

KANTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE STATE AND EDUCATION

Perspectiva kantiana sobre el Estado y la educación¹

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the role of education in the practical philosophy of Immanuel Kant. This paper analyzes the position of education and the state in the practical philosophy of Immanuel Kant, for whom education is established as the essential task of humanity; hence, he pointed out that, that man can consider the art of government, and the art of education as the most difficult discoveries, being education the process by which the human being becomes human begins; that of civilization and culture, intrinsic elements in the sphere of education, which is the basis of the development of people, and of humanity in general, for which the theses on education in the text of pedagogy must be reviewed, suggesting that the cosmopolitan educational project is the best way to promote an education that tends towards the universal good.

However, in order for the Kantian proposal to be promoted from educational institutions, it is necessary to reconsider the task and function not only of parents, but also of the State in the educational sphere and guide it according to the parameters of cosmopolitanism, a philosophy that is both offered as an unavoidable duty and as a pervasive social need. The definition of cosmopolitan education is presented as a method of human growth that enables the identification of beings with moral and legal personality in each of us.

Keywords

Education, cosmopolitanism, pedagogy, humanity, inclusion, State.

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Resumen

Este trabajo analiza la posición de la educación y el Estado en la filosofía práctica de Immanuel Kant, para quien la educación se establece como la tarea esencial de la humanidad, no en vano señaló que, “el hombre puede considerar cómo los descubrimientos más difíciles, el arte del gobierno y el arte de la educación”, que es con la cual inicia el proceso por el cual el ser humano se hace humano a saber; el de la civilización y la cultura, elementos intrínsecos en la esfera de la educación que es la base del desarrollo de las personas en particular, y de la humanidad en general, por lo cual las tesis sobre educación en el texto de la pedagogía deben ser revisadas, sugiriendo que el proyecto educativo cosmopolita es la mejor vía para propiciar una educación que tienda al bien universal.

Sin embargo, para que la propuesta kantiana sea impulsada desde las instituciones educativas, se requiere replantear la tarea y función no solo de los padres, sino también del Estado en la esfera educativa y orientarla según los parámetros del cosmopolitismo, una filosofía que se ofrece como un deber ineludible y como una necesidad social generalizada. La definición de educación cosmopolita se presenta como un método de crecimiento humano que posibilita la identificación de seres con personalidad moral y jurídica en cada uno de nosotros.

Palabras clave

Educación, cosmopolitismo, pedagogía, humanidad, inclusión, Estado.

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Introduction

The philosophical system of the Kantian corpus mentions knowledge, morality, law and politics, but it lacks an essential piece of Kantian philosophy: *pedagogy*, which is part of the universal Kantian cosmopolitan project, and is within the works of practical philosophy, as it determines a set of postulates on the configuration of the human being and his action in the world, for which the educational process, which involves strong morality, is not only important, but is inescapable and essential for the development of humanity.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the perspective of the philosopher of Königsberg regarding the importance of education, pointing out the main processes to follow, pointing out roughly, discipline and instruction, as well as the importance of the State's position regarding educational institutions, since education, according to Kant (1803/2003, p. 35) is established as the essential task of humanity, for that reason he said that man can consider the art of government and the art of education as the most difficult discoveries; in this sense, the responsibility of the State for the education of the people will also be reviewed. It is in pedagogy (1803/2003, p. 96), that Kant points out that, “for the public authorities and for the cosmopolitan, it is pivotal to know an institution because from it emerges a radically new organization of human affairs”. The foundations for a pluralistic and tolerant coexistence are established from cosmopolitanism.

Given the current different educational systems, in which it seems that the field of education has yielded to the field of educational profitability, forgetting the essential task and function of education, it is urgent to review the process by which the human being becomes human, i.e., that of civilization and culture, intrinsic elements in the field of education that is the basis for the development of people, but, because the issues of education are assumed mainly by the State, we must review the obligation and competence of the State for matters related with education. It is urgent to return to the essential task of education and, above all, to demand from heads of State a genuine commitment to education, since it is through education that we determine the type not only of citizen, but of human being that we want to have.

The methodology implemented is bibliographic review since it supports the technique and the treatment of information, favoring the references to the classical works of Kantian thought, which made possible the approach of the topic. The instruments used were phenomenological and hermeneutic method, whose objectives are to describe and interpret the essential structures of the discourse. The text is structured with a central theme: the considerations about education in Kantian philosophy, of which sections are articulated that address two axes of analysis, the first of them addresses the following question: What is to be understood by cosmopolitan education? the second section is about the importance of cosmopolitanism in public education, or towards the construction of a cosmopolitan education.

Considerations about Education in Kantian Philosophy

The issue of education is one of the major issues that continuously affects humanity as a whole and poses challenges. The so-called Kantian “major works” have always received greater attention, and some no less important writings have been left aside, such as the compilation of the notes on Pedagogy (1803/2003). Kant did not see this printed work and it was edited from the class notes he gave to the students at the University of Königsberg. However, since many ideas reappear in published works and in reflections, it would be possible to rely on them. Above all, there is a thesis to Kant (1803/2003) that returns continually, which must be authentic and states the following: “The project of an education plan must, however, be done in a cosmopolitan way” (p. 36).

