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Philosophy

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Kant- Final draft

Philosophers across the divide appear to believe that morality among humans is determined by rationality. This rationality is reflected in making decisions and working upon them. Immanuel Kant’s approach to morality stands a little different to many philosophers. He has based his philosophy over moral sensibility, heteronomy, happiness, and hedonism. Kant believes such factors choose between human motivation and choices. His theory of human morality is pillared upon human decision and practicability. This essay, therefore, analyzes Kant’s conception of morality and enlightenment and how it critiques one’s society.

# Kant’s conception of Morality

Moral philosophy addresses the issues related to human morality. It gives basis to human morality and throws light on how to achieve end goals. These end goals require moral obligations and ethical approaches to converge upon what moral philosophy encourages. Kant has emphasized upon preliminary human values and ethical responsibilities in his work: “Groundwork in the metaphysics of morals”. From this work of Kant, it appears quite obvious that human agent is forced by factors of human socializing and decisiveness (Kant and Schneewind). In his theories about human morals, he argues that the ultimate goal of human decisions should be to please one’s own self and others. For him, this is practical and gives authentication to an individual’s life goals. He is a believer of the fact that human morality in itself is a virtue related to an individual’s happiness. Kant has not only restricted himself to these aspects of morality rather, but he also opines that not at every time, human agent’s happiness is dependent on morals and virtues (Kant and Schneewind).

Many modern theorists who have worked on exploring moral psychology idealizes Kant’s moral philosophy. They have added a new dimension to his work but with a little contrast. For example, some believe that human actions are dependent on morals but to a limit. Others believe that human actions are inherently dependent on morals, and this is how a social structure evolves. Kant’s philosophy about human action is generally attributed to his work on metaphysics of human morality. The metaphysics were based on moral sensibility, ideals of humanity and ideas of religion. Relevant to this, his theory revolved around respect for morals and human values. His ideas of life, social structure, and life goals are particularly based on human virtues. For him, human actions cannot work in vacuum, it is therefore indispensable for humans to tailor their conduct over his moral philosophies. Other than building a better social structure, Kant’s moral principles assure self-motivation.

Reath argues that Kant views this admiration for morality as a major factor for self-motivation and human decisiveness. Therefore, respect for morality can be witnessed as the respect of authority. In Kant’s theory of happiness, with reference to heteronomy and hedonism, non-moral motivation is unacceptable. This unacceptability goes too far in nullifying the ideals of Kant. The non-moral attitudes are different from human values of peace and love. For Kant, this unacceptability has a limit, which is the fluctuation in human decision abilities. If some immoral things come in between human values and tasks ahead, it demonstrates that human motivation has scrambled. This is the end of Kant’s moral philosophies since he believes human morals strengthen an individual.

# Kant’s conception of Enlightenment

Kant’s enlightenment is human’s emergence from its self- imposed restrictions. The restriction in this case, is man’s ability to not recognize his strength and abilities. In one way, it diminishes human ability to take over challenge, on other hand it restricts its ability to recognize the challenges ahead. Immanuel Kant’s conception of enlightenment breaks all such taboos and calls for developing a pursuit to recognize inner individualities. These restrictions or nonage causes lies and results in taking over men’s ability to take decision. Gradually then a distance from enlightenment results in havoc which takes over all emotions and abilities. If anyone stands poles apart from changing his nature or recognizing his inner abilities, it reciprocates the absence of courage. The absence of courage, in this case, is denying each opportunity and self-realization. In ‘what is enlightenment’, Kant argues “One must have courage to use own understanding (Beiser)”. This is how courage is related to enlightenment.

This distance from enlightenment is the factor which kept humans away from ‘naturaliter maiorennes’, the alien guidance. Kant argues that since men have spent considerable time in defiance and have not accepted their ability to conquer fear and cowardice, therefore enlightenment has remained away from changing their fortunes. According to him, ignorance is bliss. It provides humans a comfort zone and all the abilities to spend a beautiful life. It is here when one destructs himself since he lacks the confidence to abolish his self-imposed restrictions (Beiser). Maturity for such humans become something of least importance since they become inclined to their comfort zones. In describing the aspect of cowardice in humans, Kant has resorted to explaining this mode by illustrating how a coward person faces difficulty in each aspect of life. It is by this manner, enlightenment remains away from humanity and people become habitual of ignorance. Kant’s work was more relevant to his time, but the philosophers after him also never denied the importance of his ideas, which shows the relevance of his inputs to philosophy.

# How they critique one’s society?

The present society or the social structure everywhere in the world lack a conceptual understanding of Immanuel Kant’s ideas. There are not many phenomena in the world of ours that hold any value to the ideas offered by him. Immorality and cowardice are the most common practices adopted by the individuals of this world. For many reasons, they are forced to live in, and no one, therefore, tries to break a so-called cover of negligence upon us. There is a lot of literature which defines in different manner, the ideas of Immanuel Kant, but none of it conforms to the manner, ‘We’ as human conduct our affairs (Habermas). The result is ignorance, lack of resources and lack of the ability to recognize ourselves. This is pushing ourselves back every day and we are not in the position to solve our very own issues. This is how the individuals of this day have deliberately denied themselves many opportunities to better themselves.

They resort to describing the flaws which exist among individuals, culture, and societies. It is in this way they have critiqued our society. Since the culture, values and our religious affiliations all stand hollow and we lack the commitment and courage to resolve our affairs, therefore Kant’s ideas stand against us. Although born at a very early time, he described the human values so explicitly that no one can deny the fact that he was right and his ideas still remain relevant today. From individual, collective and social level, the human values offered by Kant are relevant. Although critical, they hold considerable importance for humanity at large. Their critique on the society is not based on flawed conceptualization of society. Every aspect of their criticism speaks volume (Habermas). Their critique describes in the most authentic manner, what the human values of this society actually are. The critique offered by them remains useful unless individuals specifically and society at large don’t change their attitude towards life.

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