KANT AND THE BALANCE OF MORAL FORCES

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IN A MEMORABLE PASSAGE in the *Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant writes, "If we talk of laws of duty (not laws of nature) and indeed in outer relation of humans to each other, then we consider ourselves in a moral (intelligible) world, in which according to the analogy with the physical, the connection of rational beings (on Earth) is effected through *attraction* and *repulsion*." He continues:

> By means of the principle of **mutual love**, they are admonished constantly to *come closer* to one another, through that of the **respect** they owe one another, to keep themselves *at a distance* from one another; and should either of these great moral/ethical forces fail [*sittlichen Kräfte sinken*], "then nothingness (immorality) with gaping throat would swallow the whole realm of (moral) beings like a drop of water" (if I may here make use of Haller's words in a different relation).[1]

Here, Kant draws an intriguing analogy between the moral world of humans and the physical world of bodies. Unfortunately, it is unclear what exactly this moral-physical analogy amounts to or how Kant can justify it and the bold conclusion he draws from it, viz., that having two powers of moral repulsion (respect) and attraction (love) is a condition for the possibility of a moral world of humans.[2] Few commentators discuss Kant's moral-physical analogy,

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1 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:449. All citations to Kant except those to the *Critique of Pure Reason* are to the Akademie numbers listed in the margins of most editions. For the English translations of Kant's cited texts, I have used the Cambridge Editions as a starting point, though I modify where appropriate. Kant's talk of a "gaping throat" "swallowing the whole realm of moral beings like a drop of water" is a reference to Albrecht von Haller's "Imperfect Poem about Eternity." Marco Santi helpfully pointed out to me that von Haller was Kant's favorite poet and that, in this poem, God is considered the ground of everything and God's powers are considered as grounding time and eternity together in a way analogous to how the balance of moral forces in this passage grounds the realm of moral beings.

2 Here, Kant's focus is practical rather than aesthetic respect and love. In this sense, respect and love are primarily maxims rather than feelings, respectively, "the maxims of limiting our self-esteem by the dignity in another person" and "the maxim of *benevolence*" (Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:449). It is worth noting that Kant discusses other analogies between

but even fewer find it helpful. Those who do have yet to develop a reading of the analogy that makes sense of it. Some complain that Kant gets the nature of love wrong.[3] Marcia Baron has a more nuanced and sympathetic take on the analogy but ultimately argues that it is untenable insofar as love and respect do not plausibly pull us in opposite directions, concluding that it "takes a good point too far" and that "love and respect are less different and less opposed than Kant suggests."[4] Commentators who have defended this analogy, such as Christine Swanton and Eleni Filippaki, have tended to do so by focusing on the moral side, arguing that it provides a fruitful ethical framework for thinking about moral relations such as friendship.[5] Filippaki gives the most sustained treatment of this analogy in the literature. She argues that Kant's dynamical theory of matter supports a fruitful view of moral relations, attending to how the tension between attractive and repulsive forces is key to Kant's theory of friendship and his vision of moral relations in the *Metaphysics of Morals.* However, even Filippaki focuses mostly on the upshots of this analogy for Kant's

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the natural and moral in other practical works. As I discuss below, Kant puts different analogies to different uses for different purposes. My focus throughout is on the *Doctrine of Virtue*'s analogy between the physical world of bodies and the moral world of humans. I use the term "moral-physical analogy" or "the analogy" to refer to this particular analogy between the physical world of bodies and the moral world of humans.

3 Robert Johnson argues that what Kant calls love is really just a form of respect ("Love in Vain"). David Velleman argues against love being a form of coming closer, instead holding it is "like a state of attentive suspension, similar to wonder or amazement or awe" ("Love as a Moral Emotion," 360).

4 Baron, "Love and Respect in the Doctrine of Virtue," 41–42.

5 Swanton, *Virtue Ethics* and "Kant's Impartial Virtues of Love"; and Filippaki, "Kant on Love, Respect, and Friendship." Swanton follows Kant in claiming that respect and love are modes of moral response that involve keeping one's distance and coming closer (*Virtue Ethics,* 99–110). She defends Kant's distinction between respect and love but employs this distinction for her own pluralistic virtue ethical theory. In doing this, Swanton focuses on connecting this Kantian distinction with profiles of the virtues and her own view of virtues as dispositions to respond or acknowledge in an excellent way people, objects, situations, inner states, or actions falling in the field or scope of different virtues (*Virtue Ethics,* 1–2, 19–30). Swanton's focus then is not Kant interpretation but the articulation of some of Kant's resources for the purposes of developing her own rich view. Swanton does explicitly defend Kant's conception of love as a moral force, but her defense is of this view of love against certain virtue ethical criticisms ("Kant's Impartial Virtues of Love"). Filippaki argues that the "polarity" and "tension" between respect and love underlies all moral relations. According to her, the "picture of Kantian morality that emerges against this background is thus one where individuals constantly strive both to retain their agency and open up to others by acknowledging and embracing ends other than one's own, hence finding themselves in a constant struggle for balance" ("Kant on Love, Respect, and Friendship," 23). Swanton's and Filippaki's takes on this strike me as insightful and correct, so far as they go, but we can go further in understanding the analogy itself and its significance.

moral philosophy rather than on making sense of the analogy itself, admitting that a "deeper, comparative investigation of the role of attraction and repulsion as metaphysical principles in the *Metaphysics of Natural Science* and the *Metaphysics of Morals* … goes beyond the scope of [her] paper."[6]

In this paper, I undertake this "deeper investigation," giving a systematic account of this moral-physical analogy, one that explains the use to which Kant puts it in his philosophy and that spells out how the different elements of the physical and moral worlds are analogous to each other. My reading interprets the moral-physical analogy as an instance of Kant's use of analogies to determine the content of ideas (whose objects we cannot sense) in a certain way, viz., by giving us a sufficient grasp of their formal character.[7] By "sufficient grasp of the formal character of an idea," I mean a grasp of the relations the supersensible object of an idea constitutively bears that allows reason to put it to purposive use, i.e., to use for its characteristic ends.[8] Kant holds that, in order to gain such a sufficient formal grasp, reason must associate intuitions of sensible objects with ideas indirectly, in a way that allows us to think of the supersensible object of the idea as bearing similar relations to their symbol objects despite having different intrinsic properties.

In section 1, I discuss the context for this moral-physical analogy and the role analogies like this one play in Kant's philosophy. In section 2, I sketch Kant's view of the physical world in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*. In section 3, I apply the account of analogies from section 1 to the view of the physical world developed in section 2 in order to give a systematic account

6   Filippaki, "Kant on Love, Respect, and Friendship," 42.

7   I thank Jim Conant for very helpfully suggesting the terminology of the "formal character" of an idea to me.

8   My view of the role of symbolization/analogy in Kant thus differs from Andrew Chignell's. Chignell holds that for Kant symbols/analogies allow us to gain a fragmentary grasp of what it would be like for the idea to be instantiated in an individual and so of what it would be for its supersensible object to exist, giving us a limited sense of whether the symbolized object is really possible ("Are Supersensibles Really Possible?" "Beauty as a Symbol of Natural Systematicity," "The Devil, the Virgin, the Envoy," and "Real Repugnance and Belief about Things-in-Themselves"). On my view, symbolization/analogy achieves something more precise and less ambitious: it gives some determinate content to ideas, a formal content or character that consists of thinking of their supersensible objects as bearing certain relations. This does not yet settle the question of whether the objects of ideas are really possible. Settling that question requires that one successfully put the symbolized ideas to purposive use. In a companion paper, I spell out how symbolization/analogy of metaphysical ideas like substance and ground allows us to gain a formal grasp of them that then allows us to make purposive use of them in theoretical philosophy, in the service of reason's constitutive ends of seeking unifying explanations and, ultimately, the unconditioned (Sanchez Borboa, "Making the Supersensible Intuitive").

of the moral-physical analogy and of what it achieves in the *Doctrine of Virtue*. On the basis of this application, I argue that in this passage Kant endorses a moral analog of the balancing argument from his natural philosophy. There, Kant argues that purely repulsive bodies face a problem of total dispersion while purely attractive bodies face a problem of total collapse. In doing so, he offers an *a priori* argument that explains the possibility of bodies (as genuine objects of outer experience) as grounded in the balancing opposition of bodies' physical repulsion (expansion) and attraction (gravitation). I argue that, analogously, purely respectful humans face a problem of total moral dispersion while purely loving humans face a problem of total moral collapse. That is, I interpret this passage as offering an *a priori* argument that explains the possibility of humans (as genuine embodied subjects of moral duties) as grounded in the balancing opposition of humans' moral repulsion (respect) and attraction (love). I discuss some interpretive payoffs of reading this analogy this way. Finally, I conclude by drawing some implications for contemporary theorizing about moral interactions, relationships, and communities.

1. CONTEXT FOR THE ANALOGY

1.1. Kant's Twofold Metaphysics and the Privileged Place of <Matter/Body> and <Human>[9]

Kant discusses the analogy between the physical world of bodies and moral world of humans within the *Doctrine of Virtue*, a work where Kant gives his normative ethical theory. Here, Kant applies the principles of morality (established and defended in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*) to the concept of a human as a finite rational being to derive a system of ethical duties that apply to all humans. As such, this work occupies a position in Kant's practical philosophy that is parallel to that of the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* in his theoretical philosophy. There, Kant applies the principles of a general metaphysics (developed in the *Critique*

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9   Throughout the paper, my focus is the empirical concept <matter> as the movable in space insofar as it fills space. Note that Kant allows for a nonempirical concept of matter (*Critique of Pure Reason*, A359). All citations to the *Critique of Pure Reason* are given by the standard A and B pagination of the first (1781) and second (1787) editions, respectively). Despite the analogous roles the concepts of <matter> and <human> play within Kant's theoretical and practical systems, this should not be taken to imply that there are not important differences between these two concepts. In particular, Kant's treatment of <matter> is more complicated, since for Kant (given his Aristotelian intellectual heritage) we arguably only have one empirical concept of <human> that is relevant for moral philosophy, that of <rational animal>.

of Pure Reason) to the concept of matter as movable in space in order to derive a system of metaphysical principles that applies to corporeal nature as such.[10] In these two works, then, the *a priori* principles of pure understanding and pure practical reason are applied to empirical concepts in order to derive principles that we can apply as empirically determinable subjects engaging, respectively, in natural science and ethical deliberation. This application of intellectual principles to empirical concepts requires that these empirical concepts meet certain *a priori* requirements. If the concept <matter> is to be the concept of the relevant object of outer experience, it must meet certain *a priori* requirements that allow its object to fill a region of space determinately (viz., that bodies are endowed fundamental physical powers that ground the possibility of filling space). Similarly, if the concept <human> is to be the concept of the relevant rational/sensible subject of morality—i.e., the concept employed in ethics—it must meet certain *a priori* requirements that allow its objects to form moral communities, viz., that humans are endowed with fundamental moral powers that ground the possibility of moral community.

