



Nature, Providence, and Human Autonomy in Kant's Critical Philosophy*

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Abstract

Kant's political philosophy is a realm of conflict between the traditional order, which is based on nature and its arrangement, and the civic order, which attempts to substitute the general will for the natural order. In fact, Kantian philosophy as a whole still finds itself partially trapped in a form of thought based on a natural-theological order, and consequently, witnesses its penetration into the theory of the state and the political sovereign. Nature, as an impenetrable element and a determinant of the roadmap in politics, manifests itself anew under the concept of the state—a presence that the individual, and even the aggregation of the general will, lacks the power to cast aside. This paper demonstrates the complex and multidimensional character that the term "nature" holds for

* Bagherzade Meshkibaf, M. (2026). Nature, Providence, and Human Autonomy in Kant's Critical Philosophy . *Theosophia Islamica*, 6(2), pp. 1-26.
<https://doi.org/10.22081/jti.2026.75060.1144>

▣ **Article Type:** Research; **Publisher:** Islamic Sciences and Culture Academy

▣ **Received:** 2025/10/22 • **Revised:** 2025/12/25 • **Accepted:** 2026/03/20 • **Online Publication:** 2026/06/01

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<http://jti.isca.ac.ir>

Kant, analyzes the relationship between the idea of nature and Kant's political idea, and ultimately explains the weakness of Kant's political philosophy as it relates to his theory of nature.

Keywords

political philosophy, General Will, Natural Order, natural-theological, political sovereign,

Introduction

For Kant, nature can be viewed either as a regulative idea or as divine providence. Generally speaking, Kant desires to discover the natural laws of history in precisely the same manner that Kepler discovered the natural laws of the planets. When Kant speaks of the laws of nature in history, he does not mean that an actual mind or legislator called "nature" has prepared a plan that unfolds in history. Rather, if we wish to understand history, we must take refuge in an *idea*—which is nature itself—and we must consider it *as if* it pursues a purpose. Therefore, as Hannah Arendt states, history does not hold a central position in Kant's philosophy. In Kant, history is a part of nature. The subject of history is the human species, understood as a part of creation, even though humans are recognized as the ultimate purpose and the king of creation. What matters in history is not human individuals, nor historical figures, nor what humans do out of good or evil; rather, it is the secret trick (ruse) of nature that brings about the progress of the species and the development of all their capacities throughout the succession of generations... The process of history moves toward progress in culture (Arendt, 1992, p. 8).

Similarly, Allen Wood writes in *Kant's Ethical Thought*: "Kant's philosophy of history is naturalistic in the sense that he regards history as a branch of biology, but for Kant, biology can never be a pure science, and... the applicability of this science is compatible with reflective judgments" (Wood, 1999, p. 208). On the other hand, since the idea of republicanism is posited within nature, the entire political project seeks, in fact, to explain the nature of the state, the general will, and the manner of its realization.

1. For further research on the relationship between nature and the idea, see Kant's essay *Perpetual Peace* (Kant, 1989 c, pp. 107-108).

1. Understanding History from the Perspective of Nature

Kant does not recognize "history" in the sense that developed in Europe after the year 1800; rather, he has a superficial meaning of it in mind, which nature does not simultaneously denote—instead, nature denotes providence or an idea. Aside from this, it is also important to note that the ultimate purpose of this idea or providence is a government that conforms to a pure republic. In what follows, we cite passages for the reader from Kant's political essays. In his essay titled *On the Common Saying: 'This May be True in Theory, but it Does Not Apply in Practice'* (which Kant likely wrote against philosophers like Burke and conservatives who believed that abstract forms of reason have no practical application in the external world), he writes:

Progress is not based on what we do or what methods we use. Rather, it is more observable in what human nature can do in and through us to force us to follow a course in which our choice is not involved. Therefore, we must attend to nature alone, or to providence (for the most perfect reason is required for this perfect goal to be fulfilled)... In other words, through the general coercion and stress created by nature or providence, people are forced into the decision to submit to the necessity prescribed by reason and enter into a civil constitution... or even be forced to submit to a cosmopolitan law (Kant, 1989 e, p. 90).

