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Concluding remark  
on the resolution of the mathematical-transcendental  
ideas, and preamble to the resolution of the  
dynamic-transcendental ideas.<sup>78</sup>

When we represented the antinomy of pure reason in a table through all the transcendental ideas, where we showed the ground of this conflict and the only means of removing it – which consisted in declaring both of the opposed assertions to be false – we in all cases represented the conditions for their conditioned as belonging to relations of space and time, which is the usual presupposition of common human understanding, on which, therefore, the conflict entirely rested. In this respect all dialectical representations of totality in the series of conditions for a given conditioned were of the **same kind**<sup>d</sup> throughout. There was always a series, in which the condition was connected with the conditioned as a member of the series, and thereby was **homogeneous**,<sup>e</sup> since the regress is never thought of as completed, or else, if this were to happen, a member conditioned in itself would have to be falsely as-

<sup>a</sup> continuous quantity

<sup>b</sup> discrete quantity

<sup>c</sup> *Principium*

<sup>d</sup> *von gleicher Art*

<sup>e</sup> *gleichartig*

sumed to be a first, and hence unconditioned member. Thus it would not always be the object,<sup>a</sup> i.e., the conditioned, but the series of conditions for it, which was so considered merely in its magnitude; and then the difficulty – which could not be removed by any compromise, but only by completely cutting the knot – consisted in the fact that reason made it either **too long** or **too short** for the understanding, so that the understanding could never come out equal to reason's idea.

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But in this we have overlooked an essential distinction governing the objects,<sup>b</sup> i.e., among the concepts of the understanding which reason aspires to raise to ideas, namely, that according to our table of categories two of them signify **mathematical**, but the other two a **dynamical** synthesis of appearances. Until now this was all right, since just as in the general representation of all transcendental ideas we always stayed only **within appearance**, so in the two mathematical-transcendental ideas we had no **object** other than one in appearance. Now, however, that we are progressing to **dynamical** concepts of the understanding, insofar as they are to be suited to the idea of reason, this distinction comes to be important, and opens up for us an entirely new prospect in regard to the suit in which reason has become implicated; whereas up to now it has been **dismissed** as based on false presuppositions on both sides, now perhaps in the dynamical antinomy there is a presupposition that can coexist with the pretensions of reason, and since the judge may make good the defects in legal grounds that have been misconstrued on both sides, the case can be **mediated** to the satisfaction of both parties, which could not be done in the controversy about the mathematical antinomy.

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The series of conditions are obviously all homogeneous to the extent that one looks solely at how far they **reach**: whether they conform to the idea, or are too big or too small for it. Yet the concept of understanding grounding these ideas contains either solely a **synthesis of homogeneous things** (which is presupposed in the case of every magnitude, in its composition as well as its division), or else a synthesis of **things not homogeneous**, which must be at least admitted in the case of the dynamical synthesis, in causal connection as well as in the connection of the necessary with the contingent.

Hence it is that in the mathematical connection of series of appearances, none other than a **sensible** condition can enter, i.e., only one that is itself a part of the series; whereas the dynamic series of sensible conditions, on the contrary, allows a further condition different in kind, one that is not a part of the series but, as merely **intelligible**, lies outside the series; in this way reason can be given satisfaction and the unconditioned can be posited prior to appearances without confounding

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<sup>a</sup> *Object*      *das Object*

<sup>b</sup> *Objecte*      *das Objecte*

the series of appearances, which is always conditioned, and without any violation of principles of the understanding.

Now by the fact that the dynamical ideas allow a condition of appearances outside the series of appearances, i.e., a condition that is not appearance, something happens that is entirely different from the result of the mathematical antinomy. In the latter it was the cause of the fact that both dialectically opposed assertions had to be declared false. The thoroughly conditioned character of what is in the dynamical series, on the contrary, which is inseparable from them as appearances, is connected with a condition that is empirically unconditioned, but also **nonsensible**, which gives satisfaction to the **understanding** on one side and to **reason** on the other,\* and while the dialectical arguments that seek unconditioned totality on the one side or the other collapse, the rational propositions, on the contrary, taken in such a corrected significance, may **both be true**; which could never have occurred with the cosmological ideas dealing merely with mathematically unconditioned unity, because with them there is no condition of the series of appearances that is not itself also an appearance, constituting as such a further member of the series.

