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Kant's Account of Moral Education

Abstract: While Kant's pedagogical lectures present an account of moral education, his theory of freedom and morality seems to leave no room for the possibility of an education for freedom and morality. In this paper, it is first shown that Kant's moral philosophy and his educational philosophy are developed within different theoretical paradigms: Whereas the former is situated within a transcendentalist framework, the latter relies on a teleological notion of human nature. The second part of this paper demonstrates that the core ideas of Kant's moral philosophy are also present in his pedagogy. This means that the problem of moral education must be solved within the transcendentalist framework. It is finally claimed that Kant himself outlines a solution to this problem in his pedagogical lectures.

Kant's theory of freedom and morality appears to be at odds with basic ideas of educational thought – such as development, learning and education. The problem is created by the concept of transcendental freedom and the doctrine of the two selves (or characters) that is connected with it. The noumenal self¹ (or intelligible character) of the human being that has to be seen as the source of free agency, according to Kant, is situated outside of the empirical sphere.² If the free self is non-empirical, that is, not embedded in the temporal and causal order of the natural world, then it is not clear, 1) how it can develop and 2) how its development can be influenced by education. The education of a free being, as well as an education for freedom, seem to be impossible. Since the ideas of freedom and morality are intimately interconnected in Kant's thought, this calls into question the possibility of moral education.

Kant himself, however, leaves no doubt that he believes not only in the possibility but also in the importance of moral education. It is through education, Kant says in his pedagogical lectures,³ that the human individual – and the human species as a whole – can be morally improved. The child's moralization is, according to Kant, the final step of the educational process. Before the child can be moralized, the child must be cared for, disciplined, cultivated and civilized. While reading Kant's pedagogy, one gets the impression that the capability for moral agency develops gradually within a child. Yet, Kant's moral philosophy seems to leave no room for the idea that morality evolves step by step. A closer look at Kant's pedagogical thought reveals that it is underpinned by a teleological notion of human nature. It might be surprising to ascribe such a view to Kant, who counts as one of the leading representatives of a specifically modern philosophy that – as is often claimed – has left behind any form of natural teleology.⁴ The modern scientific understanding of nature can in

fact be described as strictly a-teleological; according to scientific naturalism, nature contains no meaning or value and is not apt to guide our acting or the education of our children. It is, however, well known that Rousseau – no doubt a modern thinker – considered the goal of education to be the goal of nature itself (see Rousseau 1762/2007, p. 12). We should, says Rousseau, educate our children in accordance with nature. I claim that there is a basic agreement between Rousseau and Kant in this point, although Kant’s educational ideas strongly diverge from Rousseau’s. Kant says that we should educate children according to their natural *Bestimmung*, that is, their destiny or vocation. He assumes, in other words, that the human individual, and the species as a whole, has a purpose to fulfil that is naturally pre-given (Kant 1803/2007, 9: 445). This teleological naturalism fits well with the core ideas of pedagogical thought, as is shown in the second part of this paper. In contrast, Kant’s theory of freedom and morality is developed within a different theoretical paradigm – the transcendentalist framework. The first part describes the educational problems that apparently arise from the idea of transcendental freedom.

The first two parts of this paper present Kant as a philosopher who replaces the transcendentalist paradigm of his theoretical and practical philosophy by a teleological framework to solve the problem of education. This picture, however, is oversimplified. In fact, we find many traces of Kant’s moral philosophy within his pedagogical lectures. Although he avoids using his ethical core concepts in the pedagogy, it would be mistaken to think that these concepts were not on his mind when he prepared the pedagogical lectures. But if we assume that the account of morality inherent in the pedagogy corresponds more or less to the one developed in Kant’s ethical works, then the educational problems described in the first section arise anew. The third part proposes a solution to this problem that is based on some of Kant’s remarks in the pedagogical lectures.

Transcendental Freedom and Education

‘Can Kant have an account of moral education?’ asks Kate Moran in a recent paper (2009). Moran is well aware that Kant does provide an account of moral education in his pedagogical lectures, but she notes that this account seems to be incompatible with Kant’s moral philosophy. Similarly, the German philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart (1835/1964, § 1-5) criticised Kant’s notion of transcendental freedom from a pedagogical point of view; he claimed that this notion leaves no room for the idea of *Bildsamkeit*, that is, the perfectibility of the human will.⁵ If children are free in Kant’s sense, Herbart said, it seems impossible to develop their moral will from an indefinite to a definite state.

