm with which one gives oneself up to it permits reflection and allows the mind to form principles upon it and so, if inclination lights upon something contrary to the law, to brood upon it, to get it rooted deeply, and so take up what is evil (as something premeditated) into its maxim. And the evil is then properly evil, that is, true vice. (TL, 6: 408)

Unlike affects which are temporary emotions, passions are characterized as lasting inclinations. Evil is connected to reflection and to the will's formulation of maxims based on emotions. While an affect constitutes a subjective incentive that opposes a maxim, a passion may form principles for action. If one is overtaken by anger, he may be unable to act on maxims which he reflectively acknowledges to be the right ones. But if the passion of hatred is present, the agent may choose maxims against the moral law, a choice that is classified as a third degree of evil—that is, perversity of the human heart, in the *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (Rel, 6: 30). The passion of hatred, for instance, can lead someone to premeditate a murder. One could also murder someone based on a momentary uncontrolled affect. Even if the wrong action is the same, the latter is based on a discrepancy between the force of emotion and the will; the former is based on a will that has chosen to act according to a nonmoral maxim. That is why Kant says passions are more harmful to freedom than affects:

One can also easily see that passions do the greatest harm to freedom; and if affect is a delirium, then passion is an illness which abhors all medication. Therefore, passion is by far worse than all the transitory affects which stir themselves at least to the good intention of improvement; instead, passion is an enchantment which also rejects improvement. (Ant, 7: 265)

The evil character of passions comes from two features. First, a passion presupposes a maxim of the subject and is associated with the purposes of reason. It implies that maxims are a kind of distortion and perversion of reason. Second, passions are never completely satisfied, thus they are labeled by the word “mania” (*Sucht*), meaning that they become an obsession about their never totally conquered object. That is why Kant supports that no physical love can count as a passion. Only the refusal of the object of the love can turn the affect of love into a passion of love.

There are also other feelings that can either be an affect or become a passion. Besides love, Kant gives the example of ambition. An ambitious person, besides his own ends, usually wants to be loved by others; however, if he is passionately ambitious, he can be hated by others and even run the risk of becoming poor, because his passion makes him blind. If ambition, however, remains as an inclination, it will be compared to other inclinations and will not ruin the ambitious man. That is why Kant declares that “inclination, which hinders the use of reason to compare, at a particular moment of choice, a specific inclination against the sum of all inclinations, is passion” (Ant, 7: 265).

Passions do not operate like affects, making the subject momentarily incapable of acting according to what he has decided to do. An agent taken by an uncontrollable affect may act against the maxim she has decided to follow, which may lead to irrational actions, going beyond what one call rational agency. On the contrary, passions may form maxims of action, which highlights their evil disposition. Actions from passions belong to the realm of rational agency; however, they do not follow prudential reasons. This is the case of the ambitious man. If ambition is only an inclination, one can ground maxims of action in ambition, which will lead to the conquest of what the ambitious man desires. When ambition as passion ground maxims of action, since passion is a mania (*Sucht*), it can lead to the opposite of what is desired. A blind ambition, such as Lady Macbeth’s lust for power, can lead to the opposite of what is desired. She desperately wanted her husband to be king, but she ended up causing his death.

Natural and social passions

Kant divides passions into natural and social ones: natural passions are called “burning passions,” for example, the inclinations for freedom and sex; and the social passions are called “cold passions” and are ambition (*Ehrsucht*), lust of power (*Herrschaftsucht*), and greed (*Habsucht*) (Ant, 7: 272–75). The passion of

freedom should not be understood as a rational desire to determine the will in an autonomous way; rather it is a desire not to depend on other people: “Whoever is able to be happy only at the option of another person, feels that he is unhappy” (Ant, 7: 268). It is a natural desire, a desire to keep others far away, and to live “as a wanderer in the wilderness.” It is a natural desire, not a rational one and comes from the desire not to depend on anyone, which belongs to the natural man before “public law protects him”—that is, in the state of nature.

The most dangerous passions, however, are not the innate, but the acquired ones, which arise from culture. In the *Religion*, Kant states that the evil principle of human nature resides in passions, “which wreak such great devastation in [human being’s] originally good disposition” (Rel, 6: 93), referring mostly to the social passions of envy, addiction to power, and avarice. Their danger consists in their having characteristics of reason: “Passion appears to imitate the idea of a faculty which is closely linked with freedom, by which alone those purposes can be attained” (Ant, 7: 270). Passions imitate rationality in the sense that they can calculate means to desired ends. We can observe this in the analysis of greed. Kant explains this passion as the desire to have all that is good: “Money is a password, and all doors, which are closed to the man of lesser means, fly open to those whom Plutus favors” (Ant, 7: 274). Although avarice is a passion and is not related to the moral self-determination of an agent, it is related to a calculus of the means to have everything materially worthy and to open all doors forbidden to the poor.

After all these negative features imputed to passions, we should ask: Can virtue be a cure to passions? That the evil of passions is worse than the evil of affects can be attested by many passages in the *Religion*. Kant also cites the Bible in his own words: “We have to wrestle not against flesh and blood (the natural inclinations) but against principalities and powers, against evil spirits” (Rel, 6: 59) in order to assert that evil does not reside in sensible incentives.

In the *Religion*, Kant maintains that inclinations are good and that evil should be sought for in a rational principle. This position seems to contradict

the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, where both affects and passions are considered illnesses of mind. We should try to solve the apparent contradiction between the *Religion* and the *Anthropology*. If we correctly distinguish the purpose of the texts, we see that while in the *Religion* Kant is concerned with the source of evil, which cannot be placed in the natural realm; in the *Anthropology* he is merely trying to *explain* emotions. In the latter, it is correctly shown that both affects and passions may impede the will, either as stormy feelings that hinder the accomplishment of the action based on a moral maxim, or by grounding the choice of the maxim. However, in both the *Religion* and *Anthropology* the worst evil resides in a rational principle, not in a natural one, thus, even in the *Anthropology*, passions are thought to be more dangerous than affects. Affects can be the cause of weakness, but passions are the cause of true evil.

How to heal passions

The extirpation of affects is not Kant's central goal and he even claims that the extirpation of inclinations would "not only be futile but harmful and blameworthy as well" (Rel, 6: 58). However, it is his invariable position that we should extirpate passions, since they are not natural feelings or inclinations.

