

Kant on the “Duties of Virtue” —A Response to Alasdair MacIntyre’s Critique of Kant’s Ethics

Ming-huei Lee

Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica
No. 128, Sec. 2, Academia Rd., Taipei 11529, Taiwan
E-mail: lmhuei@hotmail.com

Abstract

In his masterpiece, *After Virtue*, Alasdair MacIntyre criticizes Kant’s ethics from a virtue ethical perspective, making reference to the “ethic of rules,” “rigorism,” “formalism,” as well as his “inadequate conception of human reason.” However, Onora O’Neill, Marcia W. Baron, and Nafsika Athanassoulis point out that MacIntyre’s critique of Kant’s ethics is based on a partial understanding of Kant’s ethical works and suffers from his neglect of Kant’s later work *Metaphysical First Principles of the Doctrine of Virtue* (1797), which misshapes his conception of the “duties of virtue.” This paper analyzes Kant’s conception of the “duties of virtue” with a view to responding to MacIntyre’s critique of Kant’s ethics, and thus softening the differences between Kant’s ethics and virtue ethics.

Key Words: Immanuel Kant, Alasdair MacIntyre, Duties of Virtue, Virtue Ethics