

# Kant on the Relation between Duties of Love and Duties of Respect

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[published in Stefano Bacin, Alfredo Ferrarin, Claudio La Rocca, Margit Ruffing (eds.), *Kant und die Philosophie in weltbürgerlicher Absicht. Akten des XI. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses*, Berlin–Boston, De Gruyter, 2013, III, 15-27;

please cite from published version: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110246490.1899>]

**Abstract:** In a cryptic passage of the "Doctrine of Virtue" (§ 23), Kant underscores the relation between the two kinds of ethical duties to others, which he calls duties of love and duties of respect. The paper will explore the issues concerning this relation, and try to clarify the meaning of it for Kant's overall account of the duties towards others. I suggest that (1) Kant thereby highlights the role of a previously unconsidered class of duties, and highlights that that novelty changes the traditional picture of other-regarding morality. (2) Most importantly, Kant shows that through their reciprocal connection both duties of love and duties of respect can be related to the obligatory end of the happiness of others.

## I

In the *Doctrine of Virtue* Kant underscores that the two kinds of ethical obligations towards others, which he calls duties of love and duties of respect, are bound by a particularly close relation. Despite the heading "On the duty of love to other human beings", the sections 23 to 25 present in fact introductory remarks on the duties to others generally, whereas the duties of love are specifically discussed only from section 26 on.<sup>1</sup> In the first two introductory sections Kant mentions the relation between the two kinds of duties to others, but his remarks are quite brief and not especially clear. In section 23 he argues that love and respect "are basically always united by the law into one duty, only in such a way that now one duty and now the other is the subject's principle, with the other one joined to it as accessory" ("Sie sind aber im Grunde dem Gesetze nach jederzeit mit einander in einer Pflicht zusammen verbunden; nur so, daß bald die eine Pflicht, bald die andere das Princip im Subject ausmacht, an welche

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<sup>1</sup> On the general issues concerning the sections on duties of love see Schönecker, Dieter: "Kant on Duties of Love". In: *Kant's Tugendlehre. A Comprehensive Commentary*. Ed. by Andreas Trampota, Oliver Sensen, Jens Timmermann. Berlin–New York. 2012.

die andere accessorisch geknüpft ist”)<sup>2</sup> (TL, AA 06: 448). In section 24 he does not even seem to present an argument, as he simply describes the relation between “the principle of mutual love” and that of respect as the connection between two opposite forces, analogous to the forces of attraction and repulsion in the physical world, and adapting a quote from Haller states that, “should one of these great forces fail, ‘then nothingness (immorality) [...] would drink up the whole kingdom of moral beings [...]’” (TL, AA 06: 449). The relation between the two kinds of duties is further stressed by an analogous observation at the beginning of section 46, where the analogy with two opposite forces is repeated, with a formulation close to section 24. The connection between duties of love and duties of respect is thus given a particularly prominent position, as it is underscored both at the beginning and at the end of the treatment of the duties to others. Since “all moral relations of rational beings [...] can be reduced to love and respect” (TL, AA 06: 488), **seeing** how and why they are connected must be a key to understanding Kant’s conception of interpersonal morality.<sup>3</sup> Yet, these passages are puzzling in more than one respect, and raise several significant questions. In the following I will focus on sections 23 and 24, trying to suggest a reading of these remarks that could help to understand Kant’s overall conception of the ethical duties to others. (I will not take into consideration, though, specific issues of single duties of love and respect.)

## II

That there is a connection between duties of love and duties of respect entails, in the first place, that duties of love are not the only ethical obligations to others. To a modern reader this may not be so striking, but it must have been for Kant’s contemporaries. By mentioning the link between the two kinds of duties, Kant stresses that the ethical obligations to others encompass *duties of respect* as well. Previous moral philosophers did not recognize such duties, nor did Kant himself prior to the *Metaphysics of Morals*. All obligations towards others were earlier considered as belonging to benevolence or justice. While justice belongs to the field of law, benevolence and love<sup>4</sup> would be the only ethically relevant attitudes. This applies both to sentimentalist and to rationalist moral theories. To mention only one prominent German example, Wolff maintains that “all duties towards others depend upon the love of others

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<sup>2</sup> The translations of the *Metaphysics of Morals* are taken from the Cambridge Edition: Kant, Immanuel: *Practical Philosophy*. Ed. by Mary Gregor and Allen Wood. Cambridge. 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Kant’s remarks on this relation is now considered with great interest also by some non-Kantian ethicists, and even regarded as “arguably one of the most profound passages in normative ethical theory” in general (Swanton, Christine: *Virtue Ethics. A Pluralistic View*. Oxford. 2003, 99; cf. 105).

