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Christine M. Korsgaard's Conception of
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List of Abbreviations:

AK: Academy Edition

etc.: et cetera, and so forth

cf.: confer

ff.: following pages

gr.: greek

KpV: Critique of Practical Reason (V)

MS: Metaphysics of Morals (VI)

Preface

First and foremost, I want to thank my supervisor Prof. Dr. Pauer-Studer for her support and her patience during this process. I really benefitted from the seminar on morality and agency, held by Prof. Dr. Pauer-Studer, that was to elaborate Christine Korsgaard's book on self-constitution. Given that it was the first time I followed up with Korsgaard's approach on moral philosophy, it was interesting as well as rewarding to debate issues with all of my colleagues. Their presentations, debates, and ideas concerning Korsgaard's account on agency were so helpful to me and finally inspired me to write these pages. I also have to thank all of the speakers from abroad who have been invited to contribute to our talks. It was a pleasure to listen to your lectures that took Korsgaard's conception to a new level and encouraged me to consider the subject in more detail.

“Korsgaard’s book is about self-expression, self-development, and authenticity, and about the kind of consistency that these ideals require“
(Chappel 2010, 432).

Introduction

In my Master's thesis I will try to give answer to the question what it means to be a person of integrity. The objective of my proposal is to answer the question whether integrity is connected to moral agency in a significant manner or not. When considering the moral aspects of integrity, I will refer to Christine M. Korsgaard's conception. Korsgaard's account on integrity says that "[...] some kind of integrity is necessary to be an agent and cannot be achieved without a commitment to morality [...]" (Bagnoli 2017). As a follower of the Kantian tradition, Korsgaard presents a conception of morality with an account on agency. According to her, action is a fact of the human condition, so that we need to act in order to be alive. Human beings are not driven by simple wanting but are weighing their desires against each other. To constitute oneself is to identify with the actions we have chosen to. Whenever we act, we act for the sake of an end so that we finally determine ourselves to be the cause of x, y and so on. In the final conclusion Korsgaard states that we need to act in conformity with universal principles, which constitute the agent as whole and for their part ensure that the action is expressive of the agent's integrity. Her argument that the person of integrity must be organized in accordance with Kant's categorical imperative arguably raises critique. Why is integrity said to be dependent on universal principles? My aim is to frame an answer to that query.

In the second chapter of my analysis I will concentrate on a challenging example that might indicate why there is no chance for us to act with integrity without respect for the moral law within Korsgaard's understanding. While dealing with the issue of identity over time and the problem of changing values, I will refer to Derek Parfit's example of a Nineteenth Century Russian nobleman, that Korsgaard finds very attractive to take as a negative example. Therein, a Russian nobleman, who in his youth is a socialist, binds himself to the commitment to distribute large portions of his inheritance in the future. The problem is that he figures that in future times his "real" socialist self, the one with whom he truly identifies with, will cease to exist. (cf. Parfit 1984, 327)

That is that he already has in mind that he will not be able to keep the commitment to socialist ideals while anticipating that he will become more and more conservative in the future. He decides to bind himself to a legal document that confirms in writing to give the land away. The crucial point for Korsgaard is that the nobleman sees the need for an outer contract instead of relying on his inner commitment to socialist ideals. This leads her to the assumption that he not just fails to live with integrity but also to be an agent. Though this will not provide a satisfactory answer. With respect to the problem of integrity, the question arises whether or not the nobleman's socialist and conservative self are literally different people. How can we ever know whether a person will persist to stay the same over the course of time? Taking into consideration the temporal component, I will refer to Jean-Paul Sartre, who urges that temporality is an organized structure that requires to establish an unbroken continuity within us. Given that we are usually more concerned about our present ideals than about our future or past ones, could it be objected that we can only bind or commit our present self and not all of our future selves by any change of character? (cf. Parfit 1984, 344) Given that we have an idea about the sort of person we want to be, to act with integrity means to act in conformity with certain values and ideals one claims to hold. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to moderate our pursuit of ideals. In the final analysis, we might want to remain the kind of person we observe to be or we might want to be different. (cf. Frankfurt 2004, 171) In light of that, I will focus on the argument for radical freedom, which leads me the query whether or not it is also reasonable to preserve rather than to compromise one's present ideals. When it comes to intertemporal conflicts of value, should we eliminate the assumption that it could be subjectively rational to act on valuable ideals one does not hold now? In reference to the nobleman example, I will discuss the issue of intrinsic value. Are the things we value highly in our lives just a matter of opinion, or are they facts in the world? And finally, can something be good in itself given that it is just needed for something else? These questions seem pressing when

considering the fact that actions of integrity require the reference to valuable ideals.

In chapter three, I will consider reasons and passion in action. The main argument is that what an agent believes, finds reasonable, hopes, or fears, is an indicator for what that agent will do. It seems problematic that there are reasons that apply to agents no matter what their beliefs are. In other words, we all have reasons to act in accordance with moral commands. So, how can we become convinced by what is morally obligated? According to Korsgaard, this question can only be answered in reference to a principle that holds as a rule, come what may. (cf. Chappel 2010, 429) Whether our reasons develop a normative force, consequently depends on the value we place upon ourselves. The norm that governs the action must not depend on any desire of the agent. What is it that brings deliberation to a final conclusion? Many would agree that we tend to be moved by normative judgements. When we reflect on what to do, we make a normative judgement or a normative commitment, which motivates for action. Still it seems questionable that moral properties overcome any opposing desire. I will present two different positions that consider the motivational power of moral properties: Firstly, the hierarchical model of Harry Frankfurt, which states that every action is in some sense the expression of a desire, and secondly, the so-called volitionalist account of R. J. Wallace that refuses Frankfurt's approach. These considerations will be of importance when trying to answer the question how one's values and ideals can find their expression in the agent's actual behavior.

Assuming that integrity involves the agent's perspective on what it is to live well, one could consider that what the agent ought to do depends on reason. Christine Korsgaard argues that moral judgements do not merely depend on reason but on the agent's rational insight. Moral agency is rational agency if, and only if the agent is employing standards for how to reason on practical matters *and* such for what is right and wrong to do. I will try to go into detail about this argument in the last passage of chapter three, while referring to Benjamin Kiesewetter's thesis. He calls for agent relative perspectivism, insisting that the truth

we seek in practical deliberation itself depends on our evidence. In his view it seems irrational not to do what one believes one ought to do. Again, I will refer to the example of the young Russian nobleman as to answer some open questions concerning his reasons for doing or believing something.

In the last chapter of my thesis I will focus on three different conceptions that try to deal with the problem of how we can guarantee to act in accordance with what is important to us. How do the things we care about the most become apparent in our actual behavior? Firstly, I will present Harry Frankfurt's account, which says that when we are trying to figure out how to live, what is guiding us is important to us. Otherwise put, we "[...] are concerned with how to make specific concrete decisions about what to aim at and how to behave" (Frankfurt 2006, 185). This means that we decide for ourselves what concerns us rather than being shaped by outer influences. If we come to see that choice matters morally then we also understand that "[...] the reasons people have for wanting outcomes to be (or sometimes not to be) dependent on their choices has to do with the significance that choice itself has for them [...]" (Scanlon 1986, 180f.) The significance of our lives comes from their being chosen. To act with integrity means to go beyond simple wanting and to recognize the outcome of an intended action as one that we really want.

Korsgaard on the other hand emphasizes the agent's commitments. She says that it is our very "[...] commitments that make us who we are as individuals and give us reasons for caring about our own lives [...]" (Korsgaard 2009b, 208). Since we only pursue things of which we think that they are good, people consider what their life is fundamentally about and then commit themselves to these values. In this section, I will explain Korsgaard's conception of practical identity. She accounts that we want to make ourselves into particular persons, which in other words is to create the role of one of the people we think it would be good to have in the general human story. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 212) Considering the fact that Korsgaard's account involves the psychological aspect that human beings strive to become a unified and coherent whole

will lead me to question whether or not integrity directly moves people to act in desirable ways. In the following passage I will argue for integrity to be a virtue.

Finally, I will present Charles Taylor's account on authenticity. Authentic action means to act in such a way that the action truly represents oneself. In *The Sources of Authenticity* and *Inescapable Horizons*, Taylor states that to constitute oneself is to define what one's originality consists of. My objective is to examine his model of originality and authenticity as to demonstrate its differences to the concept of integrity. Even though both ideals seem to have much in common at first glance, they turn out to be incompatible. In the end, I will try to evaluate the results of my analysis and refer to some open questions.

Chapter 1: Integrity and Agency

The Notion of Integrity

What does it mean to be a person of integrity? Well, this question is not so easily answered. In the first section of this thesis, I will take a look at the different positions concerning the notion of integrity before I will explicitly refer to Christine M. Korsgaard's conception and its roots in Kant's moral philosophy. To this effect, I will analyze the term itself. "Integrity" is one of the most important terms within the field of virtue ethics and perhaps it is also one of the most puzzling. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) Actually, the term turns out to be this elusive, as it is quite multilayered and complex. Starting with some general explications seems to be the best thing to do. We have to ask ourselves the question: What do we mean when we are talking about integrity? Most of us might think of the term integrity while referring to the quality of a person's character. This means that integrity generally is conceived as a character trait that refers to a person's values and ideals. In other words, someone can be called a person of integrity if, and only if the values and ideals they claim to hold are likewise represented in their actions and dealings with others.¹ Within contemporary discussions of moral theory, discourses circle around the question whether integrity is connected to moral agency in a significant manner or not. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) As usual, there are enthusiastic supporters as well as strong opponents of both sides, so that in the end, there are two positions presented within the philosophical debate on what it means to live with integrity. Below, I will emphasize the two positions and examine the differences.

The first one says that integrity primarily is a formal relation one has to oneself, or between different aspects of one's self. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) According to this view, integrity has nothing to do with moral agency in the first place. Much more it is the case that representatives of the latter may judge that others "have integrity" to the extent that they act in accordance with specific values, beliefs, and principles they claim to

¹ In order to improve gender mainstreaming, only the gender-neutral form is used in this text.

hold. This account supposes that someone is an assessable counterpart and person of integrity if it is possible to rely on that someone and to recognize in them a congruency in the psychological sense that their thinking and acting correspond to each other.²

Let us imagine a young woman named Julia who claims to be vegan and consequently has a loathing for any food of animal origin. Julia furthermore believes that she is morally obligated to stand up for animal rights, as well as for sustainability itself and so on. Now if it were the case that whenever I see Julia, she outlines her position and her way of life and makes it clear for everyone to see that she holds the before mentioned values of veganism, then one ought to assume that she acts accordingly to the values and beliefs she claims to hold. But if I, for example, watch her eating a juicy steak by accident, I would have to come to the conclusion that her intentions somehow do not conform to her actions. Consequently, I would not be willing to call her a person of integrity anymore. Instead I would think of Julia's actions as quite particularistic in the sense that she, in this case, simply acts out of the strongest current desire although she was supposed to remain committed to veganism.³ There appears the problem that, on the one hand, Julia seems deeply convinced to live vegan but, on the other, she feels this strong desire for meat from time to time, which she cannot resist. Why do we fail in bringing ourselves to do certain things? "In the grip of an emotion, we do some things quite involuntarily, such as sweating, trembling and coloring up" (Hurtshouse 1991, 65). These are things over which we have no direct control. Though, there are other actions over which we can exercise direct control but which we can also do without

² The crucial point about this position therefore is that we don't have to question whether the mentioned attitudes are good ones or not. Thus, the evaluation of the relation's components plays no role. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) Otherwise we would have to focus on the intended action and ask ourselves whether the latter was directed at anything worthwhile or not.

³ "Particularism" originally stems from the field of political philosophy and in that context describes public sub-zones which seek to enforce special interests against overall interests. In the here named case it refers to the struggle between different mental states. Christine Korsgaard, who I will refer to in more detail later on, uses the term analogous to corruption or hypocrisy, which in that case means the opposite of integrity. She says that all our relations are constituted by moral standards which is why our actions must essentially invoke principles. Otherwise they would always seem particularistic.

realizing that we are doing them, like clenching or unclenching our fists, smiling or frowning, and so on. (cf. Hurtshouse 1991, 65). Others we do intentionally, because we just want to do them, though we do not believe that there is anything good about them. And furthermore, we sometimes do perform actions because we have the belief that there is something good about them but when looking back on those actions, we are not able to understand how we ever could act in such a manner. Representatives of the “non-moral” account of integrity hold that the agent’s strength of will, the particular relation between a person’s intention and their corresponding action, is the core of integrity. What a person believes, desires, fears, and so on is an indicator of what that person will do. (cf. Pitt 2017) Though, can the observation of one single situation indicate whether someone has integrity or not? Is the conclusion not drawn too soon that Julia has no integrity just because she could not resist the desire to have a juicy steak? One should consider the requirement for a person’s strength of will. Concerning this approach, Harry Frankfurt presents an original conception of the will. According to him, the notion of the will is not coextensive with the notion of wanting and choosing and being moved to do this or that. “Rather, it is the notion of an effective desire – one that moves (or will or would move) a person all the way to action” (Frankfurt 2007, 14). The idea of an agent’s will hence is not equal to what an agent intends to do.

“For even though someone may have a settled intention to do X, he may nonetheless do something else instead of doing X because, despite his intention, his desire to do X proves to be weaker or less effective than some conflicting desire” (Frankfurt 2007, 14).

An *effective* desire on the contrary must be one that we accept and with which we can identify, so that the outcome of an intended action is one that we really want. This means that we in a way “disrupt ourselves from an uncritical immersion” and distinguish between first- and second-order desires (Frankfurt 2006, 172). If an agent A wants the desire to X to be the desire that moves them effectively to act, it is not that

“[...] he wants the desire to X to be among desires by which, to one degree or another, he is moved or inclined to act. [...] It is only if he does want to X that he can coherently want the desire to X not merely to be one of his desires but, more decisively, to be his will” (Frankfurt 2007, 15).

Thus, we can state that “[...] someone has a first-order desire when he wants to do or not to do such-and-such, and that he has a second-order desire when he wants to have or not to have a certain desire of the first order” (Frankfurt 2007, 13). Frankfurt therefore concludes that

“[...] one essential difference between persons and other creatures is to be found in the structure of a person’s will. According to that, the significant distinction is that human beings “[...] may also want to have (or not to have) certain desires and motives” (Frankfurt 2007, 12).

This entails that they are able to step back from their motivating attitudes. What they do is to make those attitudes themselves objects of their reflection. (cf. Wallace 2006, 190f., referring to Frankfurt 1988)⁴ Frankfurt insists that human beings are simultaneously engaged in what is going on to detach themselves from it and to observe it from a distance. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 171) According to him, human action has a much richer psychological structure than that of animals. (cf. Wilson 2012) Humans are not just equipped with a distinctive reflexive and volitional capacity but are also provided “[...] with decisive motivations and rigorous constraints as self-conscious creatures” (Frankfurt 2006, 169). Of course, human beings, too, are subject to many conflicting desires. And furthermore, self-conflict is not limited to desire, but also ranges over principles, wishes, values, and commitments. (cf. Cox et al. 2017, referring to Frankfurt 1988) If we think of Julia’s case, for example, then there obviously is a gap between normative thought (having a juicy steak) and normative judgement (live vegan), which

⁴ Wallace refers to Frankfurt’s *Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person*, published in 1988. I am referring to the latest version published in 2007.

allows for akrasia.⁵ Still, the crucial point is that human beings are not satisfied with the answer that their actions are just driven by opaque impulses or mindless decisions. “[...] [W]e are not prepared to accept ourselves just as we come” (Frankfurt 200, 169). Like no other animal, they indeed have the tendency to be heavily preoccupied with thinking about themselves and trying to find out what they are really like. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 169) We “[...] focus our attention directly upon ourselves and practically examine our reflective competence of “self-objectification” (Frankfurt 2006, 171). This leads to the conclusion that “[i]f one simply acted at each moment out of the strongest current desire, with no deliberation or discrimination between more or less worthwhile desires, then one clearly acts without integrity” (Cox et al. 2017). The person only acting on the strongest current desire was in Frankfurt’s words a “wanton”. Developing higher-order attitudes and responses is fundamental to achieving the status of a person of integrity.

Needless to say, that human beings are not alone in having desires or in making choices. It seems to be characteristic of humans solely to “[...] have the capacity for reflective self-evaluation that is manifested in the formation of second-order desires” (Frankfurt 2007, 12). The question arises what these considerations imply for our understanding of integrity? The so-called “self-integration account of integrity” states that to live with integrity is to integrate the various parts of one’s personality, the many conflicting desires and volitions into an “harmonious, intact whole” (Cox et al. 2017).⁶ In Frankfurt’s final analysis, integrity has to be understood as a virtue of taking one’s life seriously in the sense that “[...] a pursuit of integrity involves somehow taking account of one’s changing values, convictions, commitments, desires, knowledge, beliefs

⁵ This gap indicates that intention is not accountable to oughts in the same way believe is. We cannot choose what to believe because of the normativity of belief.

⁶ Anyway, not all who account for integrity as being a formal relation agree with the self-integration conception. Some philosophers find it more important to recognize the fact that integrity merely has to be defined in terms of remaining true to one’s commitments. (cf. Cox, et al. 2017) Bernard Williams, with whom this account is mostly associated, adopts the position that to have integrity is to identify with one’s deepest commitments, which are called ‘identity-conferring commitments’ or ‘ground projects’. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) When faced with only formal conditions on what it is to live with integrity, the problem is that “[...] there appear to be no normative constraints either on what such commitments may be, or on what the person of integrity can do in the pursuit of these commitments” (Cox et al. 2017).

and so on over time” (Cox et al. 2017).⁷ The wholly integrated person finally must be able to bring together various levels of volition to fully identify with them.⁸ It could be argued that the agent must state the reasons on which their values, commitments, and convictions are based. This means that they must give detailed information on why certain values and ideals are worth pursuing. Why should we think of the person of integrity as someone credible, reliable, honest, and genuine in their dealings with others? Moral theorists account that those conceptions of integrity which are reduced to formal relations only, cannot capture the nature of integrity. They conclude, that integrity must refer to morality in a significant manner and that we have to act in accordance with some normative constraints, which on their part tell us what is right and wrong to do. Representatives of this second view state, that the fundamental aspect of integrity is it’s being connected to acting morally.

To act with Integrity

In the following passage I will discuss the moral account on integrity in reference to Christine Korsgaard. Her considerations on moral agency have significant implications for her understanding of what it means to have integrity. Following her conception, agency is morally determined and so is integrity. In other words: We have to act morally if we want to act with integrity. Korsgaard is one contemporary philosopher who attends to the matter of integrity while focusing not just on its relation to the quality of a person’s character but who is first and foremost interested in its connection to moral agency.⁹ Korsgaard sees the key to an adequate understanding of what it is to be a person of integrity in recognizing the fact that to have integrity is to *act* with integrity. She argues that “[...] some kind of integrity is necessary to be an agent and cannot be achieved without a commitment to morality [...]” (Bagnoli 2017).

⁷ Whether or not integrity really is a virtue will be discussed in chapter four, which is about the various realizations of human value. According to Bernard Williams, integrity cannot really be a virtue, as it is not related to motivation as virtues are.

⁸ Frankfurt introduces the term of ‘wholeheartedness’ which describes the never-ending process of integrating our changing values, beliefs etc. into one whole. (cf. Cox et al. 2017)

⁹ Like other modern moral theorists, Korsgaard is primarily concerned to describe morally correct action instead of being concerned directly with virtue and character. (cf. Cox et al. 2017)

We, in a sense, have to put the cart before the horse if we want to understand Christine Korsgaard's conception of integrity. In *The Normative Constitution of Agency*, Korsgaard is asking the question whether or not agency is something that is at least in part normatively constituted.¹⁰ If this were the case, she assumes, the capacity for action would depend on the existence of certain normative relations and on the conformity to the norms in question. (cf. Korsgaard 2010a, 1f.) According to Korsgaard, "the normative question" arises for humans insofar as they are capable of reflecting on themselves and considering their thoughts and desires from a detached perspective (Korsgaard 1996b, 77). When we ask ourselves what we ought to do we take one step back and call our thoughts and desires into question. Just like Frankfurt, she assumes that the distinction between first-and second-order desires enables us to do justice to human agency insofar as a reflective distance allows rational agents to call into question the legitimacy of particular thoughts and desires and to suspend their pull. Deliberation about what to do is to have a will that separates us from our incentives. Thus, the fact that we have a desire, is no reason for acting on it. For the desire to be a reason for action, it must suggest that performing the action would help to reach one or another of our ends. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 175)¹¹ In the final analysis, willing an end involves more than just desiring something. It requires actively choosing or committing oneself to the end rather than merely finding oneself with a passive desire for it. (cf. Johnson/Cureton 2017)

"Because they are reflective, rational agents have ideals about the sort of persons they want to be, so that they can guide their minds and actions accordingly. That is, they are capable of self-governance" (Bagnoli 2016, referring to Korsgaard 1996b and Korsgaard 2008).