Two problems can be distinguished, here⁶: The first problem is that the free self is, according to Kant, situated outside of the temporal sphere. Basic pedagogical concepts however – e.g., learning, education or *Bildsamkeit* – imply the possibility of development in time.

The second problem is that the idea of education, as it is usually understood, implies the possibility of influencing someone else's processes of learning. According to Kant's view, however, the human self can only be seen as free if it is not influenced by empirical causes, that is, if it stands outside the causal chains of the empirical world.

The idea of transcendental freedom is introduced in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.⁷ There, Kant distinguishes the empirical character of the human being (his phenomenal self) from the intelligible character (the noumenal self). This doctrine of the two selves or characters is used to express the idea that human beings are at the same time (1) part of a fully determined natural order and (2) persons endowed with a free will. With respect to our empirical character, we belong to the realm of nature that has to be seen as structured by causal necessity, according to Kant. As empirical selves, we can be educated – our empirical character develops in time, and can be causally influenced. However, since it is part of a fully determined order, it cannot be described as free. Kant thus rejects the compatibilist view according to which the truth of determinism does not threaten our capacity to form a will freely. Freedom, Kant says, can only be ascribed to our noumenal self which is situated outside of the realm of nature. With respect to this non-empirical self, we are free in the sense that we have the capability to start a causal chain without being influenced by empirical causes. This is what Kant calls our transcendental freedom. Thus, his account of freedom seems to be close to current forms of libertarian incompatibilism. Libertarians claim that we can only have a free will if determinism is false. Kant, in contrast, believes in the truth of determinism, as far as the natural sphere is concerned, claiming that his (libertarian incompatibilist) understanding of free will is compatible with a deterministic picture of nature. Hence, to Kant, free will and determinism seem to be compatible, after all.

It is Kant's notion of a non-empirical self that is at odds with the idea of education: While it might be assumed that the noumenal self shows itself in the empirical actions of the person, it can hardly be imagined that the moulding of the empirical character has any impact on the intelligible character – if this were the case, the intelligible character would not be free in Kant's sense.

Kant uses the concept of transcendental freedom to ground morality. Consider the example of the 'malicious lie': if a liar is detected, his acting can be considered in two different ways. First, it can be explained with respect to his empirical character – we could, for instance, say that he was badly educated, but the acknowledgement of a defective education and similar factors does not lead us to refrain from *blaming* the agent. Kant says that 'one presupposes that we can entirely set aside how [the agent's] life was constituted, and that the series of conditions that transpired might not have been, but rather that this deed could be regarded as entirely unconditioned in regard to the previous state, as though with that act the agent had started a series of consequences entirely from himself' (Kant 1781/1998, B

583/A 555). The everyday practice of blaming others morally is thus to be grounded, according to Kant, by considering the agent as unconditionally free. Thus, the assumption of transcendental freedom is needed, he says, to make sense of the idea of moral responsibility – and morality as a whole.

This idea is further developed in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, where the concept of autonomy and the notion of a categorical imperative are introduced. There, it is made clear that a free person's acting is not lawless. The free person is independent from the law of nature. Since she is not influenced by empirical causes, she subjects herself (autonomously) to the law of reason, that is, the categorical imperative. This means that she lets her will not be guided by natural impulses or personal interests, but only by maxims that can be willed (or thought) as a universal law. Every rational agent, says Kant, must presuppose his own freedom and thereby presuppose the validity of the moral law. Every human being is thus bound to the law of reason, although she might not act in accordance with it (see Kant 1785/1996, 4: 447–8).

The *Critique of Practical Reason* elaborates the interconnection between the idea of transcendental freedom – as developed in the *First Critique* – and the concept of moral autonomy from the *Groundwork* (Beck 1960, p. 177). This leads, as Beck puts it, to a „positive“ account of freedom: The moral law is not seen as a mere limitation, but as a product of freedom.⁸ The account of freedom that Kant presents in his *Second Critique* is thus not identical to his earlier views. Like these, however, it is based on the idea of a non-empirical self that stands outside of time (Kant 1788/1996, 5: 95–97).⁹

Kant's account of freedom is sometimes read as implying the existence of two separate selves. Many passages in the first two *Critiques* and the *Groundwork* point in a different direction. According to this alternative interpretation, the distinction between the phenomenal self and the noumenal self refers to two different perspectives on one and the same entity, or two different aspects of this entity (see e.g., Beck, 1960). We can try to make sense of this basic idea by embedding it in the whole of Kant's transcendentalist project.