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### III.

Resolution of the cosmological idea<sup>a</sup>  
of the totality of the derivation of occurrences in  
the world  
from their causes.

In respect of what happens, one can think of causality in only two ways: either according to **nature** or from **freedom**. The first is the connection of a state with a preceding one in the world of sense upon which that state follows according to a rule. Now since the **causality** of appearances rests on temporal conditions, and the preceding state, if it always existed, could not have produced any effect that first arose in time, the causality of the cause of what happens or arises has also

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\* For the understanding does not permit among **appearances** any condition that is itself empirically unconditioned. But if an **intelligible** condition, which therefore does not belong to the series of appearances as a member, may be thought for a conditioned (in appearance), without thereby interrupting in the least the series of empirical conditions, then such a condition could be admitted as **empirically unconditioned**, in such a way that no violation of the empirically continuous regress would occur anywhere.

<sup>a</sup> *Ideen* (plural); since the headings of the other three sections give this word in the singular, we do the same here.

**arisen**, and according to the principle of understanding it in turn needs a cause.<sup>a</sup>

By freedom in the cosmological sense, on the contrary, I understand the faculty of beginning a state **from itself**,<sup>b</sup> the causality of which does not in turn stand under another cause determining it in time in accordance with the law of nature. Freedom in this signification is a pure transcendental idea, which, first, contains nothing borrowed from experience, and second, the object of which also cannot be given determinately in any experience, because it is a universal law – even of the possibility of all experience – that everything that happens must have a cause, and hence that the causality of the cause, as **itself having happened** or arisen, must in turn have a cause; through this law, then, the entire field of experience, however far it may reach, is transformed into the sum total of mere nature. But since in such a way no absolute totality of conditions in causal relations<sup>c</sup> is forthcoming, reason creates the idea of a spontaneity, which could start to act from itself, without needing to be preceded by any other cause that in turn determines it to action according to the law of causal connection.

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It is especially noteworthy that it is this **transcendental** idea of **freedom** on which the practical concept of freedom is grounded, and the former constitutes the real moment of the difficulties in the latter,<sup>d</sup> which have long surrounded the question of its possibility. **Freedom in the practical sense** is the independence of the power of choice from **necessitation** by impulses of sensibility. For a power of choice is **sensible** insofar as it is **pathologically affected** (through moving-causes of sensibility); it is called an **animal** power of choice (*arbitrium brutum*) if it can be **pathologically necessitated**. The human power of choice is indeed an *arbitrium sensitivum*,<sup>e</sup> yet not *brutum*<sup>f</sup> but *liberum*,<sup>g</sup> because sensibility does not render its action necessary, but in the human being there is a faculty of determining oneself from oneself, independently of necessitation by sensible impulses.<sup>79</sup>

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It is easy to see that if all causality in the world of sense were mere nature, then every occurrence would be determined in time by another in accord with necessary laws, and hence – since appearances, insofar as they determine the power of choice, would have to render every action

<sup>a</sup> Kant notes: “The connection of effects and causes is not at all suited to things outside the world of sense; for how can God be a cause, be a being?” (E CLXXII, p. 51; 23:41)

<sup>b</sup> *von selbst*

<sup>c</sup> *Kausalverhältnisse*

<sup>d</sup> *dieser*, a feminine dative pronoun, which therefore agrees only with “freedom” in this context; if the text were emended to read *diesem*, it would refer to “concept.”