¹⁰ This seems to be an infelicitous wording when faced with Korsgaard's account of agency which is not just 'in part' normatively constituted but fully. This wording somehow diminishes her account.

¹¹ Frankfurt insists that the desire which moves us towards action must be one that we accept and which we can identify with, so that the outcome of an intended action must be one that we really want to be an end. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 176) We furthermore really want the intended action to be an end if we either regard the action as good in itself, or if we are performing the action as a means to some further end. (cf. Millgram 2016)

Korsgaard is linking Frankfurt's conception with norms of morality as to take the self-integration account into a moral direction. How are we to interpret this? Moral agency is addressed to people "[...] who are assumed to have this general capacity [of rational self-governance] [...]" (Scanlon 1986, 174 with author's note). The human being's capacity for rational self-governance – or inner self-constraint, as one could also say – means "[...] regulation 'from within' through critical reflection on one's own conduct under the pressure provided by the desire to be able to justify one's actions to others on grounds they could not reasonably reject" (Scanlon 1986, 173)¹² The here mentioned "regulation from within" raises the normative question and points to our reflexive competence which finds its concrete expression in the human being's capacity for resolving the question of what to do, and ultimately represents the last instance of morality. (cf. Wallace 2014) "In practical reasoning agents attempt to assess and weigh their reasons for action, the considerations that speak for and against alternative courses of action that are open to them" (Wallace 2014).

In Korsgaard's view it is evident that the subject of agency requires a normative approach, as „[a]gency can only be understood from a practical and normative standpoint“ (Schlosser 2015). This is why she insists that

“[w]hat makes willing different from merely desiring or wishing or thinking-it-would-be-nice-if is that the person who wills an end determines himself to bring the end about, that is, to cause it. [...] Thus the person who wills an end constitutes himself as the cause of that end” (Korsgaard 2009b, 68).

In other words, Korsgaard insists that to act “[...] is not just to cause an end, but to make yourself into the cause of the end, and so to make yourself into a certain kind of thing that achieves that end” (Korsgaard

¹² Thomas Scanlon herewith presents the contractualist thesis of the process of thinking through what is morally committed and what is not. He says that we should give authority to the contractualist view because we need to justify our reasons against others. (cf. Scanlon on „What is Morality“ at Guelph University 2013, 40:30)

2010a, 15f.). These considerations initially illustrate that a purely formal relation one has to oneself cannot capture the normative aspects of integrity requested by Korsgaard. In her account, integrity is morally determined in the sense that when we consider what we ought to do, we commit ourselves to the action we have chosen to do. We still have to give reasons for why an action is chosen. Korsgaard argues that reasons are derived from principles. She concludes that the will must have a principle. (cf. Korsgaard 1996a, xxvi) Acts and the ends for which they are performed build up an action only if they are bound together by a principle. It is then the content or material of our principles, which determines “[...] what kind of thing we make ourselves into, what kind of cause we are” (Korsgaard 2010a, 18).

To summarize, Korsgaard points out that to live with integrity is to *act* with integrity. Considering that action requires a normative approach, integrity is likewise connected to morality. Integrity cannot be achieved without a commitment to morality in the sense that the person of integrity must act in accordance with certain norms. The basic idea underlying her concept will be discussed in the following.

The Kantian View

Korsgaard’s proposal offers a new interpretation of Immanuel Kant’s moral philosophy. When it comes to her conception of acting with integrity she once more refers to Kant’s view, saying that we need to act in conformity with universal principles that tell us what we ought to do. In the next passage I will examine Immanuel Kant’s position as to show what Korsgaard’s ideas are based on. In *The Doctrine of Virtue*, Kant deals with the question of how we should act, given that we are beings who are self-conscious and need reasons in order to act. (cf. Pauer-Studer 2003, 56) He says that the will represents the motivational character in action insofar as it is our will that expresses our practical capacity for rationality. (cf. Gerlach 2011, 94) Actions conclusively have to be understood as a process of reasoning in terms of deriving the action from

a rule. (cf. Gerlach 2011, 94)¹³ Practical rationality in the Kantian sense is practical as it causes actions in naming rules and principles. These principles themselves, on the other hand, function as reasons for actions. (cf. Gerlach 2011, 98) But this explanation may be a little bit too abstract, so let us put it like this: To do act A in order to promote end E captures an aspect of the practical imperative, namely the one that the laws of our will must be practical laws. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 70) Kant formulates it quite plausible while inventing the so-called “Syllogism of the hypothetical imperative”, which says that someone who wants A must do B.¹⁴ May it be the case that P wants A, then it can be concluded that P does B. Kant reasons that P does B because they want A and because they understand the derivation. This finally leads to the conclusion that there definitively is no action that is not guided by some principle. In summary, the hypothetical imperative, which tells us what to do in order to achieve a certain goal, is practical because rational agents form the corresponding intention to achieve the chosen end E.

In agreement with Korsgaard’s interpretation, Immanuel Kant’s early “dogmatic rationalist” view held that we should comply with hypothetical imperatives because they express what a perfectly rational agent would do. “But the mature Kantian view [...] explains the normative authority of hypothetical imperatives in terms of the commitments that are constitutive of willing” (Kolodny/Brunero 2016).¹⁵

¹³ These rules are hypothetical imperatives which are needed as a means to an end and therefor to satisfy sensory impulses.

¹⁴ With this conception, Kant contributed to combining the two opposite positions of empiricism and rationalism. While empiricists state that actions are driven by emotions, rationalists insist that it is the insights of rationality which control our actions. According to the latter, rationality itself gives reason for action. (cf. Gerlach 2011, 92)

¹⁵ It should be noted that Korsgaard’s aim is to call rational dogmatism into question instead for constructivism. Korsgaard assimilates Harry Frankfurt’s self-integration account and Bernard Williams’ identity view of integrity and takes them in a “constructivist Kantian direction” (Cox et al. 2017). Kantian constructivism in turn accounts for the nature of moral and normative truths, while insisting that these moral ends do not exist independently of our reasoning and of the kind of agents we are. Rather, “[...] moral truths are supposed to guide us only on the condition that we have a corresponding desire to be guided by what is rational” (Bagnoli 2017, referring to Rawls 1980, 343-346/1989, 510-513). Thus, the objects of reasoning are constructed rather than to be recognized as already there. As constructivism focuses on the explanation of practical truths in terms of practical reasoning, reason turns out as a ‘self-legislative activity’ (Bagnoli 2017, citing Kant G4: §2). “[...] [P]ractical reason itself is constructed insofar as its legitimacy and authority are established and instituted by reasoning, rather than by appeal to some facts about the way the world is” (Bagnoli 2017). Moral conceptions such as good and evil are not prior to practical reason but

Regarding this, hypothetical imperatives are necessary for action as they tie our present plans and our future actions together. (cf. Cox et al. 2017)
This is that

“[a] future self must be bound to a project in light of the same principle that illuminated the project’s origin, endorsable in a process of rational reflection parallel to that at work at the project’s origin” (Cox et al. 2017).

Still, hypothetical imperatives are not sufficient since adding practical principles as premises cannot bind us to act. (cf. Korsgaard. 2009b, 67)
“So a conception of practical rationality must contain more than merely the instrumental principle that demands the most effective pursuit of one’s ends” (Pauer-Studer 2007, 84). A Humean means-end reasoning which says that persons have reason to take the most effective means to realize whatever end they desire, is in Korsgaard’s view “[...] anything like a conception of rationality” (Pauer-Studer 2007, 77/81f.). To claim that you have to choose E if you want to achieve the end E must be understood as a constitutive principle for the will, she insists. This means that the instrumental principle functions as an indicator for what is right and valid in practical deliberation: Have we chosen the effective means to our ends? Do we have reasonable beliefs regarding our ends? If some of our ends conflict with each other, are they aligned appropriately? Considering these aspects, Korsgaard describes the principle of instrumental rationality as a part of a “non-Humean conception of practical rationality” (Pauer-Studer 2007, 82). ‘You should take the means to the ends’ consequently is only justified if the mentioned ends do have themselves a special normative status (Pauer-Studer 2007, 84). The instrumental principle therefore can only be normatively effective if

only a result of it. (cf. Bagnoli 2017, referring to Kant C2,5: 62ff.) Constructivism therefore does not seek first principles or objective values on which to ground moral truths. Rather it holds that in forming our beliefs, we are answerable to criteria of correctness that are internal and constitutive of rationality. (cf. Bagnoli 2017)

we know which of our aims we have good reasons to pursue. (cf. Pauer-Studer 2007, 82)¹⁶

“Korsgaard argues that the principle of instrumental rationality cannot stand alone. It is dependent upon a generic conception of rationality that contains normative principles that allow one to determine which of the possible aims are justified” (Pauer-Studer 2007, 82).

Hence, the hypothetical imperative “[...] cannot bind us unless the end to which it points binds us” (Pauer-Studer 2003, 68). Otherwise it would not be explainable how a given means could give a person reason to choose the means if the end to which it points us was not itself something valuable to achieve. The instrumental principle only functions as a binding norm of practical reason if there are additional, independent standards for the assessment of our ends. (cf. Wallace 2014, referring to Korsgaard 1997 and Quinn 1993). It can be concluded that instrumental rationality functions as a normative principle in the sense that it points to an end which is considered as good in itself.¹⁷ (cf. Pauer-Studer 2007, 83) A given means is necessary only relative to one's given ends. We need final ends, whose value is not merely instrumental but rather determines what we have reason to do, in general and in particular. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 186) The question arises what these considerations have to do with integrity?

According to Immanuel Kant, an agent must have the capacity not only to act out of instrumental rationality and therewith due to inclinations, but to act in conformity with the notion of laws of morality. Laws of morality for their part must not be hypothetical and conditional but have to spell out categorical imperatives which are good in themselves instead of being good for something else. (cf. Gerlach 2011) If you would only find arguments for why material values like happiness, welfare and the like should be the highest values, you would unavoidably

¹⁶ “If we accept, however, that practical rationality cannot be end-neutral, then Humean means-end rationality obviously cannot amount to a complete conception of practical rationality” (Pauer-Studer 2007, 79).

¹⁷ I will focus on intrinsic value in chapter four.

end up in an infinite regress. For Kant, you have to find a principle, – a formal, not material one – that underlies your argument. This is why he coincidentally sees the need for a ‘supreme principle of morality’ which allows us to define which actions are morally good and which are not (Korsgaard 1996a, x, citing KpV, AK 04: 392). Considering this account, the person of integrity is supposed to stay true to themselves and to their self-given moral principles. They respect themselves as a person of integrity in the sense that they comply to their moral principles which express their deepest inner convictions.

Kant takes the view that human beings’ actions are always oriented towards moral standards. In *The Groundwork*, he concentrates on the challenge to determine a moral law that tells us what to do. But what reasons do we even have to be moral? The answer to that question cannot refer to morality itself. Saying that it would be morally wrong not to, already presupposes morality. Claiming that being moral is the key to success, luck, or other is not adequate on the other hand as it seems totally disconnected from morality (cf. Scanlon 2013, 17:30). According to Kant, the reasons for being moral do not spring from our desires or interests but from our nature as rational agents. In other words, this is that the agent inevitably experiences “a kind of feeling” which is at best described as respect for the moral law.¹⁸

In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant claims a distinction between the so-called “Doctrine of Rights” and the “Doctrine of Virtue”. Herein he reveals the relations as well as the differences between law and morality. With the aid of the example of a jurist, who sees the law as a criterion for what is legal, Kant wonders how that jurist can ever know if what is legal is also right. On the one hand, there is the juridical law that is needed for a mere normative order of society. It deals with the conditions of outer freedom and enforces it through external coercion. Therefore, the juridical law is called legality. On the other hand, there is the ethical law which distinguishes between right and wrong and is

¹⁸ Kant thinks in this context that “[w]e will have derived moral obligation from a freedom of the will which we have attributed to ourselves only because of the importance we in any case grant to morality” (Korsgaard 1998, xxviii). He admits that we are not always moved by it and that we do not always comply with the moral standards. (cf. Johnson/Cureton 2017)

obligated to a moral demand. The moral law guarantees inner freedom as it is defined by self-given inner commitment, called morality. (cf. Kant MS, AK 06: 381) We commit ourselves to the moral law and therewith ensure to act in accordance with moral principles. What makes an action moral consequently is the compliance to the moral law which on its part tells us what we ought to do.

In Kant, normative reasons and motivational reasons go together. To act in accordance with moral principles has not just to come from something “within” the person but in a way from the whole person. Conforming to him, our will can only be governed by the moral law if we are motivated by it. (cf. Korsgaard 1996a, xxi) If “[...] we are morally motivated, we cannot be moved by any interest outside of morality, for if we do our duty for the sake for something else, we are acting on a hypothetical rather than a categorical imperative” (Korsgaard 1996a, xxvii). It is assumed that a good-willed person acts on certain reasons, and the reason why the action is done is the same as the reason why the action is right.¹⁹ The dutiful person then sees a moral requirement as having the form of a law, so that “[t]he principle of good will, [...] is to do only those actions whose maxims can be concerned as having the form of a law” (Korsgaard 1996a, xv). In other words, acting for the sake of duty is action out of reverence for the moral law.²⁰ In the end there is just one rule, the moral law, that has to be a formal principle, universal, necessary, and sufficient which you give yourself as a general law to justify actions that underlie your argument. (cf. Johnson/Cureton 2016) “So what gives a morally good action its special value is the motivation behind it, the principle on the basis of which it is chosen or in Kantian

¹⁹ Kant says that rightness is a reason that motivates because it points to moral principles which on their part motivate the agent. Moral anti-rationalism according to David Hume’s conception, on the other hand cannot let rightness play a role.

²⁰ Kant argues that acts which are motivated by inclination rather than by duty are no moral acts. This is firstly, because acts that spring from inclination do not express a good will and are contrary to duty. In contrast, if you act for the sake of duty, you act in such a way that inclinations are not an issue in your decision to act. Acts which do express a good will are conclusively acts from duty. Then again, if you act only in accordance with duty, it is possible that your motivation stems from something other than the reference for the moral law. In this case it may be that the motivation just happens to coincide with what duty would otherwise oblige you to do. Kant therefore comes to the result that a good will is a will whose decisions are determined by moral demands.

terms ‘willed’” (Korsgaard 1996a, xii).²¹ In Kant’s conception, the coping with the difficult task of defining a supreme principle of morality leads to the conclusion what principle a person of good will acts on. (cf. Korsgaard 1996a, xii) For this purpose, he emphasizes the subject’s own will which is to recognize the human being’s capacity of giving oneself a law as the only possible source of obligation and normativity. (cf. Pauer-Studer 2003, 2) The moral law finally finds its expression in the categorical imperative with its three formulations: the formula of universality,²² the humanity formula,²³ and the formula of autonomy.²⁴

The categorical imperative as purely formal has no empirical content in itself but determines choice through its form rather than through its matter. (cf. Reath 2010, 31)²⁵ This is that moral laws are

²¹ Thus, the moral worth of an action is not determined by its success or failure but by its underlying principle – the agent’s guiding principle.

²² The first formulation of the categorical imperative, the formula of universality and the law of nature, states that you have to “[...] act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law” (Korsgaard 1996a, xviii citing Kant AK 4:421). By implication you cannot account for a principle that is morally valid only for you and nobody else. It rather is required that you are able to justify your actions against others. Practical rationality in that respect encourages people to avoid making an exception for themselves as responding to things differently from everyone else. (cf. Velleman 2009, 150) People should not choose a principle which only holds for a special situation but are supposed to choose one that can be universalized. A principle therefore is a moral law only if it holds for the will of every rational being.

²³ The humanity formulation of the categorical imperative on the other hand focuses on a different aspect. It says “[...] that we should never act in such a way that we treat humanity, whether in ourselves or in others, as a means only but always as an end in itself” (Johnson/Cureton 2016). But what is it to treat humanity as an end in itself? Kant insists that humanity is not a “relative end” but an “objective end” – or as he calls it, an “end in itself” (Hill 1980, 88, citing Kant G 95 [427-281]). In other words, humanity’s inherent value does not depend on anything outside humanity. It rather means being aware of what makes us distinctively human and to limit our actions accordingly. This is then to respect what we are permitted to do in pursuing our other ends. (cf. Johnson/Cureton 2016) Kant at this point distinguishes between personal ends, which have a price, and ends in themselves, which have dignity and consequently are priceless. This is why humanity as an end in itself has an unconditional and incomparable worth. (cf. Hill 1980, 91, citing Kant G 102 [434]).

²⁴ The third formulation is finally concerned with the perhaps most essential part of Kant’s philosophy – autonomy. Autonomy in Kant’s approach literally means giving the law to oneself. (cf. Rohlf 2016) The autonomy formula phrases that the will of every rational being is a will that legislates universal law. (cf. Johnson and Cureton 2016) And this is because it is our will that makes us identify with the moral principle on which we act, for if you are autonomous, there is no one telling you what the universal law looks like despite of your own rationality.

²⁵ To say that the form of a law is a ground of choice is to say that its necessity and universality, the facts that a principle makes a necessary demand and that all subjects can agree to it, is supposed to represent a sufficiently justifying reason to comply with this principle. (cf. Reath 2010, 33)

objective practical principles of volition and given by reason alone. Kant calls these formal principles practical laws that can be used to defend more specific material moral maxims which on their part are rules an agent holds up as self-given principles. (cf. Kant MS: 1996, 17ff.) As proper formal principles correspond to absolute ends they make certain actions duties as they demand absolute unconditional compliance. Material maxims, on the contrary, are merely relative as they have a generalizing form. Hence, maxims are subjective rules for action and have means-end or calculative structure. (cf. Bagnoli 2016, citing Kant G 4: §2) But still, if a rational being shall imagine one's maxims as universal law, this is only possible in thinking the cause of these principles as a formal and not a material one. Even though "[...] different agents can have very different maxims with regard to the same law", it is a matter of fact that if they are expected to have moral worth they must be generalizable and for their part have unconditional force. (cf. Kant MS: 1996, 20)²⁶ The categorical imperative is not a mere decision procedure to determine what to do. Rather it commands that our actions should have the form of moral conduct. (cf. Korsgaard 1996a, xi)²⁷

Korsgaard takes up this idea and mentions that norms and principles are not just rules and regulations but describe something essential to the mental economy of an active or self-determining being, as they give our actions the form of self-determined-efficacy. (cf. Korsgaard 2010a, 18) In this regard Korsgaard states that

"[w]e make ourselves into agents by following norms that express the essence of self-determined efficacy, and we make ourselves into the

²⁶ In chapter four, I will focus on the here mentioned subjective aspect when considering the private component of reasons.

²⁷ In Kant's understanding, rational arguments take the place of causes of natural phenomena. Just as laws of causation apply for natural events they similarly have to hold for actions, he thinks. But given that in nature an ought would make no sense as nature on the one hand knows no alternatives, and on the other hand has no understanding of laws, the laws of causation cannot likewise hold for actions. (cf. Gerlach 2011, 97) "Actions do have explanatory priority, and are the starting point of an argument used to determine the proper structure of an agent's psychology: We ask what psychological structure an agent must have in place for him to be able to author actions" (Milgram 2016). We explain actions psychologically as someone's reaction to certain circumstances, since actions do not – like happenings do – proceed with rules, but only with a conception of rules. Consequently, maxims prescribe an ought and no must. This "ought" in turn, enforces us towards an end which is the same for everyone.

particular agents who we are by the content that we give to those formal norms” (Korsgaard 2010a, 19f.).

We suppose that without moral principles there would be no differentiation possible between what is right and what is wrong. (cf. Dancy 2013) “So unless there are principles saying which sorts of actions are right and which wrong, none would be right and none wrong” (Dancy 2013). This makes it look as if acting in accordance with the moral law was to apply similar principles to similar cases. “Now if an action is wrong, it is wrong because of certain other features it has – the non-moral features that make it wrong” (Dancy 2013).

Let us try to answer the question why a certain action is chosen and why certain values and ideals are worth pursuing. In accordance with Kant’s explanations, what gives an action its special value is the motivation behind it, the principle of why the action is chosen. Within his conception normative and motivational reasons go together so that the reason why the action is done is the same as the reason why the action is right. Considering that integrity means to act in conformity with values and ideals one claims to hold, we must choose them in a way that we can fully identify with them. In other words, the agent’s values and ideals must represent their deepest inner convictions as to find their expression in self-given moral maxims which have the form of a law. This guarantees our acting in agreement with them in all similar occasions. In short, we have to act in accordance with the categorical imperative if we want to act with integrity.