The fact that Kant employs these central concepts of <human> and <matter> in making the analogy is reason to take this analogy seriously as a claim that is central to his twofold metaphysics of nature and morals, rather than as a mere metaphor from Newtonian physics that "takes a good point too far."[11] That Kant takes the analogy to have broader significance for his philosophical system is supported by the fact that in the conclusion to the "Elements of Ethics," he characterizes friendship (considered in its perfection) as "the union of two persons through equal mutual love and respect," noting that "love can be regarded as attraction and respect as repulsion, and if the principle of love bids friends to draw closer, the principle of respect requires them to stay at a proper distance from each other."[12] The fact that Kant uses the moral-physical analogy to explain the moral phenomenon of friendship suggests that Kant takes this analogy to be more than a stylistic metaphor.

With this context for the analogy on the table, I turn to discuss the role that analogies such as this one play in Kant's critical philosophy.

1.2. Analogies and Symbols as a Way of Thinking about Determinate Supersensible Relations (and Concepts)

Kant uses symbols and analogies in many places in different ways and for different purposes in his philosophy. Some symbols/analogies seem indispensable to

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10   Cf. Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science,* 4:469–77.

11   Baron, "Love and Respect in the Doctrine of Virtue," 41, 42.

12   Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue,* 6:469, 6:470.

the nature of our cognitive capacities (as when reason must think of a being that is responsible for metaphysical explanations as a "ground").[13] Others seem to be used as pedagogical tools for better understanding a particular philosophical project (as when juridical analogies are used to describe the project of critiquing pure reason or when chemical analogies are used to describe proper moral-philosophical methodology).[14] Still other analogies have the purpose of inspiring us to live up to our moral vocation and so aid us in moral motivation, or, as Kant puts it, to "bring an idea of reason [the categorical imperative] closer to intuition and thereby to feeling" and to effect in us a "lively interest in the moral law."[15] Heiner Bielefeldt (who has arguably undertaken the most ambitious study of the role symbols play in Kant's philosophy to date) contends that Kant "does not provide a comprehensive typology of symbols, nor does he develop a system enabling us to gain an overview of how precisely the various forms of symbolic representation are interrelated."[16] I agree with Bielefeldt that there is no single general account of symbols or analogies in Kant. However, I think we can give a systematic account of a key species of use of symbols/analogies.

The relevant species of symbol/analogy consists of the use of a sensible object as a symbol for thinking of a supersensible/intelligible object represented by an idea in a certain way. Kant employs this use of symbols to solve a problem arising from the nature of reason: that reason can never cognize things in themselves, yet it must nevertheless think of them as grounding things as they constitute objects of our experience. By its nature then, reason must think of certain supersensible things it cannot cognize. It cannot cognize these things because it has no intuition of them. Because reason has no such intuitions, it cannot determinately think of these concepts of reason, for it has no guarantee that it is not merely saying empty words with no real content in attempting to think of things using these concepts. In order to successfully grasp a concept through which we can think of an object, we need to associate some intuition with the concept, but we seem unable to do so for ideas, as we can have no intuition of supersensible objects. The problem then is that it seems impossible

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13   Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 5:352.

14   Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* Axi–xii, A501/B529, A787/B81, and *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:92, 5:163.

15   Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:436, 4:463. Other uses of symbols include the one Alexander Rueger and Şahan Evren highlight that connects natural beauty and the systematicity of nature through the form of reflective judgments of taste ("The Role of Symbolic Presentation in Kant's Theory of Taste"). Chignell notes that Kant uses the forms of both judgments of taste and of beautiful objects as symbols for the systematicity of nature ("Beauty as a Symbol of Natural Systematicity").

16   Bielefeldt, *Symbolic Representation in Kant's Practical Philosophy*, 180.

for reason genuinely to think something that it must: supersensible objects of ideas of reason.

Kant solves this problem by means of analogies between sensible and super-sensible objects in which we use sensible objects as symbols for thinking about the supersensible ones.[17] This method of symbolization or analogy allows reason to borrow the intuitions of sensible objects (which it can experience) and use them as a guide for thinking about supersensible objects of ideas (which it otherwise could not do). Such analogies determine the contents of ideas "*for us*," though without determining them unconditionally and "*in themselves*," i.e., in a way that helps us make certain uses of ideas but not in a way that determines the intrinsic properties of their objects.[18] These analogies determine the content of ideas in this way by giving us a grasp of the formal character of an idea, which we get by thinking of its supersensible object as analogous to a sensible symbol object. This formal grasp is gained by thinking of the supersensible object of the idea as bearing similar relations as the sensible, symbol objects.[19] As Kant puts it, cognition "*according to analogy*" signifies not "an imperfect similarity between two things, but rather a perfect similarity between two relations in wholly dissimilar things."[20] This kind of use of symbols/analogies therefore allows us to grasp the formal character of ideas, allowing us to think of their supersensible objects without ascribing any sensible properties to these objects, instead merely thinking of these as bearing similar relations to their symbol objects.[21] By means of such analogies then, we "can … provide a concept of a relation of things that are absolutely unknown [*unbekannt*] to [us]," allowing us to think of

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17 In a companion paper, I spell out in detail what is at issue in this species of use of symbols and analogies and discuss the key role it plays across Kant's critical philosophy (Sanchez Borboa, "Making the Supersensible Intuitive").

18 Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 4:358.

19 Kant uses the German, *Ähnlichkeit* and *ähnlich*, rather than equality, *Gleichheit* and *gleich*, to describe these relations. As such, the relation that supersensible objects bear need not be strictly the same as their symbol objects.

20 In section 90 of the third *Critique* there is a parallel passage confirming the idea that in analogies we think there is a similarity that is not a similarity in properties or marks: "One can, of course, *think* of one of two dissimilar things, even on the very point of their dissimilarity, by means of an *analogy* with the other; but from that respect in which they are dissimilar we cannot *draw an inference* by means of the analogy, i.e., transfer this mark of the specific difference from the one to the other" (Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 5:464).

21 Insofar as the relations thought in analogies hold for both sensible and supersensible objects, they must be understood as extrinsic relations, which are not determined by the intrinsic properties of their relata (cf. Moore, "External and Internal Relations"; Lewis, *On the Plurality of Worlds*).

these supersensible objects.[22] Once reason gains a grasp of the formal character of these ideas (i.e., determines a rational way of thinking of these objects as bearing certain relations) through such analogies, it can think of the objects of ideas as determinately bearing certain relations. The formal grasp of these ideas acquired through these analogies thereby allows reason to make use of these ideas (thought of in this determinate way, i.e., with their supersensible objects bearing similar relations to their sensible objects) in the service of the ends of our cognitive capacities, especially reason and pure understanding.[23]

We can elucidate this use of symbols/analogies using examples like the *Prolegomena*'s example of thinking of God as a clockmaker.[24] Here, Kant uses a sensible object (a clockmaker) as a symbol for thinking about a supersensible object (God). By drawing an analogy between God and a clockmaker in this way, reason comes to think of God and its relation to nature (the sensible world) as similar to the relation between a clockmaker and a clock: a relation of an intelligent causality (be it God or the clockmaker) that produces a whole constituting a dynamical order (be it nature or the clock). Through this analogy, we do not attribute to God any sensible properties of the clockmaker. We instead think of the sensible world and its relation to God by thinking of it as bearing a similar relation to God as the clock bears to the clockmaker. This analogy makes the concept of God "sufficiently determinate *for us,*" i.e., for our reason and its ends, without determining the idea of God "unconditionally and *in itself,*" thus without making claims about what the supersensible object of this idea is in itself.[25] In this way, the analogy allows us to determinately think of God as bearing the relation of being an intelligent creator of a dynamical order. This symbolization thereby allows reason to grasp the formal character of the idea of God and to make use of it (thought of in this determinate way, i.e., with its object bearing a relation of being an intelligent causality of a dynamical order) for its theoretical and practical ends, e.g., explaining the systematicity of nature or the possibility of the highest good.[26]

22 Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 4:357n. I thank Angela Breitenbach for pointing out this passage and its significance for this paper.

23 Note that the actual success condition for this kind of analogy is giving enough determinate content/formal grasp to an idea that you can put it to use for the ends of a cognitive capacity. Thus, by making this kind of analogy, you strictly speaking get a candidate for the determinate content/formal grasp of an idea that might be put to such an end. However, to see whether it is the right determinate content/formal grasp, you need to actually succeed in making use of the idea to achieve ends of our cognitive capacities.

24 Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 4:357–60.

25 Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, 4:358.

26 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A697–702/B725–30, and *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:124–29.

