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A CIVIC ETHICS IN KANT?

Abstract

The paper investigates whether there is space in Kant's practical thought for juridical morality and for political virtues. To this end, we will first discuss the *Doctrine of Method* of the second *Critique* and consider the possible existence of a moral schematism analogous to the transcendental schematism of the first *Critique*. We will then consider differences and similarities between Kant's doctrine of right and his ethics, in order to ponder the question whether one can assert the possibility of political and civic virtues in his political thought.

Keywords:

Doctrine of method, schematism, republicanism, civic virtues

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The "Doctrine of the Method" of the *Critique of Practical Reason* has never encountered great favor among Kant's interpreters.¹ In classical commentaries on this work, such as Lewis Beck's (1960), and in more recent ones like Filippo Gonnelli's (1999), the *Methodenlehre* is left aside or dealt with in just a few lines. Stefano Bacin tries to explain this silence by pointing out the richness and complexity of the pages that precede it, which in fact are some of the most discussed and commented in the whole Kantian oeuvre. Although this part is not as innovative as the rest of the book, it is important, according to Bacin (2010: 197), to understand why Kant put it at the end of a text as ambitious as the second *Critique*. The answer is threefold: Kant (KpV, V: 151; cf. Bacin: 2010: 200) claims that the doctrine of the method should show "(1) the way in which one can provide the laws of pure practical reason with *access* to the human mind and *influence* on its maxims, that is, (2) the way in which one can make objectively practical reason *subjectively* practical as well"

¹ I would like to thank Kim Butson for revising the text.

and, finally, it should (3) produce “morality of dispositions” instead of mere “legality of actions.”

Its role is therefore fundamental, since it aims to bring into our everyday moral life the results of the philosophical speculations developed in the rest of the work. According to Joachim Kopper (2004: 402 f.), the doctrine of the method invites the reader to “moral self-understanding; and this should happen not through solitary thinking, but through dialogue.” The reference to dialogue can be better understood if we consider that in the section on the doctrine of the method at the end of the *Doctrine of Virtue* in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant claims explicitly that the method of the doctrine that aims to teach the practical exercise of virtue is the method of dialogue or catechism. In other words, according to Kopper (2004: 403), in the second part of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant “distances himself from speculation and address oneself to common sense.” The doctrine of the method has, therefore, not a merely theoretical but also an eminently practical function – and this shows once more that Kant was not simply interested in building an abstractly coherent and formally correct ethical theory without regards for the possibility of its application. On the contrary, he gave great importance to the latter. If one left aside the pages on the doctrine of the method of the second *Critique*, one would come to a partial, distorted reading of Kant’s moral philosophy and both its practical and its theoretical intentions. This would be tantamount to neglecting these aspects since already with the *Groundwork* Kant aimed to develop an ethics that was compatible with common sense. In the *Groundwork*, he took common sense morality as his starting point, but he chose the opposite path in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, in whose second part he showed how the theoretical conclusions he reached in the first part should be applied to reality through common sense. At the same time, the same common sense arrives at conclusions that prove the plausibility of the theoretical conclusions. More specifically, it proves the existence of moral receptivity in individuals: “We will therefore show, *by observations anyone can make*, that this property of our minds, this receptivity to a pure moral interest [...] is the most powerful incentive to the good” (KpV, V: 152). The doctrine of the method has, therefore, the task of showing that the moral theory developed in the first part of the *Critique* is not a mere abstraction but corresponds to observations that *anyone* can make in their everyday experience. We agree with Bacin (2010: 207) when he claims that the doctrine of the method serves precisely to make complete the project of the *Critique*.