<sup>4</sup> On Kant’s final position, benevolence does not exhaust the scope of duties of love. However, that is here not relevant.

regulated according to the law of nature” (“*omnia officia erga alios ab amore aliorum juxta legem naturae ordinato pendent*”).<sup>5</sup> In the traditional picture, the two normative forces are then, to borrow Kant’s phrase, “the strong law of obligation [*Schuldigkeit*] and the weaker law of benevolence” (TG, AA 02: 335).<sup>6</sup>

Quite the same applies to Kant himself prior to the *Doctrine of Virtue*. The examples of the *Groundwork* do not suggest anything like what he later calls duties of respect. The duties to others mentioned there are the prohibition of false promises, which the later *Metaphysics of Morals* understands as a *juridical* obligation (cf. RL, AA 06: 272f.), and the duty of beneficence (cf. GMS, AA 04: 422 f., 429f.). Since the *Groundwork* does not aim at a new taxonomy of duties and mostly follows the traditional one,<sup>7</sup> it is even more significant that there is no mention of duties of respect whatsoever in any of Kant’s lectures either. He shares with his contemporaries the thought that obligations to others are either duties of justice, belonging to right, or duties of love, belonging to ethics, so that all *ethical* duties to others would be duties of love. In his latest lectures in moral philosophy, respect is not even mentioned in the definition of friendship, in striking contrast to the *Doctrine of Virtue* (cf. V-MS/Vigil, AA 27: 680). The notion of duties of respect occurs first in the preliminary notes for the *Metaphysics of Morals*. They are there regarded as the second component of other-regarding virtue, and the principle of ethics is now stated accordingly: “The universal principle of the duty of virtue towards other human beings is: bear love *and respect* to everyone” (“Das allgemeine Princip der Tugendpflicht gegen andere Menschen ist: trage gegen jedermann Liebe *und Achtung*”) (VATL, AA 23: 407).<sup>8</sup> (Note that also friendship is defined for the first time as combination of love and respect on the very same page.)

This is not a merely terminological issue. While the notion was absent, the obligations eventually understood as duties of respect were sometimes mentioned also before, but always as obligations of justice. The ways of conduct the *Doctrine of Virtue* presented as violations of duties of respect were previously construed as juridically relevant injuries to the other’s

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<sup>5</sup> Wolff, Christian: *Philosophia moralis sive Ethica, methodo scientifica pertractata* (1750-1753). Reprint Hildesheim. 1970-1973, vol. V, praefatio.

<sup>6</sup> On this see Kersting, Wolfgang: “Das starke Gesetz der Schuldigkeit und das schwächere der Gütigkeit”. In: Kersting: *Recht, Gerechtigkeit und demokratische Tugend*. Frankfurt a.M. 1997, 74-120.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. GMS, AA 04: 421n. As is well known, the only significant difference from the usual divisions is that duties to God are not mentioned.

<sup>8</sup> Kant’s first sketchy attempt at a co-ordination of love and respect as aspects of other-regarding morality seems to be *Refl* 7264, AA 19: 297.

honour, merit and reputation.<sup>9</sup> Their normative status changes when Kant sees the object of proper esteem no longer in a person's merit, but in the status of a moral being (cf. TL, § 40). Interpreters often notice that the duties of respect are in some ways analogous to juridical duties, since they require to pay others what is rightfully owed to them (as moral beings).<sup>10</sup> Yet, the idea of duties of respect attempts to identify a specifically *ethical* aspect of justice, not bound to social institutions like property. In one passage of the *Vorarbeiten* Kant calls the duty of respect “ethical duty of right” (“ethische Rechtspflicht”) (VATL, AA 23: 407), thereby underscoring the analogy with law. Still, such expression occurs no longer in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, since it would have generated some confusion with the “ethical right” of equity, which Kant understands as a right without coercion, and nonetheless juridical, as it is bound to the social dimension and to property (see RL, AA 06: 234f.).