The Self-Constitutive Account on Agency

In my analysis of Christine Korsgaard’s conception of integrity I first and foremost refer to her latest book on self-constitution. This is why I will emphasize her self-constitutive account on agency, elaborated in the work named above. Therein she explicitly refers to integrity while saying that the function of agency is to constitute and to unify the self. In other words, she insists that actions must build a continuum and relate to each other if they are to constitute the agent as a whole. This is an account

which many would agree to. In line with Korsgaard's view, to live with integrity is not merely to have a coherent life-plan and the courage to realize it, it is to act in accordance with universal principles which "[...] guarantee that action is expressive of an agent's integrity [...]" (Bagnoli 2017). Now let us have a closer look at Korsgaard's conception. In *Self-Constitution. Agency, Identity, and Integrity* from 2009, Korsgaard attempts to ground morality on constitutive features of human agency and herewith presupposes a specific model of the self, the constitutional model. (cf. Schlosser 2009, 1) The book's title already paints a picture of what Korsgaard's latest studies are concerned with: She enters into the normative debate on the matter of agency in analyzing the terms agency, identity, and integrity with respect to the idea of the constitutional model.²⁸

According to this account, to constitute oneself is to construct, develop, and create oneself, and to put oneself together to become a coherent whole. It turns out that those actions which are to make someone a person of integrity may not just be actions of any kind, but self-constituting and self-unifying actions insofar as they, in the first place, are to constitute the agent in the very action and, second, that they are to constitute the agent as a whole. But "[h]ow can you constitute yourself, create yourself, unless you are already there?" (Korsgaard 2009b, 20). Indeed, the first requirement seems a little confusing at first sight. Korsgaard tries to deal with the so-called "paradox of self-constitution" in not just one of her books (Korsgaard 2009b, 41f.). Yet, even though this issue seems to pursue her in some way, she herself feels confident, that it does not exist. In her understanding, the agent is not to imagine as an empty cover that has to be filled a bit at a time. This idea would, in fact, seem quite paradoxical. Rather there must already be an

²⁸ She herewith refers to Plato's conception, which is kind of a political constitution and contradicts the Humean "combat model" (Korsgaard 1999, 1f.). Within Plato's account, the principle of justice is a formal principle of deliberative action and represents the condition of being able to maintain inner unity as an agent. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 179) Plato's principles of justice therefore establish unity just as Kant's categorical imperative is the principle by means of which we constitute ourselves as unified agents. As they both are principles of self-constitution, Platonic justice as well as Kant's categorical imperative are normative standards for action. (cf. Korsgaard 1999, 1) I will refer to Plato's principle of justice in chapter four, when analyzing what justice and injustice do to the soul.

agent in order that this agent can act. But precisely here lies the problem. In *The Constitution of Agency* from 2008, Korsgaard focuses on the paradox and states: “It sounds paradoxical, I know. How can we constitute ourselves, or choose our actions one way or another, unless we are already agents?” (Korsgaard 2008, 1). Well, this argument surmises by mistake that personal identity is something fixed. Korsgaard on the contrary states that being human is always making oneself into a human being. This is exactly what a human being’s life consists of. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 36) To be a person is to be engaged “[...] in the activist of constantly making yourself into a person [...]” (Korsgaard 2009b, 42). It is one of the “inescapable tasks of human life” to carve out a personal identity for which we are responsible (Korsgaard 2009b, 24). Is it just the idea of gradation on the one hand and the concept of unification and wholeness on the other that seems so paradox? The question is how Korsgaard combines these two aspects in a plausible way. (cf. Kallhoff 2015, 147)²⁹

Korsgaard’s starting point is the claim that the way we choose constitutes who we are. For you to be human is to have no choice but to choose to regard yourself as an agent.

“Human beings are condemned to choice and action. Maybe you think you can avoid it, by resolutely standing still, refusing to act, refusing to move. But it is no use, for that will be something you have chosen to do, and then you will have acted after all” (Korsgaard 2009b, 1).

Our identities are constituted by our choices in action in the sense that when we act, we act for the sake of an end we want to achieve. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 41) “What this means is that you constitute yourself as the author of your actions in the very act of choosing them” (Korsgaard 2009b, 20). Whenever we choose to do X we at the same time commit ourselves to X and we consequently conceive ourselves teleologically as the first cause of that certain end. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 129)

²⁹ I will concentrate on this query in more detail in chapter two, which deals with identity over time and the problem of changing values.

“If when we act we are trying to constitute ourselves as the authors of our own movements, and at the same time, we are making ourselves into the particular people who we are, then we may say that the function of action is self-constitution” (Korsgaard, 2009b, xii).³⁰

We already know that to constitute ourselves is to identify with the actions we have chosen to do. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 1f.) Choice involves the power to consider what we shall do in ways not laid by the desire we are passively subject to.³¹ We are the bearers of our choices, our values, our movements, and our personalities. We ourselves decide how we want to live. Being the authors of our actions is claiming a certain movement as our own. (cf. Korsgaard 2010a, 2)³² Within Korsgaard’s account, the self is not a mere bundle, but a holistic system which is organized into a psychological unit.

“The actions which are most truly a person’s own are precisely those actions which most fully unify her and therefore most fully constitute her as their author. They are those actions that both issue from, and give her, the kind of volitional unity that she must have if we are to attribute the action to her as a whole person” (Korsgaard 2008, 102).

The function of action consequently is to constitute and to unify the self. (cf. Schlosser 209, 2)

³⁰ Talking about the here mentioned function of action refers to Aristotle’s teleological claim. According to Aristotle, an object is an object because of its “*ergon*” which is its teleological organization (*telos*, gr. *Τέλος* = an ultimate object or aim). Korsgaard claims that living things are designed to maintain and to reproduce themselves in their own form and therefore have to conceive themselves teleologically as the first cause of a certain end. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 41) This is so because when we act, we act for the sake of an end that we want to achieve. Actions consequently are performed for their own sake and not for what they bring about. After Korsgaard, there is a teleological notion within the world, namely “[...] one that we deploy when we conceptualize the world in a way that makes it possible for us to act in it” (Korsgaard 2009, 89). Hence, she draws the conclusion that if the function of action is self-constitution, then the teleological conception describes the idea of a constitution of life.

³¹ In chapter three, I will refer to this issue and look on R. Jay Wallace’s theory of agent causation while focusing on the motivational power of moral properties.

³² The issue of moral responsibility and incorporation will be discussed in the following chapter.

“What makes an action attributable to a person, and therefore what makes it an action, is that it issues from the person's constitution, and therefore from the person as a whole, rather than from some force working on or in the person” (Korsgaard 1999, 1).

Agency is supposed to be a movement that constitutes the agent as a whole. This is that actions must build a continuum and relate to each other if they are to constitute the agent as a whole. If it were the case that actions would not relate to each other, then actions could neither stand for coherent agency nor represent persons of integrity. The ideal of self-constitution finds its expression in our choices in action which for their part point to the idea of unification of the self. “[...] I must conceive myself as a unified agent both at a time and across time because I have only one body with which to act” (Shoemaker 2016, referring to Korsgaard 1989). Unity is a practical requirement of being an agent in the sense that it makes “a doer of deeds and a thinker of thoughts” (Shoemaker 2016, referring to Korsgaard 1989).³³

What makes Christine Korsgaard's way of thinking Kantian is the view that the only way to produce genuine reason is to accept the categorical imperative as a “basic standard for rationality in thinking and acting” (Bagnoli 2017, referring to Rawls 1989, 498-506).³⁴ Because of our capacity for reflective consciousness, we act on the basis of reasons. But whether those reasons develop a normative force, depends on the value we place on ourselves as human beings. As we are aware of the grounds for our actions, this capacity at once creates the need for a law to govern our actions, and places us in a kind of relationship of authority over ourselves. (cf. Korsgaard 2010a, 5) Nevertheless, the question arises time and time again why we should even think of the moral person as a person of principles. Korsgaard claims that personal identity must be

³³ Unified agents identify with their choices in action and insert themselves into the causal order. This is the case because the things a unified agent values highly in one's life are the ones that guide one's actions. “Practical reasoning thus favors developing intrapersonally coherent and interpersonally shared values” (Velleman 2009, 150).

³⁴ Korsgaard sees the key to an adequate understanding of Kant's philosophy in recognizing the fact that he conceives morality as an internal standard, demanding that morality must come from inner self-constraint.

organized in accordance with Kant's categorical imperative in order to constitute a well-functioning and well-unified agent. This is an argument that raises critique. (cf. Schlosser 2009, 2) Why is the categorical imperative constitutive for unification?

For Korsgaard, our actions could never build a continuum without principles to act accordingly to. Self-given principles function like instructions and therefore guarantee our acting as a whole. The moral law is the one thing that enables us to put ourselves together while asking ourselves whether we acted in accordance with the categorical imperative or not and then regulate our behavior accordingly. This means by implication that we find it necessary to conform to normative standards which work within us as psychological forces. (cf. Pauer-Studer, 2014/15)³⁵ For Korsgaard it is therefore evident that "[...] our moral principles are supposed to hold us together in any environment, any circumstance, come what may. They are supposed to be universalizable, and it is up to us to choose them that way" (Korsgaard 2009b, 103).

To recapitulate, Korsgaard calls for integrity to be connected to moral agency in a significant way. She insists that we have to act in accordance with certain moral principles which indicate what we ought to do in general and in particular. Self-given moral principles must be generalizable and have unconditional force as to represent those values and ideals the agent really identifies with. Arguing for integrity to being a formal relation one has to oneself, is not properly representing the nature of integrity. If, and only if our actions are oriented towards the moral law we are able to act in conformity with our deepest commitments and avoid getting distracted from them because of outer influences. In short, within Korsgaard's self-constitutive account to act with integrity means to constitute the agent as a whole, which can only be achieved by acting in accordance with universal principles. The question arises whether or not there is a possibility for someone to be a person of integrity despite

³⁵ Choosing always means to have a will that separates you from your incentives. This is then also why choosing already implies the meaning of reasoning. Given that reason alone can determine the will, it is our will that makes our identity. When we are reasoning about final ends, we are endorsing a principle. This is because willing an end is committing oneself to taking the means to that end. In other words, willing an end is an inward and volitional act of prescribing the end along with the means it requires from oneself. (cf. Korsgaard 1997, 245)

acting on universal principles. I will focus on this question in the following chapter.

Chapter 2: Identity over Time and the Problem of Changing Values

The Young Russian Nobleman Example

In this chapter I will concentrate on a concrete but difficult example as to illustrate the problem of identity over time and that of changing values which is directly connected to the issue of integrity. Recognizing the fact that integrity, however, has to be conceived as acting in conformity with one's deepest inner commitments raises the question of how we are to deal with physical and psychological changes that we go through? In chapter nine of *Self-Constitution*, Korsgaard deals with the issue of identity over time and the problem of changing values – a subject that is quite controversially discussed. It seems obvious that a person's today's personal phase, that is all their values, ideals, convictions, and so on, is mentally very strongly connected with their yesterday's personal phase, but only very weakly or not at all with her personal phase from ten years ago. (cf. Brink 2011, 368) The temporal component involved within the debate on personal identity, seems particularly difficult to handle.

When it comes to integrity we need to act in a way that is rationally endorsed both by oneself and one's future self. We therefore have to acknowledge the entitlement to temporal neutrality which is to say that an agent should have equal concern for each stage in their life. (cf. Brink 2011, 368) Korsgaard attends on the matter while focusing on a challenging example which is borrowed from Derek Parfit's book *Reasons and Persons*. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 185ff.) He therein describes a young Russian nobleman during the nineteenth century, who is a socialist in his youth. Facing his socialist ideals, which probably are basic values one could require from a socialist, like for example the endeavor to promote equality, justice, and solidarity, as well as a fair economic and social order, the nobleman binds himself to the commitment to give the estates that he will inherit in several years to the peasant. He does so in signing a legal document which confirms in writing to give the land away and which can only be revoked by his wife's consent. (cf. Parfit 1984,

327f.) For that matter, the nobleman turns towards his wife and furthermore adds:

“[...] ‘I regard my ideals as essential to me. If I lose these ideals, I want you to think that I cease to exist. I want you to regard your husband then, not as me, the man who asks you for this promise, but only as his corrupted later self. Promise me that you would not do what he asks’” (Parfit 1984, 327).

Let us leave it at this section for now. We see that Parfit’s example gives special credit to the interplay of integrity and interaction while considering the identity “[...] both of the maker of some promise, and of the person to whom it is made” (Parfit 1984, 326f.). In reference to Korsgaard we may add, that interaction does not just refer to the idea of interacting with others but also to that of interacting with oneself. In other words, for the person who must constitute her own identity, interaction literally means interacting with oneself. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 202) That is that they must reflect their sense of who they are and consider what concerns them. Interacting with oneself therefore is to determine what to care about and what kind of person to be.

Now the main character within Parfit’s story at present time values himself under the description of being a socialist. He finds his life worth living and his actions worth undertaking under the description of being a socialist, a Russian citizen, and a loving husband. (cf. Bagnoli 2016, citing Korsgaard 2009b, 20) His socialist ideals are the ones he mostly cares about and point to the question how things ought to be from the perspective of a socialist. The ideal of socialism not only governs his choices, but also turns out to be the source of special obligations against himself, his friends, family, and his wife.³⁶ Given that he deeply identifies with his socialist ideals he at the same time considers them as being fundamentally constitutive for his life. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) Deliberating about what it is to live well, he figures that being a socialist

³⁶ In chapter four, I will focus on Korsgaard’s conception of practical identity which explains in more detail why the things we mostly care about name obligations.

is the only thing really worth caring about. This is also why he tries to continue being what he is, namely a socialist.

The nineteenth century Russian seems to think that a “[...] loss of his socialist ideals represents a substantial change, which he does not survive. This is what is supposed to justify his wife in regarding his bourgeois successor as ‘another’ who cannot revoke the nobleman’s commitment” (Brink 2011, 370). Thus, we have to consider that if his wife made the promise, she might regard herself as not released from the latter even if her “future” husband would ask her later to revoke the document. In this case, it might seem to her as if she has obligations to two different people. To do what her future husband asks for would then seem to be a betrayal of the young man whom she gave her promise. (cf. Parfit 1984, 327) The question is whether socialist and bourgeois self are equally parts of the nobleman’s life or literally different people? (cf. Brink 2011, 371)

Let us imagine we could skip twenty years ahead and see that the nobleman for whatever reasons actually turned into a conservative. One day, he just by accident meets one of his former best friends. They both stop and start a conversation about everyday things. Hence, while they are talking about how they have done the last years, why they didn’t make it to see each other for such a long time and so on, they are both reminded of old times. The close friend, who always wanted, but never has been brave enough to become politically active in a way the nobleman was, now admits that he has always admired the nobleman for his socialist ideals and his sense of justice. He finally asks whether he really gave the land to the peasant like he once said he would. But when his interlocutor says with a frown that he is done with those silly ideals from earlier times and that he finally came back to his senses, the former friend faces him quite surprised and puzzled. Now, what would you say: When they finally both turn to go, will the former friend really think of the nobleman as “another”?

Physical and Psychological Continuity

In the following section I will try to answer the question of how we can ever know that a person is the same in the past as they will be in the future. Otherwise put, my objective is to deal with the query what changes a can person undergo without ceasing to exist. (cf. Korfmacher 2016) One answer to these questions refers to the physical or “bodily criterion”. (cf. Olson 2016) Representatives of this account state that a person at one time is the very same as a person at a later time if both have the same living material body. They therefore insist that we simply are our bodies and that our personal identity consists in our bodies’ identity.

To demonstrate the importance of the bodily criterion, we might refer to an interesting thought experiment, provided by John Locke. He states in advance that even if this never was or ever will be the case, it seems at least conceivable that a person’s soul may be transplanted to another one’s body. Within the example, the soul of a prince, with all its princely thoughts, is transferred from the body of the prince to the body of a cobbler, after the cobbler’s soul had departed. (cf. Nimbalkar 2011) Locke assumes, that after the exchange it might seem as if the cobbler was the same person as the prince since he now carries all of the prince’s characteristics. In other words, it might be suggested that the cobbler somehow turned into the prince. But Locke states that this conclusion is drawn too soon. If we take into account the outsider’s perspective, then the cobbler still has to be considered the cobbler, and not the prince. Now why is that? Given that the prince’s thoughts, feelings, and habits have nothing in common with those of the cobbler, the princely soul will have to find its way in the social environment of the cobbler. Regarding this, it seems obvious that the prince cannot live the life of a prince in the cobbler’s body anymore. If he would, then everyone around him would think of him as crazy, given that his outer appearance still ensures that other’s conceive him to be the cobbler. Any elitist affected behavior would therefore seem more than inappropriate. Locke concludes that the princely soul will make no different person out of the cobbler, since the seeming prince will have no other way than to come to terms with the life of a cobbler. (cf. Borchers 2012, 114ff.)

Let us leave this thought experiment as it stands. In ordinary life, our bodies are constantly subject to a number of changes. From childhood to adulthood there often are quite few similarities when it is about bodily attributions. Basically, every cell of our body is being renewed during one's life course. So, can we ever speak of someone having "the same body" over a period of time?

Franz Kafka's novel, called *The Metamorphosis* allows us to consider the agent's inner perspective. Kafka's story is about Gregor Samsa who one day wakes up to find himself transformed into an insect. While initially feeling quite ashamed and frightened about the new situation, he gets more and more comfortable with it and finally gives up human characteristics over the course of time. But even though he finds himself in a completely different body – namely that of an insect, Gregor Samsa, until the end, considers himself the same person. (cf. Kafka 2005, p.1ff.)³⁷ How can we explain this?

We have to admit that Kafka's story deals with a quite fictional issue once again. Nonetheless, it leads us to question that the bodily criterion alone could name the constitutive conditions of personal identity over time. Gregor Samsa's inner perspective indicates that we also define who we are by referring to our character, our knowledge, our values, memories, habits, or convictions, which have nothing to do with our bodily characteristics in the first place.³⁸ In the final analysis, there seems to be something more than just the identification in terms of bodily attributions. To put it differently, there appears to be a recognizable difference between the physical and the psychological continuity of character. (cf. Parfit 1984, 202 ff.)³⁹

Derek Parfit considers some ontological as well as epistemological aspects concerning this issue. In *Reasons and Persons*, he states that we can know that a person is the same in the past as they

³⁷ Within Locke's example, the princely soul would also consider itself the prince even though he lives in a new body, if only he was not coerced by "social pressure" to live the life of a cobbler.

³⁸ While the cobbler cannot consider himself the same, given that he carries princely characteristics after the exchange, Gregor Samsa considers himself the same even though he finds himself in the body of an insect. He still carries all of his former memories, habits etc.

³⁹ I differentiated these two approaches in terms of the outer (Locke's example) and the inner perspective (Kafka's novel).

will be in the future by assuming the theory of psychological reductionism. He characterizes identity with regard to psychological continuity and connectedness. According to this view, what matters is not personal identity itself but to what extent a person's actual psychological states are causally related to their former psychological states.⁴⁰ Connectedness in other words, is defined in terms of psychological interaction and dependence which sometimes is expressed in maintaining beliefs and desires. Those beliefs and desires on their part ensure some degree of psychological similarity. (cf. Brink 2011, 368) The psychological-continuity criterion therefore states that a person A at one point in time is the very same as a person B at a later time if the person at the later time is psychologically continuous with the person at the earlier time. Personal identity in this account, consequently, is about continuity and connectedness of mental states. But given the fact that a person's beliefs and desires often do change over the course of time how can we guarantee psychological continuity?

These considerations lead Parfit to associating himself with other metaphysicians, who claim that the precondition for psychological continuity is self-consciousness. He says that persons are self-conscious mental beings who know introspectively about their identical continuity over time. (cf. Cuypers 1998, 3) They are not substances that continue to exist while holding different properties but know themselves as the same thinking beings in different times and places and reflect their sense of who they are. (cf. Brüntrup/Gillitzer 1997, 4 and Uzgalis 2012) What persons do, is to moderate their beliefs, desires, ideals, and interactions while consciousness remains the same. (cf. Brink 2011, 371) Parfit therefore concludes that "[...] even if someone's character radically changes, there is continuity of character if these changes are deliberately brought about [...]" (Parfit 1984, 207).⁴¹

⁴⁰ "Psychological state" means our mental capacity expressed in our thoughts, feelings, hopes, fears, and so on. In his famous split-brain cases, Parfit separates personal identity from what matters in survival. He concludes that identity is gradually determined. (cf. Brüntrup/Gillitzer 1997, 5)

⁴¹ In Gregor Samsa's case changes in character are deliberately brought about, since he decides to give up human characteristics while he is faced with the new body of an insect that calls for some different traits. His changes in character consequently represent a natural response to his experience. (cf. Parfit 1984, 207)

Other than the metaphysician's account, John Locke's answer to the question of what makes a person at two different times one and the same, refers to a person's memory. Locke sees in memory an important source of how a person conceives one's own character, values, and potentialities. The example of former experiences, which is one version of the psychological criterion, therefore says that there is a chain of person-stages which are connected by episodic memory.