<sup>e</sup> sensible power of choice

<sup>f</sup> animal

<sup>g</sup> free

necessary as their natural consequence – the abolition of transcendental freedom would also simultaneously eliminate all practical freedom. For the latter presupposes that although something has not happened, it nevertheless **ought** to have happened, and its cause in appearance was thus not so determining that there is not a causality in our power of choice such that, independently of those natural causes and even opposed to their power and influence, it might produce something determined in the temporal order in accord with empirical laws, and hence begin a series of occurrences **entirely from itself**.

A 535/B 563

Here, then, as is generally found in the conflicts of reason with itself when it ventures beyond the boundaries of possible experience, the problem is really not **physiological** but **transcendental**. Hence the question of the possibility of freedom does indeed assail psychology, but since it rests merely on dialectical arguments of pure reason, its solution must be solely the business of transcendental philosophy. Now in order<sup>a</sup> to put transcendental philosophy, which cannot decline to provide a satisfying answer here, in a position to give one, I must first seek, through the following remark, to determine more closely its procedure in dealing with this problem.

A 536/B 564

If appearances were things in themselves, and hence space and time were the forms of things in themselves, then the conditions would always belong to one and the same series as the conditioned, and from this there would also arise in the present case the antinomy common to all transcendental ideas, that this series must unavoidably turn out to be either too large or too small for the understanding. But the dynamical concepts of reason, with which we are concerned in this and the following number, have the peculiarity that since they do not consider their object as a magnitude but have to do only with its **existence**, one can thus abstract from the magnitude of the series of conditions, and with them it is merely a matter of the dynamical relation<sup>b</sup> of condition to conditioned; thus the difficulty we encounter in the question about nature and freedom is only whether freedom is possible anywhere at all, and if it is, whether it can exist together with the universality of the natural law of causality, hence whether it is a correct disjunctive proposition that every effect in the world must arise **either** from nature **or** freedom, or whether instead **both**, each in a different relation, might be able to take place simultaneously in one and the same occurrence. The correctness of the principle of the thoroughgoing connection of all occurrences in the world of sense according to invariable natural laws is already confirmed as a principle of the transcendental analytic and will suffer violation. Thus the only question is whether, despite this, in re-

<sup>a</sup> Fifth edition: "And in order . . ."

<sup>b</sup> *Verhältnis*

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gard to the very same effect that is determined by nature, freedom might not also take place, or is this entirely excluded through that inviolable rule? And here the common but deceptive presupposition of the **absolute reality** of appearance immediately shows its disadvantageous influence for confusing reason. For if appearances are things in themselves, then freedom cannot be saved. Then nature is the completely determining cause, sufficient in itself, of every occurrence, and the condition for an occurrence is always contained only in the series of appearances that, along with their effect, are necessary under the law of nature. If, on the other hand, appearances do not count for any more than they are in fact, namely, not for things in themselves but only for mere representations connected in accordance with empirical laws, then they themselves must have grounds that are not appearances. Such an intelligible cause, however, will not be determined in its causality by appearances, even though its effects appear and so can be determined through other appearances. Thus the intelligible cause, with its causality, is outside the series; its effects, on the contrary, are encountered in the series of empirical conditions. The effect can therefore be regarded as free in regard to its intelligible cause, and yet simultaneously, in regard to appearances, as their result according to the necessity of nature; this is a distinction which, if it is presented in general and entirely abstractly, must appear extremely subtle and obscure, but in its application it will be enlightening. Here I have only wanted to note that since the thoroughgoing connection of all appearances in one context of nature is an inexorable law, it necessarily would have to bring down all freedom if one were stubbornly to insist on the reality of appearances. Hence even those who follow the common opinion about this matter have never succeeded in uniting nature and freedom with one another.