Kant says that we cannot prove the existence of a free will theoretically, but rather must presuppose it in our acting. The idea that freedom is necessarily presupposed in our relationships to others leads us to the core of the transcendentalist project. It is impossible, in this context, to provide a comprehensive account of Kant's transcendental philosophy, but let me point to one important issue.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* starts with an inquiry of the necessary presuppositions of our experience. This project is strongly influenced by David Hume's insight that causality is not empirically given – thus, we can perceive that two events happen in a temporal order, but we cannot experience them as causally connected. Kant fully agrees with this sceptical claim that questions the possibility of an empirically founded natural science. He comes to

the conclusion that causality, necessity and other 'categories' (as well as the 'forms of intuition', space and time) must be seen as necessary presuppositions of human experience. When we experience two events as causally connected, we receive the empirical information and, at the same time, bring into play the presupposition that one event is the cause of the other. These presuppositions are, as Kant calls it, given *a priori*. They make experience possible and are not themselves situated in the empirical realm.

Similarly, freedom is a necessary presupposition of human agency. It is important to note, however, that freedom has a different theoretical status than the categories of theoretical reason. Let us take a closer look at the following passage from the *Groundwork*:

'[T]his freedom is no concept of experience, and moreover cannot be one, since it always remains even though experience shows the opposite of those requirements that are represented as necessary under the presupposition of freedom. On the other side, it is equally necessary that everything which takes place should be determined without exception in accordance with laws of nature; and this natural necessity is also no concept of experience, just because it brings with it the concept of necessity and hence of an *a priori* cognition'. (Kant 1785/1996, 4: 455)

Here, Kant refers to his theoretical philosophy saying that natural necessity – or determinism – is a concept that is presupposed in experience and is not itself empirical. This is an important hint: if Kant assumes that nature is fully determined, then this does not mean that he conceives of determinism as a fact that can be experienced. In other words, determinism is not out there in the world, but is necessarily presupposed in experience.

Similarly, freedom is nothing that can be experienced in the world, but must be presupposed in action. In contrast to freedom, the concept of natural necessity is 'confirmed by experience'. This is why 'freedom is only an *idea* of reason, the objective reality of which is in itself doubtful, whereas nature is a *concept of the understanding* that proves, and must necessarily prove, its reality from examples of experience' (*ibid.*).

It was mentioned that Kant's doctrine of the two selves might be read as a doctrine of two perspectives on one and the same self. The passage just cited elucidates the way in which this idea can be specified: as agents, we necessarily take the perspective of freedom; that is, we see others and ourselves as free persons. When we experience nature, however, we necessarily presuppose categories such as causality and necessity. Neither determinism nor freedom is, thus, an empirical fact; instead, they represent two different ways of looking at the world and ourselves. This is, I think, the basis for Kant's claim that freedom and determinism are compatible.

But if Kant's argument is apt to ground his specific form of compatibilism, this does not imply the possibility of a moral education. It has become clear, at least, how the problem arises: in his transcendental philosophy, Kant searches for the necessary presuppositions of

experience and agency. As an agent, the human being must presuppose that his actions are rooted in a non-empirical self that is (transcendentally) free. Within the transcendentalist framework, an account of moral motivation and a procedure to distinguish adequate from inadequate actions (or maxims) is developed. Transcendentalism, however, is not designed to explain processes of moral learning and education. So, we might conclude that we misunderstand Kant's moral philosophy if we criticise it from an educational point of view. Still, it is disconcerting when a theory of moral justification and motivation seems to obstruct the development of a corresponding theory of learning.