In his analysis of emotions and evil in Kant, Michael Rolf correctly argues that, for Kant, "all passions are evil, and that all passions are social in content," but Kant "does not claim, and in fact he explicitly denies, that affects are evil, at least in the sense that passions are evil."² He considers that "affects, in contrast with passions, are not evil in the way passions are because they lack what makes passions evil, namely, a maxim opposed to the moral law."³

In order to win the battle against this principle of evil, one should find its cause. If men search the circumstances that lead them to evil principles, they will find out that they are not related to their raw nature, but to the corruption

of the will that one man produces over others. If a man considers himself to be poor, he does so “only to the extent that he is anxious that the other human beings will consider him poor and will despise him for it” (Rel, 6: 94).

In their works about evil, both Allen Wood⁴ and Sharon Anderson-Gold⁵ call attention to the fact that evil in Kant has its source in our social condition. Since evil originates from social relations, fighting against the evil of passions implies an effort to build a new society that could counteract passions.

In the chapter “Radical Evil” of the book *Political Emotions*, Martha Nussbaum also stresses the social feature of human evil in Kant. She says, “The fact that we are animals is not the primary source of our moral difficulty” and Kant’s “key contention is plausible: the tempter, the invisible enemy inside, is something peculiarly human, a propensity to competitive self-love, which manifests itself whenever human beings are in a group.”⁶

The raw nature of men, although able to produce strong inclinations that are difficult to master, does not lead to the corruption of the human heart. Kant is unequivocal in asserting that only association of men is able to produce pure evil:

Envy, addiction to power, avarice, and the malignant inclinations associated with these, assail his nature, which on its own is undemanding, *as soon as he is among human beings*. Nor it is necessary to assume that these are sunk into evil and are examples that lead him astray: it suffices that they are there, that they surround him, and that they will mutually corrupt each other’s moral disposition and make one another evil. (Rel, 6: 94)

This claim is unambiguous: the inclinations are not by themselves the source of evil, nor are our affects. The passions of envy, addiction to power and avarice are awakened by interaction with other human beings, even if there is no bad behavior from others. Human beings are not evil because they are corrupted by already wicked persons. Ordinary social interaction makes human beings evil, because this interaction awakes comparison between people. Kant also claims

that comparison is the source of this social evil: men feel that they are poor because they compare themselves to others, and the fear of being despised or dominated produces the evil passions of ambition and greed.

Nussbaum agrees with this very pessimistic Kantian viewpoint: “Even when people are well fed and housed, and even when they are reasonably secure with respect to other prerequisites of well-being, they still behave badly to one another and violate one’s other rights” (Nussbaum 2013, p. 167). Nor is evil a matter of social teaching: “Kant is surely right when he suggests that people require no special social teaching in order to behave badly, and indeed regularly do so despite the best social teaching” (Nussbaum 2013, p. 167).

Is virtue enough to heal evil?

Could virtue also be considered a cure for evil? If evil comes from the weakness of the will, virtue can help to strengthen the weak will. Weakness is the first degree of the propensity to evil: it refers to the case in which one has a weak will and is influenced by a strong affect, and quickly loses control. However, such lack of control is not, properly speaking, a vice, but a lack of virtue.

Virtue, as strength, could work as a cure for affects, because these are temporary outbursts of feelings. As Kristi Sweet highlights, “There are numerous ways in which Kant defines virtue, and virtue itself is manifold in its constitution, perhaps first in Kant’s understanding of it is that it is strength.”⁷ Like strength, it can work against inclinations and affects that make it difficult to maintain our resolve. Virtue implies abiding with the principle of moral law, but it also requires fortitude in keeping our decision to follow the moral law.

Could virtue be a cure for the third degree of evil, or malignity? Recently some authors have pointed out that virtue can be the cure for all evil. Michael Rohlf states that “in general, virtue is the strength to comply with moral maxims in the face of our propensity to evil, understood as our tendency to prefer

the satisfaction of inclinations,” and the education for virtue “will promote not only a good heart and the adoption of fundamental moral maxims, which together constitute the intelligible character of virtue, but also the strength of will to comply with those maxims in the face of our propensity to evil.”⁸

However, since the evil of passions is connected to society, this education for virtue can only fully occur in a society based on the idea of virtue. Only a social remedy can overcome these cancers of pure practical reason.

If evil is social, the only way to overcome the evil of passions is through a community based on the ideal of the moral good. Virtue in the sense of individual strength is insufficient to accomplish this task without setting up a society, which will rule over passions.

The social solution to evil is clearly stated in the following quote:

Inasmuch as we can see, therefore, the dominion of the good principle is not otherwise attainable, so far as human beings can work toward it, than through the setting up and the diffusion of a society which reason makes it a task and a duty of the entire human race to establish in full scope. For only in this way we can hope for a victory of the good principle over the evil one. (Rel, 6: 94)

This society is not juridical-civil society, but an ethico-civil society which can coexist with the former. While a juridical-civil, or political society, is the relation of human beings to one another under public juridical laws, an ethical-civil society is one in which they are united under the laws of virtue alone, without being coerced. They can coexist and be composed of the same members.

An association of human beings merely under the laws of virtue, ruled by this idea, can be called an *ethical* and, so far as these laws are public, an ethico-civil (in contrast to a *juridico-civil* society), or an ethical community. It can exist in the midst of a political community and even be made up of all the members of the latter (indeed, without the foundation of a political

community, it could never be brought into existence by human beings).
(Rel, 6: 94)

Kant points to an ethical community, which is the embodiment of virtue and of moral principle. This is not a political society, since even a perfect civil society could not overcome passions and therefore defeat true evil by itself. In addition, this ethical community is a community of virtue, although not individual virtue, but of a shared one. It is—as Kant stresses in the above quotation—“an association under the laws of virtue.” This association under the laws of virtue may help fight social passions, while individual virtue could only control affects.

Kant makes an analogy of this ethical community with a juridical-civil society. In addition, just as we can oppose the idea of a state of nature to the civil society, we can oppose an idea of an ethical state of nature to an ethical community.

In a political community, political citizens are still in the ethical state of nature. The citizens cannot be coerced to enter an ethical state, but they can do it. This decision rests on the person's will, since the citizen of the political community remains free:

The citizen of the political community therefore remains, so far as the latter's lawgiving authority is concerned, totally free: he may wish to enter with his fellow citizens into an ethical union over and above the political one, or rather remain in a natural state of this sort. (Rel, 6: 96)

The ineffectiveness of political institutions

Kant claims in the *Religion* that human beings cannot ground the overcoming of evil only in the development of political institutions. In order to attain their moral destination, they need to build an ethical community. He seems to have

changed his mind about possible progression in history based on improving political institutions. In the *Idea for an Universal History*, he claims that “the greatest problem for the human species, to which nature compels him, is the achievement of a civil society universally administering right” (*Idee*, 8: 22). In the *Idea*, the just civil institutions are considered sufficient to develop the aim of human nature and to accomplish our moral end.