A 537/B 565

The possibility of causality through freedom unified with  
the universal law of natural necessity.<sup>80</sup>

A 538/B 566

I call **intelligible** that in an object of sense which is not itself appearance. Accordingly, if that which must be regarded as appearance in the world of sense has in itself a faculty which is not an object of intuition through which it can be the cause of appearances, then one can consider the **causality** of this being in two aspects, as **intelligible** in its **action** as a thing in itself, and as **sensible** in the **effects** of that action as an appearance in the world of sense. Of the faculty of such a subject we would accordingly form an empirical and at the same time an intellectual concept of its causality, both of which apply to one and the same effect.<sup>a</sup> Think-

<sup>a</sup> Kant adds in his copy of the first edition: "Transcendental definitions: The causality of representations of a being in respect of the objects of them is life. The determinability of the power of representation to this causality is the faculty of desire. This power of

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ing of the faculty of an object of sense in this double aspect does not contradict any of the concepts we have to form of appearances and of a possible experience. For since these appearances, because they are not things in themselves, must be grounded in a transcendental object determining them as mere representations, nothing hinders us from ascribing to this transcendental object, apart from the property through which it appears, also another **causality** that is not appearance, even though its **effect** is encountered in appearance. But every effective cause must have a **character**, i.e., a law of its causality, without which it would not be a cause at all. And then for a subject of the world of sense we would have first an **empirical character**, through which its actions, as appearances, would stand through and through in connection with other appearances in accordance with constant natural laws, from which, as their conditions, they could be derived; and thus, in combination with these other appearances, they would constitute members of a single series of the natural order. Yet second, one would also have to allow this subject an **intelligible character**, through which it is indeed the cause of those actions as appearances, but which does not stand under any conditions of sensibility and is not itself appearance. The first one could call the character of such a thing in appearance, the second its character as a thing in itself.

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Now this acting subject, in its intelligible character, would not stand under any conditions of time, for time is only the condition of appearances but not of things in themselves.<sup>81</sup> In that subject no **action** would **arise** or **perish**, hence it would not be subject to the law of everything alterable in its time-determination that everything **that happens** must find its cause **in the appearances** (of the previous state). In a word, its causality, insofar as it is intellectual, would not stand in the series of empirical conditions that makes the occurrence in the world of sense necessary. This intelligible character could, of course, never be known<sup>a</sup> immediately, because we cannot perceive anything except insofar as it appears, but it would have to be **thought** in conformity with the empirical character, just as in general we must ground appearances in thought through a transcendental object, even though we know nothing about it as it is in itself.

In its empirical character, this subject, as appearance, would thus be

representation, if it is reason, hence is the determinability of its causality in respect of objects, i.e., its faculty of desire [is] will. If pure reason has causality, then the will is a pure will, and its causality is called freedom.

"[Now] we cannot cognize [*a priori*] any causes, nor in general any intuitions corresponding to the categories, or relationships between them, but we must take all these from experience. Hence whether freedom is possible cannot be settled." (E CLXXIII, pp. 51-2; 23:41)

<sup>a</sup> *gekant*

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subject to the causal connection, in accordance with all the laws of determination; and to that extent it would be nothing but a part of the world of sense, whose effects, like those of any other appearance, would flow inevitably from nature. Just as external appearances influence it, as far as its empirical character, i.e., the law of its causality, is known through experience, all its actions would have to admit of explanation in accordance with natural laws, and all the requisites for a perfect and necessary determination of them would have to be encountered in a possible experience.

But in its intelligible character (even though we can have nothing more than merely the general concept of it), this subject would nevertheless have to be declared free of all influences of sensibility and determination by appearances; and since, in it, insofar as it is a **noumenon**, nothing **happens**, thus no alteration requiring a dynamical time-determination is demanded, and hence no connection with appearances as causes is encountered in its actions, this active being would to this extent be independent and free of all the natural necessity present solely in the world of sense. Of it one would say quite correctly that it begins its effects in the sensible world **from itself**, without its action beginning **in it** itself; and this would hold without allowing effects in the world of sense to begin from themselves, because in this world they are always determined beforehand by empirical conditions in the preceding time, but only by means of the empirical character (which is a mere appearance of the intelligible character), and they are possible only as a continuation of the series of natural causes. Thus freedom and nature, each in its full significance, would both be found in the same actions, simultaneously and without any contradiction, according to whether one compares them with their intelligible or their sensible cause.