Teleological Naturalism and Education

The following reading of Kant's pedagogical lectures is much indebted to the recent work of Reinhard Brandt. In his book *Die Bestimmung des Menschen bei Kant* (2007), Brandt investigates an aspect of Kant's philosophy that most other interpreters have neglected. He directs our attention to the fact that the term *Bestimmung* (destiny or vocation) is frequently used in Kant's work. He concludes that, at the core of Kant's thought, lies the idea of the moral *Bestimmung* of the human being and humanity as a whole (Brandt 2007, p. 7). This is true, at least, with respect to Kant's pedagogy – only if we take Kant's talk of *Bestimmung* seriously can we get to the heart of his educational philosophy. Brandt offers further historical elucidation of the term *Bestimmung*: first, he says that its use can be traced back to a book written by a German theologian named Johann Joachim Spalding on the *Bestimmung* of the human being (1748/2006). As Brandt explains, this work has inspired many philosophers, popular writers and preachers in Germany to develop their own accounts on the destiny of the human being – most famously Fichte in *Die Bestimmung des Menschen* (1800/2000). Second, Brandt claims that Spalding's – as well as Kant's and Fichte's – use of *Bestimmung* expresses a normative notion of (human) nature. A normative concept of nature is commonly ascribed to the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle, whose basic philosophical ideas were further developed in the Christian philosophy of the Middle Ages. This version of natural teleology was widely rejected in modern philosophy. According to Brandt, the notion of *Bestimmung* has different historical roots – it can be traced back to the philosophy of the Stoa. As he explains, the Greek and Roman Stoics perceived 'nature' as being one whole entity that is pervaded by a divine reason. In their view, nature served as a measure for human acting – to live well means to live in accordance with nature. Seemingly, this account of nature was not only influential in eighteenth-century Germany, but it also inspired Rousseau's talk of natural education (see also Martin, 2007).

The basic idea of Kant's educational thought is that children should be educated in accordance with their *Bestimmung*. What this idea means can be further elucidated by focussing

on Kant's differentiation between animal nature and human nature. In the pedagogical lectures, Kant contrasts animality and humanity in three different ways.

First, Kant says that human beings – in contrast to beasts – are not instinct-guided: 'An animal is already all that it can be because of his instinct; a foreign intelligence has already taken care of everything for it. But the human being needs his own intelligence. He has no instinct and must work out the plan of his conduct for himself (Kant 1803/2007, 9: 441)'. Thus, the human being is free in the sense that his behaviour is not (fully) determined by nature. A similar view is defended by Rousseau in the *Second Discourse*: 'Nature commands every animal, and beasts obey. Man feels the same impetus, but he knows that he is free to go along or to resist' (1755/1992, p. 26). In other words, human beings are endowed with a free will. But this is, according to Rousseau, not the only feature that distinguishes them from beasts. While he is aware that it is debatable whether we are free in our will, he has no doubt about the fact that perfectibility – *la faculté de se perfectionner* – is a trait that differentiates humans from beasts. While free will is the capacity to act against one's natural impulses, perfectibility is the capability to develop capabilities that are not naturally given. In the case of beasts, it is fixed by nature what they can and will become. In contrast, the human individual – and the human species – has an open future. It is important to note that Rousseau does not use the concept of perfectibility in *Emile*. In the *Second Discourse*, where it is introduced, perfectibility is not coined as a pedagogical concept; that is, it is neither used to ground the idea of human educability, nor to justify a need for education. Its main function is to explain the fact of human degeneration. But, as free and perfectible animals, human beings have the opportunity to improve their situation by their own doing. This is the point that Kant emphasizes in his pedagogy; he believes in the possibility of moral progress of the individual as well as the species. He does not, however, use Rousseau's concept of perfectibility either in his pedagogy or his anthropology.

Thus, Kant agrees with Rousseau that the human being is characterized by the ability to deviate from nature. At the same time, the two philosophers seem to share the view that we should educate our children in accordance with nature, i.e., their natural *Bestimmung*. But what can it mean to educate children according to nature, if it is their nature to deviate from nature?

This leads us to Kant's second way of distinguishing humanity and animality. Kant thinks that animals and human beings differ with respect to their *Bestimmung*. Thus, not only humans, but also animals, have a natural destiny that they must realize. In contrast to human beings, though, animals automatically live in accordance with their destiny. Their instinct leaves them no freedom to deviate from their nature. A 'foreign intelligence', says Kant, has organized their behaviour in an adequate way. Human beings, on the other hand, must realize their natural destiny by themselves. This might be read as meaning that we

should choose our own destiny and live according to our individual tastes, but this is not what Kant has in mind. The fact that we are naturally undetermined does not mean, for him, that our natural destiny is not fixed – morality is our destiny. To live as a moral agent, however, involves self-determination. We reach our destiny only when we are able to act autonomously in accordance with the moral law. In this sense, we are destined to determine ourselves – *bestimmt zur Selbstbestimmung*, as Brandt (2007, p. 15) puts it.