Kant begins the text of *Pedagogy* (1803/2002), stating that: “Man is the only creature to be educated” and defines education as: “care (sustenance, maintenance), discipline and instruction, together with training” (p. 29).

Due to the size and nature of the domains that man must face, Kant sees education as one of the greatest challenges; moreover, it is certain that he will be in contact with other human beings who are *ends in themselves*, and whose freedom and autonomy cannot be violated or transgressed, but in which they must be influenced at the same time to civilize and moralize them, as he points out in the text of *Anthropology in a pragmatic sense*.

A tree that grows in the open field usually arches and twists, while in the forest it will grow very straight, because it cannot spread its branches, because other trees steal the sun and dispute the space [Kant, 1798/2007, p. 130].

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The figure of the unsociable sociability (*Ungesellige Geselligkeit*), appears again in the discourse, as that interaction between men in which the same opposition offers the possibility of refinement and development of the provisions that nature has conferred on them.

How, then, should such perfection be fostered, and from what side can it be expected? There is no other path except education. It must be adapted to all purposes of nature and society, both civil and domestic. However, the education we receive at home and in school is still very poor, both in terms of cultivating talent, discipline and indoctrination, and in terms of character formation according to moral principles [Kant, 1764/2002, pp. 70-471].

Education is presented as a dialectical process, since for Kant (1803/2003) “it teaches something to man and, in part, it also educates him”. From this point arises the Kantian thesis that postulates education as an art, because it is not the result of an immediate action, but has a long process. In addition, it should be noted that ‘it is not by working alone with men how natural provisions can be developed’ (p. 36).

Since the human being is not the only being on earth, he has to be constantly in relation and correspondence with others, and in order to achieve a minimum degree of communication and intelligibility, he must know the assumptions under which they move and rule. As a society, we have to have a common goal and work towards society or humanity as a whole. Kant (1803/2003) points out that it is undeniable efforts towards the education of people, as it is the safest and most reliable way to remove them from barbarism and savagery and asserts that “only by education

can man become a man” (p. 31). This is the seal that pedagogy imprints on humanity.

The human being cannot act merely by impulses, as it would remain on the same plane as the other species; education is one of the basic criteria of differentiation among living beings. Kant (1803/2003) points out that, “for this reason only men are those who educate men, this task cannot be performed by anyone but by the human gender, which must gradually take out of itself, with its own effort, all the natural provisions of humanity” (p. 32).

Nature has conferred man various provisions such as law, morality, freedom, etc., which should have as a guiding axis, as a guideline, because reason is unique to human beings, not instincts or impulses, characteristics that are shared with other animals. As Kant points out (1803/2003), “reason is another provisions that man must develop and perfect” (p. 35).

But a man needs a reason of his own, he does not have any instinct, and he himself must build his behavior. But since he is not ready to do so immediately, but comes uneducated to the world, it must be built by the others (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 30).

It is required that man be educated to develop these *natural provisions* and using them in the deployment and use of his freedom, would consider the structuring of a behavior plan, which considers others, but at the same time responds to the needs and demands of people. (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 31).

However, education is a long process that accounts for the participation of multiple generations. This is because, as a result of our limited number, we depend on the wisdom of our ancestors to move forward. By our finite nature, we need the knowledge of our ancestors to move forward. If there was no way to do that, we would be going around in circles to always respond to and solve the same problems and meet the needs of men in the same way; so, our position would never change, there would be no progress. In Kant (1803/2003, p. 31), education covers discipline and instruction, and it is not possible to find an end point in it. It can therefore be said, in general, that the goal of education is “the development of natural dispositions”, and it is achieved by parents, who seek the adaptation of children to the “present world, even if it is corrupted” (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 33).

Kant establishes four levels through which man must be educated: (1) discipline, (2) culturization, (3) civilization (or prudence), and (4) moralization (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 38).

Education is presented as one of the tasks given *a priori* to man, which must be deployed among his fellow human beings and, specifically, with his children.

This duty necessarily also results in the right of parents to *guardianship* and training of the child, while not yet having the use of his or her bodily limbs and understanding, in addition to nurturing and caring for him or her, educating him or her *pragmatically*, so that in the future he or she can support and earn a living for himself or herself, as *morally* [Kant, 1787/1999, § 29. p. 281].

Kant (1803/2003) argues that: “*discipline* turns animality into humanity, therefore it must be merely negative, since it subjects man to the laws of humanity, and this is what will make men feel its coercion, so it must be done early” (p. 30). Kant does not adopt a moralistic attitude, he speaks sober cognitive language and not so much a normative one, thus avoiding a hasty morality. Cognitively, he says that when the child is young he learns better the issues to be governed, but he does not attach him so much to morality, since Kant points out (1803/2003, p. 80), that it is not wise to talk to children about something that for them would not yet have a meaning in their subjectivity.

It is important to point out the relevance of discipline at an early age, as it subjects man to the laws of humanity and begins to make him feel his coercion, but Kant points out (1803/2003, p. 38), “this must be done at an early age, because later it is very difficult to change man”. Education must respect freedom, as long as it does the same with others.