A 541 / B 569

Clarification  
of the cosmological idea of a freedom in combination with  
the universal natural necessity.<sup>a</sup>

A 542 / B 570

I have found it good first to sketch the silhouette of a solution to our transcendental problem, so that one might better survey the course of reason in solving it. Now we will set out separately the decisive mo-

<sup>a</sup> Kant's notes: "What speculative philosophy could not succeed at, bringing reason out of the field of sensibility to something real outside it, practical reason is able to do, namely, giving an existence that is not sensible, [and] through laws that are grounded on reason. This is morality, if one admits it through freedom.

"Otherwise we would assume that there is no intuition at all without [the] senses and hence also no things outside the objects of sense belonging to intuition." (E CLXXIV, p. 52; 23:41-2)



ments on which the solution really depends, and take each particular moment into consideration.

The law of nature that everything that happens has a cause, that since the causality of this cause, i.e., the **action**, precedes in time and in respect of an effect that has **arisen** cannot have been always but must have **happened**, and so must also have had its cause among appearances, through which it is determined, and consequently that all occurrences are empirically determined in a natural order – this law, through which alone appearances can first constitute one **nature** and furnish objects of one experience, is a law of the understanding, from which under no pretext can any departure be allowed or any appearance be exempted; because otherwise one would put this appearance outside of all possible experience, thereby distinguishing it from all objects of possible experience and making it into a mere thought-entity and a figment of the brain.

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But although it looks as if there is solely a chain of causes, permitting no **absolute totality** at all in the regress to their conditions, this reservation does not detain us at all; for it has already been removed in our general judgment on the antinomy of reason occurring when reason proceeds to the unconditioned in the series of appearances. If we would give in to the deception of transcendental realism, then neither nature nor freedom would be left. Here the question is only: If in the whole series of all occurrences one recognizes purely<sup>a</sup> natural necessity, is it nevertheless possible to regard the same occurrence, which on the one hand is a mere effect of nature, as on the other hand an effect of freedom; or will a direct contradiction between these two kinds of causality be found?

Among the causes in appearance there can surely be nothing that could begin a series absolutely and from itself. Every action, as appearance, insofar as it produces an occurrence, is itself an occurrence, or event, which presupposes another state in which its cause is found; and thus everything that happens is only a continuation of the series, and no beginning that would take place from itself is possible in it. Thus in the temporal succession all actions of natural causes are themselves in turn effects, which likewise presuppose their causes in the time-series. An **original** action, through which something happens that previously was not, is not to be expected from the causal connection of appearances.

A 544/B 572

But then if the effects are appearances, is it also necessary that the causality of their cause, which (namely, the cause) is also appearance, must be solely empirical?<sup>82</sup> Is it not rather possible that although for every effect in appearance there is required a connection<sup>b</sup> with its cause in accordance with laws of empirical causality, this empirical causality

<sup>a</sup> *lauter*

<sup>b</sup> *Verknüpfung*

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itself, without the least interruption of its connection<sup>a</sup> with natural causes, could nevertheless be an effect of a causality that is not empirical, but rather intelligible, i.e., an original action of a cause in regard to appearances, which to that extent is not appearance but in accordance with this faculty intelligible, even though otherwise, as a link in the chain of nature, it must be counted entirely as belonging to the world of sense?