Once again, the doctrine of the method has a double function – a theoretical and a practical one. First, to prove through common sense the validity of the moral theory developed in the first part of the *Critique*, and second, to offer a guide to effectively transform the moral law into a mo-

tive for action. In this sense, it lays the groundwork for the moral education of individuals, as Kant explicitly claims at the end of this section: "I have intended, here, only to point out the most general maxims of the doctrine of the method of moral cultivation and exercise" (KpV, V: 161). In the above-mentioned doctrine of the method of ethics that closes the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant offers a concrete example of what he means by 'moral cultivation and exercise' when he sketches a moral catechism in which the teacher instructs the pupil to pose moral questions and then answer them (TL, VI: 480 ff.). This corresponds to what, in the doctrine of the methods of the second *Critique*, was called the first exercise, namely "making appraisal of actions by moral laws a natural occupation and, as it were, a habit accompanying all our own free actions as well as our observation of those of others" (KpV, V: 159). The second exercise consists in drawing "attention, in the lively presentation of the moral disposition in examples, to the purity of will" (KpV, V: 160). Now, in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant insists on the fact that "[a] good example (exemplary conduct) should not serve as a model but only as a proof that it is really possible to act in conformity with duty" (TL, VI: 480). The example should serve as a tool for reflection, not as a model to be blindly followed, since from the moral point of view what counts is the intention with which we perform an action, not its mere content or its conformity to the law. That is, what counts is its morality, not its legality (MS, VI: 214). For this reason, the example can only serve to awaken in the pupil of the moral catechism that moral perceptivity that we all have but that we need to develop through moral reflection and through the practice of virtue. In this context, however, I will not discuss the question of moral education in Kant (Cf. Munzel, 1999; Munzel, 2002: 151–163; dos Santos, 2007). Rather, I will analyze the doctrine of the method of the second *Critique* and then, using the findings of this analysis, I will investigate the possible foundation of juridical morality and political or civic virtue. My first step involves returning to the Kantian text.

As we saw above, Kant claims that the doctrine of the method should show "(1) the way in which one can provide the laws of pure practical reason with *access* to the human mind and *influence* on its maxims, that is, (2) the way in which one can make objectively practical reason *subjectively* practical as well" and, finally, it should (3) produce "morality of dispositions" instead of mere "legality of actions" (MS, VI: 151).

The first two points concern the possibility that the moral law (which is an objective principle of action) influences our action by being incorporated into our maxims (which are subjective principles). This issue has caused rivers of ink to flow, but I will focus on the primary text, not its interpreters. In the *Religionsschrift* (RGV, VI: 24), Kant claims that choice (*Willkür*) cannot "be determined to action 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).” Allison (1990, 5 f.) has called this position ‘incorporation thesis.’ The question is, how can the moral law enter individuals’ maxims? What leads individuals to incorporate it into their maxims? The answer is far from obvious. In the *Groundwork* Kant remarks: “Now, an action from duty is to put aside entirely the influence of inclination and with it every object of the will; hence there is left for the will nothing that could determine it except objectively the *law* and subjectively *pure respect* for this practical law” (GMS, IV: 400). In a footnote in this passage, Kant observes that

though respect is a feeling, it is not one *received* by means of influence; it is, instead, a feeling *self-wrought* by means of a rational concept and therefore specifically different from all feelings [...], which can be reduced to inclination or fear. What I cognize immediately as a law for me I cognize with respect, which signifies merely consciousness of the *subordination* of my will to a law without the mediation of other influences on my sense. 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 (GMS, IV: 401).

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In chapter three of the first book of part one of the second *Critique* (KpV, V: 71), which bears the title “On the incentives of pure practical reason,” Kant takes a more radical stance and claims that “[w]hat is essential to any moral worth of actions is that the moral law determine the will immediately” and not through a feeling, “of whatever kind.” Respect is not even mentioned, in order not to suggest that it might be a feeling that determines the will, as might still seem to be the case in the abovementioned passage from the *Groundwork*. Respect, therefore, *goes along* with the incorporation of the moral law into the subjective maxim, but it does not cause it. How, then, can the moral law have access to our mind and find its way into our maxims without going through the mediation of something subjective, even if the latter is not a feeling? Can the doctrine of the method of the second *Critique* offer an answer to this question?

Before discussing this point, I would like to refer to another passage of the second *Critique* (KpV, V: 146 ff.): paragraph IX of the second book of part one, which bears the title “On the wise adaptation of the human being’s cognitive faculties to his practical vocation.” The text is worth quoting in its integrity, but in this context, I will combine quotations and paraphrasing. These are its first lines: “If human nature is called to strive for the highest good, it must also be assumed that the measure of its cognitive faculties, especially their relation to one another, is suitable to this end.