Paul Guyer remarks that there is already a shift from the text *Idea for a Universal History* (1784) to the appendix of *Perpetual Peace* (1795). He argues that in the first, moral change happens through a natural process, while in the second Kant claims that only the exercise of human freedom can lead to the moral destination of man.⁹

Mutchnik claims that in order to understand Kant’s conceptual shift one must turn to the *Religion* (1793), “where the problem of radical evil receives its fullest expression.”¹⁰ He criticizes among others, Allen Wood, who has based his interpretation of evil in Kant only on the *Idea*: “Interpreters like Allen Wood have found in *Idea for a Universal History* the key to understanding the social dynamics of the propensity of evil, tracing the roots of Kant’s view to his thesis about unsocial sociability.”¹¹

The idea of unsociable sociability plays an important role in the *Idea*, as an explanation of how immoral inclinations or passions can engender a moral outcome. This unsociable propensity, Kant affirms, “is this resistance that awakens all the powers of human being, brings him to overcome his propensity to indolence, and, driven by ambition, tyranny, and greed, to obtain for himself a rank among his fellows, whom he cannot stand, but also cannot leave alone” (*Idee*, 8: 20).

Some commentators have found in the idea of unsocial sociability the main social evil. Kristi Sweet remarks, “Those who suggest that there is something in our unsociable nature that promotes evil are right.”¹² She goes further and associates this social evil with the unsociable sociability of human beings “evil and the principle of self-love in which it is embodied is profoundly anti-social.

This is highlighted in the way that unsociable sociability is expressed in one's desire to 'direct everything as to get his own way'" (Sweet 2013, p. 87).

In the *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (1784), the unsociable sociability is an antagonism that will overcome our initial unsociable nature: from a bad origin, we will obtain a good outcome:

Thus happen the first true steps from crudity toward culture, which really consists in the social worth of the human being; thus all talents come bit by bit to be developed, taste is formed, and even, through progress in enlightenment, a beginning is made toward the foundation of a mode of thought which can with time transform the rude natural predisposition to make moral distinction into determinate practical principles and hence transform a pathologically compelled agreement to form a society finally into a moral whole. (*Idee*, 8: 20)

In the *Religion*, on the other hand, Kant renounces to the idea of a possible moral outcome from immoral passions. There is no possibility that passions left by themselves will find their way to morality. In the *Religion*, Kant stresses another kind of evil, very different from the unsociable sociability. It is not this tendency to run away from society in order to be lonely that leads to evil, but the passions that are aroused through comparison with others.

The *Anthropology* (1797) presents another way of overcoming our evil inclinations through the cultivation of a cultivated society.

The summary of what pragmatic anthropology has to say about the vocation (*Bestimmung*) of the human being is that he is destined (*bestimmt*) through his reason to live in a society of human beings, and in this society, through the arts and sciences, to cultivate himself, civilize himself, and moralize himself. (*Ant*, 7: 324)

Unlike the radical optimist of the *Idea*, in the *Anthropology*, Kant acknowledges that there is evil in men, which "is an inclination to desire actively what is

unlawful, although he knows very well that it is unlawful” (Ant, 7: 324). He also recognizes that passions are cancerous sores of reason and does not attribute any good property to them. However, some hopefulness still remains, since passions, even if they are sores for pure practical reasons, can be overcome through the cultivation of arts and sciences. This sociocultural development, not of the individual, but of the species as a whole will be able to counterbalance evil and accomplish the natural destiny of the species, allowing it to attain full rationality.

However, neither the radical historical optimism of the *Idea* nor the cultural confidence of the *Anthropology* seemed to be enough to overcome evil. In the *Religion* there is a new condition for this development, the establishment of an ethical community, which is not guaranteed by the suggested cultivation of human being of the *Anthropology*, nor by the progress of history and political institutions of the *Idea*.

A social solution, the ethical community, should supplement a historical and cultural solution to evil, since a civil political society, even the most perfect, will never attain it. Wood explains correctly how a moral community differs from every political community:

Its laws cannot be statutes, derived from an arbitrary human authority, but must instead be purely moral laws, which recommend themselves to each man through his own reason. In addition to this, the very principle of a moral community of men will differ from that of a political one. The legislation of every political or juridical state “proceeds from the principle of limiting the freedom of each to those conditions under which it can be consistent with the freedom for everyone.”¹³

The laws of the political community are always coercive laws and a moral community should promote moral relations between its members. Good laws can compel men to an outward legality, but not to a real internal moral improvement of their character. Without a moral community, there could be an

external conformity to the law, but we would never attain the full development of morality.

Allen Wood did not realize that a moral community is only necessary because evil in society is not unsociable sociability but pure evil, which will never be healed by the development of political and cultural history. However, he is right in explaining the necessity for a moral community to heal evil, because an outward legality is insufficient to attain the full development of morality.

Only an ethical community can overcome evil, because the roots of evil are social, and belong to passions that are stimulated through social interaction. Political institutions are necessary, but not sufficient conditions, because they can compel men to an external legality, but not to an improvement of their hearts.

Conclusion: An emotional Kant?

Kant has been criticized by many philosophers for not allowing any role at all for emotions in moral life. Bernard Williams even blames Kant's morality for this flaw in contemporary ethics. In a celebrated chapter of *Problems of the Self*, entitled "Morality and Emotions," he regrets that recent moral philosophy in Britain has not paid enough attention to the problem of emotions. According to him, British philosophers limit themselves to acknowledging emotions in "one of their traditional roles as possible motives for backsliding, and thus as a potentially destructive of moral rationality and consistency."¹ Williams blames Kant's account of morality for that. In opposition to this, he struggles to dismiss several Kantian views about emotions, like the one according to which emotions are supposed to be too capricious and passively experienced, and only a product of natural causation.

What Williams does not take into consideration is the fact that in Kant's morality there is a place for emotions, in the sense that it is not composed solely of *a priori* principles and that it should be completed by an account of emotions. In order to be in keeping with Kant's philosophy, one has to acknowledge that his moral anthropology deals with emotions in great length by analyzing the entire spectrum of human affects and passions.

