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# Kant and Heidegger on the freedom that eludes 'the political'

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## Abstract

By considering the transcendentalism of Kant and Heidegger as primarily oriented towards the concerns of practical philosophy, this paper explores some of the similarities in their notions of political community and their relation to freedom. It argues that, despite the differences in their philosophical registers, these similarities lead both of them to hold that 'the political' is a deficient mode of community. Certain transcendence of experience allows them both to change how a human being relates to another. Heidegger follows Kant's lead in separating the concern of freedom from goodness and distances it even further from the means-ends reasoning by exiting the subject-object paradigm. The alternatives to the deficient political community, the kingdom of ends in Kant and the authentic community in Heidegger, too have potentially comparable facets. The paper concludes that their arguments leave an account of freedom that 'must' remain elusive for political action.

**Keywords:** political community, freedom, transcendentalism, authenticity, Kantian ethics

This paper draws parallels between Kant's ideal moral community, also known as the kingdom of ends, and Heidegger's authentic community. It argues that, insofar as political action is concerned, comparable pictures of elusive freedom emerge from both of them, although their respective philosophical registers are seemingly different. In this comparison, we shall see that even as Heidegger rejects the theoreticism of the Western philosophical canon, he operates with a certain transcendental framework that has traces of Kant. On a closer look, both the Kantian version of transcendentalism and its Heideggerian revision are oriented more towards the concerns proper to practical philosophy- the relation of a human being with others. Of course, Kant's assertion that establishes transcendental subjectivity, i.e., "…though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience", is at the same time meant to limit reason in matters of epistemology[1] (1929: 41). Conversely though, it

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is the very notion of transcendental finitude that permits Kant, in his second *Critique* and latter works on ethics, to develop the noumenal self-capable of spontaneity upon whom Kant erects his arguments of freedom as moral autonomy; that freedom has this God-like, non-empirical character. In the introduction of the first *Critique* itself, Kant declares in no uncertain terms that he aims to make room for the "assumption— as made on behalf of the necessary practical employment of my reason— of God, freedom and immortality" (Kant, 1929, p. xxx). Heidegger manifestly ontologises the Kantian account of transcendental finitude by stating in his *Kant and the problem of metaphysics* that "...experience of beings is itself always already guided by ontological understanding, which becomes accessible through experience in a more determinative respect. Ontological knowledge is hence a judging according to grounds *which are not brought forth experientially*" [emphasis added] (Heidegger, 1997, p. 9). But, as Heidegger departs from the traditional metaphysics of subjectivity and dissociates freedom and causality, he follows Kant no further to the postulation of the noumenal self. His notion of freedom emerges through Dasein's resoluteness towards the finitude of existence; through the 'ecstatic temporality' that modifies our Being-with-others. Considered in this light though, the Kantian imperative of 'treating others as ends in themselves' might even appear a precursor to the the notion of 'care' (*Sorge*). Again, the larger point I wish to make is that, from the perspective of political philosophy, these semblances between Kant and Heidegger culminate in a similar discontent with the political community and, consequently, similar elusiveness of freedom for political action.

## 'Nation of devils' and the 'kingdom of ends' in Kant

The contractarian political action of Kant that is premised on a notion of 'radical evil' needs no elaborate introduction. He describes the political community as a condition of 'unsociable sociability'. In the *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*, Kant explains that human beings, against their own tendency to live communally, also have:

> …a great tendency to *live as an individual*, to isolate himself, since he also encounters in himself the unsocial characteristic of wanting to direct everything according to his own ideas. He therefore expects resistance all around… [and] is in turn inclined to offer resistance to others. Through the desire for honour, power or property, it drives him to seek status among his fellows, whom he cannot *bear*, yet cannot *bear to leave* [original emphases] (Kant, 1991, p. 44).