The first point is that nature and providence are synonymous for Kant. But the second point is more important, in that Kant believes providence operates without our willing it. Through the coercion that nature/providence creates, people are forced to submit to a civil constitution. Kant writes in the essay *Perpetual Peace*: "Perpetual peace is guaranteed by no authority other than the great art of nature itself. The mechanical process of nature clearly reveals a purposeful design for a harmony among men, even against their will and despite

their dissent. This design is a kind of fate" (Kant, 1989 c, p. 108). Therefore, the design of nature/providence does not care at all about human desire; rather, it is imposed upon man like fate. This fate moves toward creating a government that conforms to a pure republic or republicanism. For this reason, the author does not call Kant's desired government a "republic," because the form of government is not what matters to him (meaning it can be a monarchy, an aristocracy, or a republic); rather, its substance is what is important to him, and any form of government must bring itself closer to the substance of a republic¹. Kant writes in *The Metaphysics of Morals (The Doctrine of Right)*:

The forms and shapes of government are merely the alphabet of the original legislation in the civil state, and whichever of them is deemed preferable can endure and continue as the necessary mechanism of the constitution, in harmony with the established traditions of society. However, the spirit of the original contract implies a binding property in a constructive power to make the type of government fit and harmonize with the meaning of the original contract. Now, if this harmony is not possible all at once, this change must be introduced gradually, in such a way that the government, in terms of its consequences and effects, harmonizes with the only rightful type of constitution, namely republicanism, so that the original rational form replaces the old legal forms whose only goal was to make the people submissive. This rational form is the only form of government that makes freedom the principle and condition of obligatory action, that is, duty (Kant, 2015, pp. 203-204 / Persian Edition).

1. For Kant, changing the form of government is not important; it is the essence of the constitution that is of significance (Kant, 1989 b, p. 261).

The most important point in the above paragraph is freedom. Pure republicanism, through freedom, consolidates its institutions in Kant's view, and any government, whatever its form, must test itself against this touchstone and bring itself closer to this idea throughout history. Quentin Skinner, in the introduction to the translation of Kant's political writings, writes: For Kant, the French Revolution is an event that signifies man's moral progress and the creation of a republican state. And this is the only way that exists for progress and the full realization of morality (Kant, 1989 a, p. 37). The republican state, according to Kant, possesses these characteristics: "The civil constitution of every state must be republican... The republican constitution is founded upon three principles: first, the principle of freedom for all members of society; second, the principle of the dependence of all upon a single common legislation; third, the principle of the equality of the law for all" (Kant, 1989 c, p. 99).

Now we bring examples of how providence and nature in Kant's philosophy move toward establishing a law-governed social order. Kant writes in the essay *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*:

The greatest problem for the human species, to the solution of which nature drives it, is the achievement of a civil society which can administer justice universally. The highest purpose of nature, namely the development of all natural capacities for mankind, can only be achieved in society (Kant, 1989 a, p. 45)... The history of the human race as a whole can be regarded as the realization of a hidden plan of nature to bring about a politically perfect constitution, both internally and, for this purpose, externally, as the only possible state within which all natural capacities of mankind can be fully developed (Kant, 1989 a, p. 50). In the essay *Theory and Practice*, he also writes: "Among all the contracts by which a

large group of human beings concludes to form a society, the contract establishing a civil constitution has an exceptional nature" (Kant, 1989 e, p. 73).

Therefore, as we have explained, the ultimate purpose of providence/nature in Kant's philosophy is the creation of a law-governed government with the idea of republicanism. For it is in such a government (as we demonstrated in the *Critique of Judgment*) that individuals can achieve their happiness. This development, occurring throughout history and through the passage of multiple generations, can gradually approach the aforementioned idea rather than fully realize it, since ideas in Kant's philosophy are not capable of full realization. "For Kant history is a process which moves towards rationality... But since the creation of this republic and its constitution is an idea, it is not possible that we can realize it; we can only approach it. It seems that the French Revolution marks such an event for him. For its goal is precisely the establishment of a republican state. It is in this development of rationality that our rational nature is completely realized" (Kant, 1989, pp. 36-37).