Even when other authors had argued prior to Kant that virtue cannot be reduced to mutual love, nothing like the duties of respect had been suggested. To mention just one example, Richard Price argues, following Butler, that benevolence cannot be the only ground of moral approbation and mentions cases in which our disapproval of an action cannot be grounded on a lack of benevolence.<sup>11</sup> Arguing that we in fact recognize approvingly an “intrinsic rectitude” of actions, Price mentions benevolence, gratitude, truthfulness and justice as the “principal head and divisions” of virtue. Nevertheless, no new kind of obligation is thereby outlined, and especially no obligation concerning our attitude towards others merely as moral beings.

Kant's remarks on the relation between two kinds of ethical duties to others stress thus a significant innovation of the *Doctrine of Virtue*, namely that these duties are not only obligations of love. Obligations of respect must be taken into consideration as well and cannot be reduced to other duties.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g. Meier, Georg Friedrich: *Philosophische Sittenlehre*. Halle. 1762-1774<sup>2</sup>. Reprint Hildesheim. 2007, § 955: “Insonderheit [...] entstehen, die Verletzungen der Ehre, und die unerlaubte Verachtung anderer Leute, aus dem Laster des Hochmuths”. See Hruschka, Joachim: “Existimatio. Unbescholtenheit und Achtung vor dem Nebenmenschen bei Kant und in der Kant vorangehenden Naturrechtslehre”. In: *Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik* 8, 2000, 181-195.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. Gregor, Mary J.: *Laws of Freedom. A Study of Kant's Method of Applying the Categorical Imperative in the Metaphysik der Sitten*. Oxford. 1963, 182.

<sup>11</sup> See Price, Richard: *Review of the Principal Questions in Morals* (1758<sup>1</sup>, 1787<sup>3</sup>). Ed. by D.D. Raphael. Oxford. 1974, chap. VII.

<sup>12</sup> On the duties of respect see now Sensen, Oliver: “Kant on Duties Towards Other Human Beings from Respect”. In: *Kant's Tugendlehre. A Comprehensive Commentary*.

## III

In order to clarify the nature of this connection we need to consider first the relevant passage in section 23. A key to understanding this passage (as well as the whole chapter) is to consider that Kant's remarks concern the *duties* of love and respect, not the natural feelings with those names.<sup>13</sup> Duties of love and of respect are properly duties of *love* and *respect* because they require *maxims* that give rise to, and are accompanied by, such feelings.<sup>14</sup> As is stated in section 25, "in this context, [...] love is not to be understood as feeling [...]. It must be rather understood as the maxim of benevolence [...]. The same holds true of the respect" (TL, AA 06: 449). The *moral* connection between love and respect can be grasped only as a relation between duties that is grounded in the law, while there can be no relation between love and respect as natural feelings, as Kant remarks in section 23 ("one can *love* one's neighbor though he might deserve but little *respect*").

What is unexpected, and most interesting, is that, although each of these duties are both philosophically and practically *per se* consistent (as they can be "considered separately [...] and can also exist separately"), they apparently cannot be really separated from one another: According to Kant, "now one duty and now the other is the subject's principle, with the other joined to it as accessory" (TL, AA 06: 448; cf. 488). The subject does not need to take the "accessory" duty of respect into consideration to determine himself to follow a duty of love. The connection does not amount to any co-determination. The duty of respect, though, accompanies the observance of a duty of love as a justificatory presupposition. The thought is clarified by the example at the end of section 23 (TL, AA 06: 448.21 ff.), that explains that one ought to help another moral being in such a way that does not humiliate him. Whenever I act on a maxim of practical love, I have to presuppose a maxim of respect as well. The requirement to engage in the pursuit of the happiness of others, as far as it is possible to me, makes sense only if they are first recognized as equal moral beings, subject to the moral requirements in the same measure as myself.<sup>15</sup> Peculiar to the duties of love is that they impose a new obligation on the person towards whom we act (cf. TL, VI 448), but this can happen only if we regard the

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<sup>13</sup> See on that Schönecker: "Kant on Duties of Love". See also Baron, Marcia: "Love and Respect in the *Doctrine of Virtue*". In: *Kant's Metaphysics of Morals. Interpretative Essays*. Ed. by Mark Timmons. Oxford. 2002, 391-407: 39ff.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. TL, AA 06: 469; cf. also V-MS/Vigil, AA 27: 671. Cf. also TL, AA 06: 406.