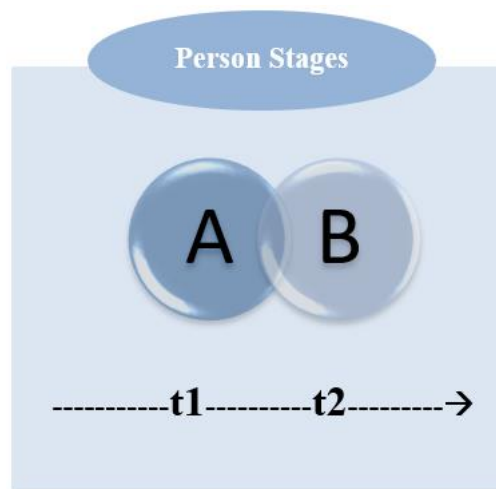


Figure 1

Having a current memory of an earlier experience is one sort of psychological connection in the sense that the experience causes the memory of it. (cf. Olson 2016) A person B at the time t2 therefore is identical with a person A at the time t1 if B at t2 is connected with A at t1 by a continuous chain of memory. Person A at t1 and person B at t2 are directly connected by memory if B remembers something that A did. If this is the case, then A and B are person-stages and therefore psychologically continuous with each other.⁴² The so-called “commemorative continuity” argument concludes a series of overlapping pieces of commemorative connectedness. This is to say that person A at

⁴² Joseph Butler called Locke's interpretation a misconception in the sense “[...] that the relation of consciousness presupposes identity, and thus cannot constitute it” (Nimbalkar 2011 citing Butler, 1736). In other words, he says that it is not my memory of an experience or action that makes it mine, rather, I remember past experiences or actions only because they are already mine. This is why I can only remember my own experiences and actions. “So while memory can reveal my identity with some past experienter, it does not make that experienter me” (Nimbalkar 2011).

t1 and person B at t2 are the same person if A is memory-continuous with B.

Locke finally states that a person's current memory of an action or experience from former times creates a constitutive relation between the two person-stages (A at t1 and B at t2). Thus, two personal phases are unified in one person if the later phase (B at t2) includes a personal experience that was part of the former phase (A at t1). (cf. Cuypers 1998, 4) In different terms, a person, understood in their temporal coherence is nothing more than their chains of experiences linked in the causal order. (cf. Brüntrup/Gillitzer, 1997, 3) As it is our memory that guarantees the mental bundle, empiricists who speak in favor of the commemorative continuity argument therefore hold that memory is a constitutive condition for personal identity over time.

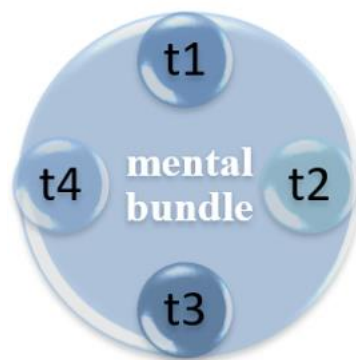


Figure 2

Let me put it into one sentence how the issue of integrity is connected to what has been said about physical and psychological continuity: To act with integrity means to act in such a way that our actions build a continuum and unify the self. It therefore seems invalid to allow for physical and psychological disparities which could lead to the anticipation that one's present and one's future self are literally different people. The question what changes a person can undergo without ceasing to exist is striking, especially when dealing with the nobleman example.

How a Whole should view its Parts

The question remains how a whole should view its parts. (cf. Brink 2011, 369). Admittedly, each of the before mentioned positions has its possible

stumbling blocks. I would suggest to return to the nobleman example and try to give answer to the question whether socialist and conservative self are literally different people.

Considering the bodily criterion, it seems questionable to assume that the nobleman's conservative future self will have the same living material body than his present one. In any case, we can imagine that the nobleman's older self somehow grew apart from his younger one's body. Not only is it very likely, that the older one's hair might already have turned into grey or that he is even wearing a toupee, it might also be that he just reached such an old age because of the successful implantation of a healthy donor kidney. However, it remains an open question whether or not our human being's continued existence needs to involve the continued existence of its components. (cf. Parfit 1984, 203) Presupposing some natural changes in physical appearance that are common practice to us, we might surmise that the nobleman's future conservative self will have the same living material body than his former socialist self.

When it comes to psychological continuity, things get even more difficult. Parfit urges that there is continuity of character if changes are deliberately brought. Those could be for instance changes that are simply the consequence of growing older or those that merely represent the natural response to certain kinds of experiences. (cf. Parfit 1984, 207)⁴³ Does the nobleman not rush to hasty judgements when presupposing some radical changes in character that he believes won't be deliberately brought about? A person's future character, one's values, ideals, and convictions, are very much influenced by the decisions one makes on the road of life. (cf. Brink 2011, 371) It seems to be a matter of fact that the nobleman "[...] is not the unwitting victim of psychological manipulation by another" (Brink, 2011, 371). It seems "[...] quite unlikely that a radical young socialist will turn into a complacent bourgeois regardless of the decisions he now makes" (Brink 2011, 371). In light of that, we may assume that the nobleman goes wrong in supposing the possibility of him losing some or all of the properties that make up his individual

⁴³ We should furthermore keep in mind that such external "signs of the time" do not arise overnight but almost always occur continuously.

identity and acquiring new ones. He just misunderstands the persistence question. (cf. Olson 2009, 73) But what does that mean exactly?

The nobleman regards himself as a mere passive spectator. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 75) In other words, he is not willing to recognize his foreseen conservative future attitudes as something that will be initiated by himself but rather as something that will just happen to him unintentionally. (cf. Wallace 2001, 58) Unlike Gregor Samsa who just wakes up one day to find himself transformed into an insect, the nobleman's foreseen changes in character are not something that will just happen to him. It rather seems that he will be acquiring conservative attitudes quite intentionally. Of course, someone could argue that there is always the possibility for some life changing event to happen without any prior warning. It is a matter of fact that even if changes do occur passively, persons mostly change continuously and actively in considering what kind of person they want to be? People have the capacity to actively cause changes that concern themselves or to react actively to passively occurring changes. Do we have a reason to anticipate that the nobleman's future self will not be able to name convincing arguments for the decision to give up on socialist ideals and turn towards a more conservative way of live? Let it be supposed that he has good reasons to desist from socialist ideals, then the nobleman would have to accept the fact that socialist and conservative self simply have different ideas about what it is to live well. This was then to understand that his potential future conservative self somehow grew apart from socialist ideals that once were so important to him.

While for the young Russian nobleman it seems unthinkable to live a conservative life, his potential conservative future self, who then will have moderated all of his former beliefs and ideals quite radically, might not be able to understand why he once was so convinced by socialist ideals. It seems problematic that socialist and conservative self are not able to explain the ideal of the other. Still, unless he will become irrational or weak in the future, the nobleman's conservative self will know introspectively about his identical continuity over time. (cf. Cuyper 1998, 3) That is to conceive himself as the same thinking being

in different times and places. (cf. Brüntrup/Gillitzer 1997, 4 and Uzgalis 2012) Present and future psychological states will be causally related to each other.

Finally, how about the commemorative continuity argument? It can be concluded that unless he will be suffering from a disease like Alzheimer's or dementia, that the nobleman's future conservative self will remember to have been a committed socialist in the past, even if that won't seem plausible to him anymore. We may therefore conclude that socialist and conservative self are equally parts of the nobleman's life, so that his future self will be memory continuous with his present self as well. In the end, socialist and conservative self are literally the same.

Dealing with the Persistence Question

The temporal component still represents a challenge while considering the following: Even if the nobleman's conservative self remembers that some ideal or conviction did play an important role in his life once upon a time, he, in twenty years' time, will nevertheless have turned away from the values and ideals from earlier days. That is that he will focus on what is important to him now. Both, socialist as well as conservative self cannot do otherwise than be more concerned about one's current desires, values, convictions, and so on. We must not neglect the fact that one's nearer future self, the one of tomorrow or of next week, is being conceived as more closely connected with one's present self than with that in 20 years' time or that of 20 years ago. (cf. Brink 2011, 368) Thus, we have to give rise to the challenge of how we are to deal with the persistence question. When it comes to integrity, how are we to bind our past, our present, and our future self to become a coherent whole?

According to the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, we are faced with the very incapacity to recognize ourselves, to constitute ourselves as being what we are. (cf. Sartre 1993, 62) In Sartre's understanding, we have to design ourselves into the future and to call our actions into question over and over again. In *Being and Nothingness. An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, he explains that we find ourselves confronted with an undetermined future. This undetermined future just

causes us to be born anew. (cf. Sartre 1993, 64) To put it in Sartre's words, I in a sense await myself in the future even though this future remains out of my reach. So, I "[...] make an appointment with myself on the other side of that hour, of that day, or of that month" (Sartre 1993, 36). The future represents us as being another, in the sense that we find ourselves in another physical, emotional, social, or other position. (cf. Sartre 1993, 127)

Anyhow, we must not understand the future as a 'now' which is not yet. (cf. Sartre 1993, 125) According to Sartre, we have to approach temporality as a totality which dominates its secondary structures. (cf. Sartre 1993, 107) This means that the present becomes the former future of the past while denying that it is this future. The original future on the other hand, is not realized. It is no longer future in relation to the present, but it still remains future in relation to the past. (cf. Sartre 1993, 145) We have to recognize the nihilating structure of temporality. (cf. Sartre 1993, 34) In other words, this is to acknowledge the fact that „[t]he Future (!) is not, it is possibilized" (Sartre 1993, 129).

"The three so-called 'elements' of time, past, present, and future, should not be considered [...] as an infinite series' of 'nows' in which some are not yet and others are no longer but rather as the structured moments of an original synthesis" (Sartre 1993, 107).

Sartre herewith illustrates that I am already there in the future in the sense that there already is a relation between my future being and my present being. (cf. Sartre 1993, 31) Temporality consequently turns out to be an organized structure which demands to establish within us an unbroken continuity of existence in itself. (cf. Sartre 1993, 440). But how can we ever guarantee this unbroken continuity, synthesis, or wholeness, if we have to recognize ourselves as living things that develop, grow, and change at the same time?

In reference to the nobleman's example, is it not reasonable to expect ourselves to moderate our pursuit of ideals? It is. Since rational

agents have ideals about the sort of persons they want to be, they constantly call into question their behavior, being aware of the possibility to radically reinvent themselves. (cf. Margalit 2012, 79) Identity has to be understood as an activity, not as something fixed. This is why we have to recognize the human being's potentiality for the future. Taking one's life seriously therefore is to take into account one's changing values, convictions, desires, and so on over time. To design ourselves into the future for its part requires that we make our actions themselves objects of our reflection. (cf. Wallace 2006, 190f., referring to Frankfurt 1988) That is to acknowledge our capacity for rational self-governance and that for reflective self-evaluation. In other terms, we have to ask ourselves whether or not we still can identify with the actions we have chosen to do. When asking ourselves whether or not we want to remain the sort of person we observe to be, we may come to the conclusion that we want to live a more dignified life from that moment on. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 171 and Cox et al. 2017). This is also why it seems wrong to bind oneself to a legal document instead of remaining true to one's inner convictions. If I understand her correctly, then Korsgaard's argument is that binding oneself to an outer contract is to deny one's own freedom and to refuse the possibility to constantly reinvent oneself. It is just synonymous to depriving oneself of humanity. In the end, the nobleman's decision of making a contract results in the negation of human nature, which is to grow and to design oneself into the future.⁴⁴ These ideas then again find their expression in the argument for radical freedom, which says that recognizing human nature is to understand all human beings as living things that develop, grow, and change. It also entails the requirement to respect others because of their potentiality for the future, which indicates the human being's ability to turn towards a morally better life. (cf. Margalit 2012, 79/122ff.)⁴⁵ But then it seems just fair to remark that in ordinary life, human beings do not just develop for the better but also for

⁴⁴ According to Immanuel Kant, the only things that justify that we owe respect against human beings are those that are valuable in themselves. (cf. Margalit 2012, 78) We may achieve the aim to respect humanity in other human beings and in ourselves by means of the absolute obligation contained in the categorical imperative. (cf. Margalit 2012, 44f.)

⁴⁵ In fact, we usually do respect people because of their former and present actions not because of their potentiality for the future.

the worse. If radical changes in character are always possible, then we may also surmise to develop in such a way that has some negative effects on our character traits.⁴⁶

“It might happen that a person believes at one time that he will at some future time accept general evaluative principles – principles about what things constitute reasons for action – which he now finds pernicious. Moreover, he may believe that in the future he will find his present values pernicious” (Brink 2011, 369f., citing Nagel 1979, 74).

Could it be objected, that we can only bind or commit our present selves and not all of our future selves by any change of character? (cf. Parfit 1984, 344) In other words, could it be assumed that making choices now that preserve rather than compromise one’s present ideals could help to avoid many intertemporal conflicts of value? (cf. Brink 2011, 371) I would argue that it cannot be that easy.

If we think through Parfit’s example once again, we see that instead of taking the temporal component seriously, the nobleman is just interested in the „Here and Now“, conceiving identity as something fixed, as it were. He reasons that socialist ideals are good and honorable and that they can be best preserved by signing a legal document which confirms in writing to stay true to the ideal that is most important to him. He is well aware of the possibility to make up one’s mind about what is really important in life and so decides not to rely on his inner conviction to socialist ideals but to bind himself to an outer contract which functions as a contractual safeguarding that will leave no other option than to remain true to socialist ideals.⁴⁷ These considerations somehow give us a negative impression. But why is that? It seems that a legal document just guarantees that the nobleman’s socialist ideals will come to light once more due to the act of charity when giving the land to the peasant. This

⁴⁶ The nobleman does not dare to hope for a more praiseworthy way of life but presupposes a personal change towards some less praiseworthy attitudes. This is because he already values the ideals he now holds highly.

⁴⁷ If we remind ourselves of Kant’s distinction between juridical and ethical law, we see that the nobleman enforces socialist ideals through external coercion.

entails that from the outer perspective, the nobleman will still be considered to be convicted to socialist ideals in reference to one single action observed. But must the outwardly socialist necessarily be an inwardly socialist, too?⁴⁸ John Locke's and Franz Kafka's examples, each showed, that inward and outward perspective might differ. A legal document may ensure an outwardly conviction to socialist ideals in future times due to the act of generosity. The inner perspective, on the other hand, underlines that the nobleman's conservative future self, in actual fact, is not convinced by socialist ideals anymore. Socialist ideals are no longer the ones he truly identifies with. In effect, that is that he already will have called into question his previous socialist way of life. He will not be happy about the donation the contract enforces upon him, secretly wishing that he could keep the estates for himself. The outer contract therefore will not force him to remain true to socialist ideals really but only to perform a certain action that is associated with socialist ideals.⁴⁹ Finally, the nobleman cannot avoid an intertemporal conflict of value while binding himself to a legal document. Making choices now for the future consequently does not lead to psychic unity but to disintegration. It leads to a division of ourselves which generate threat to our well-being and finally must arrive at integral disorder. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 171)

For someone to be true to oneself, on the other hand, is to be true to all of one's reasonable ideals. It is to weigh all of one's foreseen future attitudes against one's current ones, instead of being selectively attentive to present attitudes only. (cf. Brink 2011, 374) We have to call to our mind that to live with integrity is to integrate the many conflicting desires and volitions, and the various parts of one's personality, into one intact whole. In other terms, it is to bring together one's changing values, convictions and so on, so to fully identify with them. (cf. Cox et al. 2017)

⁴⁸ Korsgaard calls into question Plato's analogy, assuming that the person who is inwardly just will be outwardly, too. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 182)

⁴⁹ Firstly, it seemed that the content of his desire (staying socialist) and that of his belief (legal contract will preserve socialist ideals) would go together. That was then to assume that his propositional thoughts might explain his behavior. Now we see that it cannot explain anything. (cf. Alvarez 2016) In chapter four, I will focus in more detail on the rationality of beliefs.

Incorporation

In the following paragraph the focus will be on integrity with respect to the issue of taking responsibility for one's own character. To act with integrity requires the integration of the various parts of one's personality, one's changing values and convictions into one coherent whole. In other words, the person of integrity has to incorporate their thoughts and movements as to take responsibility for their actions. Is it also legitimate to deny the responsibility for one's actions? Referring to the nobleman example I will try to answer this question.

Not to be willing to identify with one's future attitudes means not being identified with one's own mind. While arguing that living a conservative life could never be good or honorable, the nobleman reasons that his foreseen future attitudes will not belong to him anymore. That is that he won't take the responsibility for his future actions. In his view, conservative ideals do – just like abnormal thoughts – not represent what he truly thinks, feels, or wants. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 174) Instead of incorporating his foreseen future thoughts and movements, he externalizes them, pushes them away, and seeks to prevent them from being effective at all. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 174) He represents those future attitudes as merely that of a tyrant which have no legitimate authority for him. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 174) While considering his future attitude as something that will have happened to him, not as something that he will have done intentionally, he therefore figures that it must be inclinations that move him. The logical consequence is not to recognize his responsibility for inclinations and tendencies that are only against his will. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 173) In the nobleman's eyes, conservative thoughts and feelings are merely items that happen to appear. They are not expressions of himself. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 173) As a consequence, he reasons that when they move him, he will be basically passive. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 173)⁵⁰

Now, when we are trying to arrive at an understanding of the conditions under which an action or attitude belongs to an agent, we want to get to know whether or not an agent is properly given credit or

⁵⁰ In chapter three I will concentrate on reasons and passion in action.

criticism for that action or attitude. (cf. Scanlon 2002, 2) Aristotle and other philosophers argue that we become responsible persons through shaping our character by voluntary choices and actions, which for their part cause a development of habits of discipline that make our character what it is. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 172) They conclude that we have caused ourselves to become the way we are by our voluntary behavior. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 172)

Harry Frankfurt on the other hand insists that becoming responsible for one's character is not a matter of producing that character but of taking responsibility for it. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 172) "What counts is our current effort to define and to manage ourselves, and not the story of how we came to be in the situation with which we are now attempting to cope" (Frankfurt 2006, 172). To put it differently, to become a responsible person is not about the story of how we came in a certain situation, but about the effort to define and to manage ourselves. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 172) This is why Frankfurt comes to the conclusion that developing higher-order attitudes and responses to oneself is necessary to become a responsible person. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 172) In short, a person has to identify with certain of their own attitudes and dispositions, whether or not it was they who caused themselves to have them. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 172) We come to identify with those attitudes, when we incorporate them and make them our own. Now, what does Korsgaard's position look like?

Korsgaard for her part argues that we are truly responsible only if we literally create and constitute ourselves through our choices in action. (cf. Schlosser 2009, 4) Moral responsibility therefore involves "[...] the capacity to grasp and apply the reasons expressed in moral principles and to control what one does by the light of one's moral understanding" (Wallace 2001, 149).

"Korsgaard's view thus involves two important and importantly different types of unity in understanding the basis for moral responsibility. First, there is the varied set of impulses and motivations that I am in a position to coordinate and integrate and which must be

coordinated and integrated before I can take autonomous action, and then there is the subset of such impulses and motivations that I have endorsed and given the authority to represent me in action” (Schechtmann 2014, 61).

In view of the nobleman example, his decision of making a contract includes to give the responsibility to his wife. (cf. Korsgaard 1996b, 207) It is now *her* who is responsible for making him keep the promise. The boundaries seem blurred. The subject of the planning is and yet is not the same self that is going to perform the act in the future. While the nobleman is the subject of the planning, his wife is the subject that is going to act in the future while making him keep the promise (not revoke the document).

“So the Russian nobleman’s wife cannot operate as an independent person free to choose now between two loyalties. She has unified her will with that of her husband, and therefore she is committed to making the decision together with him. But how can she do that, when he cannot make the decision together with himself?” (Korsgaard 2009b, 187)

These considerations lead to the conclusion that the agent has to be described as responsible for their actions, while recognizing them as a subject of planning about present and future actions. This is to say that their planning now for the future requires that the subject of the planning is the same self that is going to perform the act in the future. (cf. Searle 2001, 91) It can therefore be concluded that if there is an agent A who is conscious, persists through time, and operates with reasons under the constraints of rationality, and who furthermore is capable of deciding, initiating, and carrying out actions under the presupposition of freedom, then A is responsible for at least some of its behavior. (cf. Searle 2001, 95)⁵¹

⁵¹ Wallace states that what we identify with has to be understood “[...] as a condition of authentic and autonomous agency and not as a condition of freedom or moral responsibility” (Wallace 2001, 191).