Cultivation, for Kant (1803/2003, p. 38), “includes instruction and teaching which provide a certain ability which is the possession of some faculty by which the proposed ends are attained.”

Regarding *civilization or prudence*, Kant (1803/2003) argues that “prudence indicates that it is necessary for man to adapt to human society in order to be loved and have influence. Here emerges a certain type of teaching called *civility*, which requires good manners, kindness and prudence” (p. 38). In this area of education, parents should take special care and interest, while:

They cannot destroy their son as an *artifact* of their own (since such a being cannot be endowed with freedom) and as a property of their own, nor can they abandon him to his fate, because they brought not only a being into the world with him, but also a citizen of the world [Kant, 1787/1999, § 28, p. 281].



As for *Moralization*, Kant (1803/2003, p. 38) states that “man must not only be skilled for all purposes but must also have a criterion according to which he chooses only the good ones”. These ends are those that each one necessarily approves and that, at the same time, can be ends for all.

The doctrine of the *Critique of Practical Reason* method of Kant [1788/1989, p.159] is also concerned with this task by developing not moral philosophy, but *moral education*, so that the teaching of ethics offered in many countries could learn from it.

Two main areas can be distinguished in education: the development of natural arrangements and the implementation of art in its broadest sense. The first one represents the formation of man himself, his configuration, the second one is reflected in teaching and instruction. The question then arises: to what demands must the formation of man, nature or civil society respond? The answer is to both, as they must be taken into account for education, a primary rule in the formation of civilized man.

The role of the State in education

In general, there are two figures in charge of the education and instruction of men, namely parents and the State. Parents “commonly seek only to bring their children forward in the world”, Kant (1803/2003, p. 36). On the other hand, there are *alternative educators*, the rulers, in terms of how they organize the state and society, how they structure the model of education they want for the people, for citizens or future citizens.

On the basis of the creation of an educational structure or plan is the old discussion of who should take care of education, as well as the expenses it generates, the people (individuals) or the State (the public entity of government)? As Kant (2004, 2004) points out, “people believe that the expenses of the education of the youth do not belong to them, but to the State” (p. 128).

Kant points out in *The Metaphysics of Customs* [1787/1999] that “Education is an absolute natural duty of parents” [General Comment. Paragraph D, p. 330]. Although the process begins at home — and is therefore the responsibility of parents — it is worth noting that this education is still very poor, as the necessary elements are not available to cover the essential elements in the education of men. The state is the institution that can implement appropriate education that develops people’s talents and helps shape their moral character (not determine it).

State leaders and rulers have an obligation to educate those under their leadership (Kant 1803/2003, p. 98). There are several reasons why

one can not only ask them, but demand that they bear the costs of education. The clearest and most direct example relates to the collection of taxes, as well as the commitment made to people in assuming the task of their leadership, which undoubtedly is part of humanity, and which must be oriented towards constant progress to the best.

The problem lies in the fact that the rulers seem to have forgotten why man decides to abandon the unrestricted use of his freedom and enter a civil society. All they are doing now is to consolidate their power and, if possible, to extend their limits both internally and externally, by seeking ever more control over their citizens, and by expanding their power among States.

As long as States waste all their strength in their violent attempts of expansion, continually obstructing the slow effort of the way of thinking of their citizens — depriving them of any support in this regard — nothing of this nature can be expected: because it requires a vast internal transformation of each community in order to train its citizens. But all good that it is not grafted into a morally good feeling is nothing but sheer appearance and dazzling misery [Kant, 1784/2006, p. 54].

In the effort to extend its dominions to other States, it is when the sovereign forgets or ignores the task of educating the people, for, as Kant points out (1798/2004): “the State, for its part, hardly has anything available to pay capable teachers who dedicate themselves to their functions because it needs everything for war” (p.128).

Apparently, the State is not interested in the education of its people. It does not provide the necessary and relevant conditions that guide man to discipline, the cultivation of humanity, civilization and moralization, nor does it realize that a strong State depends on the education given to the people.

If the State does not show the interest it should in this matter, even less does it in an educational project or plan. He is concerned only with strengthening his external power and subjecting the people to a state of complete ignorance, thus seeking to make its citizens totally passive and not carry out, as Kant puts it, *the human task of thinking*.

It is surprising and at the same time disappointing to see how governments adapt curricula to their interests, to the politics in vogue, without even a minimal analysis of the real conditions in which humanity finds itself; for this reason “the whole mechanism of this education has no unity, it is not drawn up and applied according to a plan meditated from above, that meets its purposes, and if it is not kept according to it” (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 128).



The role of the State in education is to cultivate and educate men, the people, and realize that if the necessary areas for integral education (discipline, culturization, civilization, and moralization) are not covered, this will have a negative impact by moving away from the improvement of humanity, which results in the pretensions of uniformity, in outbreaks of intolerance to everything that is presented to us as opposed.

Thus, for example, even if our leaders have no money left for public educational establishments — or in general for anything that concerns a better world — because all their resources are mortgaged in advance for the next war, they will realize that it is in their interest not to at least impede their people's own efforts — indeed weak and slow — in this regard [Kant, 1784/2006, p. 58].