Moral autonomy presupposes the ability to emancipate oneself from nature. This talk of nature refers to our biological or animal nature. It is thus our nature (in the sense of *Bestimmung*) to deviate from our animal nature. Consider now a third distinction between animality and humanity that can be found in Kant's pedagogy. 'Discipline or training changes animal nature into human nature', says Kant in the opening passages of his lectures (Kant 1803/2007, 9: 441). We could try to read this statement in accordance with one of the two distinctions already introduced. Relying on the first of these distinctions, we would have to assume that it is through discipline that the animal instinct is replaced by a free will. This is, however, surely not Kant's view. What then can it mean that human nature is brought about by discipline? It might mean that human destiny is realized through discipline, and the following passage from Kant's pedagogy seems to confirm this interpretation: 'Discipline prevents the human being from deviating by means of his animal impulses from his destiny: humanity' (ibid., 9: 442). Here, however, it becomes clear that the role of discipline is merely negative; it does not bring about morality but holds back the human being's animal impulses. Thus, it can be seen as a necessary preparation for the process of moralization. The claim that discipline transforms animal into human nature can be read in the following way: without discipline, the human being is a savage. Savagery is, as Kant defines it, 'independence from laws' (ibid.). As a savage, the human being is, according to Kant, not really human, although he is endowed with a free will. Discipline is thus the first step in the child's process of humanization.

At this point, Kant's and Rousseau's views diverge. Rousseau refuses the view that discipline and, more generally, direct pedagogical interventions are needed to secure the child's natural development. Rousseau's fictitious educator – Jean-Jacques – establishes a comprehensive system of educational control, but does not discipline his pupil, Emile, in a direct way. This is the way, says Rousseau, to educate children in accordance with nature. Kant declares it to be '[o]ne of the biggest problems in education [...]', how freedom can be cultivated 'under constraint'. Objecting to Rousseau, he makes clear that 'constraint is necessary' (ibid., 9: 453). Without constraint, Kant says, the child would be left in a state of savagery. Thus, we might conclude that Kant rejects Rousseau's view that children are 'good by nature'. This, however, is only half of the truth. The human being is evil, says Kant, with respect to his animal impulses. Still, he is 'good according to his innate predispositions (good

by nature)', as Kant states in his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (Kant 1798/2007, 7: 324). This means that the child has the natural potential to fulfil his moral destiny. This tendency towards the good is given in his nature.

These last remarks make clear why Kant's teleological naturalism can be easily connected with the basic ideas of educational thought – Kant thinks of the educational process as a gradual deployment of good natural predispositions: 'Many germs lie within humanity, and now it is our business to develop the natural dispositions proportionally, and to unfold humanity from its germs and to make it happen that the human being reaches his vocation' (Kant 1803/2007, 9: 445). Education should ensure that the evil germs within human nature are held back and the good potentials are fully developed.

Transcendentalist pedagogy and natural teleology

According to Kant, the child must not only be cared for and disciplined, she must also be cultivated, civilized and moralized (Kant 1803/2007, 9:449-50). Cultivation is concerned with the development of basic skills that are useful in pursuing one's own purposes. Civilization fosters the child's prudence, that is, her ability to move successfully in society. The highest goal of education, however, is the child's moralization. Only if the child becomes a moral person does she fully reach her human destiny.

Kant, in his moral philosophy, develops an account of autonomous moral agency that is based on the idea of transcendental freedom. This account appears to leave no room for the possibility of moral education. We should now take a closer look at the conception of moral agency that is presupposed in Kant's pedagogy.

It should be noted that the concepts of transcendental freedom and autonomy do not occur in the pedagogical lectures. Kant says that freedom should be cultivated, but the term 'freedom', as it is used here, cannot be equated with 'autonomy'. What he means here is not moral, but rather civic freedom – i.e., that capacity to live as an independent citizen. Still, it is clear that Kant's account of moral education, as it is presented in the pedagogical lectures, depends on the idea of the autonomous moral agent. His remarks on moralization echo the basic ideas of his ethical theory. Children, Kant says, should 'acquire the disposition to choose nothing but good ends' (Kant 1803/2007, 9:450). He goes on to qualify which ends should count as good, providing a simplified formulation of the categorical imperative: 'Good ends are those which are necessarily approved by everyone and which can be the simultaneous ends of everyone' (ibid.). The child should learn, he says, to act 'from his own maxims' (Kant 1803/2007, 9: 450). He should do the good, 'because it is good', and 'comprehend the ground of the action and its derivation from the concepts of duty' (ibid.).