We need the principle<sup>b</sup> of the causality of appearances in order to be able to seek for and specify the natural conditions, i.e., causes in appearance, for natural occurrences. If this is conceded, and not weakened by any exceptions, then the understanding, which in its empirical use sees nothing but nature in all events and is justified in doing so, has everything it could demand, and physical explanations proceed on their own course unhindered. Now this is not in the least impaired, supposing also that it is in any case merely invented, if one assumes that among natural causes there are also some that have a faculty that is only intelligible, in that its determination to action never rests on empirical conditions but on mere grounds of the understanding, as long as the **action in the appearance** of this cause accords with all the laws of empirical causality. For in this way the acting subject, as *causa phaenomenon*,<sup>c</sup> would have all its actions linked with inseparable dependence to the natural chain of causes, and only the *phaenomenon* of this subject (with all its causality in appearance) would contain certain conditions that, if one would ascend from empirical objects to transcendental ones, would have to be regarded as merely intelligible. For if we follow the rule of nature only in that which might be the cause among appearances, then we need not worry about what sort of ground is thought for these appearances and their connection in the transcendental subject, which is empirically unknown to us. This intelligible ground does not touch the empirical questions at all, but may have to do merely with thinking in the pure understanding; and, although the effects of this thinking and acting of the pure understanding are encountered among appearances, these must nonetheless be able to be explained perfectly from their causes in appearance, in accord with natural laws, by following its merely empirical character as the supreme ground of explanation; and the intelligible character, which is the transcendental cause of the former, is passed over as entirely unknown, except insofar as it is indicated through the empirical character as only its sensible sign. Let us apply this to experience. The human being is one of the appearances in the world of sense, and to that extent also one of the natural causes whose

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<sup>a</sup> *Zusammenhang*

<sup>b</sup> *Satzes*

<sup>c</sup> phenomenal cause

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causality must stand under empirical laws. As such he must accordingly also have an empirical character, just like all other natural things. We notice it through powers and faculties which it expresses in its effects. In the case of lifeless nature and nature having merely animal life, we find no ground for thinking of any faculty which is other than sensibly conditioned. Yet the human being, who is otherwise acquainted with the whole of nature solely through sense, knows<sup>a</sup> himself also through pure apperception, and indeed in actions and inner determinations which cannot be accounted at all among<sup>b</sup> impressions of sense; he obviously is in one part phenomenon, but in another part, namely in regard to certain faculties, he is a merely intelligible object, because the actions of this object cannot at all be ascribed<sup>c</sup> to the receptivity of sensibility. We call these faculties understanding and reason; chiefly the latter is distinguished quite properly and preeminently from all empirically conditioned powers, since it considers its objects merely according to ideas and in accordance with them determines the understanding, which then makes an empirical use of its own concepts (even the pure ones).

Now that this reason has causality,<sup>d</sup> or that we can at least represent something of the sort in it, is clear from the **imperatives** that we propose<sup>e</sup> as rules to our powers of execution in everything practical.<sup>83</sup> The **ought** expresses a species of necessity and a connection with grounds which does not occur anywhere else in the whole of nature. In nature the understanding can cognize only **what exists**, or has been, or will be. It is impossible that something in it **ought to be** other than what, in all these time-relations,<sup>f</sup> it in fact is; indeed, the **ought**, if one has merely the course of nature before one's eyes, has no significance whatever. We cannot ask at all what ought to happen in nature, any more than we can ask what properties a circle ought to have; but we must rather ask what happens in nature, or what properties the circle has.

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Now this "ought" expresses a possible action, the ground of which is nothing other than a mere concept, whereas the ground of a merely natural action must always be an appearance. Now of course the action must be possible under natural conditions if the ought is directed to it; but these natural conditions do not concern the determination of the power of choice itself, but only its effect and result in appearance. How-

<sup>a</sup> *erkennt*

<sup>b</sup> *gar nicht zum . . . zählen kann*

<sup>c</sup> *gar nicht zur . . . gezählt werden kann*

<sup>d</sup> Kant notes: "i.e., is the cause of actuality of its objects [*Objecte*]. This causality is called the will. But in transcendental philosophy one abstracts from the will." (E CLXXV, p. 52; 23:50)