<sup>15</sup> On this see Darwall, Stephen: "Kant on Respect, Dignity, and the Duty of Respect". In *Kant's Ethics of Virtue*. Ed. by Monika Betzler. Berlin. 2008, 174-199.

other as an addressee of a possible obligation. Unlike duties of love, duties of respect do not immediately generate new obligations, but set the stage for them.<sup>16</sup>

Still, that the two duties are “united by the law [*dem Gesetze nach*] into one duty, [...] in such a way that *now one duty and now the other* is the subject’s principle”, means that the connection should hold in the opposite direction as well, namely from duties of respect to duties of love.<sup>17</sup> This reciprocity sounds especially puzzling, and would have requested much more explanation than Kant provides.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, also this direction of the relation can be explained as a connection between obligations: When through maxims of respect I recognize the other as a moral being, I cannot be fully indifferent to his ends, but I must recognize the possible requirement to share them, helping him in pursuing them. Complying with duties of respect entails overcoming indifference towards a person and to his possible morally acceptable ends.<sup>19</sup> Conversely, disrespecting the other amounts to injuring his consciousness of himself as a moral being and thereby to hindering his pursuit of an objective end. Disrespecting him amounts to act against what Kant calls his “moral well-being (*salubritas moralis*)” (TL, AA 06: 394).

Duties of respect, thus, are related to the obligatory end of the others’ happiness, too. This significant point is made, in fact, only through pointing out the converse relation of the duties of respect to duties of love. When I act on a maxim of respect towards him, I should be willing to adopt a maxim of love towards him as well, as far as it is possible to me.<sup>20</sup> At least,

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<sup>16</sup> As to what links love with respect, some interpreters refer to EaD, AA 08: 337.33-34: “respect is without doubt what is primary, because without it no true love can occur”; see Wood, Allen W.: *Kant’s Ethical Thought*. Oxford. 1999, 398 and *Kantian Ethics*. Oxford. 2008, 179; Langthaler, Rudolf: *Kants Ethik als System der Zwecke. Zu einer modifizierten Idee der “moralischen Teleologie”*. Berlin. 1991, 367. Yet, in that passage Kant makes a rather unspecific, very brief remark about respect and love in general; if only because there he does not mention a converse connection from respect to love, that does not seem to actually correspond to the point Kant is making in the *Doctrine of Virtue*.

<sup>17</sup> Incidentally, this suggests that the relation is in fact more complicated than between perfect and imperfect duties, since in that case there would be no *mutual* connection. (Note that, in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant does not qualify any duties to others as ‘perfect’ or ‘imperfect’, but only as *respectively* ‘stricter’ or ‘wider’: cf. TL, AA 06: 450.) If they were perfect and imperfect duties, it would be also improper that the imperfect ones (i.e. the duties of love) were examined before the perfect ones (i.e. the duties of respect). On the contrary, Wood (*Kantian Ethics*, 175f.) argues that “the distinction between duties of respect and duties of love parallels [...] the distinction between perfect and imperfect duties to oneself”.

<sup>18</sup> For instance, Marcia Baron (“Love and Respect in the *Doctrine of Virtue*”, 397) simply rejects that the relation can be symmetrical.

<sup>19</sup> On the contrary, Baron (“Love and Respect in the *Doctrine of Virtue*”, 394f.) regards indifference as a violation of a duty of love.

<sup>20</sup> Similar remarks in Herman, Barbara: “The Scope of Moral Requirement”. In Herman: *Moral Literacy*. Harvard. 2008, 203-229, 218f.

the duty of love requiring “sympathetic feeling” applies to my conduct towards the other, insofar as I recognize him as a moral being (cf. TL, AA 06: 457).<sup>21</sup> For instance, when I treat another with respect and do not ridicule him (see § 44), I see him as a person, so that I should consequently not be indifferent to his ends, but I should ask myself if, how and when I can help him. Thus, the relevance of the others’ happiness is here justified, if the obligatory end is not explicitly the ground of complying with duties of respect. It is an important assumption of the *Doctrine of Virtue* that “what, in the relation of a human being to himself and others, *can* be an end *is* an end for pure practical reason; for, pure practical reason is a faculty of ends generally, and for it to be indifferent to ends, that is, to take no interest in them, would therefore be a contradiction” (TL, AA 06: 395). Therefore, a maxim of respect makes sense, morally speaking, only if I recognize that I must be also willing to help the moral being I respect.<sup>22</sup>