Another example of the species of symbolization/analogy that I focus on is the *Groundwork*'s analogy between the realm of nature and the realm of ends.[27] Here the sensible object of a realm of nature is used as a symbol for reflecting on the supersensible object that is the realm of ends.[28] By symbolizing the idea of the realm of ends in this way, reason comes to think of the relations among members of the realm of ends as similar to the relations among members of the realm of nature: relations that constitute a universal dynamical order connected according to common universal laws. This analogy gives us a formal grasp of the idea of a realm of ends by allowing us to think of the realm of ends as a realm in which rational beings bear similar relations to the relations different natures bear in the realm of nature. This symbolization of the idea of the realm of ends thereby allows reason to make use of it (thought of in this determinate way, i.e., with members of this realm bearing relations that constitute a universal dynamical order connected according to common laws) for its practical ends. These purposive uses include (a) explaining the requirements of the categorical imperative for finite rational beings sharing a world and (b) serving as a moral ideal that enlivens the moral interest in us and thereby inspires us to live up to our moral vocation.[29]

On my view, the moral-physical analogy I began with is a more determinate version of the one between the realm of nature and the realm of ends in the

27 Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:438. As Ralf Bader helpfully pointed out to me, one might worry that the realm of nature (and the physical world) cannot be used as symbols in the way I propose because these are not objects of intuition. In response, I note, following Houston Smit, that we should distinguish between Kant's use of "intuition" as a singular representation and as a species of cognition consisting in part of intuitions in the former sense (call the latter intuitive cognition) (Smit, "Intuition"). Given this distinction, one can make a corresponding distinction between objects of sensible intuition and objects of intuitive cognitions. Objects of intuitive cognitions are objects that we cognize by means of a concept of them and an intuition of them (as a whole). Objects of mere (sensible) intuition are objects of which we can have some intuitions (perhaps only of their parts), though we are not able to have intuitive cognition of them. On my view, the realm of nature and the physical world are not objects of intuitive cognitions, but they are objects of mere intuition.

28 I should note that in interpreting the realm of nature in this way in this passage, I am giving what we might call a *dynamical* as opposed to *teleological* reading of the realm of nature in this part of the *Groundwork* (like the one given by, e.g., Allison (*Kant's* Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, 249, 257–58). According to this interpretation, the realm of nature that is analogous to the realm of ends is thought of not teleologically (as a teleological system of natural ends) but rather merely dynamically (as a dynamical system of things insofar as their existence is determined in accordance with universal laws). Though I cannot make the full case for this here, my interpretation is supported by Kant's point that in this analogy "nature as whole" "is regarded as machine" (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:438).

29 Cf. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:436, 4:662.

Groundwork. According to this first analogy, we should think of the moral world of humans as a universal dynamical order of beings connected according to particular kinds of universal common laws, viz., governing attractive and repulsive forces between the beings that make up this dynamical order. I argue that in drawing the analogy between the moral and physical worlds, we gain a formal grasp of the idea of a moral world of humans. This formal grasp allows reason to make practical, purposive use of this idea to give an *a priori* moral-balancing argument that is analogous to the physical-balancing argument in his natural philosophy. I shall also argue that this analogy (and its determination of the idea of a moral world) allows reason to put this idea to use as a moral ideal of community and interactions between humans that can guide our conduct. I now turn to sketch Kant's view of the physical world as grounded on the interaction of fundamental attractive/repulsive forces that binds bodies together.

2. BALANCING PHYSICAL REPULSION AND ATTRACTION

In the "Dynamics" chapter of the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, Kant explains the possibility of matter's essential property of filling space. He claims that "matter is the *moveable* in space, insofar as it *fills space*" where "to *fill* a space is to resist every moveable that strives through its motion to penetrate into a certain space."[30] In order to fill space, Kant argues, matter must be endowed with two fundamental forces or powers (*Grundkräfte*): repulsion and attraction. He characterizes this repulsion as that moving force (*bewegende Kraft*) "by which a matter can be the cause of others removing themselves from it" and attraction as "that moving force by which a matter can be the cause of the approach of others to it."[31] Employing these conceptions of repulsive and attractive force, Kant gives a balancing argument comprising two sub-arguments that together establish that, in order for matter to determinately fill space, it must jointly exercise physical repulsion and attraction.[32]

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30 Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:496.

31 Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:498, 4:498. Note that, for Kant, bodies can be compressed to infinity "but can *never* be *penetrated*" by another matter because their repulsive force becomes infinite "when compressed into an infinitely small space" (*Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:501). Thus, physical repulsion grounds bodies' physical impenetrability.

32 As recent scholarship (e.g., Edwards, *Substance, Force, and the Possibility of Knowledge*; Watkins, "Kant on Extension and Force"; Friedman, "Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science") emphasizes, Kant's natural philosophy (and his dynamical theory of matter) enjoyed a rich development from his precritical *Monadology* to the critical *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science,* to the *Opus Postumum*. However, as Filippaki notes, despite the significant changes Kant's natural philosophy undergoes (especially regarding

The first half of the argument, as Daniel Warren notes, "moves from the supposition of repulsive force to the need for attractive force."[33] Kant here asks us to consider purely repulsive matter. Such matter would expand without any force to limit or curb this expansive repulsion and so would "disperse itself to infinity" such that "no specified quantity of matter would be found in any specified space."[34] "Therefore, with merely repulsive forces of matter, all spaces would be empty, and thus, properly speaking, no matter would exist at all," for matter essentially fills space.[35] Thus, if matter is endowed with a repulsive force that grants it a capacity for expansion, it must also be endowed with a counteracting attractive force that grants it a capacity for compression.

The second half of the argument "closely parallels the first, but in reverse."[36] Kant here asks us to consider purely attractive matter. Such matter would be such that "all parts of the matter would approach one another without hindrance and diminish the space that matter occupies."[37] This would make it the case that the parts of matter "coalesce in a mathematical point."[38] Therefore, if there were only attractive forces, "space would be empty, and thus without any matter" for matter essentially fills space. [39] Thus, if matter is endowed with an attractive force that grants it a capacity for compression, it must also be endowed with a counteracting repulsive force that grants it a capacity for expansion.[40]

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questions of the divisibility of matter and space), one constant is "the postulate of attractive and repulsive forces" ("Kant on Love, Respect, and Friendship," 28). She is right to claim that Kant remains committed to the idea that if matter is to have the essential property of filling space, this must be grounded in matter's essentially exercising both attraction and repulsion. However, this is not so much a postulate as the conclusion of a certain kind of argument: a balancing argument.

33 Warren, "Kant on Attractive and Repulsive Force," 195.

34 Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:508. Kant's reasoning here seems to depend on the idea that a finite quantity of matter distributed in an infinite space would result in there being effectively zero quantity of matter in any finite subregion of that infinite space. This raises complications concerning Kant's conception of infinity that lie outside the scope of this paper.

35 Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:508.

36 Warren, "Kant on Attractive and Repulsive Force," 196.

37 Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:511.

38 Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:511.

39 Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:511.

40 As Sheldon Smith notes, a heuristic that Kant sometimes employs for seeing these problems is to imagine a stable configuration of matter exercising both forces and then imagine turning one or the other off and seeing what occurs to the configuration with only one force ("Does Kant Have a Pre-Newtonian Picture of Force in the Balancing Argument?" 476). This is how Kant explicitly thinks of the balance argument in, e.g., the *Opus Postumum*: "If the attraction of the internal cohesion in matter were suddenly to cease

By means of this argument, Kant infers that, without two forces of attraction and repulsion to balance each other, matter cannot possess the essential property of filling space. Matter endowed solely with physical repulsion faces a problem of total dispersion. Matter endowed solely with physical attraction faces a problem of total collapse. In either case, matter cannot possess the essential property of filling space through the exercise of its powers, so, strictly speaking, either kind of unbalanced matter is impossible. Kant concludes that in order for matter to be genuine matter (a movable in space that fills space through the exercise of its powers) it must jointly exercise expansion and gravitation. Without such joint repulsion and attraction, matters cannot relate to each other as they essentially must if they are to constitute objects of outer experience, and so there can be no matter or physical world at all.[41]

It is worth highlighting the argumentative role that balancing arguments play. Watkins and Stan give a helpful general characterization of such arguments as

> an existence proof for a type of force. Its premises are (1) an accepted universal fact, viz. that a certain stable configuration obtains; and (2) a type of force independently known to exist. The argument seeks to prove that the stability in question is impossible unless a second kind of force exists to balance the first kind.[42]

As such, balancing arguments generally comprise two sub-arguments, each of which (a) assumes unbalanced beings possessing a single force for the purposes of a *reductio ad absurdum* argument and (b) aims to show that, on the supposition of a single force, the stable configuration is not possible. This implies that the way the *reductio* is established for each unbalanced force can be importantly different. Indeed, in this physical case, there is a way in which the impossibilities at issue in the two *reductio* cases are different. For in the purely repulsive case, bodies fail to even have a specifiable physical location. At least in the purely attractive case, bodies all occupy the same point in space (though they fail to fill it).

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completely, matter would extend itself infinitely, and, if repulsion ceased, matter would coalesce into one point" (*Opus Postumum,* 21:409).

41 I agree with Smith that Kant typically starts his thinking about the balancing argument by "thinking in terms of two-body problems" ("Does Kant Have a Pre-Newtonian Picture of Force in the Balancing Argument?" 478n24). Smith notes that "Kant tries to learn what he can from thinking of the two-body case with the hopes of being able to derive the information about the more complex cases from there" ("Does Kant Have a Pre-Newtonian Picture of Force in the Balancing Argument?" 477).

42 Watkins and Stan, "Kant's Philosophy of Science."

In articulating the structure of the physical world, Kant attributes the following relations to material substances: R-rep(x_n), a relation of repulsion, of keeping their distance; R-att(x_n), a relation of attraction, of coming closer; and R-bal(x_n), a relation of balancing opposition between these forces.[43] Moreover, he attributes to the two kinds of unbalanced matter either R-col(x_n), a relation of collapse (in the case of matter bearing only R-att(x_n)), or R-dis(x_n), a relation of dispersion (in the case of matter bearing only R-rep(x_n)). As I spell out in the next section, by symbolizing the moral world using the physical world, the moral-physical analogy allows us to think of humans as bearing similar relations and so as making up a moral world whose possibility is grounded in a balancing opposition of repulsion and attraction.

