

E Kant - I Fondamenti della Metafisica dei Costumi

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Via Esio, 19

Scope - to state Kant's points as theses  
to state his arguments  
to state their logical interrelation  
to state their truth and error.

Preface. Philosophy (PK) divided into Physics, Ethics, Logic.

Logic is purely formal: it is concerned with the intelligible as such.

Physics + ethics arise from the conjunction with the intelligible of two different types of content - nature or liberty

2. As there is a metaphysics of nature, so there is a metaphysics of liberty, of customs.

3. A metaphysics of customs treats of morality as such, the morality incumbent not merely on man but on all reasonable beings. Needs to be supplemented by experience, sound judgment, effective motives so that it penetrates to the will.

Conscious only the pure form of obligation.

4. Morality requires more than mere conformity with moral law: it requires that the motive of the conformity be morality.

"per rispetto alla legge"

Because = morality is otherwise casual, haphazard

↳ a confusion of pure morality with empirical rules leads to error and is unphilosophic

But = supposes hypothesis false - presupposing conformity, must the motive be morality itself.

↳ is beside the point - to obtain truth or be philosophic is excellent. What has that to do with my motives?

The question of motive is a question of practical execution.

Primum est esse: in first place conformity to law  
in second place higher motive.

But practically, the higher the motive, the greater the attention effort + thoroughness of one's moral life. On the other hand, it is a very gradual process by which natural spontaneity is overcome and reflective motives dominate all thought words actions. On Kant's criterion of possible universalization the reflectiveness of "per rispetto alla legge" is not possible; maybe his impossibility is empirical

NB. More an higher motive than reason

Voluntas pura: una voluntas unicamente determinata da principi a priori, anz' alemo morante empirico.

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Part I Passaggio dalla coscienza razionale comune  
alla coscienza filosofica della morale:

- 9 Non si può concepire nulla nel mondo - né in generale di là da esso - che sia assolutamente buona, fuorché una buona volontà.  
Nothing good of nature, of body, of mind nor natural qualities are simply good: their being good depends upon conjunction with a good will.
- 10 Again, the goodness of the good will is inmanent: it retains its value whether an external end be attained or not. Failure to attain an external good does not of itself detract from the merit of the effective effort of will.
- 11 If the end of man is something to be attained by man [le sue conservazioni, il suo benessere, in una parola la sua felicità] nature would have moved in making us instinctive but reason the means at man's disposal for attaining his end.  
of Aristotle - would better please if man were free.
- 12 ∴ the aim of nature is "una volontà buona in sé stessa e non una volontà buona come mezzo per conseguire altri scopi"
- 13 "Può darsi dunque che questa volontà non sia il bene totale e unico, ma dev'essere il bene supremo, condizione di ogni altro, come di ogni aspirazione alla felicità"
- 14 True that the good will is a rigorous criterion with which earthly utilitarianism is no criterion at all [of. Ignatian indifference to all in world + Thomas "homo hominis est sedem rationem esse"]  
But, the Kantian expression says more than this, though his proof leads to no broader conclusion.

The good will is the moral good: but only in the case of the act performed solely out of a sense of duty - per rispetto alla legge - can we be certain of the goodness of the will - can we be certain that a man is not honest but merely because honesty is the best policy, etc. of pp 14, 15 - Therefore, the good will is the will that acts solely "per rispetto alla legge."

But, the good will is the will that is in conformity with the dictate of reason. It is good, whether we can know its goodness or not. Kant confesses the experimental method of isolation with moral precept. The question whether a motive is right or wrong is a moral question and an empirical question: it has nothing to do with a metaphysics of customs. On the other hand "per rispetto alla legge" is the fundamental motive - the promise to all others - the only motive - that can be considered in a pure ethic. Any other motive involves either the empirical or a theory of the empirical. Catholic doctrine makes God the motive but God is a pure intelligible - it supports this motive with others but this is the practical question of p 3.

N.B. The Kantian contention is that the good act performed out of inclination is not formally a moral act. At a theoretical position, this is untenable: it defines morality, moral judgment.

Kant - *Foundations of Metaphysics of Morals* p 3

Duty - ① done out of duty not by inclination.

16 ② Moral worth is measured by moral principle of action and not by the end to be attained p 18.

