

Kant und die Philosophie
in weltbürgerlicher Absicht

Akten des
XI. Internationalen
Kant-Kongresses

Band 3

Im Auftrag der Kant-Gesellschaft

herausgegeben von

Stefano Bacin, Alfredo Ferrarin,
Claudio La Rocca und Margit Ruffing

De Gruyter

Gedruckt mit freundlicher Unterstützung der Società Italiana di Studi Kantiani.

ISBN 978-3-11-024648-3

e-ISBN 978-3-11-024649-0

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A CIP catalog record for this book has been applied for at the Library of Congress.

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.dnb.de> abrufbar.

© 2013 Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston

Druck: Hubert & Co. GmbH & Co. KG, Göttingen

⊗ Gedruckt auf säurefreiem Papier

Printed in Germany

www.degruyter.com

Inhalt

Ethik

<i>Reshef Agam-Segal</i> Is Self-Legislation Possible? Kantian Ethics after Anscombe	3
<i>Stefano Bacin</i> Kant on the Relation between Duties of Love and Duties of Respect	15
<i>Carla Bagnoli</i> Respect and Obligation. The Scope of Kant's Constructivism . .	29
<i>Sorin Baiasu</i> The Deontic Force of the Formula of Universal Law	41
<i>Claudia Blöser</i> Grade der Tugend und Rigorismus	51
<i>Jochen Bojanowski</i> Evil by Nature. Does Kant Owe Us Yet Another Transcendental Deduction?	63
<i>Mario Brandhorst</i> Über das Recht, aus Menschenliebe zu lügen	75
<i>Aaron Bunch</i> The Body as Instrument and as 'Person' in Kant's Moral Philosophy	87
<i>Lenval A. Callender</i> Puzzle Maxims and the Formula of Universal Law	97
<i>Heidi Chamberlin</i> Moral Growth and Relapse. A Puzzle for Kantian Accounts of Moral Transformation	109

<i>Rodica Croitoru</i>	
The Morals of the “Starry Heavens” and of the Invisible Self . .	117
<i>Daniel Dohrn</i>	
Das Regelregressproblem in Kants praktischer Philosophie	123
<i>Raphaël Ehram</i>	
La conscience morale comme voix. Une élucidation kantienne	135
<i>Andrea M. Esser</i>	
Die Urteilskraft in der Praxis – Reflexion und Anwendung	147
<i>Antonino Falduto</i>	
The Two Meanings of ‘moralisches Gefühl’ in Kant’s <i>Doctrine of Virtue</i>	161
<i>Luca Fonnesu</i>	
Entwicklung und Erweiterung der praktischen Absicht	173
<i>Paul Formosa</i>	
Kant on the Moral Ontology of Constructivism and Realism . .	185
<i>Christel Fricke</i>	
Moral Dignity and Moral Vulnerability in a Kantian Perspective	197
<i>Courtney Fugate</i>	
Teleology, Freedom and Will in Kant’s Moral Philosophy	207
<i>Umberto Galeazzi</i>	
Sulla ragione kantiana separata dal reale. Legge morale, passioni, azioni concrete, felicità e bene	219
<i>Paola Gamberini</i>	
Guilt and Repentance. Kant on the Experience of Moral Responsibility in the Retrospective Evaluation of Actions	233
<i>Ido Geiger</i>	
Can Universal History Underwrite Kant’s Substantive Conception of Moral Value?	245
<i>Axel Gelfert</i>	
Communicability and the Public Misuse of Communication. Kant on the Pathologies of Testimony	257