In *Towards Perpetual Peace*, he maintains that a contractarian community is possible even for a "nation of devils". He points out that politics is not concerned with "how to attain the moral improvement of the human being…

but rather only how to use the mechanism of nature on human beings in order to direct the conflict between their hostile intentions in a people in such a way that they compel each other to submit themselves to coercive laws and thereby bring about the condition of peace in which laws are in force" (Kant, 2006, pp. 90-91)

Surely, it is only from similar works he wrote towards the end of his life that a political philosophy, at least in a limited sense, emerges in Kant. However, it is precisely in contrast to such a political community based on the 'desire-based' rational agency[2] that his earlier proposal of moral community or the 'kingdom of ends' presents itself. As Ricœur observed, the prescriptive character of Kantian deontology comes into play because of the existence of violence; the other is projected, as we saw in Kant's contractarian sketch, either as an aggressor or a victim (Patton, 1987, p. 107). One may say that, heuristically, the political community comes to bear upon the present moment from the contractarian beginnings, while the ideal moral community does so from the purported end of natural teleology. But even if we do not consider the ideal moral community temporally as a post-political utopia, the disjuncture between political action and morality is noticeable. We can see that the duality between politics and morality reflects the duality between nature/force and freedom. The contractual resolution to the conflicts based on prudence is part of the teleological progression of nature. Kant's political community is saying that what should be freedom's accomplishment, namely the maintenance of a harmonious community, may as well be nature's. Freedom calls upon the self-legislative capacity of pure practical reason, while nature would present experiences that force prudential reason to form a community. The disjuncture between political action and moral autonomy emerges because the structure of political action, given that it is desire-based and goal-driven, cannot comply with the categorical imperatives. This is essentially a problem that arises from an incompatibilist account of freedom.

The disjuncture, most readily seen in Kant's discussion of the French Revolution, is a point that Hannah Arendt paid significant attention to. Arendt observes that, for all his enthusiasm about the French Revolution, Kant denies revolution any legitimate status[3] or moral admissibility (Arendt, 1982, pp. 47-49). One might object to considering revolution as a typical example of political action. But, as previously mentioned, the source of the disjuncture lies, in the very structure of political action, as Kant takes his ethics away from considerations of good and ends-means reasoning. Autonomy entails that freedom lies not in your ability to choose from a variety of ends the one which the categorical imperatives entail, but rather it emanates from having already chosen it. To be free, it is not sufficient that the political actions do incidentally abide by the moral duties or that in seeking certain ends, they co-seek human beings as an end itself[4]. James Furner[5]

points out the following: "For a utilitarian, to act morally is to intend to bring about the state of affairs that has moral value on that theory. The formula of end in itself is not a command of this kind. Humanity in a person is not something to be brought about, but the reason to bring about what respect for humanity in a person requires in a given context" (Furner, 2019, p. 17). In other words, 'goodness' is no longer associated with anything external but with the moral faculty itself. Freedom is postulated here in terms of the success of moral action unencumbered by teleological considerations, much less social ontology. In a certain sense, the disjuncture also arises because the ideal moral community, for Kant, can only be a universal one. Because, for him, it must encompass all rational beings, whereas political communities for him are contractarian communities at a lower level. The sense we get from Kant is that politics and ethics work not quite in tandem, but parallelly.

## 'The political' as the inauthentic existence in Heidegger

In comparison, there is hardly any place for political philosophy in Heidegger's fundamental ontology[6]. As de Beistegui argues in this regard, a better approach might be to "emphasise the distance – indeed the abyss – that Heidegger is concerned to establish between thought proper and political philosophy" (Duff, 2007, p. 88). If anything, he is looking to render political action rather redundant and his inputs to political philosophy are of a self-negating kind. But we need to understand how he couches this in a fresh philosophical register. Heidegger's antipathy towards the 'the political' emerges because, ontologically, it represents to him the 'inauthentic existence' of human beings, or what he calls the fallenness/*verfal*. Inauthenticity refers to the loss of the singularity of Dasein to, what Steiner calls, the "formless theyness" (1978: 90). Heidegger writes that "because the 'they' presents every judgement and decision as its own, it deprives the particular Dasein of its answerability… It was always 'they' who did it and yet it can be said that it has been no one. In Dasein's everydayness, the agency through which most things come about is one of which we must say it was no one" (2007, p. 165). It is constituted by "ambiguous and jealous stipulations and talkative fraternizing in the "they" and in what "they" want to undertake" (Heidegger, 2007, pp. 344-345). Inauthentic solicitude, Heidegger explains,

> …takes over for the Other that with which he is to concern himself. The Other is thus thrown out of his own position; he steps back so that afterwards, when the matter has been attended to, he can either take it over as something finished and at his disposal, or disburden himself of it completely. In such solicitude, the Other can become one who is dominated and dependent, even if this domination is a tacit one and remains hidden from him (2007, p. 158).