17 - Otherwise we are moved by empirical and so not by duty.

③ Duty is the necessity of performing an action out of "per rispetto alla legge"

Hence, since no object can move the will to a moral act but only the moral law as such, it follows that the will must proceed entirely from the empirical. Practically, the maxim: *osservare tutte le leggi anche a costo di tutte le mie inclinazioni*.

19 - What is the moral law as something distinct from the result of action and the morality of such a result?

"io non devo mai agire se non a condizione di poter volere che la mia massima divenga legge universale. La semplice legalità imperiale è dunque ciò che serve qui di principio alla volontà --"

Truth of this is that universality is an aspect of the intelligible as such. The moral law is an intelligible; all intelligibles as such are universal; ergo, the moral law is universal.

Verification: is lying permissible. If it ever is, it always is. But it cannot always be. Ergo.

Objection: questo is a general rule lying is not permissible. But do not circumstances alter cases, put a new intelligibility in things?

Is it not sufficient to universalise the complete case: in some circumstances or such, lying is permissible.

Similarly, for omission.

Kant is right, but why?

You have to appeal to an intrinsic significance of reason function or speech that is found in every case and under all circumstances, with omission or lying unacceptable. So Kant tries to understand but his

p4 empty category ha a content. It has not.

p22. ... nei bisogni e nelle inclinazioni, il cui complesso soddisfacimento si chiama felicità

... una dialettica naturale, cioè una tendenza a ragionare sottilmente, anche pascamente, contro questa legge severa del dovere ...

## Parte II Passaggio dalla filosofia morale popolare alla metafisica dei costumi.

25es. Duty a pure a priori and not a matter of experience [other example p27]

Certainly, the moral law is not a proposition purely & simply. But it has no content at all, only the notion of universality & the like, unless the empirical element is introduced. There has to be an understanding of the function of politics for there to be a moral law with a content of utility p19.

28 -- non c'è bisogno di molte arte per farsi comprendere dalle masse, quando si rinuncia ad ogni profondità --

30 "Invece una morale ibrida, che si compone di impulsi derivanti dai sentimenti e dalle inclinazioni, e nello stesso tempo di concetti razionali, deve render lo spirito indeciso tra motivi che non possono esser riferiti a nessuna principio, che solo per caso possono condurre al bene, ma più spesso al male."

Kant was not in reproachably confining the moral good to the dictate of reason but in too narrowly interpreting the dictate of reason. He does this in two ways

1° Intellect understands experience + so morality depends on experience as upon a specifying matter. The content of the moral law is intrinsically specified by experience & not autonomously determined by the pure notion of intelligibility. There is synthesis in the content, not merely universality in the form.

2° Good is the pure intelligible.

3° supernatural motives depend upon the transcendence of the <sup>Intelligibile</sup>

4. p10 "... tutte le nozioni morali hanno la loro origine perfettamente a priori nella ragione --"

15. Kant - Fund. Metaph. Customs.

E, 7, 1 - 177<sup>9</sup> 13  
q. Nicom. II, 2, 5 - 1139<sup>4</sup>

132 -- la volontà non è altra cosa che la ragione pratica.

-- la volontà è quella parte che non permette di scegliere se non ciò che la ragione, indipendentemente dall'incitazione, riconosce come praticamente necessario o come buono. Ma se la ragione non determina sufficientemente da sé sola la volontà, se questa è inoltre sottoposta a condizioni soggettive (o determinati impulsi) che non sempre si accordano con le condizioni oggettive, in una parola, se la volontà non è in sé perfettamente conforme alla ragione (come avviene talvolta tra gli uomini) le azioni riconosciute oggettivamente necessarie sono soggettivamente contingenti, e la determinazione di tale volontà, d'accordo con leggi oggettive, è costrizione; cioè il rapporto delle leggi oggettive a una volontà che non è assolutamente buona, è rappresentato [sic to be conceived] come la determinazione della volontà di un essere ragionevole, per mezzo di principi razionali, è vero, ma ai quali questa volontà ~~stabilita~~ non obbedisce necessariamente per sua natura.