Before reaching a conclusion, the necessity of the argument requires that we explain the meaning of an "idea" for Kant. Kant uses the three terms *idea*, *providence*, and *nature* largely in the same sense. Whether these terms denote the ideas of reason or divine providence, for Kant, knowing either of them in a constitutive manner is impossible; they possess only a regulative role, and their full realization is impossible. Kant generally states either that we can only approach these horizons or believes that they will be established in an unknown future. Kant writes regarding the ideas of reason in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: "But ideas are even further removed from objective reality than categories; for no appearance can be found in which they can be represented concretely. Ideas possess a type of

perfection which no possible empirical knowledge can attain. In them, reason possesses only a systematic unity, and it strives to bring the possible empirical unity closer to it, without ever being able to fully reach it" (Kant, 2015, p. 547 / Persian Edition).

2-5 An Examination of Kant's Doctrine of Right The *Groundwork*, as well as the *Critique of Judgment* and his other political essays (as has been shown), contain fundamental political terms that constitute, in fact, the beginning or prologue to the systematic development of Kantian thought toward writing a more important book in the field of the doctrine of right and the doctrine of politics titled *The Metaphysics of Morals*. In the first part of this book, Kant addresses the Doctrine of Right and subsequently enters the Doctrine of Virtue. In the aforementioned book, Kant introduces freedom—which forms the foundation and core of the human being in the *Groundwork* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*—into the juridical realm, and writes his doctrine of right with freedom at its center. Kant writes in *The Metaphysics of Morals*: "Freedom (independence from being constrained by another's choice), insofar as it can coexist with the freedom of every other in accordance with a universal law, is the only original right belonging to every man by virtue of his humanity" (Kant, 1991, p. 63). At the beginning of the section on the Doctrine of Virtue, concerning the distinction between right and ethics, Kant writes:

All legislation can be distinguished with respect to the incentive of action. That law which makes an action a duty and also makes this duty the incentive to the action is ethical. But that law which does not include the duty as the incentive in the law, and admits an incentive other than the idea of duty itself, is a juridical law (Kant, 1991, pp. 45-46)... All duties are either duties of right, that is, duties for which external legislation is possible, or duties of virtue, for which

external legislation is not possible (Kant, 1991, p. 64).

Therefore, the difference between the doctrine of right and the doctrine of virtue lies in the incentive for acting in accordance with the law. Thus, two types of legislation exist in Kant's philosophy: a law for which the mere duty can be the incentive for action, and a law for which the mere duty does not generate a sufficient incentive for action. The former case belongs to virtue, while the latter belongs to the domain of right. In other words, Kant wrote *The Metaphysics of Morals* with a view toward two dimensions of morality: external morality, which relates to the dimension of right, and internal morality, which pertains to the doctrine of virtue. Because the doctrines of right enjoy external constraint and because they possess external legislation, he calls these types of laws external laws. Kant divides these external laws into two parts: natural laws and positive laws. According to Kant, laws whose binding authority can be recognized a priori by reason without external legislation are natural laws; conversely, those laws which do not establish an obligation without external legislation are called positive laws (Kant, 1991, pp. 50-51).

The doctrine of right¹ in Kant's philosophy consists of "the sum of the laws for which an external legislation is possible; this is called the doctrine of right. If such a legislation actually exists, it is the doctrine of positive right" (Kant, 1991, p. 55). Moreover, right in his system means: "Right is the sum of the conditions under which the choice of one can be united with the choice of another in accordance with a universal law of freedom" (Kant, 1991, p. 56). Kant also explains the universal principle of right as follows: Act externally in such a

1. According to Kant, "all propositions of right, like those of ethics (which we explained in detail in the previous section), are a priori, since they are principles of reason" (Kant, 1991, pp. 71-72).

way that the free use of your choice can coexist with the freedom of everyone in accordance with a universal law (Kant, 1991, p. 56). The foundational concept in right is this very right to possess external freedom, and "the concept of right is derived from the concept of freedom in the mutual external relations of human beings" (Kant, 1989 e, p. 73).