It is because of this inauthenticity that political action is denied any pretence of freedom. For Heidegger, 'the political' is not only a relation of domination but a relation that is overdetermined in a way that precludes the singularity of both the Dasein and the other. This condition arises from the predicament that Dasein's apprehension of the self is preceded by the fallenness that constitutes it. More importantly, the necessary fallenness he identifies is not far from the Kantian notion of radical evil insofar as it brings about an inauthentic solicitude. In Kant, the radical evil, accentuated by the formation of social life, leads to the desire to dominate others and to treat others as means to one's ends. In politics, other human beings would appear (relate) to the political agent only in the capacity of objects. For Heidegger too, 'the political' is characterised by the "unsociability" of a dominant mode of Being-with (2007, p. 162). However, his opposition to 'the political' is more pronounced after 'the turn', as he turns his critical attention to the 'technological thinking' in which Dasein is prone to a calculative and controlling relation to the world. In a series of lectures delivered around 1942 Heidegger demonstrates more explicitly how 'the political' undergirds the certainty that modern consciousness attaches to all its experiences by retrieving the Greek 'polis' as a contrast. In the lecture *Holderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*, he says:

> …that consciousness that wants to be certain of history must therefore be a consciousness that plans and acts. The fundamental modern form in which the specifically modern, self-framing self-consciousness of human beings orders all beings is the state. For this reason, the "political" becomes the definitive self-certainty of historiographical consciousness. The political is determined in terms of history grasped according to consciousness, that is, experienced "technically." The "political" is the way in which history is accomplished. Because the political is thus the technical and historiographical fundamental certainty of all action, *the "political" is marked by an unconditional failure to question itself…* The way in which the polis is the middle of being for the Greeks means something completely different from the unconditional priority of the modern totality of "the political" [emphasis added] (1996, pp. 94-95).

This argument sees the Greek polis in the very pivotal midst of beings as a whole and entails that it is prior to anything that could be called political. He would argue that 'the political' in its modern sense is erected to keep this originary sense of 'polis' away so that the subject who plans and acts can stand on grounds of certainty. The retrieval of the polis did not certainly suggest any 'return' to that past here but offered a sample of his idea of authentic community which is evidently non-political. But, Heidegger would hurry to insist, most crucially, that "the they" in itself is an existential characteristic belonging to the very structure of Dasein; being is being-in-the-world. It is precisely here that he makes his departure from Kantian transcendentalism.

Authenticity, then, does not possibly mean the preclusion but rather a modification of that existential characteristic. It is, as Duff points out, "not a state of purity, but a reappropriation of Dasein's fallen everydayness" (2015, p. 156). Therefore, the modification in the direction of authenticity must mean a restoration/induction of this question of being to 'the they'. To put it slightly more concretely, authentic Dasein and inauthentic Dasein entail two different kinds of solicitude or being-with-the-others. It may not be wrong to say that Heidegger makes an existential question out of what was an ethico-political question for his predecessors.

The 'fallenness' points to a forgetfulness of being at the heart of 'the political', a capitulation to the ontic understanding, as does 'the political' involve in Kant a trait that contradicts moral precepts. It follows that the Heideggerian authentic community, much like the Kantian kingdom of ends, lies outside the scope of both political action and political ambition. The difference, however, lies in that "the political" is, for Heidegger, much more elemental ('unconditionally prior') to Dasein than it is to the Kantian subject. This difference means that Heidegger would not try to combat 'the political' the way Kant did. Because they agree that the human tendency to dominate others is an impediment to freedom, Heidegger follows Kant, as Velkley points out, up to the point of "divorcing freedom from good" (2006, p. 254). But he takes issue with Kant re-instituting metaphysics with a new authority of morality. So Heideggerian transcendentalism, far from divorcing Dasein from the world as Kant did with the 'noumenal self', enmeshes it deeply with the world. Here, Heidegger is unburdened by the dichotomy between nature and freedom which allows him to characterise Dasein as dwelling or being-in-the-world. Authenticity as the non-technological way of relating to others pursues, as Dallmayr says, a "non-subjectivist exegesis of 'co-being'" (1980, p. 221). Dallmayr further observes that most of the moral and political treatises in Western philosophy understood collectivity either in terms of an "outgrowth of subjects" or "an empirical collectivity into which individuals are levelled" (1980, p. 242). For Heidegger, however, 'being-with-others' is an existential condition that needs to be considered ontologically. In his own terms, Being-with cannot be considered "a summative result of the occurrence of several 'subjects'" (2007, p. 163). It follows that he does not concur with the modern understanding of freedom as the individual spontaneity to act autonomously. Unlike Kant who confronts the human tendency to dominate others at the level of action, Heidegger conceptualises freedom rather at the level of human comportment. In *The Essence of Human Freedom*, he challenges the notion that freedom is a kind of causality and instead argues that causality is a problem of freedom (2002, pp. 203-205). It means that Heidegger's re-articulation of freedom emanates not by severing the causal chain, or through a wilful self-creation, but from the unique ontological disposition of human beings. It is what Heidegger would call