3. BALANCING MORAL REPULSION AND ATTRACTION

3.1. Symbolizing the Moral World by Analogy to the Physical World

In the passage I began with, Kant claims that we consider ourselves "in a moral (intelligible) world where, by analogy with the physical world, the connection of rational beings (on Earth) is effected through *attraction* and *repulsion*."[44] I propose that Kant here uses the physical world (and its constitutive balancing opposition of repulsion and attraction) as a symbol for thinking about the moral world. Recall that an analogy between a sensible and a supersensible object enables us to think of the supersensible object determinately (and gives us a sufficient formal grasp of this idea) by thinking of it as bearing similar relations to the sensible object. In the moral-physical analogy, the relevant sensible object consists of bodies as they make up a physical world whose possibility is grounded in a balancing opposition of fundamental forces of (physical) repulsion and attraction. By means of this analogy, we come to think of humans as making up a moral world whose possibility is grounded in a balancing opposition of fundamental forces of (moral) repulsion and attraction. By symbolizing the idea of the moral world then, we think determinately of a moral world of humans as constituted by a balancing opposition of repulsion (respect) and attraction (love) between them, just as the physical world is constituted by a balancing opposition of repulsion (expansion) and attraction (gravitation)

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43   The variables in these relations range over bodies and humans, where n = the number of bodies/humans in the world. Note that there are determinate aspects of these relations in their physical realization that will not transfer to their moral realization, e.g., love is a form of attraction like the physical force of gravitation, but it need not be describable by an inverse-square law, as gravitation is.

44   Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:449.

between bodies. We therefore think of humans in a moral world as bearing similar relations to each other as bodies in a physical world do: R-rep(x_n), R-att(x_n), and R-bal(x_n).

I now unpack this sketch to give a systematic account of this analogy and the moral-balancing argument. This unpacking proceeds in stages. I first explain how respect and love are forces of repulsion and attraction. I then discuss how they are united in morally ideal interactions between humans. Finally, I give the moral-balancing argument.

3.2. Respect as Repulsion and Love as Attraction

First, note that Kant's characterizations of moral forces, like those of physical forces, rely on some notion of distance. He talks of love making us "come closer" and respect making us "keep at a distance." However, the notion of Euclidean distance cannot be applied to the moral side of the analogy, as it is inherently spatial and so cannot span both sides of the analogy. Instead, Kant seems to have some analogous notion of distance in mind, which seems to be a function of the way different humans' ends relate. Exercises of respect and love determine humans' wills to set and pursue ends in a way that, respectively, maintains and diminishes moral distance.

Moral repulsion or respect is the motivational force by which humans are motivated by the thought of duty to comply with one of the two kinds of fundamental duty humans have to one another as such: duties of respect "not to degrade any other to a mere means to my ends (not to demand that another throw himself away in order to slave for my end)" and to "keep oneself within one's own bounds."[45] This respect is a form of moral motivation that treats others as "self-standing [*selbständigen*]" ends "which must never be acted against," i.e., as sources of inviolable moral worth.[46] This moral power of respect keeps humans at a distance insofar as it grounds humans' moral impenetrability (and the keeping of moral distance between distinct humans) as bodies' expansive physical repulsion grounds their physical impenetrability (and the keeping of physical distance between distinct bodies). In both cases, the power of repulsion grounds the integrity and impenetrability of the beings of the world.

Moral attraction or love is the motivational force by which humans are moved by the thought of duty to comply with the other kind of fundamental duty humans have to each other as such: duties of love, "duties to make others' ends my own (provided only that these are not immoral)" and that put another

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45 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:450. I thank Houston Smit for helping me see the need to clarify that exercising these moral forces consists of being motivated by the thought of duty to comply with duties of respect and love.

46 Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:437.

under obligation by carrying them out.[47] This love/benevolence is a form of moral motivation that treats the fact that something is another's (morally permissible) end as itself a (normative and motivational) reason to adopt that end, as *their* end. That is, practical love/benevolence consists of making it your project to help another achieve their project (as they conceive of it) from the motive of duty. Practical love brings humans morally closer because it grounds humans' coming to share ends in this distinctly moral way as bodies' gravitational physical attraction grounds bodies' coming physically closer. In both cases, the power of attraction grounds a closer dynamical connection between the beings of the world.[48]

Two things are worth noting about moral forces and their relation to moral distance. First, although my discussion of the power and hence duties of love has focused on their being duties to adopt another's ends, Kant in other passages frames duties of love/beneficence in terms of others' happiness.[49] Human happiness for Kant includes more than simply the achievement of humans' ends. It consists of inclinations, desires, and subjective feelings of agreeableness with one's existence satisfaction.[50] But a human's ends and their happiness are intimately connected, for Kant holds that finite rational beings, by the very

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47   Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:450.

48   As a reviewer helpfully pointed out, one might wonder what the relationship is between practical love and what we might call the positive side of respect discussed in the *Groundwork*. Here, the second formulation of the Categorical Imperative claims that we should act so that "you use the humanity in your own person as well as in that in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means" (*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:429). Thus, there seems to be a negative side of respect (never treating the humanity merely as a means) as well as a positive side of respect (always treating the humanity in others merely as a means). This positive side of respect seems to motivate us to treat their humanity, i.e., the rational nature of other humans, as an end in itself and so their ends as our ends. As Kant notes, for the representation of humanity as an end in itself "is to have its *full* effect in me, the ends of a subject that is an end in itself must, as much as possible, also be *my* ends" (*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:430). The practical love in the *Doctrine of Virtue* is a more determinate version of this positive respect, which motivates us to share in other ends by considering that humans are a particular species of finite rational beings on earth who require each other's help to achieve their ends. This is in keeping with the place of these two works in Kant's philosophical system. The *Groundwork* establishes and legitimizes the supreme principle of morality (*Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:8). The *Doctrine of Virtue* then applies this principle to the empirical concept of a human (as a particular finite rational being) to derive a system of duties that apply to humans as such.

49   For example, Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:387–88. I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out to me the need to address this.

50   Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:393, 4:395; see also *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:22.

nature of their embodied practical reason, set the end of happiness as a "commission from the side of sensibility."[51] Each human has as an end their own happiness, but happiness is itself an indeterminate concept.[52] As such, each human has their own determinate conception of their own happiness that they actually try to bring about. This is entirely dependent on individual humans' likes and dislikes. As Kant puts it, "in what each of us has to put his happiness comes down to the particular feeling of pleasure and displeasure in each."[53] By seeing that all finite rational beings, including humans, set their own particular conception of happiness as their end, we can see that duties of love, to make another's morally permissible ends our own, essentially include duties to adopt the morally permissible happiness of another, with its own particular shape.

Second, the particular degree of moral distance between humans varies and depends on how closely knit the moral community they form is, i.e., on how many of their ends they share in this distinctly moral way. The more of another human's morally permissible ends one human adopts as their ends simply because they are that other human's ends, the closer this human is morally to the other. And because being motivated to comply with duties of love, i.e., exercising practical love, puts the beneficiary under obligation, the closer this latter human ought to be morally to the first.[54] That is, those whom we love more ought to love us more, and we ought to love more those who love us more.

With these characterizations of the moral forces of repulsion and attraction and of how they maintain/diminish moral distance, I turn to explain how these two forces are at play in morally ideal interactions between humans.

3.3. *Uniting Respect and Love in Morally Ideal Interactions between Humans*

In the discussion following the moral-physical analogy, Kant claims that the moral law "essentially connects" these two kinds of duties in morally ideal interactions between humans. He writes that the two kinds of duties "are essentially always connected together with one another in one duty according to the law [*im Grunde dem Gesetze nach jederzeit mit einander in einer Pflicht zusammen verbunden*], only in such a way that now one duty and now the other is the subject's principle with the other joined to it as accessory [*accessorisch geknüpft*]."[55] Kant here claims that the moral law unites both kinds of duties to other

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51   Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:61; see also *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:415, 4:418.

52   Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:418.

53   Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:25.

54   Cf. Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:450.

55   Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:448.

humans as such. This seems to imply that morally ideal interactions between humans (where they fully treat humans as ends in themselves) constitutively require complying with both duties of respect and of love and so jointly exercising these moral powers.

The example Kant gives supports this reading. It is an example of how benevolent action, if it is to be genuinely moral, must also be respectful. He notes that we ought to be benevolent to someone poor in a respectful way: "it is our duty to behave as if our help is either merely what is due him or but a slight service of love, and to spare him humiliation and maintain his respect for himself."[56] Kant here claims that there is a duty of love (to be benevolent toward the impoverished person), i.e., a duty to exercise our moral power of love by adopting the ends of the impoverished person and helping them from the motive of duty. However, the exercise of love (benevolence) humbles the beneficiary. That is, this exercise of love in isolation inherently injures the self-respect of the recipient human. Given this, the exercise of love toward a human inherently generates a corresponding duty of respect to be beneficent in a way that allows the recipient to maintain self-respect (i.e., a duty to exercise the moral power of respect).

If what I have said is correct, then the general structure of how duties of respect and duties of love are "essentially always connected together with one another in one duty according to the law" seems to be that, given certain features of human nature (that we are humbled when we depend on the benevolence of others), exercising one kind of moral power in isolation (and so being moved by the thought of duty to comply with only one kind of duty [love] in our interactions with other humans) has certain inherently morally pernicious effects on them (their losing self-respect). This generates a duty to exercise the other corresponding moral power (respect) when exercising the one in interactions between humans in order to counteract the morally pernicious effects of the exercise of a single moral force on the human recipient. In order for the exercise of the moral power of love to generate an interaction in which humans fully do morally right by each other, it must be tempered by respect so as to minimize the loss of self-respect of those whom we help.