This is a crucial thesis in Kantian thought. While the State emphasizes tasks outside the education of the people, it should not present any objection to the people taking education into their hands. Kant calls for respect for the right of man to make *public use of his reason*, to be allowed to seek the means he deems most appropriate to forge a critical spirit without reprisals from the State; something that is not always easy to achieve.

For the author, another task of the State in education is to change old “customs and practices” that occur in its organization. “In order for a State to be healthy, it is desirable and necessary that from time to time it reforms itself using evolution rather than revolution” (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 128).

In the text *Practical Anthropology* [1798/2007], Kant states: “the means to improve civil society and its political constitution are: (1) education, (2) legislation, and (3) religion” [Kant, 1798/2007, p.131]. Education is the cornerstone for humanity to move towards progress, towards the best. The leaders of the State should stop and reflect further on the advantages of committing themselves to the education of their people.

But it is an observation as important for a speculative spirit as it is sad for a friend of man to see how the powerful, most of the time, take care of themselves only and do not contribute to the important experiments of education, so that nature moves a little more towards perfection (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 32).

The State presents as the most effective tool to develop the task that history has placed on humanity, *the constant progress of the human being towards the best*. For this to be carried out, it must be considered that the mission of education, of pedagogy, is to seek the improvement of the human



race, even if it occurs after many centuries; the central point is to maintain the purpose, and advance towards the goal. The task of the State is to help promote and develop *cosmopolitan education* that encompasses humanity.

What is cosmopolitan education?

If talking about the objective that humanity must achieve through education, it is necessary to point out that this task is not a utopian horizon. In Kant (1803/2003), “the idea of an education that develops in men all its natural dispositions is undoubtedly true” (p.33).

I believe that Kant offers one of the best alternatives to achieve the development of humanity and the deployment of the dispositions of men through a cosmopolitan education, so it is worth noting its meaning and the categories proper to the term.

I understand cosmopolitan education as one that contributes to the formation of the individual from a practical philosophical perspective, in which the human being adopts an integrative position with respect to the rest of humanity. The cosmopolitan is required to transcend interests (whether of groups, states, or nations) to work together to achieve a pluralistic, open, and inclusive community, in the interests of better universal coexistence.

Education is cosmopolitan because it aims to contribute directly to the great good of the world, since it seeks the integration of humanity, the inclusion of human beings. In the writings on pedagogy Kant (1803/2003) states it as follows: “The art of education or pedagogy needs to be reasoned, if it is to develop human nature so that it can reach its destiny” (p. 35)

It is understood that the entire private good, even the common good of the state itself, must abandon its narcissistic posture of power. Kant (1787/2000) does not specifically refer to the political conditions of the State, as he does not mention them at all in the pedagogy. The term *cosmopolitan* alludes to the categorical imperative and focuses, as in the canon of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the whole world; it means the true panoramic view that overcomes any narrower perspective, even that specific to a species, and is fixed in the ultimate end [p. 456]. Education is cosmopolitan because it aims to contribute directly to the greatest good of the world.

In the section that corresponds to the *Reflections on Anthropology*, Rodríguez (1989, AK. XV 517) points out that Kant opposes the son of the earth to the citizen of the world. In the first case, it is not about



anything but business and things that influence our well-being. In the second, it matters humanity, the whole world, the origin of things, the internal value, the ultimate ends. The focus is, once again, on the *cosmopolitan* concept, and more specifically on the first element of the term 'cosm', which in this case should be understood as the universe in its order (which is, after all, moral), because it appeals to the recognition of freedom and consideration as *ends in itself*, of men.

He who deals "with nature only to increase knowledge in theoretical consideration" is called, according to Kant in the work *Opus postumum* [1920/1991 p. XXI 553], as *cosmotheoros*, i.e., "contemplator of the world", which Kant opposes by the cosmopolitan, understood not as an educated man who has traveled the world, and knows how to move in it, but as a person who "observes the nature around him in practical respect to exercise his benevolence towards it [Kant, 1920/1/1 991, XXVII 2, 673].

Unlike *cosmotheoros* only committed to knowledge, cosmopolitanism is characterized by a practical and even moral-practical attitude. What is decisive is not the existence of political institutions, but, again, that man is a person, which Kant explains in the corresponding part of the *Opus postumum* as being moral.

But cosmopolitan knowledge does not ignore traditional philosophical knowledge. It only relativizes it by understanding all knowledge with a reference to the essential goals of humanity, so that it is not performed merely in a theoretical way. Most interpreters overlook the fact that wisdom, in the cosmopolitan concept of philosophy, is taught by both instruction and example.

Cosmopolitan education must contribute to a formation in which men are oriented to a critical and inclusive position; it must direct their efforts towards an education that promotes tolerance, respect and dignity of human beings wherever they are in the world; to educate, "to enlighten the people is to publicly teach them their duties and rights vis-à-vis the State to which they belong" (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 123). Moreover, not only vis-à-vis the State to which he belongs, but as a citizen of the world from his human situation, which would prevent any kind of aggression towards us.

Cosmopolitan education is far from a proposal in which man remains as a mere spectator of the world, it is required to foster an analysis and understanding about the transcendence of respect, tolerance, internal value, and consideration of ultimate ends.