Now, the *Critique* of pure *speculative* reason proves its utter insufficiency for solving, conformably with this end, the most important problems that are proposed to it." One could say that Nature is behaving 'in a stepmotherly fashion,' since it does not provide us with the faculty that is necessary to reach the highest good. Of course, this is not Kant's own position. "Assuming now that nature had here complied with our wish and given us that capacity for insight or that enlightenment which we would like to possess," what would be the consequence? Considering human nature, our inclinations would have the first word and "the moral law would afterward speak, in order to keep them within their proper limits," as actually happens. However, since we would have a direct insight into the moral law and the consequences of our possible disobedience to it, the result would be highly undesirable.

God and eternity with their awful majesty would stand unceasingly *before our eyes* (for what we can prove perfectly holds as much certainty for us as what we are assured of by our sight). Transgression of the law would, no doubt, be avoided: what is commanded would be done; but because the *disposition* from which actions ought to be done cannot be instilled by any command, and because the spur to activity in this case would be promptly at hand and *external*, reason would have no need to work itself up so as to gather strength to resist the inclinations by a lively representation of the dignity of the law: hence most actions conforming to the law would be done from fear, only a few from hope, and none at all from duty, and the moral worth of actions, on which alone in the eyes of supreme wisdom the worth of the person and even that of the world depends, would not exist at all. As long as human nature remains as it is, human conduct would thus be changed into mere mechanism in which, as in a puppet show, everything would *gesticulate* well but there would be *no life* in the figures (KpV, V: 148).

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Fortunately, however, "it is quite otherwise with us," since we have no direct view into the moral law: "the moral law within us, without promising or threatening anything with certainty [hope and fear are therefore excluded as possible incentives of action – A. P.], demands of us disinterested respect." When this respect becomes "active and ruling," we can have "a view into the realm of the supersensible, though only with weak glances" and "there can be a truly moral disposition."

Contrarily to what Kant claimed in other passages, on this page respect seems to take the role of motivating our will, while the moral law fulfils this task only indirectly, that is, by awakening our respect for it. Furthermore, Kant emphatically claims that we would lose our freedom of action if we could have before our eyes the consequences of our obedience or disobedience to the moral law in all its force: we would become like lifeless puppets, empty figures, gesticulating automata that act *necessarily* according to the moral law, but never *freely* out of duty. Apparently, we must

fight against our inclination because otherwise we would lose our moral freedom. However, we still face the question of how the moral law can influence our actions if we have no direct view of it (and of the consequences of our actions). Through which filter could we try to catch a glimpse of the suprasensible realm? To answer this question, we should recur to the idea of a moral schematism that works in the practical realm analogously to the transcendental schematism in the epistemic realm. We should think, more precisely, of a double moral schematism: a practical-theoretical one, which would allow us to know the moral law; and a practical-pragmatical one, through which the moral law could determine our will.

It is not by chance, then, that this difficult and disturbing passage immediately precedes the section on the doctrine of the method, since it is in the latter that what I have called moral schematism is treated. Its main element is what Kant calls receptivity (*Empfänglichkeit*). This word appears only twice in the text, but the verb *empfinden* occurs three times, the noun *Empfindung* two, and the adjective *empfindlich* one. We could, therefore, claim that in the text there is a conceptual constellation articulated around the idea of moral receptivity. According to Kant (KpV, V: 152), the latter is “a property of our minds” that allows us to develop a “pure moral interest” and a “representation of virtue.” Such a property is present in everyone, including in uneducated or even corrupted minds, and can be awakened and refined. The existence of this “feeling,” as Kant now calls it (KpV, V: 153) can be proved “by observations anyone can make” (KpV, V:152). The philosopher offers an example of such observations in the following paragraph when he talks about the ‘subtle reasoning’ on the moral worth of actions and persons, which is quite common in the conversations of ‘mixed companies.’ When they talk about such topics, individuals appear to have different forms of moral receptivity, since some of them “are precise, refined, and subtle in thinking out everything that could lesson or even just make suspect the purity of purpose and consequently the degree of virtue in it,” while others are “inclined chiefly to defend the goodness that is related of this or that deed against all injurious charges of impurity and ultimately to defend the whole moral worth of the person” (KpV, V:152). In these discussions, the moral character of the judging person is often revealed, as Kant observes. More generally, though, what is revealed is the subjective capacity to judge the moral character of actions. The latter is not a property of actions in the same sense that color or mass are physical properties of things that can be described objectively. The forms of intuition and the categories of understanding grant us access to the properties of phenomena and allow us to describe them objectively. In the case of the moral character of action, we do not have access through our senses to the intention of the moral actor; however, this is a determinant factor