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56 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:448–49. A reviewer helpfully noted that, in this case, one might argue that it is simply more beneficent to spare another bad feelings when we aim to help and so respect is not necessary in this case. I agree that it can be more beneficent to spare another bad feelings when we aim to help. However, I stress that this point is compatible with a different point that Kant is making here. Kant's concern here is clearly about how the moral law requires the joint exercise of respect and love between humans, for the passage deals with how the moral law unites duties of respect and love, not with how to be as beneficent as possible in exercising benevolence.

Though Kant himself only gives an example of how morality for humans requires that love be tempered by respect, we can give parallel examples of how it requires that respect be enriched by love. A complication arises given that Kant characterizes duties of respect merely negatively, as duties not to succumb to three kinds of vices: arrogance, defamation, and ridicule.[57] These are duties of respect *not to* interact with other humans (a) in a way that demands that others think little of themselves in comparison with us (arrogance), (b) in a way that brings into the open something "unfavorable to respect to others," i.e., something that is liable to make others lose respect for someone (defamation), or (c) in a way that exposes the faults of others in order to maliciously take pleasure in these faults (ridicule). Such vicious conduct clearly violates the dignity of those to whom we are arrogant, those we defame, and those we ridicule. For all such conduct fails to treat others as equal sources of inviolable moral worth. Compliance with duties of respect (and so the exercise of the moral power of respect) is thus a constitutive aspect of humans' fully treating one another as ends in themselves.

Given the negative characterization of these duties, any given exercise of the moral power of respect is an instance of conduct that we abstain from doing something in our moral interactions with others. Thus, the exercise of the moral power of respect is something that inherently maintains a distance between humans by having them not interact in a way that they otherwise would. This distance keeping is a plausible candidate for a morally pernicious effect inherent to the isolated exercise of respect among humans. After all, it seems humans can be moved by the thought of duty to comply with essentially negative duties of respect with regard to one another simply by staying clear of one another. Such pure distance keeping between humans, however, does not constitute fully treating another as an end in itself. As Kant puts it in the *Groundwork*, if the representation of humanity as an end in itself "is to have its *full* effect in me, the ends of a subject that is an end in itself must, as much as possible, also be *my* ends."[58] Thus, it seems plausible that the exercise of respect generates a corresponding duty to exercise a moral power of love toward a person in order to counteract pernicious pure distance keeping between humans.[59] That is, just as we should be benevolent toward an impoverished person in a respectful

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57 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:464–65.

58 *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:430.

59 Though I do not have the space to go into details here, it seems clear that the other duties of love (gratitude and sympathetic feeling) similarly enrich exercises of respect so that they constitute full treatment of other humans as ends in themselves (*Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:454–56). After all, complying with these duties from the motive of duty manifests a benevolent appreciation of a benefit rendered to us or of another's joy or pain, both of which counteract respectful distance keeping by bringing humans morally closer in being

way that considers the effect of our helping them achieve their ends on their
self-respect, we should not be arrogant toward others (not defame them, and
not maliciously ridicule them) in a loving/benevolent way that considers the
effect of our distance keeping on their self-love, i.e., their happiness.

Here, I focus on the duty of non-arrogance for reasons of space, but similar
things can be said about the other duties of respect. In order for the exercise
of respect to comply with the duty of non-arrogance to constitute our treating
other humans as ends in themselves, we must not simply prevent ourselves
from demanding that others think that we are better than them from the motive
of duty. We must also do so while appreciating that our achievements and vic-
tories, even if motivated by good will, can affect their self-love, their happiness,
i.e., while exercising love. Take the example of sharing the news that you got
an attractive job with a colleague who is also looking for a job in a competitive
academic job market. A clearly immoral way of sharing the news that violates
the duty of non-arrogance is to flaunt getting the job, demanding that others
recognize you got it because you are better than them. A better but still morally
deficient way of interacting is simply by not telling your colleague and have
them find out from someone else. This is an exercise of respect that complies
with the duty of non-arrogance and inherently keeps your distance from your
colleague in not sharing the news with them. You can enrich your exercise of
(non-arrogant) respect by sharing the news in a way that is considerate and
emphasizes how much of a crapshoot the job market is, making it clear that
you think of them as peers that are also deserving of such a position. By enrich-
ing respect with love in this way, you can considerately share the news while
making it clear that you are not demanding that others think less of themselves.

Note that I discuss these examples of the lived moral tension in human life
(of respectful benevolence and considerate non-arrogance) because Kant him-
self brings up how the moral law unites these duties (hence moral powers) and
to clarify the distinction between these two moral powers (and duties to other
humans), as well as give a sense of how they are both in play in human moral life.
However, we should take care to distinguish between (a) this tension (and unit-
ing of respect and love) and (b) the balancing opposition between respect and
love that makes moral interactions possible and is at issue in the moral-balancing
argument. Here, I am not trying to get argumentative mileage out of conflicts
between respect and love for the sake of giving a moral-balancing argument.

At this point, one might worry, following Baron, that even if there is a sense
in which respect has to be enriched by love and love has to be tempered by

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moved by the thought of duty to share in another's ends (through either gratitude or
sympathy).

respect, respect does not depend on love in the way love depends on respect. Baron argues that respect (in the usual, intuitive sense) either does not need love at all or needs it in a highly attenuated sense, but that love (benevolence) is only benevolent if it is respectful.[60] I grant the point that the mutual dependence of respect and love is not fully symmetric, i.e., that there is a sense in which love (benevolence) more strongly depends on respect (insofar as benevolence is only benevolence if it is respectful). But this asymmetry is compatible with morality between humans requiring that respect be enriched by benevolence. Indeed, Baron herself ultimately admits that "love does need respect, lest love be paternalistic or otherwise invasive, and respect may need love to check its tendency to aloofness."[61] That is, despite the asymmetry in dependence she rightly argues for, Baron seems to admit that respect needs to be enriched by love. And this is all Kant needs for his purposes.

What Baron finds objectionable about Kant's view that respect and love are opposing forces is that, as she sees it, Kant exaggerates "the degree to which keeping a distance from others is needed in order to respect others' freedom and self-direction and to preserve self-respect."[62] Baron is right that humans do not need to keep a large distance from one another to respect each other's self-direction and self-respect, but I do not think this is the point Kant is making in this passage. Rather, I think Kant is claiming that exercising the moral force of respect is a matter of not breaching humans' inviolable moral boundaries. For Kant, exercising respect does not increase the degree of moral distance from others' moral boundaries. It simply maintains the required minimal moral distance, i.e., it ensures that we do not cross fundamental moral boundaries. Given this, Kant is right to claim that for the thought of duty to motivate humans fully to treat one another as ends in themselves, (a) their love must be tempered by respect, and (b) their respect must be enriched by love. That is, the thought of duty must move humans (a) to keep themselves within their moral boundaries as they help each other achieve their ends, and (b) to treat each other's morally permissible ends as ends as they keep their moral boundaries and integrity. Baron is right to find the idea that respect and love pull us in opposite directions problematic, but Kant's general view of how repulsion and attraction are balanced is not that they pull in opposite directions.[63] Rather, it is that they jointly ground a stable configuration of beings

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60   Baron, "Love and Respect in the Doctrine of Virtue," 33.

61   Baron, "Love and Respect in the Doctrine of Virtue," 42.

62   Baron, "Love and Respect in the Doctrine of Virtue," 41.

63   Their pulling in opposite directions would require that the increase/decrease of one force causes a decrease/increase effect of the opposing force and vice versa. This is also not the case for physical repulsion and attraction. For example, the attraction of two bodies

in a way that explains their essential properties (of bodies filling space and of humans interacting morally).

3.4. Balancing Opposition of Respect and Love in Relationships

I suggest that we interpret Kant as holding that a constitutive requirement of moral interaction between humans is that it consists of a joint exercise of respect and love/benevolence. That is, in order for humans to interact morally with one another and form moral communities, they must be moved by the thought of duty to treat each other both (a) as self-determining and having dignity, i.e., "unconditional, incomparable worth" (such that they exercise the moral power of respect and comply with duties of respect toward each other), and (b) as needy and vulnerable (such that they exercise the moral power of love and comply with duties of love toward each other).[64] Interactions between humans that do not meet these two requirements fail to constitute moral interactions and communities.[65] We can illustrate this point by seeing how idealized purely respectful/loving cases of two-person relationships fail to constitute moral interactions between humans.[66]

An example of an idealized purely respectful relationship wholly lacking in love would be one between two respectful egoists.[67] The thought of duty could move these unbalanced humans to comply with duties of respect and maintain their moral boundaries but not to comply with duties of love and be benevolent to each other. Given their egoistic psychology and lack of love, they would each (respectfully) pursue their own interests and would lack the power to be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome their selfish inclinations and adopt each other's ends as their ends from the motive of duty. They may incidentally come to share ends (e.g., putting out the same large fire threatening their two homes). But in their interactions, they could not be motivated by the thought

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increases as they come closer together, but this does not cause them to repel each other less. Similarly, the repulsion of a body increases as we compress it, but this does not cause the body or its parts to attract each other less.

64   Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:436.

65   Kant thinks of community and interaction as interchangeable (e.g., Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B258).

66   This use of examples is different from the one above. Here the examples of purely respectful and loving relationships are assumed as cases for *reductio* arguments that establish that genuine moral interaction is not possible between humans lacking either love or respect. The strategy of using these two-person cases as a guide to the general case of moral dispersion and collapse is similar to how, as we have seen Smith point out, Kant uses two-body problems as a guide for thinking about the general case of physical total collapse and dispersion.

67   I thank Mark Timmons for the helpful suggestion to use two respectful egoists as a case here, given the isolating dynamics to which their psychology leads.

of duty to overcome their selfish inclinations and adopt the other's (morally permissible) ends and so treat each other fully as ends in themselves. As such, purely respectful egoists could not be moved by the thought of duty in a way that grounds moral interactions (and community) between them even if they lack the desire to do so. They would be two isolated moral units but not a moral community. These purely respectful humans lack the power to be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome selfish desires and do justice to the finite, sensible aspect of human nature, the aspect that requires that we rely on each other in the pursuit of our (morally permissible) happiness.