In reference to the example of the young Russian nobleman, Korsgaard concludes that he lacks normative competence and the power of reflective self-control. In the end, he wrongs not only himself but also his wife. (cf. Wallace 2001, 144 and Chappel 2010, 431)⁵²

To summarize, integrity does not only mean taking responsibility for one's own character, it also depends on the behavior of others. This has been evident when looking at the relationship between the nobleman and his wife. The main character attempts to give the responsibility for his future actions to his wife, which turns out to be a failure, on the other hand. He still will be responsible for his future behavior and additionally is for bringing his wife in such an unpleasant situation.

Intertemporal Conflicts of Value

At this stage, I will discuss the problem of intertemporal conflicts of value. This analysis seems to be of interest with regard to our values and ideals that build the core of integrity. Our values and our inner convictions indicate what we believe we ought to do or not to do. How are we to deal with the fact that our values and ideals might change over the course of time? Do we have to eliminate the adoption that it could be subjectively rational to act on valuable ideals one does not hold now? Well, it could be subjectively rational to act on valuable ideals one does not hold now, provided that we understand the agent's beliefs as the reasons they have, not in virtue of what they judge now, but in virtue of what it would be reasonable for them to judge now if they gave the matter due attention. (cf. Brink 2011, 372)

"That is, the younger Russian nobleman could take the attitude that the older Russian nobleman, in making the predicted decision that he has a reason to keep the estates, is making a claim with normative standing. And the younger Russian nobleman could conclude that if he and his future self are to act together he must take that claim into account" (Korsgaard 2009b, 203).

⁵² It seems as if the nobleman could never be willing to give answer to the question how he turned from a socialist to a conservative since the answer to that question would represent a justification for his radical turn which he would have to acknowledge.

In other words, the nobleman would have to bring all his foreseen future attitudes “[...] within the scope of his deliberation now. Instead of just anticipating his older self’s ‘reactionary’ attitudes, he [...] [would have] to look into the content of those attitudes [...]” (Chappel 2010, 431 with author’s note). But then the question is whether or not the nobleman’s belief in socialist ideals is just a matter of opinion. (cf. Searle 2011, 121) If he would have to decide whether his future conservative attitudes are justified or not, “[...] and so whether it is his future conservative self, or his present socialist self, who is right, and hence the self that he really identifies with, not in some imagined future, but right now in the actual moment of his deliberation”, then this was to decide whether socialist or conservative ideals are the ones really worth caring about (Chappel 2010, 431). The question remains whether the things we value highly in our lives represent subjective psychological states or objective facts in the world. Anyway, to act on the worthwhile ideal, not on the worthless, is a claim about the reasons “[...] one has in virtue of the fact about the situation whether one is in a position to recognize them or not” (Brink 2011, 372).

The young Russian nobleman for example judges that conservative attitudes are bad as such or at least that it is better to have socialist ideals than to have conservative ones. While deliberating about what it is to live well, he reasons that socialist ideals are valuable and good to pursue. This leads him to think that the maintenance of socialist ideals is just desirable. Acting in accordance with socialist ideals will make him to give large portions of the estates that he will inherit in several years to the peasant. Socialist ideals, for their part, result in helping others due to generosity. Since being generous, in turn, is good and honorable in the nobleman’s view, giving the estates away seems just as desirable to him. He therefore signs a legal document that prevents a change of character towards conservative attitudes which would thwart his aim to donate in the future. Again, he argues that “[i]n the case of corruption, Before’s ideals are valuable, whereas After’s are not” (Brink 2011, 372). But to say that socialist ideals are better than conservative

ones does not give answer to the question how one should pursue socialist ideals as part of the good life.

Many moral philosophers claim that the strategy to ask “what is better than?” leaves out the answer to the question what is good (cf. Schroeder 2016). The central aspect that most philosophers have been interested in, therefore is that of intrinsic value. They question how we can tell whether or not something has intrinsic value. This is that they want to know what things are good. Now, suppose that we were to ask the young Russian nobleman whether it is good to have socialist ideals. Focusing on Parfit’s specifications, we may assume that he would answer “Yes, of course it is.” If we then were to go on to ask him why it is good to remain true to socialist ideals, he might answer that it is good to stick to socialist ideals simply because it is good to preserve equality, solidarity, a fair economic order, and so on. If we then would come to ask him why it is good to stand up for equality, solidarity, and all the things he mentioned, he might say that equality, solidarity, a fair economic order, etc. are values which are honorable and just good to pursue. (cf. Zimmermann 2015) Though, at some point he would have to put an end on the question because we would force him to recognize that

“[...] if one thing derives its goodness from some other thing, which derives its goodness from yet a third thing, and so on, there must come a point at which you reach something whose goodness is not derivated in this way, something that ‘just is’ good in its own right, something whose goodness is the source of, and thus explains, the goodness to be found in all the other things that precede it on the list” (Zimmermann 2015, referring to Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* 1094a).

It will be at this point that we will have arrived at intrinsic goodness. (cf. Zimmermann 2015) To recapitulate once again, the chains of „in order to“-sentences are limited and usually have a limited number of components. Consequently, there is an ending point, which is linked to an end in itself. (cf. Rawls 2012, 64) On the other hand, if something is good just because of its relation to something else, is it only its relation to

the other things that is non-instrumentally good? In other terms, is the thing itself good only because it is needed in order to obtain the relation? (cf. Schroeder 2016) It also seems quite reasonable that something can be non-instrumentally good in virtue of its relation to something else. (cf. Schroeder 2016) That is that instrumental rationality can be normatively effective if we know which of our aims we have good reasons to pursue. (cf. Pauer-Studer 2007, 82) We already know that final ends put us in a position to determine what we have reason to do. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 186) Taking the means to the ends, consequently, can be justified if, and only if the ends we are referring to, themselves have a special normative status. To will an end therefore is at least to take that end to be good in some sense, so that there is a reason for pursuing that end. As a consequence, the outcome of an intended action must be one that we really want to be an end which is that we either regard the action as good in itself, or that we are performing the action as a means to some further end. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 176 and Millgram 2016) There is mutual agreement that what is right or wrong to do has at least in part to do with the intrinsic value of the consequences of the action performed. (cf. Zimmermann 2015)⁵³

Now let me outline what has been said within this chapter in a few sentences. The young Russian nobleman example raised some important questions, especially with regard to the temporal component. To act in accordance with specific values, beliefs, and principles one claims to hold, requires the persistence through time. The fact that values and ideals do change over the course of time cannot be avoided but poses certain challenges. In light of that, to act with integrity means recognizing one's changes in character and taking responsibility for it. The conscious dealing with the three elements of time – past, present, and future – seems indispensable. To act with integrity requires to integrate the various parts of one's personality, one's changing values and

⁵³ At this point, we would have to come back to our question-and-answer-game. In the nobleman's case, this was to argue that the consequences that result from the actions performed by socialist convictions are valuable whereas those that result from conservative convictions are not. In his understanding, socialist ideals will lead to helping others whereas conservative ideals at worst will result in greed.

convictions into one coherent whole. The person of integrity consequently has to incorporate their thoughts and movements and take responsibility for their actions. The question remains whether or not we need to act in accordance with universal principles as to ensure acting with integrity. According to Korsgaard, the answer to that query must be “Yes”. She argues that what gives morally good action its special value is the motivation behind it. In chapter three I will consider Korsgaard’s normative interpretation of choice, which might lead to a better understanding of her argument. In addition to Korsgaard’s argument for the motivational power of moral properties, I will emphasize some other important questions, that circle around reasons and the passion in action. This seems of importance, since, when we ask ourselves what it means to be a person of integrity, we at the same time are concerned with the question what we ought to do. Given the fact that to act with integrity requires that the agent’s deepest inner commitments must find their expression in their actual behavior, my central questions are: What motivates for action? What rationalizes an action? Do we have reason to do what we believe we ought to do? How do internal and external reasons go together? What makes us believe that we ought to do something? Let me start with Korsgaard’s normative account that might give answer to the question how moral properties overcome any opposing desire.

Chapter 3: Reasons for Action

The Motivational Power of Moral Properties

The issue of moral motivation that lately received more attention by moral philosophers is much discussed. Korsgaard's normative account takes for granted that the motivational power of moral properties does not depend on any desire of the individual. (cf. Rosati 2016) She presumes that we are motivated by moral judgements which for their part "[...] effectively influence and guide how people feel and act" (Rosati 2016). She says that when we consider what to do, we make a normative judgement or perhaps a normative commitment, or that we furthermore have a settled intention or make a choice which in the end leads to action. Korsgaard argues that If I chose to do X, I have most reason to do X since X is, all things considered, good. The set of ends consequently are all things that the agent desires. This is that normative judgement and choice are said to be the same thing. But why is that? How do moral properties overcome any opposing desire? Korsgaard points to the human being's capacity "[...] to work out the implications of the commitments contained in one's existing subjective motivational set [...]" (Wallace 2014). In associating herself with reason-internalism, she claims that all reasons for action are grounded in the agent's antecedent desires or prior motivations.⁵⁴ This is that

"[...] which motives an agent could come to have through sound deliberation depends on which motives he already has, because deliberation merely conveys an agent from one motive to another: it requires a motive as input in order to yield a motive as output" (Velleman 2009, 119).

Consequently, the agent should be motivated to do what they believe will contribute to the furthering of their prior motivations. (cf. Alvarez 2016)
The crux of the matter turns out to be Korsgaard's normative

⁵⁴ A reason for A must be able to be someone's reason for A in a particular situation and so to explain A. But since it could not explain A if it could not motivate, a reason for action must be able to motivate. Korsgaard herewith calls for a connection between normative status and motivation.

interpretation of choice. It states that when we think about what to do, we deliberate practically as we in the first place are concerned with action and secondly, are directly moved towards action. (cf. Wallace 2014) In short, moral and instrumental principles are binding in the sense that we necessarily commit ourselves to act in accordance with them through the normative act of choice. (cf. Wallace 2001, 3, referring to Korsgaard 1996b and Velleman 1998/2000) This can be best understood while focusing on her normative view of the so-called volitionalist account. Korsgaard therewith insists that the agent's commitment to the moral law ensures the reference to a principle of reasoning that binds all rational agents.

“To choose to do x is, in effect, to accept a ‘law’ or normative principle specifying, in general terms, which features of one's circumstances give one reason to do x. This stance commits one, in turn, to complying with a supreme unconditional principle of practical reason, the Kantian moral law, as well as with principles of instrumental reason instructing one to take necessary means to one's ends” (Wallace 2001, 3, referring to Korsgaard 1996b).⁵⁵

The universal principle therefore allows for objectively grounding moral obligations on reasoning.⁵⁶ In other words, “[...] our activity as practical reasoners, goes together with a certain way of understanding ourselves as equipped with the power to choose what we shall do independent of the given desires that are objects of reflective consciousness” (Wallace 2006, 163). This is that we test our loyalties in agreement with the principle of universality, which commits us to morality. (cf. Bagnoli 2016, referring to Korsgaard 2009, 22) Is it not true that “[e]ven if it was entirely clear what the moral law commands, it would remain an open question how important it is for us to obey those commands[?] We would still have to

⁵⁵ Wallace insists that motivating reasons admit a psychological interpretation, whereas normative reasons do not. Korsgaard on the other hand accounts for a motivational dimension of normative reasons. According to her conception, “[...] believing is an essentially normative act” (Wallace 2011, 10).

⁵⁶ Within Korsgaard's account, moral obligations finally are requirements of practical reasoning. (cf. Bagnoli 2016)

decide how much to care about morality” (Frankfurt 2004, 186 with author’s note). How does morality get grip on us? Let us recall Korsgaard’s arguments. She declares that our capacity for reflexive consciousness at once creates the need for a law to govern our actions. (cf. Korsgaard 2010a, 5) This means at the same time to locate morality in the agent’s rational insight. Korsgaard agrees with Kant who says that the reasons for being moral do not spring from our desires or interests but from our nature as rational agents. In the end, we reason in ways that are in conformity with the values we commit ourselves to and we get clear the values that define who we really are by working out the meaning and implications of our commitments. (cf. Wallace 2014, citing Taylor 1985) Though, what is it that brings deliberation to a final conclusion? To give answer to this question, I will present two fundamentally different positions which I, in some parts, already integrated into the debate. Korsgaard, to some extent, is adopting ideas from both of the accounts. Nevertheless, she tends to conform to one of the authors in substantial parts. The first account demonstrates that every action is in some sense the expression of a desire. This argument refers to Harry Frankfurt’s distinction between first- and second-order desires which I already mentioned within my work. Second, I will elaborate R. J. Wallace’s conception which disagrees with Frankfurt in saying that desires cannot bring deliberation to a final conclusion. Let me start by explaining Frankfurt’s viewpoint.

According to Harry Frankfurt’s approach, making decisions implies our distinctive reflexive and rational capacities (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 176).⁵⁷ The person who wants the outcome of an intended action to be one that they really want to be a goal, must come to identify with the

⁵⁷ Harry Frankfurt says that we are free if what we want is what we want to want. “Now sometimes [...] the desire that motivates a person as he acts is precisely the desire by which he wants to be motivated” (Frankfurt 2006, 177). That is the situation in which we are doing exactly what we want to do, so that we are acting freely, given the parallel between free action and free will. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 177) “We will freely if what we want is what we want to want – that is, when the will by which we want our action to be moved” (Frankfurt 2006, 177.) In other words, there is a match between free action and free will, if the desire that governs someone, is in agreement with what she wants to be her governing desire. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 177) But in reference to the nobleman example, we see that the temporal component further complicates the issue. The nobleman wants to donate in the future and he wants himself to want to donate in the future. But this is to disrespect his future reasons as reasons.

desire. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 176)⁵⁸ Supposing that every action is in some sense the expression of a desire to perform an action, moral judgements are said to be conative states which represent the agent's desires, volitions, or other. On the one hand, there are desires of the first order that are motivationally efficacious states. The object of a first-order desire therefore is some state of affairs that one might bring about through action. The object of a second-order desire on the other hand, is also a state of affairs, but rather a state that involves one having or not having some first-order desire. (cf. Scanlon 2002, 13)⁵⁹ The reason the agent is acting on therefore is either itself a desire or grounded in other desires. (cf. Searle 2001, 124) Practical deliberation within Frankfurt's view, concerns and projects structured deliberation by giving material for reasons for action. When we come to identify with a certain desire and really want that desire to be a goal, we are morally motivated to act in accordance with that certain desire. We therefore might come to the conclusion that, according to Frankfurt's conception, actions with which we can identify represent actions that are expressive of the agent's integrity. But how about those actions we cannot come to identify with?

In *Normativity, Commitment, and Instrumental Reason*, R. J. Wallace criticizes Frankfurt's conception and points to the fact that not everything a person does can be something the person fully identifies with, given that not every act is reflected but rather intentional. In his understanding, the constitutional hierarchy of desires and the distinction between first- and second-order desires involved, distorts our understanding of the complexities of human agency. (cf. Wallace 2006, 191f.) In ordinary contexts of deliberation, he argues, agents do not primarily think about their first-order desires themselves but concentrate on the activity they find themselves attracted to.

He, same to Korsgaard, refers to volitionalism. (cf. Wallace 2006, 149) The volitionalist account represents the active states of an agent's intentions, choices, or decisions, which for their part bring deliberation to

⁵⁸ That person finds herself in the problematic situation whether to identify with a desire or to try to suppress it. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 176)

⁵⁹ We already know that the fact that someone has a desire does not give her a reason for action. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 175)

a final conclusion. Within Wallace's account, there is the world with all its attractions and then there is an agent who needs to be able to judge. The question whether or not we have reasons to do X, requires an evaluative reply. Given that what desires we have is a descriptive matter, desires cannot settle deliberative questions. (cf. Mitova 2011, referring to Wallace 2006, 193f.) In other words, desires cannot lead to a final conclusion. Wallace's argument consequently is that we are not motivated by desires since they do not represent moral judgements and consequently do not give answer to the question what the agent believes to be good. Intentions, choices, and decisions on the other hand, belong to the class of attitudes that are sensitive to judgements. The agent's evaluative judgement or conclusive reason affirms or rejects attractions in the world. (cf. Wallace 2014) Motives are not desires but intentions, decisions and choices, Wallace claims. Given that these are active states, they must be independent of our given desires. While given desires are not directly under our control, they are not classified as voluntary phenomena. If volitional motivations were the function of given desires on the other hand, then they would not necessarily be responsive to deliberation. Furthermore, if they were not necessarily responsive to deliberation, rational action would be impossible in face of temptation, which is no different to following your incentives. In turn, if rational action were impossible, we would not be morally accountable. Though, since we are morally accountable, volitional motivations must necessarily be responsive to deliberative judgements, and not be the function of desires. (cf. Mitova 2011)

A second argument points to the fact that deliberation about what I ought to do presupposes that I have control over (not) doing what I ought to do. If volitional motivations were the functions of given desires, then they would not be under my control. But if they were not under my control, they could not serve in deliberation about what I ought to do. Volitional motivations cannot be the function of desires. (cf. Mitova 2011) Wallace therefore assumes that motivations, must be divided into two different kinds of states. Firstly, there are "[...] motivations with respect to which we are basically passive, such as conscious desires,

inclinations, yearnings, and various longer-term dispositions” (Wallace 2006, 149). Those given desires are not responsive to deliberative judgements about what we ought to do. There obviously is “[...] no genuine requirement to take the means that are necessary for realizing ends that one merely happens to desire” (Wallace 2001, 2). And second, there are “[...] motivations that are not merely given, but that directly express our activity as agents, such as choices, decisions, and intentions to act” (Wallace 2006, 149). Those are objective normative states, responsive to deliberative judgements. (cf. Wallace 2001, 3) As a result, Wallace concludes that not everything that a person does intentionally is something that the person fully identifies with. (cf. Wallace 2006, 190) “Some of the actions we perform [...] do not reflect our values, priorities, and sense of what is really important in life” (Wallace 2006, 190).⁶⁰

To summarize, Korsgaard, Frankfurt, and Wallace agree that those desires to which we are basically passive are not expressive of an agent’s integrity. That is because we are not in the position to decide whether to act on them or not. In the end, we do not identify with them. Still, in Wallace’s understanding, it does not seem adequate to differentiate between first- and second-order desires. He argues that Frankfurt is wrong in surmising that second-order desires always point to what the agent believes to be good and desirable. It is just that the agent could come to but not always does identify with desires of the second-order. A hierarchical model consequently cannot capture the complexity of practical deliberation, Wallace holds. Only those desires that represent the agent’s evaluative judgement, their intentions, choices, and decisions which for their part affirm *or* reject attractions in the world, are the ones that bring deliberation to a final conclusion and indicate what the agent really identifies with.

Though, where is Korsgaard in all this? On the one hand, Korsgaard recognizes the hierarchical model, presented by Frankfurt as highly important. She insists that the distinction between first- and second-order desires allows for a reflective distance as to call into question the

⁶⁰ Wallace therefore states that the question what to identify with has to be understood “[...] as a condition of authentic and autonomous agency and not as a condition of freedom or moral responsibility” (Wallace 2006, 191).

legitimacy of particular thoughts and desires and to suspend their pull. On the other hand, she calls for the motivational power of moral properties. In other terms, she calls for our being motivated by moral judgements, moral commitments, and choices. The action that is expressive of the agent's integrity therefore points to their inner commitment, to certain values and ideals of the agent. To recapitulate, Korsgaard's normative view says that when we consider what to do, we make a normative judgement which in the end leads to action. If it is true that we tend to be moved by normative judgements, akrasia turns out to be impossible. And furthermore, if it was impossible to violate the motivation requirement, our conception of self-determinism no longer applies, in the sense that if we cannot choose not to act, we are not in control of rational activity. (cf. Wallace 2001, 48)⁶¹ In the following pages I will try to go deeper into the topic while emphasizing what rationalizes actions. To proceed further with Korsgaard's outlining, I will ask whether or not moral agency depends on reason.

Internal and External Reasons

Christine Korsgaard argues for moral rationalism and states that deliberation about action generates the appropriate intention insofar as the agent is rational. In other words, we necessarily commit ourselves to complying with the principles of practical reason which can give rise to motivation, and therefore can play a primary role in the explanation of action. (cf. Wallace 2014)⁶² This could lead to the assumption that moral action depends on reason. Korsgaard insists that moral action does not merely depend on reason. A proper understanding rather locates morality in the agent's rational insight. (cf. Pauer-Studer 2003, 7) Moral action is rational action as it is expressed in two activities. Firstly, we act rational as we are employing standards for the adequacy of the evidence and

⁶¹ "For an agent to be correctly said to have norms, she must be able to break those norms. But if those norms are constitutive of reasoning, it is unclear how one can break them by reasoning" (Bagnoli 2017).