when it comes to ascertaining the moral worth of an action, Therefore, we cannot give an objective description of such moral worth. At most, we can infer it on the basis of our observation, by pondering the scant elements we have access to. This ponderation happens, according to Kant, in virtue of a “propensity of reason” (KpV, V: 154), thanks to the above-mentioned receptivity to pure moral interest. Once this faculty has been awakened, it never errs in identifying pure morality, so that even a ten-year-old child is capable of recognizing it in the actions of other persons, like in the example offered by Kant of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII (KpV, V: 155 f.). Moral receptivity is the filter that allows us to recognize whether the moral law was followed in the actions we are called to judge. The ten-year-old who places him or herself in the place of Anne Boleyn and the honest person who refuses to calumniate an innocent are acknowledging that the moral value of an action consists in the purity of its incentive, for example, in renouncing any incentive that might be reduced to personal happiness. They are acknowledging, therefore, that moral law demands that we act solely out of duty, and from the idea of duty they will be able to go back to the content of the moral law itself, as Kant explains in the first section of the *Groundwork*: common sense is able to formulate the moral law alone, without help from the philosopher.

Once we have acknowledged that the moral law demands a pure intention, we can incorporate it into our maxims. But which mechanism leads to incorporating the objective law into the subjective maxim? Once again, the starting point is moral receptivity, which shows us what the moral law demands from us, namely, that we act solely out of duty. This receptivity must be awakened and educated. This is the first step of the moral education as Kant (KpV, V: 159) describes it in these pages: “*At first it is only a question of making appraisal of actions by moral laws a natural occupation and, as it were, a habit accompanying all our own free actions as well as our observation of those of others, and of sharpening it.*” In this way, we will produce in ourselves “a certain interest” in the moral law “[f]or, we finally come to like something the contemplation of which lets us feel a more extended use of our cognitive powers, which is especially furthered by that in which we find moral correctness” (KpV, V: 160). To make this interest become active, however, we need a second moral exercise, “namely to draw attention, in the lively presentation of the moral disposition in examples, to the purity of will,” until “the pupil’s attention is fixed on the consciousness of his *freedom*,” which consists in “the *inner freedom* to release himself from the impetuous importunity of inclinations” (KpV, V: 160 f.). When the mind become conscious of its freedom, it feels initially a painful sensation (*Empfindung*) (freedom is also a burden) and becomes capable of experiencing a feeling of self-satisfaction precisely

because it can release itself from the influence of inclinations. The moral subject develops a *practical* interest for acting out of duty and freely, that is, without blindly obeying inclinations. In the *Groundwork*, Kant gives a definition of interest that helps to better comprehend this point. Interest is defined there as “[t]he dependence of a contingently determinable will on principles of reason.” If our will were always determined by principles of reason, like in the case of God or of a holy will, we would not have interests. But our will does not always conform to reason and can, therefore, “*take an interest* in something without therefore *acting from interest*.” In the first case, we have a practical interest in the action; in the second (acting from interest) we have an interest in the object of the action “insofar as it is agreeable to me” (this is what Kant calls ‘pathological interest’). Therefore, “in the case of an action from duty we must look not to interest in the object but merely to that in the action itself and its principle in reason (the law)” (GMS, IV: 412 f.).

Through the abovementioned exercise (discussing examples of morally good actions), we can awaken in ourselves practical interest, that is, an interest in such actions. As Kant (GMS, IV: 401) claims, “[a]ll so-called moral *interest* consists simply in *respect* for the law.” As we saw, in the second *Critique*, Kant makes it clear that our will must be determined not by respect, but directly by the moral law. The task of respect for the law, that is, of the moral interest, is to make sure that my maxim has only the moral law as its incentive. It is, therefore, a merely negative task, for it consists in freeing our mind from the influence of inclinations and in preparing it to be influenced by moral law in its purity. At the same time, this is a fundamental task, since it is only when it has been excluded that inclinations serve as incentives for our actions and the moral law can become such an incentive, filling the void left by inclinations. The pure moral interest, that is respect for the moral law, is the practical-pragmatical schematism we were looking for, since it allows that the moral law determine the will to incorporate it into its maxim.