One of the most important classifications carried out in the doctrine of right is the division of right into natural right and civil right. Of course, in Kant's view, social right also exists between these two parts of right. However, in Kantian thought, there is no contradiction between these two states, namely the state of nature and the social state; rather, both stand only in contrast to the civil state, because associations and groups can exist within the state of nature. Therefore, Kant places the state of nature and the social state within the domain of private right, whereas the civil state is placed within the domain of public right (Kant, 1991, p. 67). Thus, in explaining Kant's doctrine of right, we must first explain private right, which concerns individual property. Private right in Kant's philosophy relates above all to the right to a thing and the claim of ownership over it. This state is not a juridical state because distributive right does not exist within it—meaning there is no court of justice to distribute what is mine and what is yours. However, the social state receives an essential explanation in this section and can be considered one of the key parts of Kant's philosophy. We know that the scenario of political philosophy in the past was traditionally written such that following the state of nature, which is a state of war of all against all, a political or civil state defending the rights of persons is established via a contract concluded either among individuals themselves or between individuals and the government. Yet Kant performs a more complex task here by introducing the social state between these two, which he has adopted

from Achenwall¹. Of course, Achenwall sets it in contrast to the state of nature, but Kant opposes this classification; he places the civil state in contrast to the state of nature and introduces the social state, in a sense, between the two.

During the time Kant was teaching, Achenwall was one of the great professors of law in Germany and a figure who wrote several important books in this field. Kant used his books when he taught courses on law. Generally speaking, if we were to provide an introductory definition regarding Achenwall, it must be said that he was a thinker like Wolff, who collected and taught the body of past philosophical knowledge regarding right—though Wolff did so in philosophy and logic. In this section, which the author believes can be highly key, Kant disagrees with him and explains roughly three states, because he believes that even in the state of nature, a juridical relationship can be established among individuals, even if no guarantee has been created through a political society. Therefore, in this second state, rights exist, but they lack an external executive guarantee. The author believes that under the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment, Kant actually recognized a substance of civil society; therefore, the associations here are a prelude to the civil society that Hegel later introduces into his political thought, and Kant makes a second state appear between the two former states.

Thus, Kant proposes three stages; in the second stage, a type of community and interaction is at work. One of the reasons Kant utilizes an intermediate state is that, because he does not want to arrive at Hobbes's Leviathan, he is forced to conduct the argument differently and open up another stage. Consequently, Kant creates a complex architecture for his political theory.

1. For further study, see (Kant, 1991, p. 121).

In the condition of private right, there is a postulate based on which: "I am bound to leave what is another's in his possession only if every other person gives me an assurance that he will do the same and, based on the same principle, leave what is mine in my possession"¹ (Kant, 1991, p. 77). Therefore, it is clear that according to Kant, if only a single individual lived on the face of the earth, he could not acquire an external object as his property, and its acquisition would be impossible for him. For an obligatory relationship could not exist between him as a person and all external objects as things. Thus, determinately and formally, no one has a right to a thing; rather, what is called by this name is merely a right that someone has to a thing against another person, who also shares in common with others in a public manner (in the civil state). This sentence is the foundation of the intersubjective theory in the science of right, which dictates that two consciousnesses (self-consciousnesses) who possess an equal measure of right must always exist for right to have validity; yet despite such a condition, Kant still believes that a juridical state is not created, and we require an authority to adjudicate and settle claims. Kant writes: "In a state of nature, something external can be mine or yours only provisionally" (Kant, 1991, p. 77).

Thus, it is completely clear that the will of a single person alone, whether in the kingdom of ends (which was raised in the *Groundwork*) or in the current form that Kant demonstrates in the state of nature, is incapable of guaranteeing right. Hence, the transition to another state is mandatory. Under one of the important headings of the Doctrine of Right, namely "The Transition from What

1. Elsewhere Kant writes: No one is bound to refrain from encroaching on what belongs to another unless the other gives him a simultaneous guarantee that he will observe the same restraint toward him (Kant, 1991, p. 122).

is Mine or Yours in a State of Nature to What is Mine or Yours in a Juridical Condition Generally," Kant seeks to bring that very individual mentioned in the state of nature, with all his right and freedom, into the condition of public right, and this is what reason commands.