How a proper description of this connection can be that the two kinds of duties are fundamentally “always united by the law into one duty”? Since the maxims of respect lead us to recognize that, in the appropriate situation, we ought to practically love the others, and should not merely avoid any harm to their moral status, the duty of respect indirectly points to the pursuit of the objective end of the others’ happiness. Both kind of duties to others are in fact oriented towards the same end. Duties of love require it immediately (or explicitly), whereas duties of respect require it indirectly (or implicitly). Therefore, the law uniting the two kinds of duties to others could be stated as in Kant’s preliminary notes: “The universal principle of the duty of virtue towards other human beings is: Bear love and respect to everyone” (VATL, AA 23: 407). In the version of the *Doctrine of Virtue*, the same law requires for the same reason to fulfill both duties of love and duties of respect. It is the law commanding us to pursue the happiness of others whom we recognize as moral beings.

The connection between the two kinds of duties is “accessory” insofar as it is not analytical, but links two homogenous, *per se* consistent elements, by referring the first to the second one.<sup>23</sup> Duties of love and duties of respect are conceptually independent from one another. What connects them synthetically is the command of the moral law, which makes the

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<sup>21</sup> On this duty see Seymour Fahmy, Melissa: “Active Sympathetic Participation: Reconsidering Kant’s Duty of Sympathy”. In: *Kantian Review* 14, 2009, 31-52.

<sup>22</sup> On the contrary, Baron (“Love and Respect”, 399f.) sees a positive aspect in the “negative” duty of respect only insofar as they do not require mere omissions.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. V-Lo/Wiener, AA 08: 838: “Contingent marks are not constituent parts of the thing but rather are *accessoria*”. Thus ‘accessorisch’ and its Latin equivalents contrast with ‘*wesentlich*’ (cf. SE, AA 07: 64; 17:175, and Refl 5432, AA 18: 180) and ‘*principale*’, also according to the traditional juridical maxim *accessorium sequitur suum principale* (cf. RL, AA 06: 268). “Accessory” connected can be only homogenous elements: cf. Refl 119, AA 15: 11 (and Refl 3587, AA 17: 75).

justification and the practice of each one of them related to the other, as we have seen: Pursuing the others' happiness imposes the further moral requirement to recognize the others as moral beings, and recognizing them as such requires to overcome indifference towards their conditions. The obligations, albeit distinct as to their content, are connected through the same necessitation, to the effect that they are fundamentally ("im Grunde") "always united by the law *into one duty*", that is, into the one general "duty of virtue towards other human beings". The ethical law requiring to pursue the happiness of others commands, therefore, maxims of respect as well as maxims of love. The new class of duties of respect makes sense, within the *Doctrine of Virtue*, only in virtue of their relevance for the pursuit of the other-regarding objective end.

#### IV

Section 24 expresses a further aspect of the connection between duties of love and duties of respect. In Kant's quasi-Newtonian picture, love is like a force of attraction, while respect would be like a repulsive force, and their union should keep the moral world together: "The principle of mutual love admonishes them [sc.: the rational beings] constantly to come closer to one another; that of the respect they owe to one another, to keep themselves at a distance from one another" (TL, AA 06: 449; cf. VATL, AA 23: 406).<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, the analogy of the *Doctrine of Virtue* is not immediately perspicuous, to say the least, and can easily raise misunderstandings.