Dasein's "resoluteness towards itself" (2007, p. 344). From this perspective that considers human beings as a site of the unconcealment of Being, freedom consists in interrogating what we experience at every moment. To do so is an openness wherein the disclosure of not the Being itself, but the mystery of Being takes place.

## Moral imperative and care

Far from politically realisable goals, both the Kantian kingdom of ends and the Heideggerian authentic community are counterpoints to 'the political'— or what each of them considers to be 'the political'. Construing the authentic community in itself as the end of political action would be paradoxical, for it demands the means-ends paradigm to self-expunge. To recap, the point of similarity is that how a human being relates to other members of the community is central to both Kantian and Heideggerian accounts of freedom. And 'the political' comprises relations which are not in sync with freedom. In Kant, political action does not comply with the categorical imperatives that provide autonomy to human action[7]. In Heidegger, it impedes our participation in the revealment of Being. It is also evident that despite agreeing that freedom eludes political action for comparable reasons, Kant and Heidegger part ways in their respective conceptualisation of freedom. But I will try to argue in this section that Heidegger's ontological view of the authentic life (therefore of freedom) takes after, in a very peculiar sense, the Kantian moral argument. Keep in mind also that Heidegger's relationship with transcendental philosophy itself is far from a settled question even within the inner circles of Heideggerian scholars[8]. Particularly after what is known as "the turn" in Heideggerian philosophy, even if transcendentalism persists, his critique of the transcendentalism of the subject is so trenchant that it will no longer allow the centrality of Dasein.

Katrin Flikschuh points out that, for Kant, desires refer to the "subject's affective attitude towards others as well as themselves" in ethics while in political agency, they "typically specify relations between subjects and objects" (2002, p. 189). It follows that desires in the realm of politics have an economic function; simply put, as the want for objects. The snag that Kant wanted to sort out was that there was no knowledge of the subjectivity of others that was forthcoming from experience. This argument takes note that, in the Kantian scheme of things, other human beings would appear (relate) to the political agent only in the capacity of objects- either objects of desire or objects which are means in the teleological action. I have tried to show that this prompts an understanding of the Kantian moral community as an alternative to the essentially political condition of human beings. Lucas Thorpe has made a crucial argument that the Kantian moral community is modelled on the category of community in his theoretical philosophy, which is in contradistinction to the category of causality[9]. That is, the relation of

causality involves a subordination of the consequence to the ground, while the relation of community establishes coordination (Thorpe, 2011, p. 66). Politics appeared to Kant a relation of causality – a relation of subordination rather than of community. Translated to moral philosophy, this helps Kant to put forth a community of subjects who are related to one another not through subordination, but coordination. Kantian ethics, in this light, is primarily about community than it is about self-mastery. This is where the notion of care (*Sorge*) is, in fact, ontologizing the Kantian imperative of treating others as ends in themselves. Heidegger matches the import of the Kantian imperative while stating that "those entities towards which Dasein as Being-with comports itself, do not have the kind of Being which belongs to equipment ready-to-hand; *they are themselves* Dasein. These entities are not objects of concern, but rather of solicitude" (2007, p.157). The Kantian imperative, however, directly entailed only the liberal principle of non-encroachment; making sure that your actions do not impinge upon others, you leave the other alone. Any attempt to argue that it demands to act positively, for instance by contributing to the particular ends of the other, risks changing the deontological character of Kantian ethics. But Kantian scholars have relentlessly tried to demonstrate what treating others as an end would mean. Paul Ricœur, for example, attempts to resolve the tension between teleology and deontology by substituting 'humanity' in Kant's categorical imperative with 'fundamental goods'- goods without which "the exercise of free choice and the development of a life governed by reasoned intentions would be impossible", or in other words an "incorporation of ethics of good into the ethics of right" (1987, pp. 99-110). Similarly, Guyer argues that without consideration of particular ends, treating others and oneself as ends would be an empty tautology. Positively stated, it obliges an agent to help others pursue their particular ends insofar as it doesn't overstep upon one's own pursuits (Guyer, 2011).