The will of a single person cannot serve as a binding law for everyone regarding external property, because that would violate freedom in accordance with universal laws. Therefore, only a will that is collectively powerful and binding can create such a guarantee for everyone. But the condition of being under an external legislation that also possesses power is the civil state. Therefore, it is only in a civil state that something external can be mine or yours (Kant, 1991, p. 77).

Therefore, if peace cannot be established among individuals in the state of nature, nor within the ethical condition demonstrated in the kingdom of ends, and if we cannot ensure that they do not violate one another's rights, we must enter into the civil condition. This is because Kant believes that "it is possible to have something external as one's own only in a juridical condition, under the authority of a public legislative power, that is, in a civil state" (Kant, 1991, pp. 77-78). Consequently, in order for Kant to discuss human autonomy—which we previously examined—alongside its full freedom within the political sphere, he must now present a solution. This solution must be formulated in such a way that people can fulfill their duties toward one another and maintain mutual trust. At this juncture of the discussion, Kant must enter politics and guarantee the protection of our rights within society through that domain. Hans Reiss and Quentin Skinner write in the introduction to *Kant's Political Writings*: "For Kant political theory is inevitably part of the metaphysics of morals. This is because politics deals with the question of what we ought to do

in a social and political context, or, in other words, it is concerned with establishing criteria by which we can regulate the conflict of mutual interests... and the theory of law is what can possess necessity and universality in the realm of politics, since the metaphysics of morals is all that the metaphysics of politics can sit upon" (Kant, 1989 b, p. 20).

2. The Meaning and Scope of State Power in Kant's Political Thought

In defining public right, Kant writes: "The sum of the laws which need to be commonly promulgated in order to bring about a juridical condition is called public right. Public right is therefore a system of laws for a nation, for a large number of people who are in mutual relations with one another and require a juridical condition that unites them under one will, that is, the formation of a constitution under which they can enjoy what is established as a right. This condition of individuals within a nation in relation to one another is called the civil state, and all individuals in a juridical condition in relation to their own members are called the state. Because of its form, by which all are united through their common interest in a juridical condition, the state is called a commonwealth (res publica)" (Kant, 1991, p. 311). Kant brings all of these discussions under the term political right or political science. Within the juridical condition, mirroring the scenario previously utilized by political philosophers such as Hobbes, Locke, Pufendorf, and even Grotius, Kant likewise believes within this political framework that people must separate themselves from wild, lawless freedom in accordance with a contract they conclude with one another, and enter into a state in order to acquire that freedom within a higher realm. In the state of nature, Kant believes that the violence of others makes it impossible to rely on anyone's contract or word. In such a condition, each individual considers his own arbitrary

conception to be correct and pays no heed to the opinion of anyone else. Moreover, because everyone acts according to their own arbitrary conception in the condition of natural right or in the condition of the kingdom of ends, an intersubjective relationship is not established among persons; such a state will result only in chaos. It is precisely within this state of turmoil that human beings take steps to form a political society so that their property may be secured.

Kant had previously stated that one must, by compulsion and based on the law of reason, exit the state of nature and enter the political condition. This matter is significant because Kant believes that it is not through experience that we become aware of human wickedness in a non-juridical condition. Rather, no matter how much individuals are defined by benevolent attributes, it is present a priori in reason that before the establishment of juridical conditions, individuals, nations, and states can never be secure from one another against violence (Kant, 1991, p. 123). Kant writes in the book *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*: "The proposition 'Man is evil' cannot mean anything else, in accordance with the aforementioned statement, than that he is conscious of the moral law and yet has made deviation from this law the maxim of his behavior" (Kant, 2019, p. 67 / Persian Edition). Hence, this condition drives man toward a state in which he can unite the general will of the people into a collective community that is simultaneously intended to preserve itself permanently; to achieve this goal, it must bring itself under the authority of a state (Kant, 1991, p. 136). For the state is formed to execute the laws that human beings have set for themselves¹. And the state

1. Kant believes: "The legislative power can belong only to the united will of the people, because all right must proceed from this united will, and it cannot do any wrong to anyone through its laws" (Kant, 1991, p. 125).

itself is nothing other than a union of a multitude of human beings possessing moral freedom under the laws of right (Kant, 1991, p. 125), and human beings are elevated to the status of citizens under this unifying force, which is nothing other than themselves; or as Kant says, "the members of such a society who are united for legislation, that is, the members of the state, are called citizens of the state" (Kant, 1991, p. 125).