An example of an idealized purely loving relationship would be one between two purely selfless lovers. The thought of duty could move these unbalanced humans to comply with duties of love and be benevolent to each other but not to comply with duties of respect and treat each other (or themselves) as sources of inviolable moral worth.[68] Given their selfless psychology and lack of respect, they would each (benevolently) adopt and pursue the other's ends and would lack the power to be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome their selfless inclinations and keep at a moral distance, maintaining their moral boundaries.[69] In their interactions, they could not be moved by the thought of duty to overcome their selfless inclinations and never treat each other or themselves as mere means. As such, purely selfless lovers could not be motivated by the thought of duty in a way that grounds moral interactions (and community) even if they lack the desire to do so. They would form a loving community of selfless

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68   Plausibly, if one lacks the power to respect another as an end in itself, then one also lacks the power to respect oneself. After all, this power consists of being motivated by the thought of duty not to violate the dignity common to all humans, whether it is exercised to respect oneself or another.

69   One might object that, given how Kant characterizes practical love, it constitutively includes respect and keeping of our moral distance. For, after all, exercising the moral power of love involves sharing in another's ends as *their* ends from the motive of duty. As a reviewer helpfully pointed out, this seems to include some keeping of distance between humans and respecting the moral worth of the beneficiary. Moreover, it is natural to suppose that, in adopting another's *morally permissible* ends (as opposed to ends in general) we already exercise respect and keeping our distance insofar as we refrain from adopting another's morally *impermissible* ends (i.e., those that fail to respect human dignity). However, we must distinguish between this more minimal sense of one's moral distance keeping involved in exercising practical love and the full-blooded sense of moral distance that is constitutive of exercising respect and that maintains the *moral boundaries and integrity of both individuals*. For this richer sense of keeping one's moral distance, more is required. In particular, what is required is not just that they not be benevolent in ways that the beneficiary conceives as part of their happiness or that wrong someone, but that each maintains their moral integrity as separate, morally impenetrable agents with distinct boundaries as they adopt the other's ends.

happiness seekers but one in which the individuals lose their moral integrity as they fail to maintain moral boundaries. These purely loving humans lack the power to be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome selfless sensible desires and do justice to the rational, self-determining aspect of human nature, the aspect that requires that each of us choose our own way of life.

Given humans' dual nature as rational yet sensible beings, moral interactions between them require that they jointly exercise both respect and love. Humans need to be moved by the thought of duty both to maintain their moral boundaries with each other and to share ends morally. Only if the thought of duty moves them in these dual ways do humans interact morally with one another. With this view of how moral interaction/community between humans constitutively requires both respect and love in hand, we can give the moral-balancing argument.

3.5. The Moral-Balancing Argument

This argument is an *a priori* argument that explains the possibility of human moral subjects (as embodied subject of moral duties) as grounded on the joint exercise or moral repulsion (respect) and attraction (love), as the physical-balancing argument explains the possibility of bodies (as objects of outer experience) as grounded on the joint exercise of physical repulsion (expansion) and attraction (gravitation).

First, a sub-argument that moves from the supposition of humans with (repulsive) respect to the need for (attractive) love to avoid total dispersion. A world of purely respectful humans (e.g., respectful egoists), would be a world where the thought of duty could move humans to comply with duties of respect and maintain their moral boundaries but not to comply with duties of love and be benevolent to each other. Given their egoistic psychology and lack of love, they would all (respectfully) pursue their own interest and would lack the power to be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome their selfish inclinations and adopt each other's (morally permissible) ends as their ends from the motive of duty. They may incidentally come to share ends but not from the motive of duty. Indeed, given their egoistic psychology, they would tend to steer clear of each other. For in their interactions they could not be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome their egoistic inclinations and come morally closer by treating each other fully as ends in themselves. As such, this would be a world where humans could not be moved by the thought of duty to have moral interactions between each other even if they lack the desire to do so. A world of such humans thus faces a problem of total moral dispersion. This moral dispersion consists in the fact that purely respectful humans lack the power to be moved by the thought of duty to come morally closer by treating

each other fully as ends in themselves even if they lack the sensible desire to do so. This yields a condition of moral nothingness for such unbalanced human beings, which is equivalent to the emptiness of space for unbalanced bodies. This moral nothingness plausibly consists in the fact that the thought of duty cannot motivate such humans to interact morally and form a moral world, which (given ought implies can) implies that they are not under obligation to interact morally/form a moral world.[70]

Now, a second half that closely parallels the first in reverse. A world of purely loving humans (of, e.g., selfless lovers) would be a world where the thought of duty could move humans to comply with duties of love and be benevolent but not to comply with duties of respect and treat each as a source of inviolable moral worth. Given their selfless psychology and lack of respect, they would all (benevolently) help each other achieve their ends but would lack the power to be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome their selfless inclinations and treat each as a source of inviolable moral worth. In their interactions they could not be motivated by the thought of duty to overcome their selfless inclinations and keep their moral distance by never treating each other or themselves as mere means.[71] As such, this would be a world where humans could not be motivated by the thought of duty in a way that grounds moral interactions (and community) between them even if they lack the desire to do so. A world of such humans thus faces a problem of total moral collapse. This moral collapse consists in the fact that purely loving humans lack the power to be motivated by the thought of duty to keep their moral distance by maintaining the separateness of persons even if they lack the desire to do so.[72] This collapse leads to a

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70 One might call this the *impossibility interpretation* of moral nothingness. I do not pretend to have given a convincing case for this interpretation of moral nothingness. Indeed, as Bianca Ancillotti and Houston Smit have pointed out to me, the fact that Kant characterizes moral nothingness as "immorality" rather than "amorality" suggests a different, *immorality interpretation* of moral nothingness. According to this interpretation, the nothingness consists of the permissibility of intuitively immoral relations between unbalanced humans (of disrespectful benevolence/callous respect) due to their only being able to be moved by the thought of duty to comply with one kind of duty to one another. For my purposes, it does not matter whether we adopt the impossibility or immorality interpretation of moral nothingness. On either interpretation, moral nothingness constitutes a condition where genuinely moral relations between humans are impossible.

71 In this more general case, the thought of duty cannot motivate purely loving humans to prevent themselves from treating themselves as mere means, but also from treating selfless, willing third parties as mere means for the sake of another.

72 Jacob Barrett helpfully pointed out to me that Rawls makes a similar point to Kant's here about classical utilitarianism not respecting the separateness of persons in *A Theory of Justice*: "The most natural way … of arriving at utilitarianism … is to adopt for society as a whole the principle of rational choice for one man …, this [impartial] spectator who is

condition of moral nothingness, which plausibly consists of the fact that the thought of duty cannot motivate such humans to interact morally and form a moral world, which (given ought implies can) implies that they are not under obligation to do so.[73]

Note that, as is to be expected of balancing arguments, moral interaction between humans is shown to be impossible in different ways in the two *reductio* sub-arguments. This is highlighted by the fact that these worlds fail the universalizability test of the categorical imperative in different ways.[74] A purely respectful world is one in which the maxim of nonbeneficence would be a universal law. Kant explicitly notes that such a world is one we can conceive of but cannot rationally will.[75] By contrast, a purely loving world is one in which the maxim of generally treating each other as ends in themselves but sometimes treating some humans (perhaps themselves) as mere means for the sake of others' ends would be a universal law. This latter maxim is like that of making a lying promise when in need: both maxims that hold that one can sometimes treat humans as mere means.[76] They are thus nonuniversalizable maxims that violate perfect duties to others and yield a contradiction in conception when universalized. Consequently, although moral interactions between humans are impossible in both a purely respectful and a purely loving world, these unbalanced worlds are not symmetrical. A purely loving world is actually impossible (as it yields a contradiction in conception) whereas a purely respectful world is merely morally

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conceived as carrying out the required organization of the desires of all persons into one coherent system of this desire; it is by this construction that many persons are fused into one" (*A Theory of Justice*, 23–24). Rawls is explicitly referring to this as "a sense in which classical utilitarianism fails to take seriously the distinction between persons" (*A Theory of Justice*, 163; see also 24). Rawls notes, "This results in impersonality, in the conflation of all desires into one system of desire" and amounts to "mistak[ing] impersonality for impartiality" (*A Theory of Justice*, 164, 166).

73 As Sasha Newton and Marie Newhouse have pointed out to me, one related way of understanding this moral collapse is that, without respect, humans cannot be moved by the thought of duty to respect each other's rights. Elaborating the connection between rights and moral collapse would require interpreting Kant's "construction of the concept of right" by analogy with presenting the possibility of bodies moving freely under the law of the *equality of action and reaction* (*Doctrine of Right*, 6:233). This lies beyond the scope of this paper.

74 I thank Houston Smit for helping me see the need to connect the moral-balancing argument's sub-cases with the categorical imperative test.

75 This is made clear by, e.g., Kant's claim in the second section of the *Groundwork* that a universal law according to the maxim of nonbeneficence could subsist but cannot be rationally willed as a universal law of nature (*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:423).