⁶² How the practical reason view works:

- I) If we are moral agents, then we are deliberating practically.
- II) If we are deliberating practically, we are capable of choice.
- C1) As we are practically reasoning, we are also capable of choice.
- C2) We meet the condition for agency.

validity of arguments and herewith construct a system of belief. And secondly, we determine our actions by employing standards for the goodness and of what is right and wrong to do. Moral action, Korsgaard concludes, is guided by the principle of the Golden Rule. (cf. Korsgaard 2010b, 24.)⁶³ But what does the principle of the Golden Rule tell us about the belief whether something can be a good reason to act on or not?

In *Reflections on the Evolution of Morality*, Korsgaard takes issue with those scientist who claim to have found the rudiments of morality in the animals capacity of cooperative action and criticizes, that they do not pay attention to the importance of normative self-governance, which is „[...] the capacity to be motivated by the thought that you ought to do it“ (Korsgaard 2010a, 1).⁶⁴ Consequently, we do not blame animals for what they do, because of their lack of reasoning. That is, that an animal’s instincts are relative to her environment, so that they are just not able to do something other than react. In light of that, Korsgaard stresses the point that “[...] other animals normally can resist an impulse to act only under the influence of a stronger impulse. But rational animals can resist the impulse to act under the influence of the thought that the action is wrong” (Korsgaard 2010b, 24).⁶⁵ We have to recognize the fact that “[a] rational animal is aware of the grounds of her beliefs and actions, of the way in which perception tends to influence her actions” (Korsgaard 2010b, 24). This is that human beings have the ability to decide whether forces that incline to believe or to do certain things are good reasons or not and determine what to believe and act accordingly. (cf. Korsgaard 2010b, 23) Again, Korsgaard points that moral agency is rational agency in the sense that we are employing standards for how to reason on practical matters and such of what is right and wrong to do. In *A response to Parfit*, she furthermore adds that we actually have to ask practical questions since “[...] we want to know how to shape reality – we want to

⁶³ The Golden Rule is the principle of treating others as one would wish to be treated oneself.

⁶⁴ In reference to Frankfurt’s account, Korsgaard says that first- and second-order desires “[...] must be separated in our analysis of action in order to capture the difference between being motivated, which requires self-determination, and being caused, which does not” (Korsgaard 2009, 107).

⁶⁵ Korsgaard states that this of course still is a causal influence but that it does not threaten our freedom.

know which actions to perform, and how to solve certain problems” (Korsgaard 2009, 9). But how do we ever know whether or not we have reasons to do what we believe we ought to do? To put it differently: What rationalizes an action?

In general, deliberation in action involves the power to actively choose what to do. This is that agents assess and weigh the reasons that speak for and against alternative courses of action against each other. In other words, they are capable of responding to reasons. (cf. Wallace 2014) In *Rationality in Action*, John Searle deals with this issue and states that “[i]t is tempting to think that all reasons are facts” (Searle 2001, 102) But this anticipation quickly turns out to be false. “A fact is a reason only relative to the fact it is a reason for, and it is a reason for that fact only if it stands in an explaining relation to that fact” (Searle 2001, 102). When we ask why someone acted the way they did, we want to be provided with an interpretation. (cf. Davidson 1963, 691) Such an interpretation must take into account “[...] some of the agent’s beliefs and attitudes; perhaps also goals, ends, principles, general character traits, virtues or vices” (Davidson 1963, 691). Reasons for action turn out to be propositionally structured entities which may be facts in the world “[...] such as the fact that it is raining, or they may be propositional intentional states such as my desire that I stay dry” (Searle 2001, 103). However, we come to see that a reason for action is a consideration in favor of doing or believing something. In the case of action, the agent makes a reason effective by acting on it, while in the case of belief the agent accepts the belief because of a reason they also accept. (cf. Searle 2001, 112).

If we want to give answer to the question why someone acted as they did, we consequently need to see something the agent saw, or thought they saw, in their action. This is then why actions have explanatory priority and determine the structure of an agent’s psychology.⁶⁶ Reasons rationalize a person’s action or belief only if they lead us to see “[...] some feature, consequence, or aspect of the action the

⁶⁶ Korsgaard focuses on the agent’s psychology so to guarantee a connection between agents and their actions. Otherwise we could not hold the agent responsible for what she does.

agent wanted, desired, prized, held dear, thought dutiful, beneficial, obligatory, or agreeable” (Davidson 1963, 658). Those are the actions we do for a reason. This is to say that we do them in order to do or achieve something we believe to be good and desirable. (cf. Hurtshouse 1991, 65)

Rationalizing an action or belief while thinking about something as dutiful or obligatory for example, points to the fact that reasons for action can also be propositionally structured entities that are neither facts nor intentional states. Entities of this sort would be obligations, commitments, requirements, needs, or others. (cf. Searle 2001, 103) In light of that, Searle assumes that “[i]t is this combination of features, the existence of the motivators and the recognition of the facts that bear on the case, that gives people the illusion that somehow all reasoning is means-ends, or belief-desire reasoning” (Searle 2001, 123f.). But this confuses external and internal motivators, he informs. “Although a reason that motivates an action can always explain it, a reason that can explain the action is not always the reason that motivates it” (Alvarez 2016).

Now, where do we have to draw the line between external and internal reasons? External reasons are normative reasons which name objective justifications for action from a third-person point of view. They justify actions while naming arguments that speak in favor of the intended action. This is why normative reasons can be best understood in terms of justifications. So, “justifying” reasons make it right for someone to act in a certain way. (cf. Alvarez 2016) The fact that it is raining, or the fact that one has an obligation, is an external reason for action. This aspect alone cannot help us yet to see something the agent saw or thought they saw in their action. “In order for such an external reason to function in actual deliberation, it must be represented by some internal intentional state of the agent” (Searle 2001, 115). Intentional phenomena for their part are subject to constraints of rationality and represent a belief, a desire, etc. which shows how an action is rational and how justified. (cf. Searle 2001, 108) Internal reasons are subjective justifications from a first-person perspective which explain the agent’s action. They point to the deliberative point of view – some considerations that motivate the

agent towards action. In our example, they recognize their obligation or they believe that it is raining. (cf. Searle 2001, 115)

We must come to see that citing mental states as reasons for action is highly problematic for it sometimes is the case that a person has a false belief. That is that they believe something which is not true. To say that a person's "[...] belief may be a reason for something even if it is not true, that is, even if the corresponding fact in the world does not exist", makes it look as if what really matters is not the fact itself but the belief (Searle 2001, 104).⁶⁷ I guess there is no need to explain why this must be incorrect. Some philosophers consequently insist that nothing follows from beliefs but only from propositions. In other words, they claim that nothing follows from the fact that you want x and believe y. The agent's belief that it is raining must therefore not play the same role in the agent's deliberation whether or not the belief is true. Since the belief is answerable to the facts, "[...] the normative constraints on the explanation of why an action occurred, why an agent accepted a belief, why an agent formed a desire, why an agent fell in love, etc. do not remove the causal constraint that an explanation of why the agent did it must state the reasons that were effective with the agent" (Searle 2001, 112). That is simply because "[...] something that is not the case cannot explain anything [...]" (Alvarez 2016)

These considerations lead to the conclusion that the interplay of objective facts in the world and subjective psychological states of the agent is quite interesting but also very challenging. Anyhow, deliberation in action plays an important role when it comes to the issue of integrity. In reference to Korsgaard's account, it was shown that moral judgements do not merely depend on reason. Moral judgements refer to the agent's rational insight in the sense that the agent is applying standards for how to reason on practical matters and such for what is right and wrong to do. Normative judgements, which, according to Korsgaard, motivate for

⁶⁷ While practical rationality deals with the rationality of action, theoretical rationality focuses on rationality of beliefs. "In the case of theoretical reason, it is a matter of what to accept, conclude, or believe; in the case of practical reason, it is a matter of what actions to perform" (Searle 2001, 90). Practical reasoning about what one ought to do therefore leads to modifications of our intentions. Theoretical reflections about what one ought to believe on the other hand, leads to modifications of our beliefs. (cf. Kieran 2015, referring to Harman 1986 and Bratman 1987)

action, represent propositionally structured entities that are neither facts nor intentional states but obligations, choices, commitments, requirements, or others. Still, they are internal reasons which point to the agent's first-person point of view, their subjective justifications. Hereafter, I will go into detail with the agent's perspective. Considering the fact that integrity involves the agent's belief of what it is to live well, a person's subjective perspective seems to play a primary role when dealing with the issue of integrity. We already know that a person's belief of what it is to live well, one's inner conviction to certain values and ideals, has to find its expressions in that person's actual behavior. Still, we must not forget that the belief is relative to the facts. How do internal and external reasons go together? I will elaborate Benjamin Kiesewetter's approach in the following section as to give answer to that question.

Evidence-Relative Perspectivism

In *"Ought" and the Perspective of the Agent*, Benjamin Kiesewetter is asking himself whether what the agent ought to do depends on the agent's perspective, or not. (c.f. Kiesewetter 2011, 1) "When we make up our mind about something, we normally take the object of our thinking to be independent of our perspective on it" (Kiesewetter 2011, 4). One could therefore assume "[...] that things are not any different when it comes to thinking about what we ought to do" (Kiesewetter 2011, 4). Objectivists say that A ought to Φ if, and only if, A ought to Φ relative to all facts. But that means that "[...] an agent's belief that she ought to do something could be perfectly justified by her evidence – and yet false" (Kiesewetter 2011, 4).⁶⁸ Kiesewetter's example of a doctor who sees herself confronted with a patient's disease which she knows will lead to death unless treated shortly, makes this dilemma quite clear. (cf. Kiesewetter 2011, 2ff.) In the example, there are two possible treatments available to her: A and B. After carefully considering which of the two will cure the patient, she concludes that treatment A will cure, while B

⁶⁸ Belief-relative perspectivists on the other hand state, that A ought to Φ if, and only if, A ought to Φ relative to A's beliefs.

will lead to the patient's death. What the doctor does not know is that, in fact, treatment B is the cure while A will kill. (cf. Kieseewetter 2011, 2) The question then was what the doctor ought to do in this situation: Should she give treatment A or treatment B? Obviously, she ought to give medicine A relative to her perspective, but medicine B, relative to all facts. (cf. Kieseewetter 2011, 2)

It could be helpful to consider the example of the young Russian nobleman once again. The nobleman believes that he ought to spend money in the future. He furthermore believes that a legal contract will ensure to stay socialist and consequently will ensure to spend money. His inner conviction to socialist ideals, on the other hand, might not be strong enough to bind him, he fears. Relying on his inner commitment therefore bears the risk of turning away from socialist ideals. Now the problem is that the nobleman's belief that a formal contract will ensure to stay socialist is wrong. It only ensures spending money, even if that will be something he will not be willing to do in the future. This is what we already know. Given that his assumptions concerning the outer contract are false, how shall we deal with his normative belief while being aware of the fact that something which is not the case cannot explain anything?

Kieseewetter, for his part, argues for evidence-relative perspectivism. According to this account, "[...] the truth we seek in practical deliberation does itself depend on our evidence" (Kieseewetter 2011, 4). He claims that A ought to Φ if, and only if, A ought to Φ relative to the evidence available to A. (cf. Kieseewetter 2011, p.3) The idea behind his argumentation is the one that it seems irrational, or akratic, not to intend what one believes one ought to do. (cf. Kieseewetter 2011, 2)⁶⁹ In reference to the nobleman example this is to say that he should only make a contract if he knew that making a legal agreement represents the appropriate means to his ends (stay socialist in the future). Since we know that a contract will not ensure to stay socialist, we might conclude that the nobleman fails in taking the appropriate means to his

⁶⁹ What allows for akrasia is a gap between normative thought and normative judgement: I judge that A is all things considered good but I choose to do B instead. Akrasia is possible for choice or intention but not for belief since you cannot choose what to believe. (cf. Wallace 2006, 95)

ends. Though what about his belief to turn into a conservative, anyway? We do not know whether or not he really will turn into a conservative in the future. One could also assume that he will stay true to his socialist ideals until last. Consequently, it seems to be an emotion, his fear to turn into a conservative, which moves him to make a contract. These considerations give confirmation that what an agent desires, hopes, and fears indicates what the agent will do. Still, how about the nobleman's evidence? Obviously, the decision of making a contract is not based on evidence, considering that his system of beliefs is not based on valid arguments. This is that his reasons for making a contract seem irrational. Internal and external reasons do not go together. The nobleman refers to his internal reasons only. Even if the agent's deliberation can operate on internal reasons only, they often are valid reasons only because they represent external reasons which will be effective in my reasoning only if there is a corresponding internal effector, my belief, goal, or principle, for example. (cf. Searle 2001, 115/123) The question is whether or not reason may correctly judge that emotions and physical desires are themselves good and worthwhile? (cf. Hurtshouse 1991, 67) Let us think this through: "Reason may judge truly that to cease to have many of the emotions to which we are subject would be to lose something of worth, thereby conferring value on many of the actions to which they prompt us which it would endorse" (Hurtshouse 1991, 67). This is that human beings might be seen in their role as rational animals when fleeing the dangerous, repelling aggressors, and so on. (cf. Hurtshouse 1991, 67).⁷⁰ Still, the reasons for fleeing from the dangerous, for example, can only be rationalized if the emotion itself can be justified. If I flee from a kitten by judging that it might be dangerous then the action obviously cannot be rationalized simply because a cat is not dangerous to human beings. Going back to the nobleman example this means that his decision of binding himself to a legal document seems unnecessary with respect to the objective that his foreseen transformation into a conservative might never really happen.

⁷⁰ This argument would speak in favor of considering moral judgements as desires rather than commitments etc.

This situation is aggravated by the fact that the agent's beliefs, knowledge, or evidence might change over the course of time. It might be that the nobleman in the foreseeable future won't care about whether he will be willing to spend money or not since some life-changing experience will have caused him to turn away from socialist ideals. It could furthermore be the case that the nobleman, just like we did in our analysis, will come to see that an outer contract will, in fact, not bind him to socialist ideals but only to spending money. So, what consequences do changes of beliefs and evidence have for our deliberation in action? If we agree that the agent's action is an indicator for whether or not someone has integrity, then what about changes of beliefs that concern one's values and ideals? Let us recall that reasons can rationalize actions only if they refer to subjective and to objective justifications. This leads us to conclude that we need to be clear about what evidence we are referring to while focusing on the notion of time: "the evidence available at the time of the ought-judgment or the evidence available at the time of the action" (Kiesewetter 2011, 9).

"The introduction of the notion of time enables us to see that rationality in action is always a matter of an agent consciously reasoning in time, under the presupposition of freedom, about what to do now or in the future" (Searle 2001, 90).

The agent's belief (as the nobleman's belief to turn into a conservative), expresses a mental state in a substantial ontological way. This is that the agent is the owner of a certain static property for a certain time. In other words, the agent's mental state indeed is extended in time but rather continues for a limited period of time than to occur in time. An agent's decision (as the nobleman's decision to make a contract), on the other hand, represents a mental event which occurs in time but as a momentary event does not continue to exist over a certain period of time. It can be assumed that all reasoning is in time, while practical reasoning is about time. (cf. Searle 2001, 92)

In *Rationality in Action*, John Searle explains that “[...] practical reasoning is not just something that occurs in time, but [that] it is about time in the sense that it is reasoning now by a self about what that self is going to do now or in the future” (Searle 2001, 91 with author’s note). How do we have to understand Searle’s conception in reference to the agent’s perspective? Benjamin Kiesewetter states that A ought to Φ at t . “ A ought to Φ ” must therefore implicitly refer to time. (cf. Kiesewetter 2011, 9) Let us reconsider the temporal component with respect to what it means to act with integrity: We already know that agents often find themselves in the situation where they do not know all the relevant facts or where they have normative reasons that are false beliefs. (cf. Alvarez 2016) In the nobleman’s case, for example, he believes that an outer contract will ensure to stay socialist, which, as shown, is not true. He consequently has a false belief about what he ought to do. Though, which consequences has an agent’s false belief in light of making decisions now for the future?

We know that something which is not the case cannot explain anything. Given that an outer contract will not lead to the intended end, there is no reason for him to bind himself. Kiesewetter’s argument which states that it seems irrational not to do what one believes one ought to do, could lead to the anticipation that the nobleman’s decision of making a contract is quite rational since he simply does what he believes he ought to do. The crux of the matter is that the nobleman was unable to reason on practical matters in the appropriate way. This is that he does not take the necessary means to his ends. His decision of making a contract is grounded on a false belief. To put it differently: His way of reasoning is not the rational course. We might conclude that he could have been able to reason according to principles of rationality but was not. And finally, what about the temporal aspect? The nobleman’s belief that he will turn into a conservative is temporally extended and so is his belief that a legal contract will be binding. It was shown that the belief to turn into a conservative is just represented by an emotion and not by evidence. The belief that a contract is binding, on the other hand, is quite right, given that in ordinary life, we rely on legal contracts. This leads to the

conclusion that the nobleman's contract will also be binding. The question is what he is bound to. I would argue that the nobleman did not deliberate properly on this question. Otherwise, he would have recognized that an outer contract will actually not bind him to socialist ideals. Besides that, the temporal aspect indicates that deciding now what to do later seems wrong. Even if a legal contract will only bind him to spending money in the future, this seems to be a decision that depends on the belief and evidence he will have at the time of the action. Benjamin Kiesewetter therewith focuses on the so-called "static perspectivist" view, saying that "[...] A ought to Φ at t if, and only if, A ought to Φ at t relative to the evidence that is available to A at t" (Kiesewetter 2011, 9).

"As a consequence of this [static] view, when I judge now that I ought to do something later, the truth of my judgment will not depend on the evidence available to me now, but on the evidence, that will be available at the time at which I am supposed to act" (Kiesewetter 2011, 10).

In the nobleman's case, his judgement that he ought to spend money in the future depends on the evidence available to him at the time at which he is supposed to act. That is that he ought to spend money in the future, if and only if he (at future times) believes that he ought to spend money.

The question I tried to answer in this chapter was whether what the agents believe they ought to do depends on the corresponding facts in the world or not. A person's belief of what it is to live well has to find its expressions in that person's action. That is that a person's inner conviction to certain values and ideals have to become evident in the action itself. We might conclude that what an agent will do depends on what that agent believes, fears, and so on. We have to consider the fact that the agent's beliefs cannot play the same role in practical deliberation whether or not the belief is true. Things get difficult when considering the temporal component, since the agent's beliefs about what they have reason to do might change over the course of time. This leads us to conclude that we must refer to the evidence available to the agent at the time of the action, not at the time of the ought-judgement. In reference to

the nobleman example, Korsgaard concludes that he failed twice since he did not act in conformity with the principles of practical rationality, nor with those of morality, which had required him to rely on inner convictions instead of binding himself to an outer contract.

In the next paragraph I will focus on the study of normativity of reasons. My main aim will be to question what makes us believe that we ought to do something. In other words, I will ask what convinces us of the normativity of reasons. With this in mind, I will consider the issue of belief in more detail given that it seems to be of importance when we ask ourselves what we ought to do. Korsgaard's moral account shall be outlined once more, as to explain her argumentation for why the nobleman fails to live with integrity.

Normativity of Reasons

What convinces us of the normativity of reasons? It seems problematic that there are reasons that apply to agents whether or not they are motivated by them. "Arguably, we all have reason to do what morality dictates, whether or not we are (or would be, if we reasoned consistently from our current motivations), motivated by those reasons" (Alvarez 2016). The question arises what makes us believe that we ought to do something?

We already heard that when we contemplate about what to do, "[...] we make the normative judgment that something is *good for us*, or that we have a *reason* to act in a particular way, or that a specific course of action is the *rational* course [...]" (Rosati 2016). If I judge, for example, that any act of generosity is good and if I furthermore evaluate that making a legal contract ensures to be generous, then I have to conclude that making a contract is good.⁷¹ It may be concluded that whenever you act, you think it is right.

"When we judge that an action is right or wrong or that a state of affairs is good or bad, we seem to represent the world as being a certain way. We

⁷¹ The content of the desire and that of the belief is the same.

seem to express a moral belief, attributing a particular moral property or normative characteristic to the action or state of affairs” (Rosati 2016).

