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Introduction

This is a book about practical reason, action, and emotion in Kant. My aim is to answer what is the real importance of emotion for Kant. I will try to show that Kant had considerable views about emotions and that he was not blind to their importance in action in general. My object is not moral action, but action in general, including weak and even evil ones. My purpose is to show that Kant dedicated a considerable part of his work to the study of the relation between reason and emotion.

In Chapter 1, I analyze Kant's theory of action and what can count as a reason for or cause of an action. First, I begin with the distinction between *motiva* and *stimulus* in the pre-critical lessons on ethics and metaphysics. In the *Groundwork*, Kant explains this distinction in terms of objective and subjective grounds for actions: the motive (*Bewegungsgrund*) is the objective ground of an action and the incentive (*Triebfeder*) is the subjective one. Next, I analyze the possibility of the overdetermination of actions, understood as the possibility of two possible causes for the same action. I will argue that according to the incorporation thesis, there is only one motive for an action.

Second, I try to reconcile the weakness of the will and the incorporation thesis. I will show that, according to the incorporation thesis, Kant is committed to a strong thesis concerning causation of actions. Reason and only reason can be the cause of an action. If we accept weakness, however, we must have a humbler solution to the Kantian theory of action: the domain of rational agency does not have the same extension of voluntary action. In the model of rational agency there is no room for weakness, although it is a fact in real actions. The domain of the voluntary is, then, wider than the

domain of rational agency. The weakness of the will applies to the first and the incorporation thesis applies only to the second.

In Chapter 2, I shall analyze whether human beings can act morally without being moved by sensible feelings. I will show that the answer in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *Groundwork*, and the *Critical of Practical Reason* is undoubtedly yes, but that Kant is ambiguous in *The Metaphysics of Morals* and also in the *Anthropology*. In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant claims that there are some sensible conditions for the reception of the concept of duty: moral feeling, conscience, love of one's neighbor, and respect for one self (self-esteem). I examine moral feeling and the love of human beings, trying to figure out whether or not they are necessary sensible preconditions for moral actions.

In Chapter 3, I ask whether there is a place for affects and passions in the Kantian system. I intend to show that this place is the empirical part of morals, which can be understood as anthropology. I follow the development of the idea of anthropology in Kant's moral works, showing the division between a moral metaphysics and a practical anthropology, aiming at exploring the impure part of Kantian ethics. I also try to compare the concepts of practical anthropology, pragmatic anthropology, and transcendental anthropology.

In Chapter 4, I analyze Kant's theory of emotions and what he can teach us about them. I will challenge two models that have been used to explain his theory. I begin with Sabini/Silver's position, according to which emotions for Kant follow the pain model: they are precognitive and involuntary phenomena. Next, I analyze Baron's objection, according to which Kant held that we are responsible for our emotions. I argue that both interpretations are misleading. First, I show that there is not a unique model for emotions in Kant. In his work, there is a *continuum* from uncontrollable emotions, like anger, to those which can be cultivated and rationally controlled. The voluntariness and involuntariness of emotions as well as their capacity for being cultivated depends on their relation to the passive, reactive, or active self. Second, I argue that Kant's account of emotion includes both physiological aspects and

cognitive contents, mainly evaluative beliefs. However, the variety of emotions presents us with different proportions of these two elements. I conclude that Kantian moral theory contributes an outstanding theory of emotions to contemporary debates, one which acknowledges physiological as well as cognitive aspects, without forgetting their diversity.

In Chapter 5, I discuss Kant's theory of affects, particularly the possibility of controlling them. I claim that affects are not easy to control and some are even uncontrollable through the power of the mind. The possibility of controlling affects depends upon a mild temperament. Although in some cases Kant admits cultivation of character, the limits of this cultivation will depend on the natural temperament of the agent. I will argue that Kant's theory of affects is connected to the seventeenth-century physiology idea of excited states, which make affects difficult to control merely by the force of the mind.

In Chapter 6, I analyze virtue as a cure for strong affects, and refinement as a propaedeutic to virtue. Kantian virtue is apart from happiness and does not aim at any *telos*, such as the achievement of a happy life. If virtue does not lead necessarily to happiness or pleasure, what is then virtue? What is the aim of Kantian virtue? Kantian virtue is the fortitude, strength, and self-constraint to attain full rationality. The development of virtue over time will be necessary to control instances of outbursts of feelings that could oppose the accomplishment of moral actions.

In Chapter 7, I investigate the aesthetical conditions for morality. I will begin with *Critique of Judgment* and the thesis of § 59, stating that the beautiful can be considered a symbol of the morally good. After that, I try to sort out the relation between refinement and morality. I also ask about the presence of the feelings of pleasure and displeasure in morality and analyze moral feeling in *The Metaphysics of Morals*. I then examine the relation between the realm of taste and the realm of virtues in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*.

In Chapter 8, my aim is to explore the relations Kant establishes between women, emotions, and morality, in order to show that the female sex is useful

in the moral education of men. Kant has often been criticized for holding a very negative vision of women, according to which they are less rational and less morally valuable than men. In this chapter, I will show that, in spite of some pejorative comments, Kant held that women have some characteristics that can be useful to morality. This is due to some qualities of the female sex, mainly women's capacity for self-control and the capacity to have moral feelings like sympathy and compassion. Moreover, women demonstrate their mastery of emotions and passions when they are able to use their emotional sensitivity and self-control to master the feelings and passions of men. Since the moral agent presupposes the capacity of mastering his/her inclinations in order to follow the moral law, at least in this particular area, women seem to fit this role better than men.

In Chapter 9, I argue that the evil of emotions resides in passions and I try to point to a possible cure for this evil through an ethical community. Kant claims that both affects and passions are illnesses of the mind, because both hinder the sovereignty of reason. I show that passions are worse than affects for the purpose of pure reason. I then relate affects and passions to the degrees of propensity to evil in *Religion* and I analyze the idea of an ethical community as a way to overcome evil, which goes beyond the political and anthropological solutions suggested by Kant.

In Conclusion, I offer an idea of Kantian philosophy that does not deny the reality of human emotion, although it is faithful to the claim that the moral value of an action resides in its being done for the sake of duty.