76 Cf. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of* Morals, 4:422; see also 4:429–30.

undesirable (as it yields a mere contradiction in the will). Still, both are worlds in which genuine moral interactions between humans are impossible.[77]

By means of this argument, we can infer (as Kant did in the physical case) that without two forces of repulsion and attraction to balance each other, humans cannot possess the essential property of having genuine moral interactions. Humans endowed solely with moral repulsion face a problem of total moral dispersion, while humans endowed solely with moral attraction face a problem of total moral collapse. In either case, humans fail to possess the essential property of having genuine moral interactions through the exercise of their moral powers (i.e., through being motivated by the thought of duty). We can conclude that in order for humans to be genuine humans (subjects of morality who have moral interactions in being motivated by the thought of duty), they must jointly exercise respect and love (i.e., the thought of duty must move them to be respectful and benevolent to each other). Without such joint repulsion and attraction, humans cannot relate to each other as they essentially must if they are to constitute embodied subjects of a moral community, so there can be no moral world at all. And if there can be no moral interactions/communities, i.e., no morality *between* humans, there is a sense in which there is no morality at all.[78]

The moral-balancing argument's conclusion—that the thought of duty needs to motivate humans to respect and love one another for moral interactions and so morality between humans to be possible—fits nicely with Kant's claim in section 12 of the introduction to the *Doctrine of Virtue* that certain forms of affective receptivity to concepts of duty "lie at the basis of morality, as *subjective* conditions of receptivity to the concept of duty, not as objective

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77 This is not unlike the physical case, for a purely repulsive world is one where bodies fail to even have a specifiable physical location, whereas a purely attractive world is one where bodies occupy the same point in space (though they fail to fill it). Note that a purely repulsive *physical* world seems more incoherent than a purely attractive one, but a purely *attractive* moral world seems more incoherent than its counterpart. This shows that we should not expect this kind of analogy to grant too much symmetry to Kant's theoretical and practical philosophies. This is made clear by considering how the different sides of this analogy interact with other aspects of Kant's system: the moral worlds interact with the categorical imperative test while the physical worlds interact with infinity and the relationship between geometric and physical objects.

78 This is in keeping with Kant's discussion of the autonomy formula in the second section of the *Groundwork* as essentially dealing with a community of autonomous legislators. For here, he considers an autonomous will as a "universally legislating will" (*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:432), i.e., a will that legislates not just for a single "I" but for all of "us" fellow rational agents. This way of reading Kant also fits nicely with the fact that, as Jens Timmermann notes, Kant seems to regard the autonomy and realm of ends formulations as statements of the same third formula of the categorical imperative (Timmermann, *Kant's* Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, 105).

conditions of morality."[79] That is, Kant claims that it is a condition of the possibility of morality for certain subjects (humans) that the thought of duty be able to move them in certain ways. Kant thinks that every human by nature must be able to be moved by the thought of duty to feel moral feeling, consciousness, love of neighbor, and respect for oneself and that "it is by virtue of [these forms of receptivity to the thought of duty] that he can be put under obligation."[80] I think that with the moral-physical analogy, Kant means to add that the capacity for joint exercise of respect and love is among these subjective conditions of receptiveness to the thought of duty. Indeed, in discussing moral feeling, Kant makes similar claims to the conclusion of the moral-balancing argument but about moral feeling rather than respect and love: that if a human were "completely lacking in receptivity to [moral feeling] he would be morally dead," and that "if (to speak in medical terms) the moral vital force could no longer excite this feeling, then humanity would dissolve (by chemical laws, as it were) into mere animality and be mixed irretrievably with the mass of other natural beings."[81] That is, Kant claims that if the thought of duty could not move humans to feel moral feeling, then humans could not constitute genuine moral subjects and would be mere natural beings that are moved by desires according to natural laws (but not by the thought of duty, by representations of laws).[82] Kant thus seems to think that for humans to be genuine moral subjects and so genuine humans (rational animals under obligations to interact morally that can be motivated by the thought of duty and not mere brute animals without such obligations that can only be motivated by desires), the thought of duty must be able to move them to feel moral feeling (and conscience, love, and self-respect) and to jointly exercise respect and benevolence.

Both the physical- and moral-balancing arguments constitute *a priori* arguments that link the possibility of certain kinds of individuals (bodies as objects of outer experience/humans as moral subjects) and the possibility of their existing in a system or community (bodies filling space/humans morally interacting). They both seek to show that the individuals in question are ultimately only possible if the system of individuals is possible (if bodies can interact so as to fill space/if humans can interact so as to form moral communities). This moral-balancing argument thus yields insight into the possibility of humans as moral subjects that have moral interactions as grounded in a

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79 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:399. I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out to me the relevance of Kant's discussion of these moral endowments to this project.

80 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:399.

81 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:400.

82 Cf. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:412.

balancing opposition of moral repulsion and attraction. This is just as the physical-balancing argument yields insight into the possibility of bodies as movables in spaces that fill space as grounded in a balancing opposition of physical attraction and repulsion. Without this balancing opposition of repulsion and attraction, there would not be bodies as such objects of outer experience or humans as such moral subjects at all. I give a systematic account of the different aspects of the moral-physical analogy as I have fleshed it out here in the appendix, but now I turn to discuss some upshots and payoffs of my reading of this analogy.

3.6. Upshots and Interpretive Payoffs

Apart from making sense of an intriguing yet puzzling passage, my reading offers interesting interpretive payoffs. By drawing this analogy, we think of a moral world of humans as constituted by an essential balancing opposition of repulsion and attraction. By thinking of the moral world of humans in this way, we gain a formal grasp of this moral idea (i.e., a grasp of its formal character), which makes the idea determinate enough for reason to make purposive use of it. Since this idea is that of a world of humans whose wills are fully determined according to the moral law, symbolizing the moral world of humans through this analogy to the physical world allows reason to put this idea to purposive use in practically cognizing that we ought to bring about such a world by interacting with one another in a dynamical harmony of respect and love.[83] One purposive use of the idea of the moral world that this analogy enables is thus the practical use that Kant attributes to ideals in the "Ideal of Pure Reason" chapter of the "Transcendental Dialectic."[84] Here, Kant notes that ideals have "*practical* power (as regulative principles) grounding the possibility of the perfection of certain *actions*."[85] Ideals provide "an indispensable standard for reason, which needs the concept of that which is entirely complete in its kind, in order to assess and measure the degree and the defects of what is incomplete."[86] For Kant, ideals play an important role in guiding our moral improvement by providing a standard by means of which we can evaluate our conduct. Kant tells us that the

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83 Kant characterizes practical cognition in the first *Critique* as the cognition "through which I represent *what ought to exist*," and the practical use of reason as that "through which it is cognized *a priori* what ought to happen" (*Critique of Pure Reason*, A633/B661; emphasis added).

84 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A568–71/B596–99. Note that the claim that the concept of the moral world is an ideal that fleshes out the realm of ends fits well with Kant's calling the realm of ends a "splendid ideal" in the third section of the *Groundwork* (*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:462).

85 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* A569/B597.

86 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* A570/B598.

ideal of the Stoic sage guides our moral improvement as individual humans.[87] I suggest that the ideal of the moral world guides our moral improvement as a community, admonishing us to bring about a dynamical harmony of respect and love in our interactions with one another. The moral world is a realm of ends among humans, considered in thoroughgoing determination according to the moral law, and it allows us to assess and measure the degree and defects of what is incomplete in our empirically realized moral communities. According to this interpretation, the moral-physical analogy, in determining the idea of a moral world of humans in this way, constitutes a cognition of the moral requirements that follow from the application of the categorical imperative to humans. This yields cognition of a duty of humans as such to form a moral world with one another by jointly exercising respect and love in their interactions. The cognitive gain yielded by the moral-physical analogy therefore forms part and parcel of the articulation of the system of duties that constitutes the *Doctrine of Virtue*.

Seeing the moral world as a realm of ends among humans allows us to see further interpretive payoffs for Kant's normative ethics. For example, the dynamical harmony of love and respect that Kant thinks we humans ought to bring about in our interactions helps correct a misleading toy picture of Kant's ethics one might get by focusing solely on the *Groundwork*. Such a narrow focus might lead one to think that Kant's ethics is inherently cold and heartlessly concerned only with acting on universalizable maxims and doing our duty for the sake of duty. But the idea of a moral world of humans with its constitutive dynamical harmony of love and respect allows us to see that acting on morally permissible maxims for the sake of duty is by no means a cold, merely intellectual activity. It is a richly social and emotionally laden activity that seeks to do justice both to the rational and to the finite aspects of human nature. The moral-physical analogy (and the resulting dynamical harmony of love and respect) helps us see that Kant's ethics has a rich heart, making room for emotional and social aspects of our moral lives as humans.

Considering this moral world as an ideal that realizes a realm of ends and so a world in which all humans comply with the categorical imperative (and the moral law) can further inform our interpretation of Kant's moral philosophy if we use it to work backward toward more fundamental aspects of his moral philosophy. This is because Kant's claims about morality and rational agents in the *Groundwork* and the second *Critique* ultimately have to apply to humans who ought to bring about a dynamical harmony of love and respect. In other words, the idea of a moral world of humans spells out the material conditions for a

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87   Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A569/B597. The idea of the son of God in the *Religion* serves a similar purpose as a moral ideal or exemplar in a religious context, as Chignell discusses in "The Devil, the Virgin, the Envoy," esp. 120–22.

realm of ends of humans in particular.[88] I suggest then that the moral-physical analogy and its idea of the moral world can inform our interpretation of Kant's treatment of the categorical imperative and moral law more generally. It can do this by specifying that although these fundamental practical principles may seem (and indeed be) sparse, they need to be able to ground the kind of rich moral community we find in the idea of a moral world of humans.

Further interpretive payoffs that I do not have the space to fully develop here concern how the moral-physical analogy can help us understand why Kant makes certain intriguing but somewhat puzzling claims about the moral law and its contemplation in different writings. For example, he claims in the *Doctrine of Virtue* that we can cultivate virtue by contemplating the dignity of the moral law.[89] But this seems puzzling if we just consider the moral law as a practical principle.[90] What is it that we are contemplating when we contemplate this principle? Do we simply contemplate its constitutive concepts and the way they are combined? That does not seem to inspire one to be virtuous. I suggest that part of what we can contemplate in the moral law is a realm of ends of humans in a dynamical harmony of love and respect. This is supported by Kant's claims that the realm of ends is "intended to bring an idea of reason closer to intuition (by a certain analogy) and thereby to feeling."[91] Kant thinks

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88 I thank Houston Smit for helping me see the need to make this point explicit.