If arguing the negative, it will be said that the violation of human rights and the outbreaks of racism and intolerance that emerge dangerously in various parts of the world, is a wake-up call about how difficult



these problems are, and the urgency of solving them, but doing so with a serious project, which, although it will yield long-term results, will be more effective than if the conflict is only solved in an emergent way with some program that responds to the fashion or political demand of the State, but not to the underlying problem.

As human beings, we have inalienable rights, which should not be limited to one group of men. The touchstone of cosmopolitan education is precisely that the formation process emphasizes that the same rights apply to all people, and that they cannot be undermined or alienated by racial or cultural arguments.

If, as Echo (2010, p. 283) points out through William of Baskerville, character of the novel *The Name of the Rose* “and from the point of view of the raw material, you are not better than her”, then we are on a symmetry level, no one has a preponderant place compared to others. This invalidates racial positions that look to place themselves in a privileged position with respect to other cultures and, with rational arguments, to dominate them.

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Ultimately, for the good of the world, it all comes from education, which the government should take much more care of, with particular regard to religion and morality. However, they do not take much care to act according to the law, since, having power in their hands, they can impose the immoral through violence. therefore, they prefer that schools teach reading, writing, and calculating on the basis of education based on religion rather than on the basis of morality and its imprint (Kant, 1798/2004, p. 128-129).

Education must be reconsidered in accordance with the needs and demands of humanity, since it is the guiding axis of humanity and there is no other way to prepare, to train the human being for participation in the public sphere. In this sense, the educational policies of the State should be reviewed and, if necessary, reformulated. Today's education demands more than reading and writing, it requires instruction in the recognition and respect of human beings. It may sound naive, but we need a resurgence of humanism.

Humanity must also be a moral community, the realm of ends. Such a form of community is important, as it sets obligations for individuals and make them concern for their life chances and obligations that should constrain our moral status and powers, which have to be consistent with our moral obligations towards humanity (Granja and Leyva, 2008, p. 137).

This is what cosmopolitan education aims at, to consider a free and equal world for all people and will be responsible for reorienting humanity towards this goal as a chronic horizon, as Rodríguez says (1989, Refl.1471a, pp. 650-751[1790s.]), i.e., if we do not reach the goal, at least we are working to find that man is a human being committed to humanity.

The cosmopolitan education must take the principle of art that Kant points out in the pedagogy.

One principle of the art of education, which should be borne in mind by the men who make their plans, is that children should not be educated according to the present, but according to a better state, possible in the future, of the human species, i.e., according to the idea of humanity and its complete destiny. This principle is of the utmost importance (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 36).

This principle fits with Kant's cosmopolitan position, which seeks the total integration of human beings from a panoramic perspective under a goal to achieve in common, a shared commitment for the sake of a better humanity. To conquer this goal, we must assume that position as our own, because it is necessary to take it as a regulatory idea of reason, we must genuinely join in a community of efforts to at least get closer to the realm of ends. Likewise, Kant (1803/2003) states:

Parents in general do not educate their children except in view of the present world, although it is very corrupted. Instead, they should be educated so that a better state can be produced later. But there are two obstacles: (a) fathers only care, ordinarily, that their children prosper in the world; and (b) princes consider their subjects only as instruments of their desires (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 36).

These obstacles can be overcome if education is reformulated and oriented toward a cosmopolitan view. This educational project is theoretical and practical and is strongly influenced by the current discussion on protectionism and human rights and, of course, how they should be presented and taught in our schools.

The importance of cosmopolitanism in public education. (Towards the Construction of a Cosmopolitan Education)

Many of the challenges we face today are related with education at some point. It is clear to Kant that man, and humanity in general, will only achieve the highest political good, through the cultivation of the various

provisions that nature has conferred on him, which must be conquered throughout the development and historical progress of humanity.

In the text *Practical Anthropology*, Kant (1798/2007, p. 131) poses the following question: ‘what are the means to improve civil society and its political constitution?’ The author’s reply is emphatic: “1) education, 2) legislation, and 3) religion” [p. 89].

The place of education in the Kantian project and in the project of practical philosophy is pivotal insofar as education must be aided by rules and laws to constrain the autonomy of men and religion, considered essential areas of choice of every free will. The last two issues are not addressed in this paper, which is limited to the education aspect.

It should be noted that when Kant [1798/2007, p.131] points out that education, legislation, and religion are the means to improve civil society, there is an addition in the text that states: “all three must be public and conform to nature”. *Man is humanized* through education, and it is *really the first entry point into the public*. At present, it is necessary that this entry into the public leads to the inclusion of people, however, it must be based on very specific conditions that have shaped their conception of the world. To adopt a reductionist position in which only the local is valid is to place oneself in an overpowering relativism, which threatens—whether we want it or not, whether we realize it or not—against other lifestyles that are finally under which we can demand respect for the diversity of individuals that inhabit the planet. Given that contemporary schooling encourages purely localist loyalty confined to areas of the nation-state, and often underestimates the plight of other humans, man does not come to the end of his existence in any way, so a commitment to humanity must be fostered today.

What matters is that the child learns to think from its particularity. Again, in a very contemporary way, Kant mixes this perspective with a notion of development that directs us towards the achievement of humanity’s ultimate goal. It does so by focusing not only on the present but also on future generations.