<i>Filippo Gonnelli</i>	
Moral Teleology and Moral Theology in the <i>Kritik der Urteilkraft</i>	269
<i>Marco Ivaldo</i>	
Habitus libertatis. Jacobi e Kant sulla virtù	281
<i>Jan C. Joerden</i>	
Kooperationsregeln und der kategorische Imperativ	293
<i>Samuel Kahn</i>	
Reconsidering RGV, AA 06: 26n and the Meaning of ‘Humanity’	307
<i>Katsutoshi Kawamura</i>	
Kants Stellung zum Urheber des moralischen Gesetzes	317
<i>Franz Knappik / Erasmus Mayr</i>	
Gewissen und Gewissenhaftigkeit beim späten Kant	329
<i>Gerhard Krieger</i>	
„Factum der Vernunft“. Zu einer Parallele zwischen Kant und mittelalterlichem Denken (Johannes Buridan)	343
<i>Luc Langlois</i>	
Wolff and the Beginnings of Kant’s Moral Philosophy. The Forgotten Heritage	355
<i>Bernd Ludwig</i>	
Kants Bruch mit der schulphilosophischen Freiheitslehre im Jahre 1786 und die „Consequente Denkungsart der speculativen Critik“	371
<i>António Marques</i>	
Imputation Judgment in Kant’s Practical Philosophy	385
<i>Beate Marschall-Bradl</i>	
Wahrhaftigkeit und Menschenwürde	395
<i>Florian Marwede</i>	
Die moralische Notwendigkeit des höchsten Guts	407
<i>Kate Moran</i>	
For Community’s Sake – A Self-Respecting Kantian Account of Forgiveness	419
<i>Roberto Mordacci</i>	
Kantian Naturalism in Moral Theory	431

<i>Reza Mosayebi</i>	
Die „Antinomie“ des § 3 der <i>Tugendlehre</i>	443
<i>Peter Nickl</i>	
Lügenverbot und Liebespflicht. Zu einem Dilemma in Kants Ethik	457
<i>Angelica Nuzzo</i>	
Moral Space and the Orientation of Practical Reason	471
<i>Tatiana Patrone</i>	
Making Sense of Kant’s Casuistry	483
<i>Adrian M. S. Piper</i>	
Practical Action – First <i>Critique</i> Foundations	495
<i>Alberto Pirni</i>	
Freedom of the Will in Communitarian Perspective	509
<i>Luis Placencia</i>	
Die Subjektivität der Maximen bei Kant	521
<i>Jepppe von Platz</i>	
Freedom as both Fact and Postulate	533
<i>Rocco Porcheddu</i>	
Der Zweck an sich selbst und die Deduktion des kategorischen Imperativs	547
<i>Frederick Rauscher</i>	
Chaos and Control – The Nature of Practical Philosophy	559
<i>Andrews Reath</i>	
‘The ground of practical laws’	571
<i>Kari Refsdal</i>	
Kant’s Theory of Rational Agency as Free Agency	583
<i>Paula Satne</i>	
Kant’s Two Internalist Claims	597
<i>Dieter Schönecker</i>	
Kant’s Argument for the Existence of Duties to Oneself in § 2 of the <i>Tugendlehre</i>	609
<i>Clemens Schwaiger</i>	
Kant über den Begriff des Glücks	623

<i>Oliver Sensen</i> Kant's Other Arguments For Freedom	633
<i>Claudia Serban</i> Le possible pratique selon Kant – qu'est-ce qui est 'en mon pouvoir (<i>in meiner Gewalt</i>)' et qu'est-ce qui ne l'est pas ?	645
<i>Tatsubumi Sugawara</i> Kant und das Problem des Lügens. Über Nebeneinanderbestehen der moralischen Pflichten	657
<i>Jens Timmermann</i> Divine Existence and Moral Motivation	669
<i>José M. Torralba</i> The Two Objects of Practical Reason, Moral Autonomy, Human Causality, and Inner Disposition (<i>Gesinnung</i>)	679
<i>Stijn Van Impe</i> Kant's Realm of Ends and Realm of Grace Reconsidered	693
<i>Brian Watkins</i> How Kant Explains the Delusion that Some Actions are Supererogatory	705
<i>Annika Wennersten</i> Kant's Non-Egoistic Hedonism. Another Look at an Eternal Debate	713
<i>Victoria S. Wike</i> Reconsidering Kant's Concept of Friendship. A Comparison with the Highest Good	725
<i>Katrin Wille</i> Moralische Kompetenzen des Weltbürgers. Die drei Ebenen der praktischen Urteilskraft	733
<i>Ryan H. Wines</i> The Importance of the Third Proposition in <i>Groundwork I's</i> Analysis of Duty	745
<i>Steven J. Winkelmann</i> Duties to the Deceased in Kant	757

<i>Thomas Wyrwich</i> Kants Galgen-Beispiel und Adornos Verurteilung. Eine Skizze zum Begriff der „Erfahrung“ in der kritischen Moralphilosophie	769
--	-----