As Bourdieu reckons, the crucial point in Heidegger's argument is the identification of transcendental subjectivity with time, "in as much as it transcends itself to create the possibility of the objectifying encounter, the opening up towards other entities" (1999, p. 60-61). It is argued that freedom, in this sense, involves self-transcendence insofar as it exposes the agents to their heritage by transposing them to an openness, to an 'ecstatic temporality'. The Heideggerian sense of transcendence does not therefore mean severance from this heritage, nor does such a severance mean freedom. Now, if we avoid misunderstanding the notion of ecstatic temporality and that of heritage in terms of the ontic knowledge, or how we usually understand history, we come to see that it hardly entails any principles of action, much less any course of political action. It rather appears only to be proffering a human possibility for a unique comportment or bearing, which is freedom. What is key to the ontologisation of the imperative of treating others as ends

in themselves is an exit from the metaphysics of subjectivity. *Verfal* or the necessary fallenness implies a life permeated by the subject-object paradigm. Heidegger takes exception to this paradigm and argues that:

> The structure of the worldliness of the world is such that others are not initially objectively present as unattached subjects along with other things, but show themselves in their heedful being in the surrounding world in terms of the things at hand in that world… "Empathy" does not first constitute being with, but is first possible on its basis, and is motivated by the prevailing modes of being within their inevitability (1996, pp. 116, 117)

Heidegger believes that authenticity "makes possible the right kind of objectivity, which frees the other in his freedom for himself" (2007, p. 159). He argues that freedom as Dasein's resoluteness towards itself co-discloses the "ownmost potentiality-for-Being" in others (2007, p. 344). To reiterate, the crucial difference from Kant is that it does not rely on an assumption of the subjectivity of others, i.e., recognition of others as authors of action. Resoluteness does not imply an individualistic self-realisation. An authentic community arises out of a commitment to "the same affairs in common" and "their doing so is determined by the manner in which their Dasein, *each in its own way*, has been taken hold of" [emphasis added] (Heidegger, 2007, p. 159).

In Dallmayr's juxtaposition of Heidegger's authentic solicitude to Kant's 'kingdom of ends', he observes that the Kantian notion retains some instrumentalist residuals as it treats the subject's ego as a means to others who are ends-in-themselves. This is, in fact, the result of a persisting subject-object paradigm. In contrast, Heideggerian solicitude as respecting others 'in their potentiality for being' neither postulates them as ends nor entails means (1980, p. 244). An analysis of the ramifications of Heidegger's thinking for political thought, as Schürmann insists, cannot lose sight of "this release from purpose in action" (1978, p. 202). How else does Dasein participate in the disclosure of the Being but by existing itself as released? Keep in mind that Heidegger develops this theme of 'releasement' or 'letting-be' in his writings after 'the turn', especially after the Second World War. The easier path to draw political action from his proposal is to harness the contrast that Heidegger makes between the political and the polis, which means to oppose 'the political' with another 'political'. In this sense, it is possible to say that the 'releasement' translates itself as a pursuit of an 'experience of discord' that cannot help having political ramifications. Dungey observes, in this sense, that existing as releasement is political because it interrogates and weakens what has been entrenched (2001, p. 459). But, to fathom the non-interventionist aspect of authentic solicitude has proved trickier, even for Heidegger. As Thorpe has shown for Kant, the task is not to understand Heideggerian authenticity simply as some kind of mastery over the

technological attitude. Instead, to understand it as orienting towards Being as 'presencing'. White explains this in terms of allowing "things to come into one's world in a way that refrains from harnessing them to our perspectives and purposes" (1990, p. 86). It is the phenomenological attitude that lets things be; "in a phenomenon which is left to itself Being appears as letting-be" (Schürmann, 1978, p 198). Allowing others their ownmost potentiality consists in the perpetual questioning of Dasein's relation with them. Although this questioning cannot release us once and for all and we do 'fall' again and again, in questioning, we are indeed possessed by freedom. Care is a hermeneutical relatedness and not a political relation. While he thinks of 'the political' as a relation in which human beings are overdetermined, by technological reasoning- a desire for control, Heidegger's dissent to Kant is that falling back on rational subjectivity to overcome this essentially end-means reasoning is self-defeating.