I have shown so far that Kant's ethics accounts not only for *a priori* principles, but also for some empirical facts about human beings. One of these facts is that we have passions and affects that are difficult to control. Kant also shows that the construction of moral character, in the Aristotelian sense of choice-making, is limited by the temperament of each individual. Among the four

temperaments listed in the *Anthropology* (phlegmatic, melancholic, choleric, and sanguine), the first one is the most likely to attain freedom of affects.

It is also not the case that Kant fails to account for individual character, as Bernard Williams argues. The idea that Kant's ethics does not leave room for the significance of the personal in moral theory is misleading. Kant has a place for moral character. He only points out that moral character can be influenced by natural characters, called temperaments.

Temperament is related to physiological components, which make some temperaments too difficult to tame. Sometimes Kant states that we can diminish the disposition of a bad temper: "A hot temper can be controlled gradually by inner discipline of the mind" (Ant, 7: 260). However, while Kant allows for a possible reform of sensibility (Rel, 6: 47–48), he also seems to accept that specific instances of affects are beyond the rational agent's control. Even if, through the inner discipline of the mind, someone can indeed decrease the number of specific instances of affects, some specific outbursts of emotions will still be beyond our control.

Williams is also mistaken when he criticizes Kant for lacking a theory of virtue. Although such a theory is not construed in the Aristotelian sense of virtue, it has an important role in bridging the gap between what is under our voluntary control and what is not. Apathy is an important component of virtue, although sometimes it consists in what is difficult to control. In this sense, Kantian virtue is primarily self-knowledge and self-control.

I have argued that effective control of the discrete manifestations of stronger affects like anger or fear is not based on changing one's beliefs, like in the ancient tradition of the Aristotelian cultivation or stoic extirpation. Rather, the attempt to control affects should encompass physiological strategies like relaxation and even the use of "medication, which will work directly on the mind, cheering it up or alleviating worries by suppressing or even stimulating affects."

Kant presents some indirect, or even medical, ways to manage what is not under our control. Apathy is essential for Kant's notion of virtue, not in

the stoic sense of hostility toward all inclinations, but at least in the sense of controlling strong affects. Then, for those who are not by nature endowed with a phlegmatic temperament, and are sometimes dominated by particular instances of outbursts of strong affects, Kant advises us to consume “large doses of hellebore rather than to rely on the healing power of sound reason” (Rek, 15: 946).²

Kantian practical philosophy does have a place for emotions; however, these emotions are not a unique kind of phenomenon, and Kant’s theories about them are multifaceted and complex. As I explored in this book, Kant does not have a single theory for emotions, not even a single word for them. While sympathy can help the accomplishment of good actions, passions can lead to evil.

After the publication of the *Vorlesungen uber Anthropologie* in 1997, many Kant scholars have also found that Kant has thought about emotions, and that his theory as a whole has a place for them. Some US Kant scholars such as Paul Guyer, Barbara Herman, Nancy Sherman, and Marcia Baron, have shown that Kant was not that cold philosopher who denied any role to emotion in practical life. After them, a new generation of philosophers has gone further in this task, and among them are Ian Morrison, Alix Cohen, Patrick Frierson, Michel Rohlf, and others.

All these scholars have helped us to understand Kant more broadly. Some of them, however, have gone too far in seeing emotions as having an intrinsic moral value. For the opposite reason to Williams, they are also wrong. Affects and passions are often sources of evil, not of the good. Even if few moral feelings can help in the accomplishment of good actions, they will never have the firmness of the moral law.

NOTES

Chapter 1

- 1 Henry Allison, *Idealism and Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 110.
- 2 R. Henson, "What Kant Might Have Said: Moral Worth and the Overdetermination of a Dutiful Action," *Philosophical Review* 88 (1979): 39–54.
- 3 Barbara Herman, "On the Value of Acting from the Motive of Duty," in *The Practice of Moral Judgment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1–22.
- 4 Herman, "On the Value of Acting," 1.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 6 Paul Guyer, "Moral Worth, Virtue and Merit," in *Kant on Freedom, Law and Happiness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 294.
- 7 Allen Wood, *Kantian Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 149.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 149.
- 9 Henry Allison, *Idealism and Freedom*, XVIII.
- 10 See Allison, *Idealism and Freedom*, 121.
- 11 John Searle, *Rationality in Action* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 13.
- 12 See Henry Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 87.
- 13 Rüdiger Bittner, "Maxims," *Akten des 4. International Kant-Kongress* II, no. 2 (1974): 485–98.
- 14 This example was given by Rüdiger Bittner in the aforementioned article.
- 15 I am using affects here as a translation for *Affekten* and passions for *Leidenschaften*.
- 16 Onora O'Neill, *Constructions of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 82.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 83.
- 18 This thesis was named by Allison as "Incorporation Thesis" and presented in *Kant's Theory of Freedom* (1990) and discussed by him in *Idealism and Freedom* (1996).
- 19 See Allison, *Idealism and Freedom*, 121.

- 20 Iain Morriison, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure in Moral Action* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), 104.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 105.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 121.
- 23 In the § 13 of the *Discourse of Metaphysics*, Leibniz states that “as the individual concept of each person includes once for all everything which can ever happen to him, in it can be seen, a priori the evidences or the reasons for the reality of each event, and why one happened sooner than the other. But these events, however certain, are nevertheless contingent, being based on the free choice of God and of his creatures. It is true that their choices always have their reasons, but they incline to the choices under no compulsion of necessity” (Leibniz, *DM*, § 13). In this statement, Leibniz tries to conciliate the necessity of each event with the free choice of creatures. First, Leibniz holds the position that the concept of an individual substance includes once for all everything which can ever happen to it. Then, if someone knows the concept of an individual substance, one will be able to know everything that can be said concerning this individual. In this case, to know a particular substance is the same as the nature of a circle and derives all its properties from that.

Chapter 2

- 1 Karl Ameriks, “Kant and Motivation Externalism,” in *Moralische Motivation*, eds. H. Klemme, M. Kuhn, and B.D. Schoneker (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 2006), 3.
- 2 Morriison, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure*, 1.
- 3 I take “sympathy” as translation for *Teilnehmung*, instead of “compassion.” *Affekt* will be translated by affect, while *Leidenschaft* by passion. I will reserve emotions for a generic term that denotes moral feelings, affection, and passions.
- 4 Hume also doubts the existence of a creature, in which sympathy was completely absent, which he calls a “monster of fancy.” “It can be said that it does not have such a human creature, for whom the happiness of the others did not provoke pleasure (where it did not have place for envy or revenge), and the appearance of suffering, pain.” D. Hume, *An Essay Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. J.B. Schneewind (Indianópolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983), 52.
- 5 Morriison, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure*, 5.
- 6 Although Frierson put Guyer among the intellectualists, I would rather describe him as an affectionist.
- 7 Patrick Frierson, *Kant’s Empirical Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 117.