Such analogies are in fact not uncommon in 17th and 18th century philosophy as representations of the moral dimension. For instance, Hutcheson compares often benevolence to gravitation.<sup>25</sup> A Newtonian analogy in moral matters was also used earlier by Kant in the *Dreams of a Spirit Seer*, apparently concerning the same topic, as it occurs precisely where "the

<sup>24</sup> See *MAN*, chap. 2, for Kant's account of how attractive and repulsive forces make the physical world possible.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. e.g. Hutcheson, Francis: *Inquiry Concerning the Original of our Ideas of Virtue or Moral Good*, § V.II. (*An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue in Two Treatises*. Ed. by Wolfgang Leidhold. Indianapolis. 2004, 149): "This universal Benevolence toward all Men, we may compare to that Principle of Gravitation, which perhaps extends to all Bodys in the Universe; but, like the Love of Benevolence, increases as the Distance is diminish'd, and is strongest when Bodys come to touch each other. Now this increase of Attraction upon nearer Approach, is as necessary to the Frame of the Universe, as that there should be any Attraction at all. For a general Attraction, equal in all Distances, would by the Contrariety of such multitudes of equal Forces, put an end to all Regularity of Motion, and perhaps stop it altogether". On the use of analogies between natural and moral forces or laws in early modern thought see Tonelli, Giorgio: "Kant's Ethics as a Part of Metaphysics: a possible Newtonian suggestion? With some comments on Kant's *Dreams of a Seer*". In: *Philosophy and the Civilizing Arts. Essays presented to Herbert W. Schneider*. Ed. by C. Walton, J. P. Anton. Athens (Ohio). 1974, 236-263, and Macklem, Michael: *The Anatomy of the World: Relations between Natural and Moral Law from Donne to Pope*, Minneapolis. 1958.

strong law of obligation and the weaker law of benevolence” are presented as two forces (TG, AA 02: 335). Yet, in the *Dreams* they are not thought of as two *opposite* forces, but as forces which *together* oppose to self-love. What the analogy has in common with the then familiar ones, is that it is not about natural feelings.<sup>26</sup> The first sentence of section 24 states precisely this condition for the meaning of the analogy: “In speaking of laws of duty (not laws of nature) [...]” (TL, AA 06: 449). Love and respect as terms of the analogy are two “principles” (*Prinzipien*), not two natural tendencies of human mind. Accordingly, attraction and repulsion are here called “*ethical* forces”. Furthermore, the kind of respect mentioned here is not the respect which a man can deserve or not depending on his merits (as it was the case in TL, AA 06: 448), but the respect which moral beings “owe one another”.<sup>27</sup>

For similar reasons I find misleading to see here any relation with Kant’s thought of an “unsociable sociability”, as some interpreters have suggested.<sup>28</sup> Drawing this parallel, again, confuses natural tendencies of human race and directions of the ethical obligations in the moral space. This trait of humankind is mentioned later in the *Doctrine of Virtue* (§ 47), but only as the natural feature which moral friendship rectifies.<sup>29</sup> Finally, the analogy in section 24 is not about any tension whatsoever. Here Kant simply states that duties of love and respect can be described as forces pushing in opposite directions, which does not yield any contrast.<sup>30</sup> Rather, the two forces balance each other through their *necessary* connection, that is *not necessary from nature, but from the command of the moral law*. Kant points out no uncomfortable tension in morality between love and respect, but – quite to the contrary – a *morally required* connection between duties, which should yield a welcome equilibrium. The analogy aims at describing the fundamental ordering structure in interpersonal morality (“die Verbindung vernünftiger Wesen”).

Nevertheless, while it seems easier to understand how love can be represented as an attractive force, it does not sound quite as perspicuous that respect can be seen as repulsion.<sup>31</sup> This must be the most original trait of Kant’s analogy, here, as associating love with

<sup>26</sup> A fairly similar point is made by Wood (*Kant’s Ethical Thought*, 398) against Baron: “Love and Respect”.

<sup>27</sup> Pace Swanton: *Virtue Ethics*, 104.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Sherman, Nancy: *Making a Necessity of Virtue: Aristotle and Kant on Virtue*. Cambridge. 1997, 230; Baron: “Love and Respect”, 392.

<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the model of unsociable sociability (see IaG, AA 08: 20ff.) corresponds rather to the forces analogy in the *Dreams* than to the one in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, as self-love is described to be balanced by the social bounds, which encompass the laws both of obligation and of benevolence.