In the second part of this essay, I will consider the possible consequences of the position exposed in the ‘Doctrine of the method’ of the second *Critique* for a civic ethics. In recent years, interpreters have increasingly discussed the republican character of Kant’s political thought, starting with Habermas’ mention of a ‘Kantian republicanism’ – an expression he uses to indicate Kant’s concern with self-government by the citizens of a political body.² However, these interpreters do not discuss whether one could find in Kant’s political thought another characteristic element of classic republicanism, namely the notion of civic virtue and the corre-

² Cf. Habermas (1996: 126); cf. also Kaniowski (2013: 49–64).

sponding idea of a civic education for citizens. One reason for this could be the circumstance that Kant himself, in the well-known passage on the republic of devils in *Towards Perpetual Peace* (ZeF, VIII: 366), claims that it is not necessary to be a good man to be a good citizen. Now, this is precisely a typical republican position. Even Rousseau, who greatly inspired Kant's political thought, observed that there is an irreducible conflict between the demands of universalistic morals like the Christian ethics that requires us to love our enemies, on the one side, and the demands of patriotism that require us to love exclusively our fellow-citizens and hate the enemies of our country, on the other. For this reason, a good Christian or a cosmopolitan philosopher (another example mentioned by Rousseau) cannot be a good citizen (Rousseau, 1992: 163 f.). One could also mention Tocqueville who, in his *Souvenirs* (2004: 55), defines his sister-in-law as "the most honest woman I ever met, but a dismal citizen." And, of course, one could mention Machiavelli (1997: 349 f.), according to whom the true patriot ought to be willing to practice morally reproachable acts if they are demanded by the good of the country. In a letter to a friend, Machiavelli (1981: 505) even writes that he loves his country more than his soul, that is, more than his own moral integrity. It is unthinkable, however, that Kant might defend such a position when he claims that it is not necessary to be a good man to be a good citizen. We know that according to him it is not possible to justify an immoral act by pointing to the political benefits that might result from it (as he makes it clear in the appendices to *Towards Perpetual Peace*). What Kant means, therefore, is that all one expects from good citizens is respect for the juridical law, not the moral law. One expects even less some ethical morality that means they act according to the moral law out of respect for the law itself, that is, out of duty. Can we expect that they act according to the juridical law out of respect for it and not just out of mere legality? Is a juridical morality thinkable?

According to Otfried Höffe (2001: 112 ff.), it is. Morality and legality are attitudes that can be taken concerning both spheres of morals, namely to right and to ethics (following the distinction presented in the "Introduction" to the *Metaphysics of Morals*). We would face then four possibilities: ethical morality (*conditio sine qua non* of the moral value of an action), ethical legality (when one acts according to the moral law, but not out of duty), a juridical legality (when one respects a juridical law, whatever the motive might be, that moves the agent) and a juridical morality. What interests us here is this latter possibility, that is, the case where an individual acts according to a juridical law out of a motive analogous to duty in the case of ethical morality.

First of all, we must remember that, for Kant, there is no moral obligation to take this attitude of juridical morality: one characteristic element of

juridical law is precisely the circumstance that it admits to being obeyed out of mere legality. There is no perfect duty to develop some form of civic virtue, in this sense, if one understands the latter as juridical morality. Secondly, we must remember that in the "Introduction" to the *Metaphysics of Morals* (MS, VI: 220), when distinguishing ethical from juridical laws, Kant claims that "[e]thical lawgiving (even if the duties might be external) is that which cannot be external; juridical lawgiving is that which can also be external." The word "also" opens up the logical possibility that juridical lawgiving, which is usually external, can also be internal; contrarily to ethical lawgiving, which cannot be external and remains limited to the internal dimension of intentions. An example of such internal juridical lawgiving might be the pseudo-Ulpianian principle: *Honeste vive*, which Kant (MS, VI: 236 f.) believes gives rise to an internal juridical duty. However, I will not comment on this principle here.³ We could, therefore, conclude that juridical morality is possible, even if it is not necessary or even if its existence is not demanded by practical reason. We could consider it to have a morally supererogatory character; to be, therefore, a juridical virtue that reunites all other virtues, traditionally called 'civic virtues.'