"La rappresentazione di un principio oggettivo, in quanto obbligatorio per la volontà, si chiama comunemente (della ragione); e la formula del comando imperativo"

15. Imperative is "dictate of right reason in the <sup>general</sup> concrete"

33 Imperative implies possibility of real act; human liberty <sup>is</sup> not a proprio pura but it contains imperativeness.

Imperatives are hypothetical or categorical.

Hypothetical regard means to an end that need not be desired, but possible actual (real).

Categorical are simply imperatives, whether we matter what we desire or wish or will.

Uncategorical imperative follows from the nature of the will  
appetitus rationalis sequens formam intellectus.  
inclinetis naturalis sequens formam intellectus. 1/87/4c.

Hypothetical imperative

• Problematic: end possible - practical science - mechanical acts.

35 b. Assertive: end actual (real) - happiness; as a matter of fact this end exists in all men

Categorical imperative is apodictic (34) -- non riguarda la materia dell'azione, né quel che deve risultare, ma la forma e il principio donde deriva l'azione stessa; e il suo

p. 6.

26 carattere di bontà essenziale consiste nell' intenzione, qualunque cosa sia il risultato."

- 1 regole di abilità - hypothetical or possible
  - 2 consigli di prudenza - hypothetical or actual
  - 3 precetti di moralità - categorical or intellectually absolute.
- ↳ hypothetical: commands a means: possible de re and de facto
- ↳ technical      2 pragmatic [i.e. for well-being]      3 moral

N.B. Person who desires heaven as his happiness will with consistency desire sin in this life and a death-bed repentance. The preacher's argument that you have a higher place in heaven if no sin; that you cannot be certain of a death-bed repentance, etc., is not always effective. Again, confessors for to say this is only a venial sin; that will be taken as treatment to a general licence to commit the sin as often as you wish.

Again, what is happiness?

p. 28. Pict arguments against any attempt to define happiness in content - Not riches, learning, long life, health.

"Non si può dunque agire secondo principi determinati per essere felice, ma solo secondo consigli empirici, per esempio: la sanità, l'amicizia, la gentilezza, la prudenza, etc..."

∴ no commands but only counsels

∴ "il problema di determinare sicuramente ed in modo generale la condotta idonea a procurare la felicità di un essere ragionevole, è perfettamente insolubile."

"la felicità non è un ideale della ragione, ma dell'immaginazione"

Yes, that is Kant's sense of happiness, but it can be an ideal of reason - i.e. attaining the end of creation

p. 29. No a posteriori proof of categorical imperative, because we are unable to know with certainty that any act was ever performed simply "per rispetto alla legge".

Mean strive; therefore, there is something to be strived for; there is a meaning to Action; that meaning is the specified moral law.

Kant. Found. Metaph. Customs p. 7.

p. 41 Agisci secondo una norma che tu possa volere diventare nello stesso tempo legge universale.

Agisci come se la massima della tua azione dovesse, per tua volontà, diventare legge universale della natura.

N.B. The introduction of "nature" involves the empirical to the extent that the existence of nature is implied. We are no longer dealing with the pure form. Hence Kant is able to test "maxims" by asking could the maxim represent a law of nature. How to propose a nature is to presuppose a being that has in itself a given intelligibility and Kant's test becomes simply a test of whether or not in a particular case we have stated the natural law or not. i.e. Kant presupposes the existence of a natural law.

This is evident from the instances Kant gives pp 42, 43.

The transition is from the pure intelligible [legge universale] to the applied intelligible [legge universale della natura].

But on p. 41 Kant says he is merely attempting testing whether his norm of morality is a premise to the applied moral law. It is not such a premise but only a test.

p. 44 "la cui deduzione dall'unico principio susposto cade sotto gli occhi"

45. -- solo ci proibisce la libertà personale di fare un'eccezione (per una volta) per noi stessi e per una nostra inclinazione."

Contradiction between one thing as universal law and another as the law for exception in my favour.

Contradiction between will as potency & will as determinate of person, i.e. inhibition of phenomenal flow.

46 "Ma non posso riuscirci ancora a dimostrare a priori che un tale imperativo esiste realmente -"

It follows from the a posteriori account of the idea of morality.

48 "ciò che serve alla volontà come principio soggettivo per determinarsi è il fine."