<sup>30</sup> Pace Baron: “Love and Respect in the *Doctrine of Virtue*”, and Stohr, Karen: “Minding Others’ Business”. In: *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 90, 2009, 116-139, 118. See also Vogt, Katja: “Duties to Others: Demands and Limits”. In: *Kant’s Ethics of Virtue*. Ed. by Monika Betzler, 219-243, 233.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Baron: “Love and Respect in the *Doctrine of Virtue*”, 392.

gravitational attraction was not a new thought at all. However, if the analogy is not about feelings, but duties, the contrast should be understood *not* as describing the inner, psychological nature of love and respect, but as expressing their complementary relation to the objective end which “according to the law” they both refer to. The “principle of respect”, then, is not repulsive *per se*, but only in comparison with that of mutual love and concerning the relation to the ends of others. While duties of love require us to actively share the ends of others, which brings us closer to them in a practical sense, as agents, duties of respect require us to act towards the others acknowledging them as moral beings, without actively pursuing any end of them.<sup>32</sup> Unlike duties of love, which require us to act according the specific needs and ends of that individual person, duties of respect regard indifferently any other person and do not require to take the other’s conditions into consideration; therefore they do not create a specific bond with her. For this reason also duties of respect do not generate a new obligation in the other person (TL, AA 06: 448, 450). Thus, the “distance” in the analogy stands for the mere recognition of the other moral beings which is not *ipso facto* active sharing of their ends.

The two forces in the analogy, therefore, stand for the two mutually connected aspects of our general obligation to pursue the others’ happiness: the fundamental recognition of the other as a moral being, and the active participation to his ends. Section 24 expresses that the connection of these duties is not only required by the moral law, but makes a moral order of interaction among rational beings possible. The “harmony of the will of one with that of another” (TL, AA 06: 488) requires that the subjects recognize the others’ will as such and that they identify shared ends. The balance of forces required by the moral law expresses the mutual implication of these two steps. Without the maxim of mutual recognition of the moral capacity to set ends under the conditions of the moral law there will be no real moral *interaction* among equals (complying with duties of love would rather be something like our behaviour towards animals, that is, only indirectly morally relevant). Conversely, without sharing ends, there will be no active *interaction* towards morally permissible aims.<sup>33</sup>

## V

In section 25 the duty of love is defined as “the duty to make’s others’ ends my own”, and the duty of respect as the duty “not to degrade any other to a mere means to my ends” (TL, AA 06: 450). On my reading, the thought of a morally necessary connection between them stated

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<sup>32</sup> I do not see any ground for taking ‘getting close’ and ‘keeping a distance’ to mean a social closeness or distance, as suggested by Robert Johnson (“Love in Vain”. In: *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 35, 1997, Suppl., 45-50.

<sup>33</sup> I cannot take into consideration here how the moral world mentioned in section 24 relates to Kant’s various (and not always homogenous) remarks on a bond of the rational beings grounding on the moral law.

in sections 23 and 24 adds a deeply significant element to the picture. While the definition of the duty of respect is confined to a re-statement of the Formula of Humanity, the thought that this negative duty is nevertheless connected with the pursuit of the obligatory end of the others' happiness is really expressed only by the two passages on the connection between the two kinds of duties. But this further element is crucial, since duties of respect can be acknowledged as properly belonging to the ethical obligations to others only in virtue of a relation to the obligatory end.

This peculiar feature of Kant's position can also be highlighted again by underscoring a further significant difference from Price's. Arguing that morally worth actions cannot be all seen as examples of benevolence leads Price to hold that "it is not to be conceived, that promoting the happiness of others should comprehend our whole duty".<sup>34</sup> Obviously, Kant agrees, insofar as there are also duties to oneself; he does think, though, that "promoting the happiness of others" encompasses "our whole duty" *towards others*. That duties of love cannot exhaust our obligations to others does *not* imply, on his view, that we need to see also a further moral end besides promoting others' happiness. On the contrary, duties of respect are outlined as ethical duties only insofar as Kant can point out a connection between them and that objective end.

On my reading, thus, Kant stresses the significance of a relation between duties of love and duties of respect for good reasons. He thereby highlights the role of a previously not considered class of duties, and points out that this changes the traditional picture of other-regarding morality. Most importantly, he shows that through their reciprocal connection duties of respect as well as duties of love can be both related to the obligatory end of the happiness of others.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Price: *Review of the Principal Questions in Morals*, 374.

<sup>35</sup> I thank Carla Bagnoli, Marcia Baron, Manfred Baum, Andy Reath, Dieter Schönecker, and Susan Shell for valuable comments on an earlier version of the paper.