536 Once we have established that it is possible to think of a juridical morality in Kant and that such morality has a supererogatory character, and can, therefore, be assimilated to a virtue, we can address the question that interests us: would it be possible to think, on the basis of the doctrines of the method of the second *Critique* and of the *Doctrine of Virtue*, a doctrine of the method concerned with developing a juridical morality? In other words, how can such a morality be awakened in citizens?

Differently from what happens in the case of ethical morality, the law here is known directly and we are far from being dazzled by its awful majesty: it is simply the juridical law. We do not need, therefore, to develop some 'juridical' receptivity through education. Nor are we supposed to fulfil this law out of mere respect: pathological incentives such as fear and hope are admissible. It is possible, however, to make citizens obey it out of (juridical) morality. In this case, we do not need to go through the first step described in the "Doctrine of the method," and we can directly pass to the second, namely, awakening through examples a practical (i.e., non pathological) interest in the minds of citizens. Kant himself quotes (KpV, V: 158) some verses by Juvenal that recommend: "Be a good soldier, a good guardian, and an incorruptible judge" and mention the example of those who sacrifice their life "for the preservation of [their] country." However, there is no mention of this kind of exercise in the *Metaphysics of Morals*. In this work Kant mentions (in the *Doctrine of Right* and in the

³ Cf. Pinzani (2005: 71–94).

Doctrine of Virtue, respectively) two kinds of honesty, namely, juridical and internal honesty. In both cases, they concern primarily the prohibition of renouncing one's freedom (external freedom in the case of juridical honesty, internal freedom in the case of internal honesty). They do not, however, indicate the attitude of those who constantly respect the law. Where in the Kantian oeuvre could we then find a basis for thinking of a juridical morality?

To answer this question, I will recur to two commentators: Peter Berkowitz and Sandra Seubert, who in their works speak explicitly of civic virtues in Kant. Berkowitz (1999: 111) starts by identifying politics' ultimate goal as the protection of individual freedom as external freedom. Right and political institutions do not directly influence our internal freedom and are not grounded on our moral character, but on our understanding, that is, on the faculty or quality that Kant (ZeF, VIII: 366) demands from his people of devils. Berkowitz, however, considers this faculty to be much more than the mere capacity to recognize one's immediate interest. Through their understanding, the devils realize that their long-term interest is to obey common rules; therefore, they are forced to develop some characteristics that make it possible to create a minimal level of respect of the juridical laws. According to Berkowitz (1999: 127), "[w]hether one gives these qualities the name 'virtue' is less important than appreciating that, on Kant's own account, liberal republics require them, and, though Kant does not delve deeply into the matter, that since they do not arise spontaneously, particular beliefs, practices and associations must be instituted and sustained to foster them." It seems to me, however, that Berkowitz (1999: 127) tends to morally overload the subjective attitudes that are necessary to create a republic. Kant demands from his devils solely the capacity to recognize their interest, but he does not claim that this must be their long-term or 'enlightened self-interest', as Berkowitz holds. Such a capacity can have a merely prudential character and does not need to include specific moral attitudes. The same is true for the capacity of respecting juridical laws. Whether a republic can survive without such qualities, simply by gaining citizens' obedience by threatening them with the use of violence, is an empirical question and allows for prudential answers à la Hobbes.

Berkowitz seems to appeal to the classical republican idea that individuals have a superior interest that ends up coinciding with the common interest (an idea that becomes especially clear in Rousseau's concept of a general will). The corresponding civic virtue would consist then in acknowledging both this coincidence and, as a consequence, the normative necessity of pursuing the common good. If it were so, then Kant would assume the same position as Rousseau. In my opinion, though, political

virtues in Kant do not serve the creation of a republican constitution; they are not instrumental to this goal but have value in themselves. They go beyond an attempt to attain the common good of a specific political community and point to a wider dimension, namely the cosmopolitan process of 'republicanization.' This can be made clearer by recurring to Sandra Seubert's interpretation of Kant's political thought.