## Afterword

Hannah Arendt traces a fundamental tension between politics and philosophy to the trial of Socrates that, in the eyes of Plato, demonstrated the failure of politics to appreciate the worth of philosophy. He would then set Western philosophy on a course that is always fidgety about politics. Arendt observes that "philosophy, the concern with truth regardless of the realm of human affairs… drove its adherents out of the polis and made them unfit for it". This flight from the realm of polis, in her opinion, reflects "a deeper contradiction between philosophy and politics'' (1990, 76). One might object here and ask, did Kant not intend to save religion and morality, God and freedom, by limiting what could be known, 'by the clearest proof of the ignorance'? So, is not the focus of Kantian philosophy precisely the 'human affairs'? Remember that began this paper by arguing that the Kantian transcendental argument belongs indeed to practical philosophy. In this vein, Beiner observes that Kant challenges Plato through the "demotion of cognitive enterprise and the elevation of the cosmological significance of the morality of ordinary moral agents" (2001, 93). Nonetheless, I think the Kantian theory of action remains too solipsistic that his moral agent is closer to God (in the Aristotelian sense) than to humans. There is nothing in experience that enables the agent to value 'others' as subjects. By seemingly moving away from the notion that philosophy's prime concern is truth to the view that it is freedom, Kant might have reconfigured philosophy and instituted a new authority, that of morality, for transcendentalism, but did not resolve its tension with politics. In Heidegger, freedom resides with truth; it is what [it] is. This view establishes the concerns of practical philosophy as constitutive of existence. So, any philosophy must now be practical philosophy. It deposes philosophy from the highbrow echelons and embroils it in communal destiny. Philosophy's only access to authenticity,

then, is through the authentic 'self-recovery' of the community of which it is a part. If philosophy is to find the truth of human experience, Newell observes, it should reside in the respective community's world (1984, 780). But as we saw, where Kant moralises our relation with others, Heidegger ontologises. The authentic 'self-recovery' cannot be translated into political action or a mode of political existence. As strategies of freedom, both involve an overcoming/questioning of the political. Philosophy's reluctance to consider politics as a possible candidate for an authentic, free, higher form of life is a thread that is broken by neither Kant nor Heidegger.

## Endnotes

Strawson calls this epistemological argument the 'principle of signficance' (Strawson, 1966). In a nutshell, it is the argument that the concepts logically preceding experience would still be required to relate to an experience to be meaningful or legitimate.

Some form of the concept of desire-based agency is found in a number of Kantian scholars like Allen Wood, Paul Guyer, and Katrin Flikschuh (Wood, 1991, Guyer, 2003, Flikschuh, 2002). In a gist, this is a recognition that there is a shift from a 'virtue-based' agency to a 'desire-based' agency' as political philosophy transitions from the ancient and medieval to the modern era. For example, Aristotle's virtue-ethics considers human desires to be already tempered by virtues or entrenched dispositions. But with the desire-based agency, we see that desires are without the virtuous temperence and ethics seeks to offset them. Kant's contractarian truce, however, is solely based on the desire-based agency.

She explains this contradiction through a duality between the judging spectator and the engaging actor. Cursorily, the argument is as follows: Kant, in his Towards Perpetual Peace, makes it clear that the moral maxim of action has to be necessarily compatible with being made public. Revolutionary action, by the very nature of it, demands secrecy. Therefore, revolution is morally inadmissible. And yet, the spectator who makes a judgement is free from this requirement of abiding by moral principles. Arendt emphasises that Kant's enthusiasm for revolution is that of a spectator. This summarises the conflict of politics with morality in Kant (Arendt, 1982, p. 49).

In thsi regard, Henry Sidgwick raised the concern that Kant is conflating two kinds of freedom, the freedom to choose between good and evil and the freedom to act from moral motivations (Korsgaard, 1996, p. 161).

Furner's is a marxist critique of Kant.

There is indeed that elephant in the room- Heidegger's Nazi affiliations. Commentators and even Heidegger's own disciples are divided and there is no easy answer possible to the question of a (lack of) continuity between his philosophy and political engagements.

There is indeed the 'comparative' freedom of the 'willkür' (choice) that Kant talks about. While it is possible to speak of the freedom of political action in this sense, it does not countervene the arguments we are now considering.

See Nelson, "Heidegger's Failure to Overcome Transcendental Philosophy."

Of course, this is not to refute the spontaneity that constitutes human subjectivity in the first place.

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