- 8 Kelly Sorensen, "Kant's Taxonomy of Emotions," *Kantian Review*, no. 6 (2002): 109–28.
- 9 Sorensen, "Kant's Taxonomy," 114.
- 10 Allen Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 196.
- 11 Nancy Sherman, "The Place of Emotions in Kantian Morality," in *Identity, Character and Morality, Essays in Moral Psychology*, eds. Owen Flanagan and Amelie Rorty (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 159.
- 12 See Karl Ameriks, *Kant and the Historical Turn: Philosophy as Critical Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 91.
- 13 Karl Ameriks, *Kant and the Fate of Autonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 310.
- 14 Marcia Baron, *Kantian Ethics Almost without Apology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
- 15 Sally Sedwick, "Can Kant's Ethics Survive the Feminist Critique?," in *Feminist Interpretations of Immanuel Kant*, ed. May Robin Schott (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 78.
- 16 Paul Guyer, *Knowledge, Reason and Taste: Kant's Response to Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
- 17 *Ibid.*, 164–65.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 179.
- 19 Morrisson, *Kant and the Role of Pleasure*, 5.
- 20 Frierson, *Kant's Empirical Psychology*, 117.
- 21 Bernard Williams, *Problems of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973).
- 22 Jesse Prinz, *The Emotional Construction of Morals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
- 23 *Ibid.*, 14.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 16.

Chapter 3

- 1 Allen Wood, "Practical Anthropology," in *Akten des 4. Internationaler Kant-Kongresses* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2001), Tomo IV, 469.

- 2 H.J. Paton, "Kant on Friendship," in *Friendship: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. Neera Badwar (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 133–73.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 147.
- 4 See Werner Starck, "Kant's Lectures on Anthropology: Some Orienting Remarks," in *Kant's Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide*, ed. Alix Cohen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 11.
- 5 Rudolf Makkreel, "Self-Cognition and Self-Assessment," in *Kant's Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide*, 20.
- 6 This incorporation was shown by Wood, "Practical Anthropology," 464.
- 7 See *Moral Mrongovius*, II 29: 599.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 458.
- 9 I agree with Robert Louden's argument expressed in *Kant's Impure Ethics*. Louden claims that Kantian ethics is composed of a pure and *a priori* part, and of an impure part which is mentioned in the anthropological texts and in the *Doctrine of Virtue*. See R. Louden, *Kant's Impure Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- 10 *Moral Mrongovius*, II 29: 599.
- 11 Patrick Frierson, *What Is the Human Being?* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 11.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 42.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 131.
- 14 Alix Cohen comments this development of the Kantian scholarship since the publication of the *Vorlesungen über Anthropologie* in her introduction to *Kant's Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1 a 9.
- 15 Louden, *Kant's Impure Ethics*, 7.
- 16 The sensitive feelings of pleasure and displeasure, aside from merely physical pain and pleasure, include two other kinds of feelings: sensitivity (*Empfindsamkeit*) and affects (*Affekt*).
- 17 "Many a person even wishes that he could be angry, and Socrates was in doubt whether it would not be good to be angry sometimes; but to have emotions so much under control that one can cold bloodedly deliberate whether or not one ought to be angry appears to be something paradoxical" (*Ant*, 7: 252).

Chapter 4

- 1 This chapter was previously published in *The Journal of Philosophy*, as "What Can Kant Teach Us about Emotions," 101 (2004): 140–58. Published by permission of *The Journal of Philosophy*.

- 2 In the *Groundwork*, Kant writes the following: “Suppose that the mind of this friend of man is clouded with sorrow of his own which extinguished all sympathy with the fate of others, but he still had the power to help those in distress, though no longer stirred by the need of others because sufficiently occupied with his own and suppose that, when no longer moved by any inclination, he tears himself out of this deadly insensibility and does the action without any inclination, simply from duty, then for the first time his action has its genuine moral worth” (G, 4: 398).
- 3 J. Sabini and M. Silver, “Emotions, Responsibility and Character,” in *Responsibility, Character and Emotions*, ed. Ferdinand Schoeman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 165–75.
- 4 “Emotions are brute forces unconnected with higher mental functions. Pain is the obvious model. Pain is a brute force; it is beyond the will; it is, or at least typically is, independent of reason” (Sabini and Silver, “Emotions,” 166).
- 5 Robert Zajonc, “Feeling and Thinking: Preferences Need No Inferences,” *American Psychologist* 35 (1980): 151–75.
- 6 This is the position of William James, see James, “What is an Emotion,” in *The Nature of Emotion*, ed. M. Arnold (London: Penguin, 1968).
- 7 More recently, Jon Elster has developed the idea of a similarity between strong emotions and addiction. See Jon Elster, *Strong Feelings, Emotion, Addiction and Human Behavior* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).
- 8 Baron, *Kantian Ethics Almost without Apology*, 197.
- 9 Wiebke Deimling also claims that “Kant’s taxonomy of affective states is more complex than the distinction his predecessors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries make.” Descartes and Hume, for example use “passion as their most basic term for affective states. Spinoza and Hutcheson use ‘affect’ and ‘affection’ respectively as their most general concepts. Kant decides to use these terms for more specific affective states to get a nuanced picture.” See Wiebke, “Kant’s Pragmatic Concept of Emotions,” in *Emotion and Value in Kant*, ed. Alix Cohen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- 10 While I use affects and passions as translations for *Affekten* and *Leidenschaften*, respectively, I use moral feelings as referring to respect (*Achtung*) and moral feeling itself (*Moralische Gefühl*). In the paper “Kant’s Taxonomy of Emotions,” Kelly Sorensen relate these two feelings to a reason-caused desire. See Sorensen, “Kant’s Taxonomy,” 109–12.
- 11 I use inclination here in a wide sense, referring to a wide range of empirical impulses, including instincts, affects, and appetites. Inclination can also have a specific meaning in Kant’s thought, as the third degree of the faculty of desire. For a more detailed explanation about inclinations, see Wood, *Kant’s Ethical Thought*, and Loudon, *Kant’s Impure Ethics*.
- 12 In *Anthropology*, Kant refers to this kind of sympathy as sensitivity, a capacity to feel states of pleasure or displeasure with the happiness or misery of the others. Kant

writes the following: “Sensitivity is not opposed to equanimity because it is a faculty and a power which either permits the states of pleasure or displeasure, or even keeps them from being felt. Sensitivity is accompanied by a choice. Sentimentality, on the other hand, is a weakness because of its interest in the condition of the others who could play the sentimentalist at will, and even affect that person against his will” (Ant, 7: 236).