The establishment of a state and, consequently, the elevation of individuals to the status of citizens require a constitution, regarding which Kant writes: "All forms of state are based on the idea of a constitution (which is a constitution of a republican nature) that is compatible with the natural rights of man" (Kant, 1989 d, p. 187). It is evident that for Kant, the constitution functions as an *idea*—a horizon toward which humanity must evolve. Since we have previously explained that human nature drives humanity toward the creation of a specific type of the rule of law, the constitution of every state must be pure republicanism.

Up to this point in the discussion, we have briefly reviewed the process of history's abstract movement in transitioning from the state of nature or the ethical-civil condition to the condition of public right, politics, or the juridical-civil state from Kant's perspective. Until now, despite the fact that Kant always regarded humanity's ultimate purpose to be cultivation, culture, and development toward the maturity of its capacities, and always referred this purpose to a civil state, we have not yet observed anything distinct or commensurate with Kant's claim and the human subject he introduced prior to this. That is to say, the author of these lines believes that Kant is an absolute failure in his political theory, and he was never able to create a political philosophy or a political doctrine that matches the boundless power of autonomy he granted to the human being. The reason for this is that Kant,

seemingly like Hobbes, Locke, and others, was unable to extricate himself from the pre-existing scenario of political philosophy; rather, the preservation of security remains his primary concern, and he wrote this book within that same historical framework, where the bulk of his effort is directed solely toward the preservation of property. Yet, before the author draws his fundamental conclusions, we must still bear with this interpretation until it reaches its end. From the moment Kant implements the state in theory, his political philosophy degenerates even further compared to before, and it bears no scent of the anthropology he once championed.

Kant envisions three powers within public right in the section on government, which he believes are derived from reason. Kant writes: "The three powers in a state, which arise from the concept of a commonwealth, are simply the three relations which are derived a priori by reason from the united will of the people" (Kant, 1991, p. 147). Despite Kant's claim that this united will brings about the formation of these three powers, he performs profoundly weakly in linking the two together, and his political philosophy lacks the capacity to achieve this. He writes that with respect to each of the powers regarding their rank and position, it can be said: "The will of the legislator in relation to what is mine and yours is irreproachable; the executive power in the person of the highest authority of the government is irresistible; and the verdict of the highest authority of the government is irreversible" (Kant, 1991, p. 127). This means that from the moment these three powers are established, the relationship between myself as a citizen and them is completely severed; their decision must be my decision, and no organic or holistic relationship exists between me and the institutions created through these powers. From this point onward, only force operates. Kant goes on to write:

From this it follows that the sovereign in a state has only rights

against his subjects and no duties (which he can be compelled to perform). Furthermore, if the organ of the sovereign, namely the ruler, acts contrary to the laws—for instance, in matters of taxation, recruitment of officials, and similar affairs in determining the duties of government contrary to justice—the subjects possess only the right to complain against these injustices, but not the right to oppose or resist (Kant, 1991, p. 130).

This quoted paragraph clearly demonstrates that the power of the people and their will holds no relation to political power. Kant may believe that the only thing that creates power is the will of the people, but he cannot advance this substance with a political philosophy that, like those of his predecessors, remains mechanical; he cannot establish a relationship between the individual, with their free will, and external institutions. John McCumber writes in an astonishing analysis of Kant:

The vast content of human life—inclinations, drives, customs, and institutions, and the like—is in Kantianism merely a set of empirical inclinations, all of which are non-moral and none better or worse than another... Consequently, when in *The Metaphysics of Morals* Kant commits to establishing political and social structures in detail (in the Doctrine of Right), the operating principle is the establishment of universal mutual coercion. When he turns to the individual level and concrete virtues, the principle is 'self-coercion'. Such coercion or force is necessary. We humans tend to pursue our individual benefit, inclinations that operate contrary to the moral law in determining our actions. The operative principle of civil society is opposition to such antisocial inclinations through legally established institutions... A society operating strictly on laws of coercion is a society whose laws and social arrangements cannot be affirmed by the individual. For those

laws are to that individual (as Hegel says) a restriction upon his arbitrariness. Therefore, there is no place in Kant's ethical theory for individual rationality to recognize or affirm such relations... That Kant's brilliant achievement in grounding morality upon pure abstract emptiness must arrive here is truly tragic (McCumber, 2014, pp. 170-172).