It is true that the pedagogical Kant 'relaxes some of his rigor', as Lewis White Beck (1978, p. 201) puts it, but there is no reason to assume that Kant's pedagogy is based on a theory of

morality that is fundamentally different from the one that is presented in the *Groundwork* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*. Thus, it might have been premature to declare that Kant's destiny-based account of education does not encounter the same problems that arise within the transcendentalist framework. Kant seems to claim that it is our natural destiny to become autonomous. This claim, however, makes no sense if an individual's capacity for autonomy cannot evolve within the empirical world.

As I would like to show in the remainder of this section, Kant outlines a solution to this problem in his pedagogical lectures. He says that the maxims of moral acting 'must originate from the human being himself' (Kant 1803/2007, 9: 481), that is, 'from the human being's own understanding' (ibid.). Thus, Kant is convinced that the individual finds the moral maxims within himself. This might be read as referring to the transcendentalist framework that grounds Kant's practical philosophy. Kant thinks that the moral law – as well as the maxims that are compatible with it – are necessarily presupposed by every human agent. The point is, however, that agents – especially if they are young and uneducated – might be unaware of their own presuppositions. To say that some presuppositions are logically necessary does not mean that they are consciously accepted by the agent. This is why the transcendentalist framework leaves room for the ideas of learning and education, after all; transcendental philosophy detects the necessary presuppositions of agency, i.e., those presuppositions that every agent implicitly accepts.¹⁰ In the process of moralization, as Kant sees it, the agent becomes aware of, understands and explicitly accepts what he has always already presupposed.

Now, we might suppose that this process of moral learning can and must be initiated by the agent himself; using his own reason, he can detect the rational presuppositions that are pre-given in himself. According to Kant, however, it cannot be expected that the individual himself comes to accept the moral law without pedagogical assistance. But what can the educator do to foster the child's insight into the law of reason? Kant provides a clear answer: 'In the formation of reason, one must proceed Socratically. For Socrates, who called himself the midwife of his listener's knowledge, gives in his dialogues [...] examples of how, even in the case of old people, one can bring forth a good deal from their own reason' (ibid., 9: 477). Thus, as far as moral education is concerned, it is important that the educator does not 'carry rational knowledge into [children] but rather extracts it from them' (ibid.).

This Socratic account of moral pedagogy fits well with Kant's ethical transcendentalism. If freedom and the moral law are rational presuppositions that are necessarily made by the agent, then it must be possible for the agent to gain insight into these presuppositions. The educator – as a Socratic midwife – can help him to use his reason and to bring forth what is already there within himself. It is not possible to make the child moral by mere training, but it is possible to prompt him to think by himself.

In the context of the Socratic and Platonic philosophy, the maieutic method is connected with the concept of *anamnesis*, that is, the remembering of knowledge that one has acquired before birth. Kant's account, in contrast, does not presuppose a notion of human pre-existence or a theory of Platonic forms. Kant does not even assume that moral maxims are innate; they are given in reason, and every human being has the power to detect them.

Fostering the realization of the human being's *Bestimmung* means, then, to enable the learner to understand and accept what he necessarily presupposes. The child should come to see himself as a transcendently free person – a noumenal self – that can determine his will in accordance with the moral law. It is correct to say that the noumenal self cannot be educated, but this does not imply the impossibility of moral learning and education. First, the empirical self must be educated in a conventional way – disciplined, cultivated and civilized. This is a necessary preparation for the final step in the full deployment of human nature – moralization. In the process of moralization, the empirical human being gains rational insight into a non-empirical sphere, and thereby comes to understand and accept the demands of reason. This process can be fostered, according to Kant, by using the Socratic method. Thus, while Kant assumes that moralization depends on the ability to use one's own reason, he is convinced that most children will not reach this point without educational support.

Conclusion

Kant seems to have been unaware of the tension between his pedagogical and ethical thought. Nowhere in his work does he explicitly address the educational problems that arise from his theory of freedom and morality. His pedagogy proceeds within a teleological framework that allows us to think of moral education as a continual deployment of natural potentials. Still, there are traces of Kant's transcendentalist thought within his *Lectures on Pedagogy*. It seems clear that the pedagogical idea of moralization is based on the concept of the autonomous moral agent. This is why we need a solution to the problem of how the capacity for autonomy can evolve within the natural world. As I tried to show in the last section, a solution to this problem can be extracted from Kant's pedagogy. It is by using the Socratic method, that the educator can prompt the learner to understand and accept what he already presupposes.