- 13 Love of human beings also belongs to what Kant calls “concepts of what is presupposed on the part of feeling by the mind’s receptivity to concepts of duty as such.” However, Kant denies that this kind of practical love is, properly speaking, an emotion, since we cannot have the duty to love someone, if love is a matter of feeling. One can only cultivate this practice of benevolence, but to call it love is “very inappropriate” (MS, 6: 401).
- 14 See MS, 6: 402.
- 15 See Choderlos de Laclos, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972).
- 16 I am indebted to Julian Wuerth and his outstanding work, for the sketch of a map of the self. See Wuerth, *The Account of the Self in Kant’s Philosophy*, PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania. See also Julian Wuerth, *Kant on Mind, Action and Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- 17 According to Collins’s notes on *Anthropology* (1772–73) we observe the soul in a triple perspective, like soul (*anima/Seele*), mind (*animus/Gemüth*), and spirit (*mens/Geist*). The passive soul is called soul/*anima* (*Seele*); the reactive soul is mind/*animus* (*Gemüth*); when the purely active soul is spirit (*mens/Geist*). These three instances of the soul refer not to three substances, but to “three forms of feeling alive.” See Collins’s notes on *Anthropology*, AntC, 25: 16. For a groundbreaking and insightful analysis of the notes on *Anthropology* concerning the self, see Wuerth, *Kant on Mind*.
- 18 See Rek, 15: 944.
- 19 These effects include sympathetic system effects, such as acceleration of the heart, and parasympathetic system effects, such as loosening of the bowels. See Ronald De Souza, *The Rationality of Emotions* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 47–52; Elster, *Strong Feelings*, 36.
- 20 According to Elster, some emotions, like love and anger, are characterized by a point of no return beyond which self-control is no longer possible, since we lose control before we become aware of the emotion. See Elster, *Strong Feelings*, 28–29. I would like to suggest both that this no return point is due to inertial physiological aspects, and that Kant was aware of this when he said that the man in anger should sit down to calm himself. Once anger is triggered, the moment one notices it, it is already too late to maintain self-control.
- 21 The feeling theory goes back to Descartes, Hume and James, “What is an Emotion,” in *The Nature of Emotion*, ed. M. Arnold (London: Penguin, 1968). Recently, the work of Zajonc emphasizes the noncognitive elements of the feeling theory. Zajonc, “Feeling and Thinking,” 151–75.

- 22 See Paul Griffiths, *What Emotions Really Are* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 1–24.
- 23 Examples of propositional attitude theory can be seen in Anthony Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), and Robert Solomon, *The Passions* (New York: Anchor, 1977). The propositional attitude school could also be labeled in a more general way, as cognitive theory. According to De Souza, cognitive theories sustain that emotions have informational content. In his view, Solomon's theory is a modified cognitive theory, where the judgments involved are of a special kind, they are evaluative ones. See De Souza, *The Rationality of Emotions*, 40.
- 24 John Searle, offers a good summary of the basic structure of intentionality. See John Searle, "The Basic Structure of Intentionality, Action, and Meaning," in *Rationality in Action* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 34. I will take his definition of intentionality here: "Intentionality as philosophers use the word, refers to that aspect of mental states by which they are directed at, or about, or states of affairs in the world beyond themselves." Although Kant did not use the vocabulary of intentional states, I think he will agree with Searle that emotions are intentional states.
- 25 About moral salience and emotions in Kant, see Barbara Hermann, *The Practice of Moral Judgment*.
- 26 Michael Moore, "The Moral Worth of Emotions," in *Responsibility, Character and Emotions*, 198.
- 27 Kant writes: "That's why the hideous movements that we call convulsions, and epilepsy, can spread to other people: imagination gives them a certain contagiousness. This gives rise to a strategy, which does not belong to the doctor as such, of practicing medicine merely through the force of imagination. . . . Hence the confidence invalids put in the doctor adds strength to his remedies for even the most enfeebled" (Rek, 15: 944).
- 28 See *Lectures on Ethics*, Mrongovius: "Can I really conceive of a pathological compulsion in man as well? Truly I cannot, for freedom consists in this, that he can be without compulsion in the pathological sense; nor should he be compelled in that way. Even if a man is so constrained, he can nevertheless act otherwise" (29: 617).
- 29 See Elster, *Strong Feelings*.
- 30 Some of the recent exceptions are Griffiths and Elster, who seem to acknowledge that emotions are not a single type of event. Yet, from this fact, they have reached different conclusions. While Griffiths maintains that the category of emotion is not useful philosophically speaking, Elster seems to accept the philosophical use of this category.

Chapter 5

- 1 This chapter was previously published in *The Kantian Review* 13 (2008): 46–66.

- 2 MS, 6: 408.
- 3 I hold that sympathy, moral feelings, and love of benevolence are not strictly speaking affects. Kant is ambiguous about sympathy. In some texts, such as the *Doctrine of Virtue*, it is not considered an affect. However, in the early *Lectures on Anthropology*, and sometimes in the *Anthropology*, it is treated as an affect. See Borges, "Sympathy in Kant's Moral Theory," in *Akten des 4. Internationaler Kant-Kongress*, Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung, eds. Volker Gerhardt, Rolf Peter Hostmann, and Ralph Schumacher (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), Band III, 152–58.
- 4 MS, 6: 409.
- 5 Kant gives at least three different definitions of apathy. In Mrongovius's transcriptions, apathy is the freedom from passion. In the lectures on Anthropology of 84/85, Kant explains the concepts ataraxy and apathy: "The ataraxy of the Pyrrhonists freedom from affects (*Affekten*) and the apathy of the stoics is freedom from passions (*Leidenschaften*) (*Anthropologie*, Mrongovius, 25, 2: 1353)." Together with this commentary, there is a note that refers to Sextus Empiricus's ataraxy, mentioning that the difference between *Affekt* and *Leidenschaft* was unknown to ancient philosophy, and that this was the reason why they did not distinguish between apathy and ataraxy. See 25, 2: 1353, note 199^a. In the *Religion*, the Stoic's apathy is a battle against inclinations (Rel, 6: 58). Here, inclinations should be understood in the general meaning of incentives of sensibility. In the published *Anthropology*, apathy is considered the freedom from affects (7: 753), having the same meaning as the moral apathy of the *Doctrine of Virtue*.
- 6 Ant, 7: 253. Kant is ambiguous about sympathy. While in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, sympathy is considered a moral feeling; in the *Anthropology* it is considered an affect. In this quotation, sympathy is undoubtedly considered an affect, whose suppression will be good to a virtuous state of self-control.
- 7 The soul cannot have full control over its passions because "they are nearly all accompanied by some disturbance which takes place in the heart and consequently also through the blood and animal spirits." Since they have this intrinsically bodily component, once an emotion is incited, there is no possibility of a total rational control of it. We could control the lesser passions, but not the more violent one, until the movement of blood and spirits has been ceased (Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, AT, XI, 364).
- 8 Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, AT, XI, 363.
- 9 Ant, 7: 285.
- 10 Ant, 7: 285.
- 11 Ant, 7: 254.
- 12 Ant, 7: 252.
- 13 Kant, *On Philosophers' Medicine of the Body*, *Rektoratsrede*, Rek, 15: 943.