In light of that one might arguably state that every action we judge to be good for us is ultimately determined by preference of happiness. In other terms, one could say that we all by nature want to be happy and always have the end of happiness in mind. In the final analysis, the argument may run, we are guided by the thought that we ought to do what we believe is best for us. But then the problem seems that we never know if whatever we think was best for us really is in the long run. Different ends depend on what happiness consists of. The difficulty here is that it is only formal to state “I want to be happy” but it is something different to know what happiness consists of. (cf. Timmermann 2014) This is that we do not know in general what our happiness consists of. Representatives of the argument for preference of happiness would consequently have to conclude that whenever we fail in action, we make a mistake in judgement. Though, how shall we act with integrity if we do not know whether the reasons for action could be our reasons in all similar occasions? If it is the case that we constantly changed our mind about what our happiness consists of, then how can our values and commitments represent stable and reliable entities which for their part find their expression in the agent’s action? Is it not true, for example, that what an agent believes to be good for them depends on which option the judgement is made? In other words, is the agent’s belief about what they ought to do dependent on the situation? This would mean that we might change our mind about what is best for us, what makes us happy, from one situation to another. But this seems quite particularistic.

Derek Parfit’s young Russian nobleman, for example, believes that binding himself to a legal contract is best for him. He deliberates in ways not determined by the moral law but by preference of happiness. This finally leads him to pursue an idealistic strategy that oversees any possible future desire, belief, or other that, if he only was willing to recognize them, might lead to a different judgement about what is good for him. In Christine Korsgaard’s analysis, the nobleman would have

been able to produce genuine reason only if he had recognized the categorical imperative as constitutive for his thinking and acting. This is that the activity of reasoning must be guided by principles of rationality. Korsgaard is grounding the normativity of reasons on the concept of rationality and argues that whether our reasons for action develop a normative force depends on the value we place upon ourselves. It is the moral law that makes the agent aware of the fact that they can do (or not do) something by the thought that they ought to do it (or not to do it). Practical reasoning within Korsgaard's conception requires that the agent accepts a norm which governs the activity of reasoning. This norm or principle for its part guarantees the agent's acting on reasons which can be their reasons on all similar occasions. (cf. Wallace 2006, 87ff.) According to her account, there are objective criteria for moral judgment insofar as there are objective criteria for how to reason on practical matters. (cf. Bagnoli 2016) The nobleman, on the other hand, is morally at fault given that he has not regulated his behavior in the way that moral standards would require. (cf. Scanlon 1986, 166f)⁷² From this illustration, Korsgaard comes to the conclusion that the deliberative question can only be answered in reference to a principle that holds as a rule, come what may. (cf. Chappel 2010, 429) This is what ensures psychic unity and in the final analysis allows us to act with integrity.

Again, moral reasons are presented by categorical moral requirements which make it right or wrong to do certain things. In other words, there are norms, correct and binding, which prescribe actions. These are the ones the agent would agree to where they engage in an idealized process of rational deliberation, choice, or agreement. (cf. Bagnoli 2016 and Korsgaard 1996a, xii) The norm that governs the activity of reasoning must not depend on any given value, interest, or desire. Rather it must be internal and constitutive of the activity itself. (cf. Bagnoli 2016, citing O'Neill 1989, 172-173) This is why we need to "[...] work out principles which each of us could be expected to employ

⁷² The contractualist thesis says that an action is right if it would be required or allowed by principles which no one, suitably motivated, could reasonably reject. (cf. Scanlon 1986, 151)

as a basis for deliberation and to accept as a basis for criticism” (Scanlon 1986, 166f.).

In reference to the young Russian nobleman example, Korsgaard concludes that he is just a mere heap of unrelated impulses, not willing his maxims as a universal law. And in the end, this is no better or any different from having a particularistic will, she states. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 204) The nobleman is acting only in accordance with the strongest current desire instead of governing himself by the law of his own will. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 204) He failed to attend to the considerations that moral standards would require him to take account of. (cf. Scanlon 1986, 167) If he would, then there was no reason for him to anticipate a corrupt later self. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 203). Thus, while assuming to become more and more conservative in the future, he in a sense “denies” his present socialist ideals while detaching himself from the ought he once prescribed on himself when he committed himself to socialist ideals.⁷³ In other words, he is not acting in accordance with his maxim through which he could at the same time will that it becomes universal law. Rather he is making an exception for himself while responding to things differently from everyone else. (cf. Velleman 2009, 150) The young Russian nobleman just like animals and little children, lacks the capacity for self-regarding interest and rather does whatever his impulses move him to do.⁷⁴ This is that his behavior is just “one dimensional” (Frankfurt 2006, 172). To put it differently, he does not take the means to his self-given ends which was to will universally. The

⁷³ Kolodny and Brunero doubt that Korsgaard is right in claiming that willing an end necessarily involves prescribing that end to oneself. While Korsgaard insists that to will an end is at least to take that end to be good in some sense so that there is a reason for pursuing that end, Kolodny and Brunero state that this argument “[...] seems unable to explain the authority of instrumental rationality with respect to such ends – ends that an agent has but doesn't prescribe to herself” (Kolodny/Brunero 2016, referring to Korsgaard 1997, 246/250f).

⁷⁴ In Korsgaard's understanding, this is to say that he chooses to act on a principle that tells him to act on whatever whim happens to seize him instead of governing himself by the law of his own will. (cf. Korsgaard 2009b, 75). She therefore draws the conclusion that he ends up with particularism. I do for my part not agree with Korsgaard in this aspect. I cannot see why she claims that the nobleman is driven by desires and inclinations only. He decided to make a contract to bind himself to socialist ideals, since he wants to donate large portions of his inheritance in the future. Though, he has a false belief while assuming that making a contract will ensure to stay socialist. The problem that Korsgaard sees herself confronted with is simply that the nobleman is not acting in reference to the moral law. That does not mean that he ends up with particularism.

law that he made for himself could not be one that he could come to will to act on later again. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 202f.)⁷⁵ Finally, the nobleman within Korsgaard's interpretation, is acting on a hypothetical rather than a categorical imperative. (cf. Korsgaard 1996a, xxvii) She presents Parfit's main character as the "disunified", who is not respecting himself or others as moral agents (Korsgaard 2009, 184).

To summarize, Korsgaard argues that those actions which are not oriented towards the moral law but towards preference of happiness do not allow for agency that unifies the self. They only focus on the agent's strongest current desire and finally lead to particularism. What makes us convinced by the thought that we ought to do something is the reference to the moral law. She considers the categorical imperative as the only way to ensure our acting in accordance with inner convictions come what may.

In this chapter, I tried to focus on Korsgaard's normative interpretation of choice and her argument for the motivational power of moral properties. She says that what motivates for action is the agent's normative judgement or conclusive reason which in the end brings deliberation to a final conclusion. In accordance with Korsgaard's normative approach, we rationalize an action or belief while thinking about something as dutiful or obligatory. This is that we refer to propositionally structured entities that are neither facts nor intentional states but obligations, choices, commitments, requirements, or others. Moral judgements, for their part, do not merely depend on reason but refer to the agent's rational insight in the sense that the rational agent is applying standards for how to reason on practical matters and such for what is right and wrong to do. The person of integrity consequently must act in accordance with principles of rationality. In Korsgaard's conception, this means to do only those things which are all things considered good. To act with integrity therefore is to act in conformity

⁷⁵ Korsgaard states that one must make a law for oneself that one could come to act on later again unless there was a good reason to change his mind. I don't see why this account as well is not already conditional. In fact, the nobleman committed himself to socialist ideals and did so while anticipating to fail from the beginning. In my understanding, this is not any different from saying: "I bind myself to socialist ideals as long as I have no reason to change my mind".

with the categorical imperative which allows for objectively grounding moral obligations on reasoning. What I was trying to show within this chapter was that the question what it means to act with integrity is strongly connected to that of what we ought to do. Given that integrity refers to a person's values and ideals, we have to ask ourselves which of our aims we have good reason to pursue. To concentrate on the agent's reasons for action consequently seemed quite important to me.

Chapter 4: Various Realizations of Human Value

In the last chapter of my thesis, I will consider the various realizations of human value. We already know that different agents can have very different arguments for what it is to live well. That is that they often do not agree in what is valuable or good to achieve. Once again, I will ask myself how the things we value highly in our lives might find their expression in our actual behavior. For this purpose, I will compare Korsgaard's moral account with two other authors who try to give answer to the question what it means to act with integrity. While Korsgaard argues for the compliance with the categorical imperative, the two authors that I will consider in the following present a different account each.

Firstly, I will refer to Korsgaard and her conception of practical identity. She says that we have to make ourselves into someone particular in order to value our actions to be worth undertaking. Properly considering Korsgaard's argumentation, one could come the conclusion that identity is a virtue. Before referring to Harry Frankfurt's account on caring, I will emphasize the question whether integrity is a virtue, or not. Finally, I will consider Charles Taylor's ideal of authenticity which shows some parallels to the ideal of integrity. Dealing with the ideal of authenticity allows us to recall what it means to be a person of integrity and to elaborate the differences to what it means to be a person of authenticity. Let me start by considering Korsgaard's idea of practical identity.

Practical Identity

According to Korsgaard, people consider what their life fundamentally is about and then commit themselves to these values. She concludes that it is our "[...] commitments that make us who we are as individuals and give us reasons for caring about our own lives [...]" (Korsgaard 2009, 208). Since we only pursue things of which we think that they are good, it is our very commitments that show what we care about and what we consider to be important in our lives. Consequently, the things we value

highly in our lives for their part reflect our sense of right and wrong and also tend to influence our behavior.

Thus, integrity has to be understood in terms of the commitments that people most deeply identify with, constituting what they think could be worth to pursue. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) Committing yourself therefore means to give yourself a law that has universal normative force and allows you to value your personal projects as important for you. But then it seems obvious that what we determine to be important, pursuable, and good in our lives, for all intends and purposes points to a private component. This private component indicates that we give meaning to various values in different ways. To put it differently, certain values may be important for you in particular, but they do not have to be this important for everyone else. We know that people often do not agree with others in what they think it is to live well. It seems as if some kinds of reasons are private or agent-relative after all. This is because the agent has a special relationship to their own projects.

“The end that we set before ourselves in our ordinary actions, Kant urges, do not have absolute but only relative value: ‘their mere relation to a specially constituted faculty of desire on the part of the subject gives them their worth’” (Korsgaard 1996, xxii, citing KpV, AK 04: 427).

In chapter ten of *Self-Constitution*, Korsgaard explores how to be a person while facing the private component of identity. She argues that there are no agent relative reasons insofar as “relative” means “private”. She argues that reasons cannot be private reasons given that reasons are needed to justify actions. This is that self-given laws can only have universal normative force, if they hold not only for one special situation, but also for the other. Reasons have to be public within Korsgaard’s account. Korsgaard captures the aspect of privacy when she urges that “[...] what you want is to be a *someone*, a particular instance of humanity” (Korsgaard 2009, 212). Understanding the private aspect correctly therefore means to recognize the ideals of self-expression and self-development which undeniably point to an agent relative issue, while

indicating what is important for us as particular persons. (cf. Chappel 2010, 432) The so-called “subjective principle of human actions” consequently says that what makes the ends that we set before ourselves worthwhile is their relation to a specially constituted faculty of desire on the part of the subject. (cf. Korsgaard 1996a, xxii, citing KpV, AK 04: 427/429) Regarding this aspect, Korsgaard for her part insists that we must come to see that our identities are various realizations of human possibility and human value. Otherwise put, we have to recognize our own life as one possible embodiment of the human. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 211f.)

“As a person, who has to make himself into a particular person, you get to write one of the parts in the general human story, to create the role of one of the people you think it would be good to have in that story“ (Korsgaard 2009, 212).

Korsgaard herewith introduces the notion of “practical identity” and points out that “[e]very human being must make himself into someone in particular, in order to have reasons to act and to live” (Korsgaard 2009, 24). Practical identity, for its part, is “[...] a description under which you value yourself and your life to be worth living and your actions to be worth undertaking” (Korsgaard 2009, 20). Since our various practical identities govern our choices in the way that Kant thinks morality does, it is morality itself that is grounded in an essential form of practical identity, our identity as rational beings. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 21)

“Our conceptions of our practical identity govern our choice of actions, for to value yourself in a certain role or under a certain description is at the same time to find it worthwhile to do certain acts for the sake of certain ends, and impossible, even unthinkable, to do others” (Korsgaard 2009, 20).

It is therefore our practical identities which determine whether we want to be moral subjects acting only on maxims on which all rational beings in cooperative systems could agree. (cf. Pauer-Studer 2003, 58)

Consequently, practical identity is not just an attribution or description but a particular role that calls for commitment:

“You make yourself into an affective friend, teacher, parent, citizen, or whatever, by imposing the form of activity on principles derived from those roles” (Korsgaard 2010a, 18f.).

Furthermore, since practical identity specifies roles as sources of special obligations, morality is to be found behind these principles of identity. (cf. Bagnoli 2017, referring to Williams 1981 and Korsgaard 1996b/2009) Korsgaard says that “[i]f you continue to endorse the reasons the identity presents to you, and observe the obligations it imposes on you, then it’s you” (Korsgaard 2009, 23).

“However, we do not have obligations just because we occupy certain roles [...]. Rather such roles become practical identities, and sources of reason, insofar as we rationally endorse them” (Bagnoli 2016, citing Korsgaard 2008, Lecture 6, 25-26).

Otherwise put, the person who is deliberating correctly about what it is to live well will take those obligations to define constraints on a good life. This is “[...] to treat your contingent identities as the sources of absolute inviolable laws” (Korsgaard 2009, 23).

„So in valuing ourselves as the bearers of contingent practical identities, knowing, as we do, that these identities are contingent, we are also valuing ourselves as rational beings. For by doing that we are endorsing a reason that arises from our rational nature—namely, our need to have reasons. And as I’ve just said, to endorse the reasons that arise from a certain practical identity just is to value yourself as the bearer of that form of identity. We owe it to ourselves, to our own humanity, to find some roles that we can fill with integrity and dedication“ (Korsgaard 2009, 24).

In light of that, I would argue that Korsgaard's conception of integrity can be best understood while referring to the concept of practical identity. Defining practical roles as sources of special obligation, is to locate morality behind the principles of identity. That is that the person who is deliberating correctly about what they ought to do, will take those obligations to define constraints on a good life. These constraints have to be understood in terms of the commitments that people most deeply identify with. To act with integrity in the final analysis is to commit ourselves to our values and ideals and to give ourselves a law that has universal normative force. When we consider what it is to live well, the moral law allows us to value our personal projects as important to us. In the end, we are guided by roles of practical identity that govern our choices and sustain our integrity in the sense that we value ourselves in certain roles and find it worthwhile to do certain acts.

A Sense of Who You Are

Again, Korsgaard states that we owe it to ourselves to act with integrity. This is that we endorse the reasons that arise from practical roles and that we value ourselves as the bearers of certain practical identities. Finally, do we have to surmise that to live with integrity is a virtue? In other terms, does integrity move people to act in desirable ways? In the next section I will focus on this query.

According to the identity view of integrity, to act with integrity is nothing more than to act in such a way that reflects your sense of who you are and so "[...] to act from motives, interests and commitments that are most deeply your own" (Cox et al. 2017, citing Williams 1981a, 49). If integrity is considered to be nothing more than the maintenance of identity, however, it cannot really be a virtue.⁷⁶ So, what exactly is it to possess a virtue?

"To possess a virtue is to be a certain sort of person with a certain complex mindset. A significant aspect of this mindset is the wholehearted acceptance

⁷⁶ Bernard Williams argues that integrity is just an admirable human property and not a disposition that itself is related to motivation as virtues are. (cf. Cox et al. 2017)

of a distinctive range of considerations as reasons for action” (Hurtshouse/Pettigrove 2016).

A virtue consequently is a multilayered disposition that cannot be attributed to an agent because of just one single action observed. (cf. Hurtshouse/Pettigrove 2016) There are a number of ways of falling short of this ideal. A virtue rather is a matter of degree. (cf. Hurtshouse/Pettigrove 2016, referring to Athanassoulis 2000) When it comes to integrity, the question is whether integrity is a character trait possessed by those who reliably fulfil their duties or whether there are other normative notions grounded in integrity. Let us be clear: Does integrity move or enable persons to act in desirable ways? (cf. Cox et al. 2017)

People prefer to have a positive rather than a negative self-image. That is that they strive for high self-esteem. (cf. Makariev 2014, 55) The person of integrity regulates themselves and puts themselves together in such a way that they do not allow any part of themselves to meddle with each other. Only in becoming a “moderate and harmonious” whole, they believe that they are a person of integrity (Cox et al. 2017). To put it differently, they believe that actions of integrity preserve their inner harmony and that actions which destroy that harmony are not of integrity but corrupt and dishonest. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 179, referring to Plato R443d-444) This leads us to the assumption that integrity does, as benevolence moves a person to act for another's good or as courage enables a person to act well, also move or enable people to act in desirable ways. (cf. Cox et al. 2017) To sum it up in just one sentence: When people act with integrity, they strive for inner harmony and unity. But then who says that it is better to live with integrity than to live with corruption, dishonesty, or division of ourselves?

In *Self-Constitution*, Korsgaard refers to Plato's Glaucon example which deals with the question what justice and injustice do to the soul. It turns out that this is not about whether it is better to live a just or an unjust life, but about whether living a just or an unjust life is worthier of

choice.⁷⁷ In Plato's example, even if the just person who is believed to be unjust will be tortured, they still believe that living a just life is worth it. When you decide to be a just person, you have to be convinced that it will be worth it. The just person therefore must be considered as being entirely self-governed, in the sense that all of their actions are really and fully their own and that they are the expression of their own choice. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 180) According to Plato, justice is the very condition of being able to maintain inner unity. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 179)

“The action that the just person calls ‘just’ is the one that maintains his inner harmony. In other words, the principle of justice directs us to perform those actions that establish and maintain our volitional unity” (Korsgaard 2009, 179).

Thus, Plato's principle of justice turns out to be a formal principle of deliberative action which allows you to pull yourself together. But what if the just person under the stress of torture does something unjust? Well, that obviously just means that they failed. It does not mean, on the other hand, that they never really were committed to justice or that they only made a conditional commitment to justice.⁷⁸

Let me try to transfer these considerations towards the ideal of integrity. If integrity is said to be a virtue, then the question is whether living with integrity or with division of ourselves is worthier of choice. When we decide to live with integrity, we have to be convinced that it will be worth it. The person of integrity therefore must be considered as being entirely self-governed, in the sense that all of their actions are really and fully their own and that they are the expression of their own choice. This would lead to the conclusion that integrity is the very condition of being able to maintain inner unity. The action that the person of integrity calls ‘of integrity’ is the one that maintains their inner

⁷⁷ Korsgaard insists that it seems obvious that not everyone lives a just life. What everyone does, on the other hand, is to strive for being a unified whole. And if we do that well, so Korsgaard says, then we are just. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 180)

⁷⁸ The example of the nobleman, on the contrary, led her to conclude that he only made a conditional commitment to socialist ideals. She argues that he decided to fail from the beginning. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 180)

harmony. The ideal of integrity consequently directs us to perform those actions that establish and maintain our volitional unity. made a conditional commitment to justice. Finally, I will conclude that integrity is a virtue since it directly moves people to act in desirable ways. Though if integrity is said to be a virtue, it also is a matter of degree. This is that within Korsgaard's account integrity cannot really be a virtue. She argues that we fail to live as persons if we fail to live with integrity.

What we care about

In the next part I will concentrate on Harry Frankfurt's account who conceives integrity as being a virtue. In his essay *On Caring*, from 1999, Frankfurt himself asks the question how we can achieve the goals we want to reach. He states that what is guiding us is important to us. This is that we "[...] are concerned with how to make specific concrete decisions about what to aim at and how to behave" (Frankfurt 2006, 185).

"Suppose you are trying to figure out how to live. You want to know what goals to pursue and what limits to respect. You need to get clear about what counts as a good reason in deliberations concerning choice and action. It is important to you to understand what is important to you" (Frankfurt 2006, 185).