89 Kant, *Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:397.

90 To the extent that the moral world of humans is a world of virtuous humans, the moral-physical analogy can also help us understand why Kant claims in the *Religion* that virtue is "strictly … *beneficent* in its consequences, more so than anything that nature or art might afford in the world" and that "if we consider the gracious consequences that virtue would spread throughout the world, should it gain entry everywhere, then morally oriented reason (through the imagination) calls sensibility into play" (*Religion within the Boundaries of Reason Alone*, 6:23n). Virtue is so beneficent because it has as a consequence a dynamical harmony of love and respect for all others, i.e., the pursuit of one's own self-determined happiness as one is helped by others and helps all others pursue theirs. And "should virtue gain entry everywhere," we would have an ideal moral world of humans living in a dynamical harmony of love and respect, of humans that all stay within their moral boundaries as they help each other achieve their own authentic autonomous happiness. In contemplating this ideal moral world, practical ("morally oriented") reason guides the imagination and enlivens sensibility, inspiring us to live up to our moral vocation and cultivate the virtue we ought to develop in ourselves.

91 Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:436. Timmons discusses how bringing the concept of the realm of ends closer to intuition and to feeling in part consists of conceiving of how one might realize a community whose end is the practice of virtue ("Closer to Intuition (According to a Certain Analogy) and Thereby to Feeling"). Timmons helpfully relates this to Kant's concept of a "visible church" whose constitution satisfies the characteristics of an ethical community and has for its content moral laws, arguing that this visible church is a way of making intuitive a communal duty to institute a religious

that, in bringing the requirements of the moral law closer to intuition, "the splendid ideal of a universal realm of *ends in themselves* (rational beings)" helps produce in us "a lively interest in the moral law."[92] Going a step further, the moral world of humans (as an ideal world of humans whose wills are fully determined by the moral law and its constitutive dynamical harmony of love and respect) helps bring the requirements of the moral law even closer to intuition and to feeling. By helping us see that this wonderful dynamical harmony of love and respect is what the moral law requires of humans, the moral-physical analogy and its resulting idea of a moral world inspire us to do our duty, become virtuous, and live up to our moral vocation so that we might contribute to the realization of such a harmonious community.

If what I am suggesting is correct, then we can contemplate the moral law by contemplating the dynamical moral order that it prescribes humanity to realize on earth (in the sensible world). This, in turn, can help enrich our understanding of why not just the "starry heavens above me" but also the "moral law within me" "fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and reverence the more often and more steadily one reflects on [it]."[93] That is, the moral-physical analogy helps us see that contemplating the moral law, just like the starry heavens, consists of contemplation of a universal dynamical order among beings wrought by the use of reason. The starry heavens constitute a universal dynamical order of bodies that is thought by understanding and theoretical reason. The moral law gives a universal dynamical order of rational beings and humans that is thought by practical reason.

If my interpretation of the moral-physical analogy is correct, this suggests that we can apply the same account of the use of symbols and analogies in my interpretation to other key analogies that Kant uses to give determinate content to ideas in his practical philosophy (in the form of a grasp of their formal character). These include the idea of the realm of ends (which is "possible only by analogy with a realm of nature") that I mentioned above as well as those of right and legal relations of human actions (the former of which is presented "in pure intuition *a priori*, by analogy with presenting the possibility of bodies moving freely under the law of the *equality of action and reaction*" and the latter of which

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community, i.e., a church whose realization would make humanity worthy of happiness. I find Timmons's suggestion compelling and add that we should consider the visible church to be an even more determinate version of an ideal moral community between humans than the moral world, one that adds details about instituting a community with certain key ethical features and whose end is the practice of virtue.

92 Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 4:462, 4:463.

93 Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:161.

is analogous to "the mechanical relations" of bodies' "moving powers").[94] I propose that these different analogies provide a framework for interpreting Kant's philosophical project of a metaphysics of morals as a whole. Through these different layered and systematically related analogies, Kant offers a philosophical framework for thinking about the moral and political relations between humans as importantly analogous to the geometric and dynamical relations between bodies. This is an intriguing, majestic philosophical picture of the ethical relations between humans, one that we can only properly appreciate if we take seriously these analogies as more than mere metaphors and are willing to explore in detail how Kant richly relates theoretical and practical aspects of his philosophy through them. It is worth highlighting that nothing I have discussed here concerns how the moral-physical analogy illuminates the foundations of Kant's moral philosophy directly. My aim here has been to give a reading of this analogy itself and spell out some interpretive payoffs for Kant's ethics. Still, if my reading of the moral-physical analogy is correct, it suggests an interpretive approach that articulates how certain analogies relate to key aspects of Kant's practical and theoretical philosophies.

4. CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have given the first systematic account of the analogy Kant draws in the *Doctrine of Virtue* between the physical world of bodies and the moral world of humans of which I am aware in the literature. In doing so, I have provided a philosophically attractive interpretation of Kant's intriguing albeit obscure conclusion that the moral forces of respect and love are conditions for the possibility of a moral world of humans. I argued that we should interpret Kant as endorsing a moral-balancing argument and offered a reconstruction of this argument, explaining how it justifies Kant's conclusion.[95] I also argued that this analogy allows the idea of a moral world to play the role of a compelling ideal for moral interactions between humans. I hope to have shown that by taking this analogy seriously as a key part of Kant's systematic philosophy, we can better understand an intriguing yet puzzling and ultimately central aspect of his practical philosophy.

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94 Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Nature*, 4:438, *Doctrine of Right*, 6:232, and *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, 4:357n.

95 In giving the moral-balancing argument, I have assumed Kant's normative premises concerning how a community of moral beings ought to be structured as well as metaphysical assumptions concerning the nature of forces. To the extent that one finds these assumptions implausible, one will find the justification for the claim lacking. I thank Robert Clewis and Janis Schaab for making me see the need to make this explicit.

In addition to helping us understand Kant's own philosophy, there is an insight in Kant's moral-balancing argument that we should take seriously in contemporary moral theorizing. Even if we do not accept all of Kant's philosophical system or of views about love and respect, there is something deeply right about his balancing argument, viz., that proper moral relations between humans require a balance of respect that allows each to grow as an individual, and love that allows all to grow closer. Kant's take on the balancing of moral forces and his corresponding argument show that, given our human constitution as rational but finite beings, moral interactions require that we balance respect and love in our moral relations with each other. Kant's moral-balancing argument thus sets forth certain *a priori* requirements for morally ideal interactions and relations: they must consist of a balancing of these two moral concerns. If a given interaction between humans fails to manifest either, then it fails to do justice either to the rational, self-determining aspect or to the sensible, finite aspect of human nature. If a relationship between humans is wholly lacking in either respect or love, then it is a morally pernicious relationship, one in which at least one human's dignity or happiness is compromised.[96] It is an intuitive and attractive thought that respect and love must be balanced in correct moral relations. Kant's moral-balancing argument explains why this is so. Without this balance, we cannot build the right kinds of relationships or communities, ones that allow each of us to grow and develop autonomously as we help contribute to the (morally permissible) happiness of all.[97]

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APPENDIX: SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT OF THE MORAL-PHYSICAL ANALOGY

Space: Physical space of points————Moral space of ends.

Occupants/Bearers of Powers/Forces: Bodies————Humans.[98]

96 Robert Gooding-Williams helpfully pointed out to me that we can also connect Kant's idea of striking the right balance of love and respect in a contemporary context with the idea of setting and negotiating the right personal boundaries in one's different relationships.

97 Throughout its development, this paper has greatly benefited from the helpful feedback of many thoughtful persons who have engaged with previous drafts at a wide variety of talks. For invaluable comments, objections, and discussion, I am especially grateful to Houston Smit, Mark Timmons, Ritwik Agrawal, and two anonymous reviewers.

98 Note that, as Martin Sticker helpfully pointed out to me, this moral-physical analogy is compatible with there being important disanalogies between the bearers of moral and

Distance: Function of locations of bodies————Function of ends of humans.

R-rep(x_n), Force of Repulsion, Keeps at Distance: Expansion (grounds physical impenetrability)————Respect (grounds moral impenetrability).

R-att(x_n), Force of Attraction, Closes Distance: Gravitation (brings bodies physically closer)————Love (brings humans morally closer).[99]

R-dis(x_n), Total Dispersion: All bodies disperse into infinity————The thought of duty cannot move humans to come morally closer by treating each other fully as ends in themselves and adopting each other's morally permissible ends even if they lack the sensible desire to do so.

R-col(x_n), Total Collapse: All bodies coalesce into a mathematical point———— The thought of duty cannot move humans to keep their moral distance by treating each as an inviolable source of moral worth with dignity even if they lack the sensible desire to do so.

R-bal(x_n), Balancing Opposition: Bodies fill space determinately at every point with different density grounded in a dynamical harmony of expansion and gravitation————Humans interact morally with one another, helping each other pursue their own distinct happiness, forming a moral community grounded in a dynamical harmony of respect and love.

Nothingness: Bodies fail to possess the essential physical property of filling space————Humans fail to possess the essential moral property of having moral interactions.

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physical forces. Indeed, one important disanalogy between these in the Critical period is that the primary bearer of physical forces is a material continuum, whereas the primary bearers of moral forces are discrete humans.

99 One apparent disanalogy between these two forces of attraction is that, although gravitation is symmetrically exercised between all bodies, it is not exercised to the same *degree* between them. In accordance with Newton's inverse-square law, the closer bodies are to each other, the more strongly they exercise their attractive forces. However, we can note that love can and ought to be exercised to different degrees between agents, for we ought to love practically those with whom we share special relations to a higher degree. Furthermore, exercising practical love involves fulfilling duties of love, which Kant notes, "put another under obligation" (*Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:450). Thus, those whom we love more ought to love us more, and we ought to love more those who love us more.

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