In what order can progress toward the best be expected? Here is the answer: not the course of things from the bottom up, but from the top down. Through the formation of youth, under family leadership and then in schools, from the lower to the higher levels, with an intellectual and moral culture reinforced by religious teaching, one would finally come not only to educate good citizens, but to educate for the good all that can always progress (Kant, 1798/2004, pp. 127-128).



Kant points out (1803/2003,) “the heart of this task lies in the education of the youth, and says that by it, it will be shown that one’s own ends will not be attained if others are not allowed to attain their own” (p.27). We must understand that we are part of a vast and intricate network of connections that intersect with us from many different directions. We cannot act as if the world were simply our immediate environment or adopt an attitude of complete detachment from the circumstances that present us as unknown or alien to our reality. As Gutiérrez points out (2023, p. 171). “Against utilitarianism, humanism must ensure the health of the soul to avoid becoming mere beings in fact, lacking humanity.” What Kant’s practical philosophy (1803/2003) shows is “the *urgent need* for us to commit ourselves to a common project from a common base, and for that it is necessary to consider what can be shared with humanity” (p. 36). The solution is to protect the intrinsic rights of individuals, including their autonomy, independence, and sense of dignity, namely, human rights.

Every culture begins with individuals, and from here it extends to others, the slow approximation of human nature to its end, is only possible through the efforts of people, of feelings quite large to be interested in a better world, and able to conceive the idea of a more perfect future state (Kant, 1803/2003, pp. 37-38).

Education is the best means of socializing human beings, knowledge and ideas are exchanged, so why not give education the duty to foster a diverse and inclusive society? One of the main responsibilities of cosmopolitan education is to clearly represent the different without pretending to belittle it and showing ourselves different from the rest of the others, but emphasizing that, despite our differences, or perhaps because of them, it is how we can work in favor of a common project that leads humanity towards the realization of the ultimate end:

The foundations of an education must be made cosmopolitaneously. Is the universal good an idea that can be harmful to our particular good? In no way. Although it seems that some sacrifice must be made for it, nevertheless, the good of its present state is favored. And then what noble consequences accompany him! A good education is precisely the origin of all good in the world. It is necessary that the germs that lie in man become increasingly developed (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 36).

Behind education lies the great secret of the perfection of human nature. It must be realized that the particular good is not necessarily opposite to the universal good, on the contrary, the universal good is possible thanks to the sum of the particular goods. Education must seek the

construction of this sum of goods through cosmopolitanism. You have to go back to the panoramic view to identify the specific in general, and the general in the specific:

Human beings are united by many bonds: by bonds of love and compassion as much as by bonds of profit, by the love of justice as much as by the need for justice. Real people often respond narrowly or arbitrarily unequally to the needs of others. But education can go a long way towards making these bonds deeper, more comprehensive and more impartial (Nussbaum, 2007, p. 165).

The needs of others are unequally met for many and varied reasons. What is important is the lack of awareness, in reference to the problems facing humanity in other parts of the world. This may be due to multiple factors, including that we are unaware of the events other human beings are going through, or we feel that what happens elsewhere is beyond our reach and circumstances, and that their problems do not affect us, not realizing that with our indifference and apathy we collaborate negatively to keep such events occurring. A very serious but inevitable issue is that the freedoms and guarantees that we enjoy by virtue of our humanity are unknown. They are often violated, and we do not do anything because we do not know that these kinds of legal protections protect us.

Even if nations should generally base education and political debate on shared national values, commitment to basic human rights should be part of any national education system, and, in a sense, this commitment would lead to the unity of many nations (Nussbaum, 1999, p. 16).

We must build the framework for the foundation of a cosmopolitan education, in human rights. To the extent that it has universalist aspirations, but does not exclude particularities, Kantian cosmopolitanism presents itself as a viable alternative for the construction of a pluralistic, fair, and inclusive society. This claim can be placed on human rights.

For the Stoics, education is about good civic citizenship, which is what educates for global citizenship. Since it intends to unite us in a kind of united front against outbreaks of intolerance, racism and violence that escalate with greater force, cosmopolitanism is a commitment to the defense of the human being.

In addition to being one of the most pressing problems facing our society, education is also one of our highest moral obligations. The formation of good citizens would therefore result in good human beings. The teaching of human rights would surely be a good starting point in



the long and nascent route of cosmopolitan education, about which Gutmann, in Nussbaum (1999) points out the following:

Most nations teach — let alone practice — nothing like basic human rights, including the right to freedom of expression and religious freedom; equal treatment and equal protection under the law; education and economic security; and equal representation in a truly democratic politics (p. 83).

What would have a positive consequence, at least in principle, is that communities, whatever they may be, would be taught a recognized place and should be respected and treated with dignity. It is commonly asserted that the contemporary transcendence of cosmopolitanism lies in educating children from their own lifestyles, but with an eye on the cultures of others. The goal of cosmopolitan education is to introduce people to the concept of pluralism and to help them understand that being different from others does not diminish or deny anyone; rather, it is on the other hand that we are able to distinguish ourselves from the rest of humanity. If we were all the same, where would diversity come from? Being separated from the other is, in my opinion, one of the biggest losses that people can experience. In this sense, Walzer (1998) points out the following:

The goal of cosmopolitan education is not to teach children what differences are supposed to be, but to teach children, who are supposedly different, to be different in the right way (p. 87).