Recht und Gerechtigkeit

<i>Corrado Bertani</i> Equity Presumptions <i>versus</i> Maxim of Distributive Justice in the <i>Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Rechtslehre</i> , §§ 36–40	783
<i>Maciej Chmieliński</i> Deliberatives Rechtsetzungsverfahren als Gewährleistung der juridischen Autonomie nach Immanuel Kant	797
<i>Franz Hespe</i> Rechtsbegründung und Sicherung des Meinen nach Kants <i>Einteilung der Rechtslehre</i>	809
<i>Louis-Philippe Hodgson</i> Needs and External Freedom in Kant's <i>Doctrine of Right</i>	825
<i>Sarah Holtman</i> Justice, Ethics and the Lessons of Context-Sensitivity	835
<i>Burkhard Kühnemund</i> Die systematische Stellung der Eigentumslehre in Kants praktischer Philosophie	849
<i>Macarena Marey</i> Kant's Law of Peoples and the League of Democracies. How to Reconcile Human Rights with National Borders	861
<i>Michael Nance</i> The Categorical Imperative and the Universal Principle of Right	873
<i>Japa Pallikkathayil</i> Kant and the Limits of Global Governance	885
<i>Riccardo Pozzo</i> Homo Noumenon – Intellectual Property Abuse and Kant	893

<i>Faviola Rivera Castro</i> A Substitute for Coercion – Kant and Rawls on Compliance with International Laws of Justice	905
<i>Daniela Tafani</i> The Boundaries of Law. Kant and the Secularity of the State . .	915
<i>Johannes Thumfart</i> Kolonialismus oder Kommunikation. Zu Kants Auseinandersetzung mit Francisco de Vitorias <i>ius communicationis</i>	929
<i>Paola Vasconi</i> Giustizia internazionale ed elementi di diritto umanitario nella filosofia del diritto di Kant	941

‘The ground of practical laws’

Andrews Reath

At a certain point in the *Groundwork*, Kant writes that an end of absolute worth would be the ground, and indeed the only ground, of a possible practical law.¹ He then claims that *die vernünftige Natur* – rational nature, every rational being – is such an end in itself. I wish to ask, in what sense is an end in itself, specifically rational nature, a necessary ground of practical laws, or a necessary condition of there being true practical laws? There is an obvious answer to this question that I no longer find satisfying, and sometimes we make progress by allowing ourselves to become unsettled about what once seemed clear. To address this question (and to try to move beyond my confusion), I will explore a thinner reading of the idea that rational nature is an end in itself than what we usually take from the *Groundwork*. Kant’s moral theory is certainly committed to a rich ethical conception of the absolute value of persons as rational agents with autonomy, and the argument of the *Groundwork* is heading towards that conception. But I’ll suggest that his purposes at this juncture in his argument are served by a thinner reading of rational nature as an end in itself and that this reading is a better fit with Kant’s claim that the different formulas of the Categorical Imperative are equivalent. My larger aim is a better understanding of the structure of the argument of *Groundwork* II and of the relation between the first and second formulas of the Categorical Imperative.

The passages that I have in mind are those that lead up to the Formula of Humanity [FH]. Kant asks us to suppose something ‘*dessen Dasein an sich selbst einen absoluten Werth hat, was als Zweck an sich selbst ein Grund bestimmter Gesetze sein könnte,*’ and then asserts (Passage 1):

so würde in ihm, *und nur in ihm allein* der Grund eines möglichen kategorischen Imperatives d. i. praktischen Gesetzes, liegen. [GMS, AA 04: 428; II, 47. My emphasis]

1 GMS, AA 04: 428. Citations to the *Groundwork* give the chapter and paragraph number where appropriate. I use the translation in *Kant: Practical Philosophy*. Trans. and ed. Mary J. Gregor. Cambridge 1996.

Here Kant claims that in addition to an end in itself being a sufficient condition, it is also a *necessary* condition of there being true practical laws – if there is no such end, there are no such principles. In a second passage a paragraph later he writes that without an end in itself (Passage 2) ‘und zwar ein solcher, an dessen Statt kein anderer Zweck gesetzt werden kann, dem sie *bloß* als Mittel zu Diensten stehen sollten, weil ohne dies ...’

... nichts von *absoludem Werthe* würde angetroffen werden; wenn aber aller Werth bedingt, mithin zufällig wäre, so könnte für die Vernunft überall kein oberstes praktisches Princip angetroffen werden. [GMS, AA 04: 428; II, 48]

Without an end in itself, all worth would be conditional and there would be no ‘supreme’ practical law.

