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The subjective conditions of human morality

Vujosevic, Marijana

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Propositions belonging to the PhD dissertation

THE SUBJECTIVE CONDITIONS OF HUMAN MORALITY

The Relevance of Kant's Moral Psychology

by

Marijana Vujošević

1. On the standard picture of Kant's moral theory and the place of psychology within it, most of our subjective, psychological conditions are obstacles to morality, and only some are aids (understood as mere instruments in the performance of moral actions on the basis of adopted maxims). (*Chapter 1*)
2. Kant's moral theory contains a moral psychology, the relevance of which lies in the fact that he took certain psychological conditions to be necessary not only for observing moral maxims but also for adopting them in the first place.
3. The Kantian capacity for moral self-control is not a mere instrument for following already-adopted maxims, because it is also necessary for the adoption of moral maxims of virtue. (*Chapter 2*)
4. On Kant's view, virtue as moral strength is acquired via the proper exercise of the capacity for moral self-control; by this exercise we ensure that our moral maxims have a proper motivating ground. (*Chapter 3*)
5. Moral weakness is mere lack of virtue as moral strength. Kantian weak-willed agents lack moral strength in constraining themselves and hence fail to adopt moral maxims that are effective in practice. (*Chapter 4*)
6. According to Kant, conscience is a capacity for moral self-appraisal that triggers certain feelings; by approving and disapproving incentives, it enables us to adopt moral maxims. (*Chapter 5*)
7. Conscience is usually neglected in contemporary ethics.
8. Kant's conception of conscience proves a fruitful tool for explaining the moral incompetence characteristic of those with psychopathy. (*Chapter 6*)
9. Kant's moral psychology is relevant to contemporary moral psychology.