Distinguished: end to be attained by action  
intention of action = intelligible as law of action  
impulse to action = mere desire

If the end is immediate, i.e. happiness below, then the action is moral & based on categorical imperative  
If the end is not immediate but attained by something else then first, action is amoral & based on hypothetical imperative

49. Hence man & every rational creature exists as an end in se and never merely as a means.  
For, the action has an end in itself (conformity to law) and since the end of the action is in itself, therefore the end of the man acting is in himself.

Kant seems to lack precision. From his premise it only follows that "man acting" has within himself [i.e. not in empirical order or outside the act as such] the end of the acting. This does not involve that man is never simply a means but that no human act is ever simply a means. It does not exclude the possibility that makes the human act a means to God, since God's end is precisely the goodness of the human act as a means to His eternal glory.

This consideration of "man acting" as an end in himself is but a partial understanding of the datum: it does not belong to the pure practical reason; the partial understanding by its incompleteness leads to confusion & probably error - which is a lack of perspective.



p 9 Kant Found. Metaph. Customs.

50. "Agisci in modo da trattar l'umanità, sia nella tua persona, come in quella di ogni altro, sempre come fine, e mai semplicemente come mezzo."

∴ "la natura ragionevole esiste come fine in se"

The end of action is in the action itself; as much in that of others as in the case of my own. Reason sets this absolute value indifferently for all, though there is a natural order (charity vs self or those at hand, piety vs relatives etc.)

The criterion is valid as an understanding of human life: living is giving - above all, it is giving the moral good. Hence, the supreme "giving" is St Paul's "estote imitatores mei sicut et ego Xpi." for this giving is giving the spark that leaps from one soul to another and directs all thought and all effort to the eternal by its whole-hearted disregard of the world, the flesh, the devil.

52. "L'idea della volontà di ogni essere ragionevole come volontà legislatrice"

54. autonomy of will: it is a law in itself.

heteronomy of will: it is moved by an interest and the act is a means to the end. True but simplistic & so easily lead to false conclusions.

56. What has a value has an equivalent; "ma ciò che è al di sopra di ogni valutazione e che non può quindi avere un equivalente, ha una dignità."

58. "L'autonomia è dunque il principio della dignità della natura umana e di ogni essere ragionevole."

61. "legis dei fini" a word parallel to "regno della natura"

[But nature quotes blindly according to Kant  
I morality consists in constituting and executing the law

"il rispetto per una semplice idea debba servir di norma inflessibile per la volontà"

"altrimenti non potrebbe esser concepito che come atrocissimo alla legge fisica dei suoi bisogni"

64. Autonomy of will: "is debitas per quanta causa, perchi volis  
an alia causa"  
 Autonomy of will: "debito agit causa, quod nullo modo volis aliam  
 causa"

Opponent: if the reason of the "ought" is a "willing" "desiring"  
 the question returns: why ought I will? desire?  
 Fundamentally, there must be simply an "ought" and or  
 there is no "ought" at all that merely desire with  
 consequent "oughts" that are purely hypothetical.  
 The simple "ought" the ultimate "ought" has to be  
 an "a priori" of Reason and has to be pure Reason or  
 in no way empirical.

However, the autonomy of the will is very relative.  
 The will constitutes no law otherwise: Reason  
 constitutes the law and will executes it; now,  
 it is not human reason but absolute Reason that  
 constitutes the law; human reason is merely the "praxis".  
 Kant's narrow field of consideration and his disjunction  
 autonomy or heteronomy tend to make the truth of the  
 matter (submission to God's law) appear plain.

On the other hand, avoid error of saying that there can be no divine obligation  
 apart from a natural theology. There is not a true or complete theory  
 of obligation apart from God, Cosmology. There is no divine  
 obligation which, understood, proves the existence of God, Angels.

Finally: "I ought to act in this way, no matter what I  
 wish" is simply the refusal to explain. The "perchi"  
 is not the reason why I do the thing but the explanation  
 of why I ought to.

65 Kant again insists that he is not demonstrating the  
 actuality of the categorical imperative: his point is,  
 if the common notion of morality as an absolute  
 implies necessarily a categorical imperative.

p<sup>11</sup>  
III Panegirio della metafisica dei protinni alla critica  
della ragione pratica pura.