- 14 See Mary Gregor's Introduction to "On Philosophers' Medicine of the Body," in *Kant's Latin Writings* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1992), 189.
- 15 The idea of the body as a hydraulic machine became common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through the work of Descartes, especially in Holland.
- 16 See Ralph Major, *A History of Medicine* (Springfield: Charles Thomas Publisher, 1954), vol. II, 569–70.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 566.
- 18 *Ant*, 7: 255.
- 19 According to Cumston, these three men "lived at the same time, but this is their only point in common, for their characters and geniuses were as distinctly different as were their doctrines. They may be characterized by saying that Stahl was a man of doctrines, Hoffmann a man of systems and Boerhaave an eclectic. Stahl was the chief of modern vitalism, Hoffman that of solidism, preparing the way for the school of irritability and spasms, while Boerhaave was the chief of the humoral school." See C.G. Cumston, *The History of Medicine* (London/New York: Routledge), 327.
- 20 See W.-F. Bynum and K. Porter, ed., *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine* (London: Routledge, 1993), 257.
- 21 "Sensuum, motuum, mentis et adfectuum, augmen, ab incitationis, in unoquoque eorum instrumento, sanguinem inter alias actiones percitantis, augmine pendet." Joannis Brunonis, *Elementa Medicinae* (Edinbourni: Executebat Ioseph Galetius, Mediolani M, DCC, XCII), § CLIII.
- 22 "Ante perturbationem quae tantum in graviore justo morbi impetu supervenit, sensus omnes hebetiores, motus, tam voluntati, quam non, parentes, pigriores, ingenii acumen minus, sensibilitas et adfectus languidiores, existunt. Cor et arteriae languent, ut harum pulsibus cernitur, item extrema in summo corpore vascula; ut parillore, siccitate cutis, et tumorum diminuta mole, ulcerum exficcatione, et manifesta phlogisticae, quae horum symptomatum similitudinem creet, diatheseos absentia, patet." Brunonis, *Elementa Medicinae*, § CLXXVI.
- 23 According to Mary Gregor, the therapies of Scottish Physiologist John Brown "are said to have killed more people than the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars combined." He also died from his favorite medicines, opium, and whisky. See *Rektoratsrede*, introduction of Gregor, *Kant's Latin Writings*, 191.
- 24 *Ant*, 7: 256.
- 25 Kant, *On Philosophers' Medicine of the Body*, *Rek*, 15: 939.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 15: 943.
- 27 *Ant*, 7: 252.
- 28 Descartes, *Passions of the Soul*, *AT*, XI, 364.

- 29 Sherman, "The Place of Emotions."
- 30 Ibid., 155–56.
- 31 Ant, 7: 260.
- 32 "We can be afraid, e.g., or be confident, or have appetites or get angry, or feel pity, in general have pleasure or pain, both too much or too little, and in both ways not well, but [having these feelings] at the right time, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end and in the right way, is the intermediate and best condition, and this is proper to virtue" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1106 b 20).
- 33 Kant, *Ant*, 7: 253.
- 34 TL, 6: 456.
- 35 "Obligation with regard to moral feeling can be only to cultivate it and to strengthen it through wonder at its inscrutable source" (TL, 6: 399).
- 36 "So the saying 'you ought to love your neighbour as yourself' does not mean that you ought immediately (first) to love him and (afterwards) by means of this love do good to him. It means rather, do good to your fellow human being, and your beneficence will produce love of them in you (as an aptitude of the inclination to beneficence in general)" (TL, 6: 402).
- 37 Ant, 7: 257.
- 38 Baron, *Kantian Ethics Almost without Apology*.
- 39 Ibid., 203.
- 40 Ibid., 200. Here Baron is using affect as a general term for a varied set of emotions. However, her position is clear: passions are worse than affects (*Affekten*).
- 41 Ant, 7: 251.
- 42 See note 2.
- 43 Rel, 6: 29.
- 44 Ant, 7: 262.
- 45 Sherman, "The Place of Emotions," 158–59.
- 46 Ibid., 158.
- 47 Ibid., 159.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 See Ant, 7: 286–92.
- 50 See Sorabji, *Emotions and the Peace of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2.
- 51 See Robert Solomon, *The Passions* (Indianópolis: Hackett, 1993).

- 52 M. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
- 53 See James, “What is an Emotion.”
- 54 See Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will*.

Chapter 6

- 1 A former version of this chapter was published as “Kantian Virtue as a Cure for Affects and Passions,” in *Kant e-Prints*, Campinas, Série 2, v. 4, n. 2, 267–83, jul.-dez., 2009.
- 2 J. Annas maintains in *The Morality of Happiness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) that happiness was a primary notion for all the ancient moral theories: “In them—she says—the notions of the agent’s final end, of happiness and of virtues are primary, as opposed to basic. . . . They are thus primary for understanding; they establish what the theory is a theory of, and define the place to be given to other ethical notions, such as right action” (p. 9). She also points out that stoicism also presents itself as a eudemonistic theory, for which virtue is sufficient for happiness. She cites Arius Didymus: “One’s aims, they say, is being happy, for the sake of which everything is done, while it is not done for the sake of anything further; and this consists in living according to virtue, in living in agreement and further (it is the same thing) in living according to nature” (Arius, 77.16–78.6; Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, 163).
- 3 M. Nussbaum explains the independence of Stoic eudemonism from external contingencies: “According to stoicism, then, only virtue is worth choosing for its own sake; and virtue all by itself suffices for a completely good human life, that is, for eudaimonia. Virtue is something unaffected by external contingency—both (apparently) as to its acquisition and as to its maintenance once acquired. Items that are not fully under the control of the agent—such as health, wealth, freedom from pain, the good functioning of the bodily faculties—have no intrinsic worth, nor is their casual relationship to eudaimonia even that of an instrumental necessary condition” M. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 359.
- 4 J.B. Schneewind, “Kant and Stoic Ethics,” in *Aristotle, Kant and the Stoics, Rethinking Happiness and Duty*, eds. S. Engstrom and J. Whiting (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 289.
- 5 Schneewind, “Kant and Stoic Ethics,” 294.
- 6 “That is to say, in what each has to put his happiness comes down to the particular feeling of pleasure and displeasure in each and, even within one and the same subject, to needs that differ as this feeling changes” (Kant, *KpV*, 5: 25).