Since the external object holds no importance for Kant, he does not articulate an important theory regarding objective factors either, because all empirical factors are, in his view, non-moral. Consequently, the external human being solely pursues their own inclinations, and the state stands in opposition to these matters. Thus, a mutual coercion is created, and because this society must hold human beings together purely by virtue of coercion, it is clear that institutions cannot have an organic relationship with human beings. If they did, force would not be required to compel obedience to them. Force is required precisely when there is no relationship between the people and the institutions. Therefore, because Kant was unable to introduce that autonomous human being from his ethical texts and from the *Critique of Judgment* here, and give him personality in political relations through his free will, the conclusion of his political philosophy is disastrous. To confirm our view, Kant goes on to write:

There is also no rightful resistance by the people against the supreme legislative authority of the state; for the realization of such a rightful condition is possible only through the people's submission to the universal legislative will. Hence, there is absolutely no right to sedition, let alone a right to rebellion... and an attack with intent on the life of the sovereign is condemned to death as treason (Kant, 1991, p. 131).

Kant has created a complete severance and by no means seeks to grant any right to the human being within the public sphere.

Consequently, he has stripped humanity even of the right to resistance, which Hobbes and Locke had permitted under specific conditions, and has elevated the power of the sovereign to such an extent that he cannot be subjected to judgment. Therefore, even altering the status quo is not in our hands, but is rather the monarch's prerogative. Kant writes: "A change in a (defective) constitution, which may be necessary at times, can therefore be brought about only by the sovereign himself through reform, but not by the people, and consequently not by revolution... The people can only voice their opposition through their delegates" (Kant, 1991, p. 133). Kant thus abandons human beings to the arbitrary will of the monarch. Whenever the ruler feels a change is necessary, change will occur; otherwise, the people must not engage in any affirmative activity—rather, only a negative activity is recognized for them. In the essay *Theory and Practice*, after condemning resistance on the grounds that it results in a state of lawlessness, Kant grants human beings only a single freedom, namely the freedom of the pen, and identifies it as the unique palladium and safeguard of the people's rights (Kant, 1989 e, p. 85). Concerning the problem Kant has with affirmative resistance, Frederick Beiser writes:

There are two problems with resistance. First of all, the problem of the onset of anarchy. If we generalize the postulate that we all have a right to riot, we have allowed for a state of complete anarchy or lawlessness. But Kant rejected such a thing not because of this outcome, but because he thought that such a thing is self-defeating or a contradiction. For the generalized principle regarding the right to riot is formed in such a way that there must be a law that under certain conditions there is lawlessness. 2- Another problem arising from the generalization of the right to riot is the division of sovereignty. If the people have the right to revolution, they have

the right to judge and coerce the sovereign. But if they have such a right, they are an authority superior to him. In such a situation, the people possess a power beyond the sovereign, which is absurd (Beiser, 1992, p. 45).

It is clear that because Kant was unable to explain the relationship between the personal will and the general will in political relations, he was forced to create such a severance so that no one (except the sovereign) would slide into arbitrariness. Kant believes that rebellion against a constitution is not a reform but its complete destruction; therefore, in his view, no revolution occurred in France from this perspective either. Regarding the French Revolution, Kant writes: "From the standpoint of the constitution, no revolution occurred in France" (Kant, 1989, p. 261). Aside from this, he also believes that the revolution of that country is not fit for imitation due to the costs it entailed. In the essay *An Old Question Raised Again: Is the Human Race Constantly Progressing?*, Kant writes: "The revolution which we have seen taking place in our day may succeed or it may fail. It may be so filled with misery and atrocities that no right-thinking man would ever decide to make the same experiment at such a cost, even if he could hope to carry it out successfully at the second attempt" (Kant, 1989 d, p. 182). Therefore, obedience to the sovereign and respecting his right in governance under all circumstances are among the requirements of his philosophy. For instance, in a striking paragraph, Kant grants this highly unjust right to a deposed monarch: "A dethroned monarch (who has survived the upheaval) cannot be called to account for his previous actions, let alone punished, provided he returns to the status of an ordinary citizen and prefers peace to chaos for the sake of his own tranquility and that of the state. But if he chooses the path of fighting the people, he cannot be opposed, because the people's rebellion against him was contrary to justice" (Kant, 1991,