My question is: in what sense is rational nature a necessary and sufficient ground of practical laws? There is a familiar reading of the claim that rational nature is an end in itself that seems to provide an obvious answer to the question. According to this reading, Kant’s claim that rational nature is an end in itself asserts that persons have moral standing that gives them inviolable claims to certain kinds of consideration and treatment, that confers moral standing on their interests, needs, ends, and so on (details to be worked out...). Certainly persons have this kind of moral standing, and it follows that there are limits on permissible actions, positive duties governing our treatment of and attitude towards persons, and so on. The formal features of the absolute worth of persons translate readily into categorical requirements on action that determine how persons are to be treated. That persons are ends in themselves is then a sufficient condition of there being genuine practical laws.

But it is easy to become puzzled by the claim that rational nature as an end in itself is a *necessary* condition of their being true practical laws, and this familiar and rich conception of rational nature as an end in itself (the conception of the value of persons) does not readily dissolve the puzzles.

First, Kant’s treatments of the Formula of Universal Law [FUL] in both the *Groundwork* and the second *Critique* appear to offer more or less complete accounts of the authority of the moral law that do not depend on the idea of an end in itself. In both works, he derives a statement of the FUL – i. e., a statement of the supreme principle of morality – from the idea of a practical law. The *Groundwork* attempts to establish the authority of the moral law by arguing (via the idea of autonomy) that the FUL is the basic principle of our free agency (say, the internal

constitutive norm of free volition), while the second *Critique* does so by arguing that its authority is given as a fact of reason. Further, Kant appears to use this principle to derive substantive duties, including the duties of virtue. In short, he appears to believe that FUL can stand on its own as a formulation of the moral law. In what sense, then, does this principle require a ground in an end in itself – specifically, in the absolute worth of rational nature? Why does Kant think (as in Passage 2) that, without an end in itself, all value would be conditional and there would be no practical laws? And is rational nature, so understood, the only candidate for an end in itself?

Two further discussions compound my puzzlement. After the four examples illustrating the application of humanity as an end, Kant writes (Passage 3):

Es liegt nämlich der Grund aller praktischen Gesetzgebung *objectiv in der Regel* und der Form der Allgemeinheit, die sie ein Gesetz (allenfalls Naturgesetz) zu sein fähig macht (nach dem ersten Princip), *subjectiv* aber im *Zwecke*, das Subject aller Zwecke aber ist jedes vernünftige Wesen, als Zweck an sich selbst (nach dem zweiten Princip)... [GMS, AA 04: 431; II 55]

What Kant is saying here, I take it, is that what makes a principle a law is the fact that it has the form of law-giving, which (we later learn) is also the form of free volition. That is, ‘objectively’ the ground of law-giving – the source of the authority of moral principles, sufficient reason to follow them – is the fact they exemplify the very form of free volition (‘the form of universality’). What Kant means by the subjective ground of law-giving here is obscure. For now we need only note that the end here (‘the subject of all ends’ as an end in itself) is not the objective, but the *subjective* ground of law-giving – presumably the ground of law-giving as found in the subject. That is to say that the form of universality, not the end in itself, is the objective ground of law-giving.

The second discussion is Kant’s explanation of the proper method in moral theory in Chapter II of the second *Critique*. There he raises concerns that are very similar to those seen in the second *Groundwork* passage (Passage 2 from GMS, AA 04: 428), but he suggests a different resolution. When a moral theory begins from the concept of the good, the agreeable is the only available standard of immediate good. That is to say that launching moral theory with an inquiry into the good makes all value conditional and relative, in which case there would be no true practical laws. Given the second *Groundwork* passage, one might expect Kant to avoid the unpalatable conclusion that there are no practical

laws by introducing an end in itself; but instead he makes moral theory an inquiry into the formal law of practical reason. (It is also worth noting that the absolute worth of rational nature is conspicuously absent from the arguments of the second *Critique*.)

Both of these discussions appear to confirm the thought that the FUL stands on its own and does not need to be grounded in an end of absolute worth. What establishes its authority – its objective ‘ground’, as it were – is the fact that it is the formal principle, or internal constitutive norm, of rational volition.