Under no circumstances could cosmopolitanism be viewed as a “theory” that attempts to assign human beings a hierarchy of importance. What cosmopolitanism seeks is state that our differences should not be considered as deficiencies, rather they should be taken as a possibility of complementarity with others; an inclusive point of view that values pluralism, exists only in systems that consider all people and is not based on the experiences of individual, children or members of a particular community or social group. Nussbaum (1999) points out that this is where the State must demand that the various educational institutions teach ideals that support pluralistic, free, peaceful and democratic cooperation among peoples:

In educational terms, this means that students in the United States, for example, can still regard themselves as beings defined in part by their particular affections: their families, their religious, ethnic, or racial communities, or even their country. But they must also, and fundamentally, learn to recognize humanity wherever they find it, without being dete-

red by traits that are alien to them, and be willing to understand humanity no matter how strange their disguises may be (p. 20).

The draft of a cosmopolitan constitution, as the concept indicates, has to cover the largest number of countries (States). This does not undermine the power status of nation-states. If the States were engaged in this adventure, they would be working for the formation of citizens committed to their localities, but with a holistic, universal look, and then we could say that we would be in favor of achieving the highest political good of humanity. According to Walzer (1998), confederations can also teach a minimal curriculum focused on a history of coexistence and joint cooperation, and on the institutions in which such coexistence is embodied (p. 85).

Education should cultivate the skills and virtues of democratic citizenship in all students, including the ability to deliberate on the demands of justice for all individuals. Political deliberation and participation lose importance when the view that people are ends in themselves is disregarded.

Cosmopolitan education offers the possibility of learning more about us through the dialectical relationships we establish with others. Learning to value, to listen and to recognize others as *equal beings in rights*, but *different in particularities*, would offer the possibility of establishing increasingly diverse relationships without discussing in a respectful, deliberate, and democratic way issues essential for human coexistence seems to be an unsolvable problem:

Our author cared above all about the establishment of a universal order based on law, moreover, as a corollary of this new international order and world peace, Kant did not hesitate to elevate dignity and human rights to its highest expression, above any other principle or interest. To achieve this objective, it is essential that nations (here the term “nation” is used as a synonym for the State) renounce their claims, their localist interests in the interest of the development of international law, human rights and a *universal educational system* that promotes tolerance, rationality, and freedom among individuals (Llano, 2002, p. 145-146).

In my opinion, the school is presented as the first space in which recognition is really played through confrontation with others, hence it has been pointed out that the school is the first entry into the public, however, generally educational institutions are either public or private.

But how can private education outstrip public education, or outstrip public education? In general, public education seems to be more ad-



vantageous than private education, not only in terms of skill, but also in terms of the character of the citizen. It is very common for domestic education not only not to correct the faults of the family, but to increase them (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 42).

Public schools are under the responsibility of the State; in the case of Mexico, the territorial entities have federal schools that, as its name indicates, depend on the federal government, but there are also state schools, which depend on the consideration of the state authorities. For its operation there is general (federal) education legislation, along with specific education laws for each of the 32 states. However, they are not fully autonomous, since the Ministry of Public Education, which regulates education issues and dictates educational plans, programs, and models to be implemented at each of the levels and school subsystems, is the State that determines the educational plans and curricula to be implemented. In contrast to public schools are private schools, which are the responsibility of the State, only in terms of regulations, but leaves a certain range of autonomy so that they can add content or extra activities to those marked by official plans and programs. These institutions respond to particular demands of different character, from religious situations, groups or “social classes” or membership or local affiliations, etc.

Private schools are presented as directed to a particular class or social group and reserve the right to provide their services. This type of education tends to be positionist and privileged only by virtue of being a member of a particular group; recognition is not earned, it is granted, something that is otherwise misleading.

As long as education is established as public in the Constitution (article 3, 2022B), it is common to all people, everyone has access to it and educational services cannot be denied under assumptions of race, group membership or religion, as doing so would exclude a part of its population (hence, in many countries, it has been decreed that the institution is secular and free). As Cepeda (2022, p. 213) points out, “education as a fundamental right involves a reconversion of the signifiers that constitute it, i.e., it no longer focuses on the figure of the State but on the uniqueness of the individual recognizing him as a subject of law”. To achieve this, it is intended that education be presented as neutral as possible, without attachment to ideologies, needs or characteristics of a group or sector of society.

Public education has its most obvious advantages here, since it learns to measure its strengths and the limitations imposed by the right of another; it enjoys no privilege because resistance is found everywhere,

and it excels only by merit itself; it is the education that gives the best image of the future citizen (Kant, 1803/2003, p. 43).

In public school, it is assumed that *we are all equal*, there is no preference, no special privilege or treatment. The public space is conquered by the individual, and he has to establish relationships with his other companions, make himself heard and listen to the other, he has to search for his own space and, at the same time, respect the space of the other, because if he does not, he will be in trouble, since he cannot violate the right of others. Relationships must be mediated through the rules imposed by the school, which has the enormous responsibility and opportunity to shape the character of individuals.