<sup>e</sup> *aufgeben*

<sup>f</sup> *Zeitverhältnisse*

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ever many natural grounds or sensible stimuli there may be that impel me to **will**, they cannot produce the **ought** but only a willing that is yet far from necessary but rather always conditioned, over against which the ought that reason pronounces sets a measure and goal, indeed, a prohibition and authorization.<sup>a</sup> Whether it is an object of mere sensibility (the agreeable) or even of pure reason (the good), reason does not give in to those grounds which are empirically given, and it does not follow the order of things as they are presented in intuition, but with complete spontaneity it makes its own order according to ideas, to which it fits the empirical conditions and according to which it even declares actions to be necessary that yet **have not occurred** and perhaps will not occur, nevertheless presupposing of all such actions that reason could have causality in relation to them; for without that, it would not expect its ideas to have effects in experience.

Now let us stop at this point and assume it is at least possible that reason actually does have causality in regard to appearances: then even though it is reason, it must nevertheless exhibit an empirical character, because every cause presupposes a rule according to which certain appearances follow as effects, and every rule requires a uniformity in its effects, grounding the concept of a cause (as a faculty), which, insofar as it must come to light from mere appearances, we could call the empirical character, which is constant, while its effects appear in alterable shapes, according to the differences among the conditions that accompany and in part limit it.

A 549/B 577

Thus every human being has an empirical character for his power of choice, which is nothing other than a certain causality of his reason, insofar as in its effects in appearance this reason exhibits a rule, in accordance with which one could derive<sup>b</sup> the rational grounds and the actions themselves according to their kind and degree, and estimate<sup>c</sup> the subjective principles<sup>d</sup> of his power of choice. Because this empirical character itself must be drawn from appearances as effect, and from the rule which experience provides, all the actions of the human being in appearance are determined in accord with the order of nature by his empirical character and the other cooperating causes; and if we could investigate all the appearances of his power of choice down to their basis, then there would be no human action that we could not predict with certainty, and recognize as necessary given its preceding conditions. Thus in regard to this empirical character there is no freedom, and according to this character we can consider the human being solely

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<sup>a</sup> *Ansehen*

<sup>b</sup> *abnehmen*

<sup>c</sup> *beurteilen*

<sup>d</sup> *Principien*

by **observing**, and, as happens in anthropology, by trying to investigate the moving causes of his actions physiologically.

But if we consider the very same actions in relation to reason, not, to be sure, in relation to speculative reason, in order to **explain** them as regards their origin, but insofar as reason is the cause of **producing** them by themselves – in a word, if we compare them with reason in a **practical** respect – then we find a rule and order that is entirely other than the natural order. For perhaps everything that **has happened** in the course of nature, and on empirical grounds inevitably had to happen, nevertheless **ought not to have happened**. At times, however, we find, or at least believe we have found, that the ideas of reason have actually proved their causality in regard to the actions of human beings as appearances, and that therefore these actions have occurred<sup>a</sup> not through empirical causes, no, but because they were determined by grounds of reason.

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Suppose now that one could say reason has causality in regard to appearance; could reason's action then be called free even though in its empirical character (in the mode of sense)<sup>b</sup> it is all precisely determined and necessary? The empirical character is once again determined in the intelligible character (in the mode of thought).<sup>c</sup> We are not acquainted with the latter, but it is indicated through appearances, which really give only the mode of sense (the empirical character) for immediate cognition.\* Now the action, insofar as it is to be attributed to the mode of thought as its cause, nevertheless does not follow from it in accord with empirical laws, i.e., in such a way that it is **preceded** by the conditions of pure reason, but only their effects in the appearance of inner sense **precede** it. Pure reason, as a merely intelligible faculty, is not subject to the form of time, and hence not subject to the conditions of the temporal sequence. The causality of reason in the intelligible character **does not arise** or start working at a certain time in producing an effect. For then it would itself be subject to the natural law of appearances, to the extent that this law determines causal series in time, and its causal-

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\* The real morality of actions (their merit and guilt), even that of our own conduct, therefore remains entirely hidden from us. Our imputations can be referred only to the empirical character. How much of it is to be ascribed to mere nature and innocent defects of temperament or to its happy constitution (*merito fortunae*)<sup>d</sup> this no one can discover;<sup>e</sup> and hence no one can judge it with complete justice.