The rich conception of rational nature (persons) as an end in itself raises more general worries as well. It is natural to think that claims about the value of persons as ends in themselves introduce new substantive notions that go beyond the bare idea of practical law that underwrites the FUL. Does Kant think that the value of persons as ends is a further and independent condition on the existence of practical laws that appears for the first time at this point in the *Groundwork*? That would not square well with his claim that the different versions of the Categorical Imperative are ‘so many formulae of the very same law’, ‘at bottom one and the same’ [*nur so viele Formeln eben desselben Gesetzes*, ‘im Grunde einerlei’ – GMS, AA 04: 436, 438; II, 72 and 77]. It is easy enough to interpret FUL and FH in a way that makes them extensionally equivalent, leading to the same substantive conclusions. But one might think that Kant intends the different formulas to be strictly equivalent in a stronger sense.

Perhaps these puzzles are sustained by the wrong picture of the argument of *Groundwork* II. One might be tempted to think that from GMS, AA 04: 412 on through the different formulas of the Categorical Imperative, the *Groundwork* lays out a series of distinct and independent conditions that need to be satisfied if there are genuine practical laws. (For example, a practical law applies with necessity and universality; it requires a ground in an end itself, which is its matter; it presupposes subjects with autonomy, and so on.) The claim that an end in itself is a necessary ground of practical laws would be a new condition on the existence of practical laws that is not contained or implicit in any of the ideas introduced so far. But note what an odd picture of the overall argument this reading suggests: the idea of practical law would give us the form of moral requirement through the features of necessity and universality. Since principles with these features presuppose agents with certain kinds of practical capacities, it also tells us that moral subjects are agents with autonomy and that moral laws are to govern the choice of agents

with autonomy (and indeed a community of such agents), and it tells us that the necessity of the moral law is explained by the fact it arises from the will of such agents – i. e., that the moral law is the internal constitutive principle of rational volition and thus the principle of a free will, and so on. Oh and by the way – in order to get genuine practical laws, we also need an end in itself. If *Groundwork* II is laying out a series of independent conditions on practical laws, it is unclear what this last one adds, given the dominant line of argument that runs from the idea of a practical law through autonomy to the authority of the moral law in *Groundwork* III.

Here is a more satisfying picture of the structure of the text (perhaps uncontroversial). Beginning at roughly GMS, AA 04: 412 (through 421) Kant mounts an analytical argument from the ‘universal concept of a rational being’ to a statement of the moral law. Practical reason is ‘das Vermögen, *nach der Vorstellung* der Gesetze, d. i. nach Principien, zu handeln’ [GMS, AA 04: 412, II, 12]. Understood as a faculty of principles, practical reason gives us the concept of a practical law and the formal features of necessity and universality, from which Kant analytically derives a provisional statement of the moral law in the FUL. Starting at GMS, AA 04: 427, Kant re-launches the very same argument, surveying the same terrain, but through the lens of a different aspect of practical reason. Practical reason is equally a faculty of ends. Every action or maxim contains an end, and to determine the will, practical reasoning must specify some aim to be actualized or realized, a representation of which is to guide volition (Cf. MS, AA 06: 385, 395).² That must mean that a principle determines volition by specifying or being recast as an end. According to this picture of the text, the lead up to the FH develops an analytical argument to an alternative provisional formulation of the moral law, but from this aspect of practical reason – in light of the need for volition to have an end.

The shift to the side of ends is marked by the obscure remark (Passage 4):

2 Here see Engstrom, Stephen: *The Form of Practical Knowledge*. Cambridge, MA 2009, 167–172, esp. 169. He notes several passages that indicate that ‘faculty of principles’ and ‘faculty of ends’ are coordinate descriptions (e. g., KpV, AA 05: 58 f., KU, AA 05: 220) and draws attention to the claim at MS, AA 06: 385 that ‘the act which determines an end is a practical principle that prescribes the end itself ...’

Nun ist das, was dem Willen zum objectiven Grund seiner Selbstbestimmung dient, der *Zweck*, und dieser, wenn er durch bloße Vernunft gegeben wird, muß für alle vernünftige Wesen gleich gelten. [GMS, AA 04: 427; II 46]

Kant uses the terms ‘objective’ and ‘ground’ in different ways in these pages. (I offer a schematic explanation of all the distinctions that Kant draws in this paragraph of the *Groundwork* in the Appendix.) Since this sense of ‘ground’ must have some relevance to the idea that an end in itself would be a ground of laws, this remark is worth unpacking. Here goes: the ‘objective ground’ here appears to be a ground in an object – in some aim to be actualized or realized – in contrast with a ground of choice in some motivating state of the subject. (Objective in this sentence contrasts with ‘in the subject’, rather than with ‘subjective’ in the sense of ‘subjectively valid’.) Without an objective ground in this sense, volition is indeterminate (not directed at anything). An end is the ground of the will’s *self*-determination because a will is self-determining by (freely) adopting or committing itself to some end (or understanding itself to have this end) and by normatively guiding its activity by a representation of the end. If that guiding representation is a representation of the end as good, then this aspect of practical reason makes it explicit that a notion of worth or value figures in volition. Further, one might think that it is by adopting an end prescribed by a principle or taking that end to be good, that a principle gets a motivational hold on a subject.