- 1 The expression 'noumenal self' is used by Paton (1947/1971, p. 234), Allison (1990, p. 52) and other commentators, but does not occur in Kant's writings.
- 2 Useful comments on Kant's theory of freedom are provided by Paton (1947/1971), Beck (1960), Allison (1990) and Pereboom (2006).
- 3 Kant's lectures on pedagogy have often been neglected because their authenticity is doubtful. It is clear that the text was not written by Kant himself, but put together by Friedrich Theodor Rink on the basis of materials that Kant used for his lectures. This explains the partial redundancy, incoherence and impreciseness of the text. Its quality strongly differs from Kant's original writings. In an 'erudite, somewhat pedantic, and mammoth book' (Beck 1978, p. 194), Traugott Weisskopf (1970) develops the claim that the pedagogy cannot be considered to be Kant's work and should therefore be removed from the *Akademieausgabe*, the authoritative edition of Kant's collected works. At the same time, Weisskopf shows that the core ideas of the pedagogical lectures have parallels in other works of Kant. Hence, there is reason to believe that the pedagogy in fact expresses Kant's view of education, although in a somewhat distorted form.
- 4 The view that Kant's account of nature expresses a scientific form of naturalism is put forward, for instance, by John McDowell in *Two Sorts of Naturalism*. Many commentators of Kant's moral philosophy, however, have detected *teleological* elements in his ethical argument. The teleological strain in Kant's ethics has mostly been described as Aristotelian (see e.g. Paton 1947/1971, p. 109). In this paper, I focus on the teleological aspect that is inherent in Kant's use of the term *Bestimmung* (destiny or vocation). I rely on Brandt (2007) who claims that the meaning of *Bestimmung* in Kant has Stoic – not Aristotelian – roots (see section 2 of this paper).
- 5 The term perfectibility is taken from Rousseau's *Second Discourse* (1755/1992). It is often assumed that Fichte's concept of *Bildsamkeit* is inspired by Rousseau (see Fichte (1796/1960)). Thus, *Bildsamkeit* might be read as a German translation of the French *perfectibilité*. It should be noted, however, that the term *Bildsamkeit* does not refer to the idea of human perfection, but is related to expressions like *bilden* and *Bildung*. While Fichte introduces *Bildsamkeit* as an anthropological concept, Herbart proposes to use it as a basic concept of educational thought.
- 6 I do not claim that this is exactly the way in which Herbart or Moran would formulate the problem. Moran (2005, p. 271) says that 'Kant's account of moral knowledge and decision-making seems to be one that is self-taught'. If acting on moral reasons is self-taught, we might ask why education is necessary. It is not clear whether it means that education is impossible.
- 7 Kant famously defines the term 'transcendental' in the introduction to the *First Critique* (B 26/A 12). Later in this work, the term is used in connection with the concept of freedom – freedom is called a 'transcendental idea' (B 476/A 448). The term 'transcendental' that was originally used in the theoretical realm, is thus moved into the area of practical philosophy. In his explanations of the term 'transcendental freedom' he emphasizes that this idea is independent from the empirical sphere. It is described as an absolute form of spontaneity, that is, the capacity to start a causal chain. In the *Groundwork*, freedom is not described as a transcendental idea, but an 'idea of rea-

son' (4: 455). The *Second Critique* uses the term 'transcendental freedom' in the preliminary remarks, already (5: 3).

- 8 According to Paton (1947/1971, p. 203), the *Second Critique* sheds new light on the relation between the notion of freedom and the idea of the moral law: 'In the *Groundwork* he seems to think that the moral law is both justified and established by an independent and necessary presupposition of freedom. In the *Critique*, on the contrary, it is our consciousness of the moral law which leads to the concept of freedom'.
- 9 In *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797/1996), however, this view is not explicitly stated.
- 10 At this point, a further distinction could be made. As Paul Dietrichson (1961/1962) convincingly argues, Kant ascribes two different functions to practical reason. The first is 'to make us cognizant of the moral law' (ibid., p. 277), the second to 'elicit from our conative nature an *interest*, an incentive which is in kind different from any natural (empirically conditioned) interest, namely a purely *moral* interest in obeying the law of objectively correct behavior' (ibid., 277-78). Practical reason has thus a *motivational* dimension. This means that detecting the necessary presuppositions of agency does not only make us aware of the right way to act, but also creates an interest in doing so.

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