According to Frankfurt, we want to be clear about what we are really like and about what we are actually up to. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 169) We have to understand the agent as a subject of significance which at the same time is to recognize matters of significance that are peculiarly human and have no analogue to other animals (cf. Taylor 1985, 102)⁷⁹ Due to the human being's capacity to think rational, we find ourselves provided with decisive motivations and rigorous constraints as self-conscious and active creatures. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 169) It is the normative authority of reason that leads people who take themselves seriously to confront fundamental

⁷⁹ Those matters of significance are "[...] matters of pride, shame, moral goodness, evil, dignity, the sense of worth, the various human forms of love, and so on" (Taylor 1985, 102).

issues of normativity and to wonder how to get it right (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 170/180)

In the final analysis, we want our thoughts, our feelings, our choices, and our behavior to make sense. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 169) Moral deliberation therefore involves the power to choose what we shall do in ways not laid by the desire we are passively subject to. “To be an agent is to be a person for whom it makes sense to grapple with the question of what one ought to do, as having the power of self-determining choice” (Wallace 2006, 157). The fact, that a certain action resulted from the agent’s choice makes a crucial difference to our assessment of the rights and obligations of the agent and others after the action has been performed. (cf. Scanlon 1986, 151) If we come to see that choice matters morally, we also understand that “the reasons people have for wanting outcomes to be (or sometimes not to be) dependent on their choices has to do with the significance that choice itself has for them, not merely with its efficacy in prompting outcomes that are desired on other grounds” (Scanlon 1986, 154/181). The principle of choice therefore is expressive and representative of ourselves. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 75) Even if the reference to the agent’s capacity for self-determining choice may not explain why we did what we did, it helps to explain how it was possible for us to act in accordance with what is important to us. (cf. Wallace 2006, 157)

Frankfurt therewith points to the fact that the ultimate source of practical normative authority lies not in reason but in the will (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 170) It is the ability to an “inward-directed, monitoring oversight” which allows to focus our attention directly upon ourselves. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 170) This reflexive structure puts us in the position to form reflexive or higher order responses to our given desires (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 171) It enables us to go beyond simply wanting and so to care about certain things. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 171)

To sum it up, Frankfurt’s position points to the human being’s ability to take one’s own life seriously. Integrity in his understanding has to be understood as a virtue in the sense that we have to take seriously what concerns us. This is in other words that integrity directly moves

people to act in desirable ways as agents of integrity go beyond simple wanting. To act with integrity is to recognize the outcome of an intended action as one that we really want. That is that we can identify with the desires we are not basically passive to. Given that we want our actions to make sense and our lives to be coherent, we are able to integrate the many conflicting desires and volitions into one coherent whole.

The Ideal of Authenticity

In the last passage of my thesis I will look at the ideal of authenticity which must be conceived as an inward directed turn towards the individual's self-relation. Conceiving authentic action as action that truly represents oneself, could lead to the assumption that it was not any different from actions of integrity which are characteristic of self-expression and self-development. Though the ideal of authenticity also points to something that goes beyond integrity. I will refer to Charles Taylor's conception of authentic action to elaborate the similarities as well as the differences between the two ideals that seem quite similar at first glance.

We already heard that the significance of my life comes from its being chosen. There is something noble, courageous, and hence significant in giving shape to my own life. (cf. Taylor 1992, 39) In the essays *The Sources of Authenticity and Inescapable Horizons*, Charles Taylor addresses the topic of authenticity and originality in terms of self-definition. He is asking the question what it means to truly represent oneself. It seems obvious to him that whenever someone acts in a certain way, it is that someone who is doing so. But we also must confess that sometimes the decisions we make and the actions we undertake do not express who we really are. Thus, what is authentic action? And furthermore, is authentic action similar to action of integrity? I would suggest to think about the ideal of authenticity while keeping in mind our previous findings about integrity.

To say that someone is authentic is to say that they are what they pretend to be. It means being faithful to an original. (cf. Varga/Guignong 2017) That is when the agent's motives and reasons for action are

expressive of one's identity. The ideal of authenticity therefore means to define yourself while determining what your originality consists of. It means finding what is significant in your being different from others. (cf. Taylor 1992, 35f.)⁸⁰ Those actions that are expressive of what you are and others aren't, are authentic. (cf. Varga/Guignon citing Williams quoted in Guignon 2004, viii) According to Taylor, a person holds a certain moral status, has certain capacities, a sense of self, a notion of the future and the past, and can adopt self-plans. (cf. Taylor 1985, 97) His authenticity model therefore refers to identity and moral responsibility. It emphasizes the individual's capacity to decide for oneself and is connected to the idea that moral principles should be grounded in the self-governing individual. (cf. Varga/Guignon 2017)⁸¹ The ideal of authenticity therefore states that "[...] one should strive to live one's life according to one's own reasons and motives, relying on one's capacity to follow *self-imposed* guidelines" (Varga/Guignon 2017). In other words, we should not only not fit our life to the demands of external conformity but cannot even find the model to live by outside ourselves. This is that we can find it only within. (cf. Taylor 1992, 29) Being true to oneself therefore means being true to one's own originality while truly representing one's own self.

"There is a certain way of being that is my way, I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's. But this gives a new importance to being true to myself. If I am not, I miss the point of my life, I miss what being human is for me" (Taylor 1992, 29).

To put it differently, being true to my own originality is something nobody else but me can articulate or discover. "In articulating it, I am also defining myself. I am realizing a potentiality that is properly my own" (Taylor 1992, 29). We are free when we decide for ourselves what concerns us rather than being shaped by outer influences. Defining

⁸⁰ Taylor is grounding his conception on the idea of individualism and the principle of originality.

⁸¹ Self-given laws must fit with the wholeness of the person's life and expresses who that person really is.

oneself is to break free of all external impositions. (cf. Varga/Guignon 2017 referring to Taylor 1992, 27) But apart from that, self-choice, actions, ideals, self-commitments, and all the other things we identify with, only make sense if we take for granted that some issues are more significant than others. To put it in Taylor's words, that is that they have only meaning in relation to "meaningful horizons".

"So the ideal of self-choice supposes that there are *other* issues of significance beyond self-choice. The ideal couldn't stand alone, because it requires a horizon of issues of importance, which help define the in which self-making is significant" (Taylor 1992, 39).

The ideal of self-constitution, self-choice, self-making, or self-realization as a moral ideal, consequently falls into triviality and incoherence unless the agent recognizes a horizon of important questions. (cf. Taylor 1992, 40)

In fact, there are some issues that are more significant than others. (cf. Taylor 1992, 39) Whatever is important to us must refer to an inter-subjective notion of the good. Otherwise, the focus on one's inner feelings and attitudes would lead to a self-centered preoccupation with oneself. (cf. Varga/Guignon 2017)⁸² Taylor therefore urges that it cannot be up to the individual what is important.

"Otherwise put, I can define my identity only against the background of things that matter. But to bracket out history, nature, society, the demands of solidarity, everything but what I find in myself, would be to eliminate all candidates for what matters" (Taylor 1992, 40).⁸³

⁸² In fact, the ideal of authenticity arises many criticisms. They express the word of concern that the ideal of authenticity as the last measure of value indicates that the inward directed turn towards the individual's self-relation destroys some significant social and moral characteristics.

⁸³ Meaningful horizons therefore have to be conceived as collective horizons.

Taylor therefore insists that the crucial point about agents is that things matter to them. (cf. Taylor 1985, 98)⁸⁴ To put it differently, agents “[...] develop emotional and conative responses that can be understood as prompted by recognizable kinds of things [...]” (Velleman 2009, 150). These “recognizable kinds of things” provide an internal reference for what is good, important, useful, desirable, and so on. “To say that things matter to agents is to say that we can attribute purposes, desires, aversions to them in a string, original sense” (Taylor 1985, 99). But that in turn is to refer to *our* desires, *our* emotions, *our* situation. It is the subject that gives them their worth. In other words, given that we describe our emotions by describing our situation, we describe our situation in its significance for us. When we ask why someone acted as they did, we consequently are provided with an explanation of action in terms of our emotions and other motives that are based on our sense of significance. (cf. Taylor 1985, 107)⁸⁵ “So situation-description is only self-description because the situation is grasped by its significance” (Taylor 1985, 107).⁸⁶

After properly considering Taylor’s ideal of authenticity, it might seem evident to us, that the ideal of authenticity is not equal to that of integrity. Even though there are quite a few similarities, both concepts do differ to a large extent. In order to act with authenticity, we also need our ideals and values to become expressive of our actions. The ideal of authenticity as an inward directed measure of value, indicates that it is more about doing your own thing and differentiating yourself from others than about becoming as assessable counterpart. As it has been shown by my analysis, the ideal of integrity is not just about interacting with oneself but also about interacting with others. That is that integrity is also

⁸⁴ We now might come to understand why Korsgaard points that living an unjust life is no different activity than living a just life. In fact, it is the same activity of self-constitution – badly done – in the sense that those who live an unjust life do not define themselves against a background of things that matter. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 180). Thus, the person who lives an unjust, dishonest, corrupt or other life, that cannot give rise to collective important questions, does not refer to the demands of morality

⁸⁵ To understand things from an absolute perspective, on the other hand, was to understand them in abstraction from their significance for us. (cf. Taylor 1985, 112)

⁸⁶ “It is what gives sense to the idea of ‘doing your own thing’ or ‘finding your own fulfillment’” (Taylor 1992, 29).

dependent on the behavior of other people. The ideal of integrity therefore is not fully compatible with that of authenticity.

Conclusion

In the last pages of my thesis, I will give an overview of what has been said in the previous chapters. I will emphasize the most important issues with regard to integrity once again and relate these to each other. Considering that my aim was to elaborate Christine Korsgaard's conception of integrity and to critically question her normative account, the argument that we fail to live as persons if we fail to live with integrity, seems quite disputable. (cf. Cox et al. 2017, referring to Korsgaard 2009). Let us think through Korsgaard's moralizing conception of integrity once again.

We started by asking ourselves whether or not integrity is connected to moral agency in a significant way. Korsgaard's argument says that to have integrity is to act with integrity. "Like Plato and Kant, Korsgaard explains that some kind of integrity is necessary to be an agent and cannot be achieved without a commitment to morality, which is founded on reason" (Bagnoli 2016, citing Korsgaard 2009, xii and Plato *Republic* 443d-e). This is to say that those actions which are to make someone a person of integrity must be self-constituting and self-unifying actions. Korsgaard insists that our actions must relate to each other if we want our lives to be coherent and our actions to make sense.

We furthermore constitute ourselves as the authors of our actions in the very act of choosing them, she says. (cf. Korsgaard 2009, 20/129) When we act, we consequently have to make ourselves into the first cause of a certain end. Given that deliberation in action involves the power to actively choose what to do, we must have a reason in order to act in a particular way. Korsgaard refers to Immanuel Kant when she says that the only way to produce genuine reason is to accept the categorical imperative as a "basic standard for rationality in thinking and acting" (Bagnoli 2017, referring to Rawls 1989, 498-506). According to her Kantian account, we cannot be agents without moral principles since they make our moral identities. Choice therefore implies the acceptance of a law, that allows for an understanding of the binding force of principles of practical reason. (cf. Wallace 2001, 3) Norms and principles

function like instructions, and guarantee our acting as a whole, Korsgaard claims. In her final analysis, choice of principles must be choice of self-unifying principles. (cf. Chappel 2010, 429)⁸⁷ It is the moral law which enables us to put ourselves together. That is that the categorical imperative is a principle by means of which we constitute ourselves as unified agents. In effect, even if there seems to be no conceptual relation between integrity and morality, we find a relation between these two when recognizing the fact that the principles a person of integrity is acting accordingly to are moral principles. (cf. Margalit 2012, 60)⁸⁸ To put it differently, the person, who is deliberating correctly about what it is to live well, will take those obligations to define constraints on a good life. In the end, you cannot do otherwise than to act with integrity if you want to act morally. Conclusively, she states that if we fail to live with integrity, we also fail to live as persons since we in that case do not act morally. For now, I will limit myself to these considerations in regard to Korsgaard's basic arguments.

A large part of my thesis dealt with the example of the young Russian nobleman who, according to Korsgaard, fails to live with integrity since he ignores the fact that moral principles must play an essential part of the good life. The nobleman seems to pursue an idealistic strategy, while trying to realize the socialist ideal no matter which obstacles might come in his way. (cf. Margalit 2012, 269) Binding himself to a legal contract just seems to be the most reasonable thing to do, given the fact that such a document is binding, whereas inner convictions might fail. He decides to disregard any possible obstacle in order to approach the socialist ideal as near as possible. (cf. Margalit 2012, 269)⁸⁹ His focus on socialist ideals brackets everything else out, as it were. To summarize, the nobleman just wants his future self to have no other way than to do what he expects him to.

⁸⁷ This is to recognize the immediate moral significance of choice.

⁸⁸ Avishai Margalit insists that the fact that a person of integrity is acting on moral principles does not necessarily mean that one is acting in accordance with those because they think that they are morally right. (cf. Margalit 2012, 60)

⁸⁹ Disregarding any obstacles that might come in your way is not necessarily a good option. (cf. Margalit 2012, 269f.)

In reference to Korsgaard's moral conception, to be a person of integrity is to direct oneself to stable and appropriate norms as to guarantee a unity of agency. (cf. Frankfurt 2006, 169) Other than the young Russian nobleman, a person of integrity has standards and is guided by moral principles. While anticipating to fail from the beginning, the nobleman makes a conditional commitment to morality, not taking seriously his inner convictions, she says. In her understanding, he finally even fails in being an agent since he is not able to recognize an unbroken continuity within himself. Being aware of the possibility to constantly calling into question one's behavior, the nobleman assumes some negative changes in character. He decides to make choices now that preserve rather than compromise his present ideals. Though, if we want to live with integrity we have to acknowledge our present as well as our future reasons as reasons, Korsgaard points out. The nobleman's case therefore indicates that binding oneself to a legal document does not lead to psychic unity but to disintegration. This is because, when it comes to integrity, an agent must have equal concern for each stage in their life. (cf. Brink 2011, 368) To act with integrity requires to be true to all of one's reasonable ideals and so to weigh all of one's future attitudes against one's current ones. (cf. Brink 2011, 374) As a consequence, we have to emphasize that persons have an identity and must be able to develop a reflective and critical attitude towards the reasons guiding their choices (cf. Pauer-Studer 2007, 75). Personal identity is nothing that exists prior or outside of our choices in action. It is our actions themselves which constitute who we are. We have to try to develop in the best way we can to fulfil our autonomous identity.

After Korsgaard, it is our "[...] commitments that make us who we are as individuals and give us reasons for caring about our own lives [...]" (Korsgaard 2009, 208). She says that "[t]he law that I give myself must have universal normative force, or I have not committed myself to anything at all" (Korsgaard 2009, 78f.). Rational human beings constitute themselves by choosing actions in accordance with the principles of practical reason, especially moral principles. (cf. Korsgaard 2008, 1) "We

ourselves impose the laws of reason on our actions, and through our actions on the world, when we act morally” (Korsgaard 1996a, xxiv).

When we reflect about what to do, we employ standards for what is right and wrong to do. It is therefore to conclude, that the question about what would be desirable to do is not concerned “[...] with matters of fact and their explanation, but with matters of value [...]” (Wallace 2014). The values an agent holds, tend to influence their behavior. (cf. Pauer-Studer 2003, 65) We reason in ways that are in conformity with the values we have committed ourselves to and we tend to act in ways we believe will contribute to the furthering of our prior motivations. (cf. Alvarez 2016)⁹⁰ We often find ourselves confronted with changing values, so that we “[...] may want to remain the sort of person we observe ourselves to, or we may want to be different” (Frankfurt 2004, 171). It is a matter of fact that our life conceptions can and usually do change as time goes by. Regarding this, Korsgaard assumes that the human being’s intrinsic nature is development. We develop, we have intelligence, we are curious, we feel pain and pleasure, and we value them. And this gives answer to the question how value and morality come into the world.

Actions that do express a person’s sense of self, hence actions, that are expressive of an agent’s integrity, do reflect our values, priorities, and what is really important to us. Those are the actions that directly express our activity as agents. Practical deliberation refers to the active states of an agent’s intentions, choices, or decisions, which for their part bring deliberation to a final conclusion. To sum it up in just one sentence, Korsgaard draws the conclusion that self-constitution is what agency is all about. (cf. Chappel 2010, 1) This is that we have to act with integrity if we don’t want to fall of short of the ideal of self-constitution. “The Constitutional Model tells us that what makes an action yours in this way is that it springs from and is in accordance with your constitution” (Korsgaard 2008, 101).

⁹⁰ Reason internalism therefore states that a reason for A must be able to be someone’s reason for A in a particular situation as to explain A. It could not explain A if it could not motivate. A reason for action must be able to motivate. cf. chapter three.

Finally, how are we to deal with Korsgaard's normative account? We might agree that we are faced with the task of unification and the endeavor to make ourselves into one coherent whole. Still, her moralizing conception seems questionable. I would argue that one can be a person of integrity without acting in conformity with the categorical imperative. The categorical imperative binds us too strongly. Korsgaard's argument that we fail to live as persons if we fail to live with integrity goes back to the assumption that someone who is not committed to morality is not committed to anything at all. That is that this someone is neither committed to one's personal projects, the values and ideals one deeply identifies with. But that finally does not seem right to me.

I would argue that people may be said to have integrity even if they are not committed to the moral law but only to their deepest inner convictions. Integrity in my reasoning, is not related to moral agency if this means that to act with integrity must implicate to act in reference to universal moral principles. I would rather say that integrity is a virtue and therefore is a matter of degree. Integrity as a virtue, moves people to act in desirable ways. Though, this conception also allows them to fail. Someone who fails while giving in for desires one cannot fully identify with or while acting on false beliefs, can still be considered as being committed to their deepest inner convictions. I do not agree with Korsgaard's argument that the laws that we give ourselves must have universal normative force, in order to be committed to anything at all. On the contrary, I would insist, that the requirement to commit oneself to the action one has chosen to do, seems completely implausible since we often find ourselves in a position where we cannot bring ourselves to do certain things even if we are convinced by the thought that we ought to do them, or, we do things which prove to be false afterwards. Korsgaard's moral conception makes it impossible to violate the motivation requirement.

Appendix

ABSTRACT: What is it to be a person of integrity? In *Self-Constitution. Agency, Identity, and Integrity*, Christine Korsgaard presents a conception of agency whose roots go back to the constitutional model of Plato and Kant. We construct ourselves from our choices, from our actions, and from the reasons that we legislate, she says. This is why we need unconditional universal principles, which guarantee that the action is significant for an agent's integrity. Korsgaard focuses on a moral account of agency, which turns out to be constitutive for a person's identity. As personal identity has always been a controversial issue, even Korsgaard's contemporary approach on self-constitution is not outside the scope of criticism. My intention now is to outline the three main topics that are essential to her conception – agency, identity and integrity, and to elaborate the controversial passages within her book. What I am about to present in my Master's thesis is an analysis of the three mentioned subjects with reference to some literature that allows dealing with the issue of self-constitution in a deeper understanding. This hermeneutic approach, which is expected to get clear about several attractive aspects within Korsgaard's account, includes topics such as the question what we care about, the meaning of practical identities, acting for a reason, as well as it considers the constitution of life in a sense of unifying oneself into a coherent whole. To sharpen the idea of self-constitution, I will properly consider Derek Parfit's Nineteenth Century Russian example which Korsgaard herself finds very interesting to deal with. She concludes that, other than the young Russian nobleman, a person of integrity is having standards and is guided by moral principles. In short, to be a person of integrity to put yourself together to become a coherent whole.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG: Was genau meinen wir damit, wenn wir sagen, dass eine Person Integrität besitzt? Mit Ihrem Werk *Self-Constitution. Agency, Identity, and Integrity*, liefert Christine Korsgaard eine Konzeption, die auf Platons und Immanuel Kants Vorstellungen der, wenn wir so sagen wollen, „Bildung zu einem Ganzen“ zurückgeht. Um dies erreichen zu können, sind bedingungslose und universale Prinzipien vonnöten, die ihrerseits garantieren, dass unsere Handlungen integer sind. Damit bestimmt Korsgaard moralisches Handeln maßgeblich durch integrires Handeln. Angesichts dessen, dass personale Identität immer schon kontrovers diskutiert worden ist, bleibt auch Korsgaards aktueller Diskurs nicht von Kritik verschont. Ziel meiner Arbeit ist es ihre Konzeption mit Hinblick auf verwandte Literatur auszuarbeiten, die es wiederum erlaubt Korsgaards Modell der Selbstkonstitution in einem tieferen Zusammenhang zu begreifen und umstrittene Passagen aufzuarbeiten. Was ist uns wirklich wichtig im Leben? Welche sozialen Rollen sind für uns von Bedeutung? Warum suchen wir nach Gründen für unser Handeln? Und wie können wir unser Leben sinnvoll bestimmen, sodass wir am Ende zu einem kongruenten Ganzen werden? Um Korsgaards Vorstellungen von dem was es heißt Integrität zu besitzen anschaulich machen zu können, möchte ich insbesondere auf Derek Parfits Beispiel des russischen Edelmannes verweisen, auf das auch Korsgaard selbst sich in ihrem Buch bezieht. Anders als der russische Edelmann, so stellt sie heraus, hat eine Person von der wir sagen, dass sie Integrität besitzt, Standards nach denen sie handelt und moralische Prinzipien die sie leiten. Kurzum, Integrität zu besitzen bedeutet, durch sein Handeln die Bildung zu einem Ganzen anzustreben und somit integer zu handeln.

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