p. 133). In addition, Kant attributes three other rights to the sovereign. He writes that the three rights of levying taxes (whether voluntary or forced) from the people, managing the state economy, property, and the police to direct the people, as well as the right of inspection, belong to the sovereign. For to preserve his power through the right of inspection, he must prevent any society or gathering from convening to deliberate on improving society, unless the police deem such an assembly advisable (Kant, 1991, pp. 135-136).

In this part of the preceding discussion, the author has demonstrated that in Kant's political theory, because man is viewed as evil and solely in pursuit of his personal benefit in both social and non-social states, a master must be chosen for him to keep him within his limits inside society. "Man is an animal that needs a master because he abuses his freedom" (Kant, 1989 a, p. 46). Thus, the free will of the autonomous human being in Kant's philosophy does not enter into politics, an outcome that stems from numerous reasons which the author will now proceed to explain. I begin my analysis with this quote from Hannah Arendt:

[Kant] was looking for a solution to a problem: how to reconcile the problem of the organization of the state with his moral philosophy, that is, with the *Critique of Practical Reason*. And the astonishing thing was that he knew his moral philosophy could not help him here; therefore, he refrained from moralizing and understood that the problem is how to force man to be a good citizen, even if he is not a morally good person, and that a good constitution is not to be expected from morality, but rather, conversely, a good moral condition of the people is to be expected under a good constitution (Arendt, 1992, pp. 16-17).

Therefore, Kant knew that for certain reasons, the foundations of his moral philosophy could not assist him in political science;

consequently, he seeks to create a good citizen within legal conditions. It is precisely here that the author perceives Kant's downfall, for a political philosophy severed from the core of freedom found in Kant's critical philosophy has no choice but to fall captive to the self-interested ideas of utilitarian philosophers. Charles Taylor writes regarding this case: "Thus, although Kant begins with a radically novel conception of morality, his political theory, however, is disappointingly conventional. This theory does not take us much further beyond utilitarianism, and this is because the chief problem in this theory remains the reconciliation of individual wills" (Taylor, 2000, p. 151).

The author of these lines identifies the reason for Kant's failure in politics, as well as his descent into a purely utilitarian¹ view of governance, in the fact that his philosophy derived all its power from its complete abstractness. Because it failed to establish a relationship and forge a link between this abstraction and concrete reality anywhere, whenever it discusses experience and enters concreteness, it finds its hands tied in advance from utilizing that profound freedom. And the primary reason for this failure in Kant's moral philosophy is that, by examining Kant's ethics, the author arrives at his downfall in politics.

Conclusion

The concept of the idea of republicanism holds a central role in this paper. The author believes that the idea of republicanism in Kant's philosophy derives its semantic validity not only from the framework of transcendence in Kant's philosophy, but also functions as the

1. According to this model, society is understood atomistically as a collection of individuals, each pursuing their own satisfaction (Walton, 1984, p. 246).

architect of the roadmap in Kant's moral philosophy, philosophy of right, and politics. The idea of republicanism, based on divine providence, effectively becomes the locus of Kant's practical thought regarding the manner of its realization. Kant's political philosophy is a realm of conflict between the traditional order, which is based on nature and its arrangement, and the civic order, which attempts to substitute the general will for the natural order. In fact, Kantian philosophy as a whole still finds itself partially trapped in a form of thought based on a natural-theological order, and consequently, witnesses its penetration into the theory of the state and the political sovereign. Nature, as an impenetrable element and a determinant of the roadmap in politics, manifests itself anew under the concept of the state—a presence that the individual, and even the aggregation of the general will, lacks the power to cast aside. Indeed, Kant does not succeed in replacing the power of the natural order—which derives its character from divine providence—with a second nature that is the product of the human general will.

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