The possibility of consolidating a cosmopolitan education fits perfectly into public education, as it is the place where different forms and lifestyles, thoughts and customs converge, and all must be respected, as there is no privileged place absolutely for anyone. The positioning of the subjects depends on themselves, cosmopolitan education demands a strong and serious commitment in the teaching of shared values, tolerance, human rights, and exercises of deliberative and democratic practices that contribute to the formation of inclusive and tolerant subjects (who will become citizens).

It would be interesting to propose that, in the curriculum, in addition to one's own history, a subject be opened that adopts other histories from a humanistic and formative point of view rather than merely informative. There is much to be said about how these concepts can be implemented in the curricula at different levels, but that discussion is for a further paper.

According to Nussbaum's argument (1999), the importance of implementing a cosmopolitan education, which addresses issues in favor of multiculturalism, "is weakened by not being able to contemplate education, as one of its central elements, a wider world respect" (p. 26).

We have locked ourselves into our own ideas and beliefs and lost the horizon of intellect by forgetting the place of others. It would be interesting to know the gaze of the "others" towards us. We do not work for an inclusive society. We have forgotten to commit ourselves as a humanity to a common goal that cries out for our attention. We believe that not being in the place where the events take place exempts us from participating in the denouncement and, why not, from seeking an alternative solution to conflicts.

Cosmopolitan education seeks the integration of men as men. Education needs to be more humanistic and committed to educating citizens who are committed to themselves and others.



Kant's perspective on many and varied issues has placed him as one of the most influential minds in human history. I consider that the educational proposal reflected in *Pedagogy* is salvageable and has much to tell us from a legal-political position of its practical philosophy.

Education, from a Kantian perspective, must be taught from a cosmopolitanist perspective, since it offers the bases that will contribute to the development of the natural dispositions of men with a view to achieving the highest good of humanity (or the highest political good, which is what will lead us to perpetual peace). Nussbaum (1999) puts it this way:

If, as I believe we should, we embrace Kantian morality with all its consequences, we need to educate our children to care about it. Otherwise, we merely educate a nation of moral hypocrites who speak the universalist language, but whose universe, on the contrary, has a restricted and self-serving scope (p. 24).

The commitment that the State must adopt (of course, shared with private institutions) is to develop curricular proposals that educate the individual to insert himself, from his own and particular world of life, into global citizenship, and it requires the teaching of shared values, respect, tolerance, and exercises of deliberative and democratic practices that contribute to the formation of inclusive and tolerant subjects (who will later be citizens). All this with a strict knowledge of human rights with respect to ourselves and others. This requires that public education no longer be part of the machinery that the state uses for its own purposes and interests.

We must review the role we play, and how we do it, in the education of our children, students, etc. We must examine the precepts and parameters according to which education is carried out, from the perspective of Kantian thought.

Conclusions

Kant's perspective on many and varied topics has placed him as one of the greatest philosophers in human history. I believe that the educational proposal reflected in pedagogy can be rescued and have much to tell us from its practical philosophy. Kant points out in the pedagogy that the two most difficult things that man has discovered are "the art of government and the art of education", however, two centuries after Kant made his statement, there is still discussion about these ideas that far from losing impact, gain more force. Kant offers a solid analysis of the process



that humanity has carried out and the direction it must follow to reach its final destination without undervaluing itself.

Indeed, social conditions have changed, which is why the question, Why do we still not make progress on these issues? Presents as a kind of claim that requires the most urgent attention of humanity as a whole. Perhaps history is proving Kant right, when in Anthropology he made the harsh claim that we have civilized ourselves to excess, but we have not moralized; the answer seems to be positive, many areas of science and technology have seen progress, but the field of humanities seems to have stopped. Kant offers, in my opinion, the best theoretical position regarding the process that has been carried out by humanity and, the orientation that has to be followed to reach its final destination, without it coming to undervalue itself. In this sense, efficiency, technology and economic performance are not the main factors in education, rather, education must contribute to the realization of humanity, and this realization can be achieved through cosmopolitan education, which presents as an alternative for humanity to reach its destiny, although this can be considered a utopia.

The cosmopolitan education should be taken as a regulatory idea, given the view of utopia that it entails, for them it is essential that the commitment to adopt the State (of course, is also a task shared by private institutions), to assume the commitment to educate, and to develop and promote curricular proposals that educate the individual to be able to insert, from their own and particular world of life, to the world citizenship, for which it is required the teaching of shared values, respect, tolerance, exercises of deliberative and democratic practices that contribute to the formation of subjects (who will later be citizens) inclusive and tolerant, based on a strict knowledge of human rights towards ourselves and others; for this reason, it is necessary that public education is no longer part of the machinery that the state uses for its own purposes and interests.

Note

- 1 The references to Kant's works belong to the classical edition of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences, currently the German Academy of Sciences, (Kant's *Gesammelte Schriften* herausgegeben von der Königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin) and are enclosed in square brackets [.]. Even works in Spanish, as they are direct translations. The rest of the above works are quoted in normal brackets.



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