- 7 I have in mind Barbara Herman in the last chapter of her book *The Practice of Moral Judgment*.
- 8 Kant has been criticized by many for presenting a minimal morality, without concern for friendship, emotions, and caring about others. Recently, M. Baron has defended Kant, in order to show that the *Doctrine of Virtue* gives us much more than a narrow moral theory. However, she does not consider that the virtuous actions, according to Kant, are supererogatory actions. See Baron, *Kantian Ethics Almost without Apology*, 21–107.
- 9 The idea of a narrow realm of morality, composed of the right, and wrong, and a wider one, composed of broader values also appears in some neo-Kantian contemporary theories. See Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 342ss.
- 10 In *After Virtue*, McIntyre diagnosed Kantian morality a failure of the enlightenment project in the foundation of morality: “The project of providing a rational vindication of morality has decisively failed—he says—and from henceforward the morality of our predecessor culture lacked any public, shared rationale or justification” (McIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd ed., 1984, Notre Dame University, 50). The Kantian moral theory is considered part of this failure to provide a full set of virtues. If McIntyre still persists in the searching for virtue in his neo-Aristotelian theory, Kant seems to take this impossibility of a shared public values as an undeniable truth of his time. He no longer has a conception of what is a worthy life and this is expressed in the absence of a defined conception of happiness.

Chapter 7

- 1 Ted Cohen, “Why Beauty is a Symbol of Morality,” in *Essays in Kant’s Aesthetics*, eds. Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 222.
- 2 “Ästhetische Vorbegriffe der Empfänglichkeit des Gemüts,” in which the meaning of aesthetic is relative to pleasure and displeasure. The meaning of aesthetic in *The Metaphysics of Morals* is closer to the meaning of aesthetic in the *Critique of Judgment*, even if it is not a judgment of taste. However, both the aesthetic feelings related to the reception of morality and the judgment of taste refer to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, and are, thus, distinct from the meaning of aesthetic related to the faculty of knowledge. In this last case, it regards the reference of the representation toward an object received by sensibility. In Kant, there is, therefore, a double meaning of aesthetics: one related to the faculty of knowledge and the other to the faculty of pleasure and displeasure.
- 3 KU, § 59.

- 4 P. Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 333.
- 5 F. Menegoni, *Finalità e destinazione morale nella critica del Giudizio di Kant* (Trento: Pubblicazioni di verifiche 12, 1988), 94.
- 6 H. Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste: A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
- 7 Cf. KU, § 90, 5: 448.
- 8 Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, 335.
- 9 KU, 5: 355.
- 10 KU, 5: 354.
- 11 For a detailed analysis of the instances of the soul, see Chapter 4.
- 12 G.F. Munzel, *Kant's Conception of Moral Character: The Critical Link of Morality, Anthropology, and Reflective Judgment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 129.
- 13 Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, 145.
- 14 Alix Cohen, "The Ultimate Kant Experience: Kant on Dinner Parties," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2008): 315–36.

Chapter 8

- 1 Robin May Schott, "Kant," in *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy*, eds. Alison Jaggar and Iris Marion Young (Malden: Blackwell, 2000), 39.
- 2 Cohen, "The Ultimate Kant Experience," 321.
- 3 May Robin Schott, *Feminist Interpretations of Immanuel Kant* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 78.
- 4 This line of criticism refers not only to Kant but to the rationality of Enlightenment. These criticisms have two different schools of thought that have a parallel with the second and the third waves of feminist movement. According to one of these criticisms, the rationality of Enlightenment is essential to women's liberation. According to the other, this rationality is mainly masculine and women have another way of reasoning in moral matters.
- 5 Marcia Baron, "Kantian Ethics and Claims of Detachment," in *Feminist Interpretations of Immanuel Kant*, 161.
- 6 Baron, "Kantian Ethics," 166.

- 7 See Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).
- 8 Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought*, 396.
- 9 See Jean Rumsey, "Re-vision of Agency in Kant's Moral Theory," in *Feminist Interpretations of Immanuel Kant*, 132.
- 10 Wood, *Kantian Ethics*.
- 11 Rumsey, "Re-vision of Agency," 130.
- 12 Frierson, *What is the Human Being?*, 94.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 96.
- 14 Mari Mikkola, "Kant on Moral Agency and Women's Nature," *Kantian Review* 16 (2011): 89–111.
- 15 Martha Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 57.

Chapter 9

- 1 A previous version of this text has been published in the journal as "Passions and Evil in Kant's Philosophy," *Manuscrito* [On-line], Campinas, 37, no. 2 (2014): 333–55.
- 2 Michael Rohlf, "Emotion and Evil in Kant," *The Review of Metaphysics* 66, no. 4 (2013): 755.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 759.
- 4 A. Wood, "The Intelligibility of Evil," in *Kant's Anatomy of Evil*, eds. Anderson-Gold and Pablo Muchnik (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- 5 Anderson-Gold, *Unnecessary Evil* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001).
- 6 Nussbaum, *Political Emotions*, 166.
- 7 Kristen Sweet, *Kant on Practical Life* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 85.
- 8 Rohlf, "Emotion and Evil in Kant," 749–73.
- 9 Guyer, *Kant on Freedom*, 408.
- 10 Muchnik, *Kant Theory of Evil* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 27.

- 11 Ibid., 2.
- 12 Sweet, *Kant on Practical Life*, 87.
- 13 Allen Wood, *Kant's Rational Theology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 189.

Conclusion

- 1 Williams, *Problems of the Self*, 207.
- 2 Hellebore is a flower (*Helleborus*) which was largely used for paralysis, gout, and insanity.

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