In sum, ends are needed as ‘objective’ grounds of volition because they provide direction for volition, they are grounds of self-determination and normative guidance, and they enable motivational engagement. Thus for a principle to determine the will (and so to be practical), it must specify or be recast as an end that can play these roles.

If we ask what practical laws presuppose from the side of ends, it is clear that they presuppose an objective, rather than a relative or conditional end. More precisely, they presuppose an objective end whose formal features map onto the necessity and universality of a practical law – a necessary end of absolute worth, an end in itself. ‘Absolute worth’, we might think, is just the necessity and universality thought in a law, described from the side of ends. For an end to have this kind of necessity, it must be internally related to practical reason – that is, if you do not have this end, you cannot coherently engage in practical reasoning, and this end tacitly guides all instances of practical reasoning. It is beginning to sound like the end in itself must be the constitutive aim of practical reasoning – but more on that in a moment. Furthermore, I would stress that

the claim that an end in itself is a necessary condition of genuine practical laws (if there are any) is not a separate or independent condition on there being practical laws. Rather, it is another way of unpacking the idea of a practical law. The claim that there is an end in itself is simply the claim that there are practical laws, now made through the lens of practical reason as a faculty of ends.

This is all well and good. But in what sense is rational nature the end in itself that provides a necessary ground of practical laws?

I'll address this question by sketching a thin reading of the idea that rational nature is an end of absolute worth that draws on some work by Stephen Engstrom and Barbara Herman.³ Here is the thought: the claim that rational nature is an end in itself is the claim that rational nature, or practical reason, has its own proper exercise as its formal or constitutive aim. Rational nature is the capacity for practical reason (in the broadest sense), and that capacity is constitutively aimed at its own proper exercise – at conforming to all the internal norms of practical reason, including the condition of universal validity (reasoning in ways that are universally valid or from universally valid principles, etc.). One might even say here that rational nature (practical reason) has the formal aim of conformity to universal law. This aim is internal to practical reasoning – it is an aim that one must have if insofar as one reasons, and it tacitly guides all exercises of practical reason. Since it is a condition of exercising the faculty of practical reason, the formal aim has authority over all exercises of practical reason. So the idea is that practical reason has a formal end that guides all exercises of practical reason and that it necessarily values that end (takes that end to be authoritative). Rational nature thus necessarily values itself – its own proper exercise – as an end in itself.

Note that rational nature 'sets itself' this end in the sense that practical reasoning understands itself to have this formal aim and its activity is normatively guided by this self-understanding. (The idea of 'setting oneself an end' supposes an element of spontaneity, but it need not mean that one chooses the end at one's option or discretion. The element of spontaneity can be supplied by a self-conscious conception of what one is doing, through which you understand yourself to have an end and which normatively guides your activity.) Since this formal end tacitly guides all exercises of practical reason and thus is an end that practical reasoning is always on the way to actualizing, it is a 'self-standing end'

3 See Engstrom, *The Form of Practical Knowledge*, Ch. VI, and Herman, Barbara: *Moral Literacy*. Cambridge, MA 2007, 250–253.

(*ein selbständiger Zweck*), rather than an end to be produced [GMS, AA 04: 437, II 77].

In sum, the thin reading of rational nature as an end in itself is that practical reason necessarily understands the formal aim of its own proper exercise as an end of absolute worth. In what sense is the absolute worth of rational nature so understood a necessary condition (ground) of there being practical laws? Well, imagine (*per impossibile*) that rational volition did not recognize the formal end of its own proper exercise as an end in itself – that is, imagine that this end did not have authority over all exercises of practical reason and that some other aim could be put in its place? Rational volition would be free, as it were, to aim at something other than conformity to the conditions of universal validity, in which case it would have no authoritative standard. (You could forget universal validity and reason in ways that you find agreeable...) There would be no authoritative reason to conform to the principles of practical reason and the conditions of universal validity, all value or worth would be conditional, and there would be no genuine practical laws. To say that rational nature is an end in itself is just to say that the principles and deliverances of practical reason are genuine practical laws.