Seubert (1999: 16) calls attention to a relevant difference between Kant, on the one side, and Hobbes and classical republicanism, on the other. The latter refer to 'the good citizen' in a purely functionalistic way: it is the citizen who has the qualities that are "necessary to maintain a specific political order, whatever this might be." One could have a different understanding of what it means to be a good citizen, however: good is the citizen who contributes to maintaining a *just* political order like, for example, maintaining Kant's republic precisely because it is a just order. In this sense, one should talk of *political*, not just of civic virtues in Kant, for these virtues do not depend on belonging to a specific political community but have to do with creating just political institutions in general – on the domestic as well as on the international level (tendentially even on the global level).

538 The first and most important political virtue is the republican 'way of thinking,' that is, the will to organize one's own political community in accordance with a republican constitution. Since Kant claims that the republican ideal corresponds to a demand of practical reason, each individual has a duty to pursue its realization. Obviously, this must happen primarily in the political community to which one belongs; however, reason demands that such an ideal be realized in every country. Kantian republicanism is a process that involves at the same time the citizens of a state, the states in their reciprocal relations, and the individuals in their relation with foreign states, conforming with the triple division of public right, in the *Doctrine of Right* (RL, VI: 311), into domestic public right, right of nations and cosmopolitan right.

The republican way of thinking corresponds to the propensity of evaluating the purity of the morality of actions mentioned in the "Doctrine of the method." It is present in every individual and needs only to be awakened, as shown by the public's enthusiasm for the French Revolution quoted by Kant in *The Conflict of the Faculties* (SF, VII: 85). This historical event assumes here the role of the moral examples in the "Doctrine of the method" and contributes to the rise of a practical interest in the republicanization of state constitutions. The republican ideal thus becomes the main motive of individuals when they act as citizens, that is, when they obey the law. The corresponding internal attitude is, therefore, juridical morality. In the case of ethical morality, it is demanded

that pathological incentives be neutralized and that the only motive is the moral law itself, unconditionally. In the case of juridical morality, it is demanded that the pathological incentives of fear and hope be neutralized and that citizens obey to the law as such, *but only under the condition* that it is a law that contributes to realizing the republican ideal. The subjects of a tyrant have a duty to obey the law, but not to obey out of juridical morality. The citizens of a republic, however, have the duty (imposed on them by pure practical reason) to obey the law because it is an expression of the republican ideal, no matter how imperfect the state's constitution may be.

In the "Doctrine of the method" of the second *Critique*, the moral pupil acquires consciousness of his freedom when he acquires consciousness of the existence of actions that are practiced merely out of duty. This is an essential moment, since it indicates that, when obeying the moral law, the agent is affirming her internal freedom, that is, her autonomy from pathological inclinations. Something similar happens in the context of juridical lawgiving: when the citizen obeys it, she is affirming her external freedom, since juridical laws make possible and safeguard the concrete exercise of external freedom, which according to Kant (MS, VI: 237) is the only innate right. But this is possible only if they are republican laws, that is, laws created by the citizens themselves through their representatives, for only thus can citizens acknowledge them as their laws; namely, as laws which they give to themselves and which they will obey not out of fear or hope (these are pathological incentives), but because they are expressions of their freedom. Through participation in this law-giving activity, citizens are not only creating the practical conditions for the exercise of their external freedom, but they are also directly affirming such freedom. The fulfilment of juridical laws should therefore awaken in them a feeling of self-satisfaction analogous to that awakened by the fulfilment of the moral law, but this feeling may not serve as a motive for acting according to the law.

This means that, differently from ethical morality, juridical morality depends on conditions that are external to the subject, namely on the existence of a republican constitution. The latter, however, depends on the circumstance that citizens deploy a republican way of thinking. They must develop their propensity to republicanism, develop enthusiasm for concrete examples of republicanization, and listen to the intellectuals who try to enlighten them (as claimed by Kant in *An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?* and in *The Conflict of the Faculties*). In this sense, citizens are all pupils of a political catechism, whose text is gradually written over the course of human history with the help of philosophers. These scholars allow us to recognize a meaning in this history; that is, they make us

understand it as a constant juridical-political progress that is at the same time a moral progress. Philosophy of history is the link that bounds ethics and politics in Kant's practical thinking, but this issue cannot be discussed in this context.

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