Let me try to connect the different senses of ‘ground’ floating around in these paragraphs. First, the absolute worth of rational nature is a necessary ground of practical laws because it amounts to the authority of the principles and conclusions of practical reason. If the formal aim of the proper exercise of practical reason (reasoning in ways that are universally valid or conformity to the conditions of universal validity) did not have absolute worth, there would be no practical laws (Passages 1 and 2). Second, this formal end ‘serves the will as the objective ground of its self-determination’ (Passage 4). The formal aim is the formal principle of volition recast as an aim to be actualized in volition, and you are self-determining by having this aim. That is, in practical reasoning, you understand yourself to have this formal end and take it to be authoritative (to have ‘absolute worth’), and you are guided by this self-understanding. Further, the formal aim motivationally engages a subject through this self-understanding. So the formal aim provides direction, self-determination and motivational engagement. And because volition needs an end that can serve these functions, the principle or law of pure practical reason moves the will by being recast as this formal aim.

Finally, since self-determination and motivational engagement (the last two points) are states of a subject, they suggest an explanation of the claim that the ground of law-giving lies objectively in the rule, but

subjectively in the end. (Passage 3) The objective account of the authority of the moral law is that it is the formal, or internal constitutive principle of rational volition. That makes it a law. But how does a subject recognize it as law? That is, what is the ground of law-giving in the subject? That comes from the end. A subject comes to recognize the authority of the law by taking on the formal end (roughly, by respecting rational nature as an end). In understanding yourself to be a practical reasoner, you, as it were, take on or give yourself this formal aim and take it to be authoritative (have absolute worth), and in so doing you are motivationally engaged by the formal principle.

The interpretation of rational nature as an end in itself that I propose has much to recommend it, but it also points to the need for further work. One advantage is that it enables us to see how the FUL and FH could be strictly equivalent – just different versions of the same Idea, as Kant's remarks suggests. (What has absolute worth is conformity to the conditions of universal validity, acting only from maxims that can be willed as universal law. The absolute value of rational nature simply amounts to the existence of authoritative practical laws, expressed in light of the need for volition to have an end.) It suggests that there are parallel analytic arguments from a conception of practical reason to both FUL and FH, as provisional statements of the moral law. FH would introduce no fundamentally new ideas, but simply reframes the same material from the side of ends. This of course puts the burden of reasoning to specific duties on some rendition of the FUL.

On the other hand, this reading is in tension with certain elements in the text. Clearly many of Kant's references to rational nature as an end in itself have the richer ethical notion in mind. He asserts that *persons* are ends in themselves that are the supreme limiting condition of free choice. Further, Kant writes: 'Nun sage ich: der Mensch und überhaupt jedes vernünftige Wesen *existirt* als Zweck an sich selbst ...' [GMS, AA 04: 428; II 48]. It is hard to see this as an analytic claim. It appears to be a more substantive value claim (though not one that can be established at this point in the argument). Finally, the introduction of the value of humanity is presumably intended to advance the argument for the authority of the Categorical Imperative by introducing a substantive value with strong intuitive appeal (the value of respect for persons). Learning that what is at stake in acting from FUL is respect for persons helps to deflect questions about the authority of this very abstract principle and to motivate acceptance of it. So the interpretation that I propose will only be complete when one can show how this thin reading of the abso-

lute worth of rational nature can be specified or developed into the more intuitive ethical notion of respect for persons (the moral standing of persons). I have not done that work in this brief paper, though I assume that it can be done.

APPENDIX: analysis of GMS 04: 427–8; II 46

The following diagram offers a way to understand the distinctions that Kant draws in this paragraph of the *Groundwork*. The third and fourth sentences of the paragraph are concerned with the grounds of volition 'in objects', and within this category draw a distinction between ends and means. Beginning in the fifth sentence, Kant is concerned with the contrasting category of grounds of volition 'in the subject'. Within this category he distinguishes between 'incentives', which are subjective in the sense of being valid only for a subject, and 'motives', which appear to be reasons that hold objectively for any agent. This distinction between incentives and motives, when applied to the notion of ends, leads to the distinction between subjectively valid ends and objectively valid ends, and to the distinctions in the remainder of the paragraph.