<sup>a</sup> *geschehen*

<sup>b</sup> *Sinnesart*

<sup>c</sup> *Denkungsart*

<sup>d</sup> to the merit of fortune

<sup>e</sup> *ergründen*

ity would then be nature and not freedom. Thus we could say that if reason can have causality in regard to appearances, then it is a faculty **through** which the sensible condition of an empirical series of effects first begins. For the condition that lies in reason is not sensible and does not itself begin. Accordingly, there takes place here what we did not find in any empirical series: that the **condition** of a successive series of occurrences could itself be empirically unconditioned. For here the condition is **outside** the series of appearances (in the intelligible) and hence not subject to any sensible condition or to any determination of time through any passing cause.

Nevertheless, this very same cause in another relation also belongs to the series of appearances. The human being himself is an appearance. His power of choice has an empirical character, which is the (empirical) cause of all his actions. There is not one of these conditions determining human beings according to this character which is not contained in the series of natural effects and does not obey the laws of nature according to which no empirically unconditioned causality is present among the things that happen in time. Hence no given action (since it can be perceived only as appearance) can begin absolutely from itself. But of reason one cannot say that before the state in which it determines the power of choice, another state precedes in which this state itself is determined. For since reason itself is not an appearance and is not subject at all to any conditions of sensibility, no temporal sequence takes place in it even as to its causality, and thus the dynamical law of nature, which determines the temporal sequence according to rules, cannot be applied to it.

A553/B581

Reason is thus the persisting condition of all voluntary actions under which the human being appears. Even before it happens, every one of these actions is determined beforehand in the empirical character of the human being. In regard to the intelligible character, of which the empirical one is only the sensible schema, no **before** or **after** applies, and every action, irrespective of the temporal relation in which it stands to other appearances, is the immediate effect of the intelligible character of pure reason; reason therefore acts freely, without being determined dynamically by external or internal grounds temporally preceding it in the chain of natural causes, and this freedom of reason can not only be regarded negatively, as independence from empirical conditions (for then the faculty of reason would cease to be a cause of appearances), but also indicated positively by a faculty of beginning a series of occurrences from itself, in such a way that in reason itself nothing begins, but as the unconditioned condition of every voluntary action, it allows of no condition prior to it in time, whereas its effect begins in the series of appearances, but can never constitute an absolutely first beginning in this series.

A554/B582

A555/B583

In order to clarify the regulative principle<sup>a</sup> of reason through an example of its empirical use – not in order to confirm it (for such proofs are unworkable for transcendental propositions) – one may take a voluntary action, e.g. a malicious lie, through which a person<sup>b</sup> has brought about a certain confusion in society; and one may first investigate its moving causes, through which it arose, judging on that basis how the lie and its consequences could be<sup>c</sup> imputed to the person. With this first intent one goes into the sources of the person's empirical character, seeking them in a bad upbringing, bad company, and also finding them in the wickedness of a natural temper<sup>d</sup> insensitive to shame, partly in carelessness and thoughtlessness; in so doing one does not leave out of account the occasioning causes. In all this one proceeds as with any investigation in the series of determining causes for a given natural effect. Now even if one believes the action to be determined by these causes, one nonetheless blames the agent, and not on account of his unhappy natural temper, not on account of the circumstances influencing him, not even on account of the life he has led previously; for one presupposes that it can be entirely set aside how that life was constituted, and that the series of conditions that transpired might not have been, but rather that this deed could be regarded as entirely unconditioned in regard to the previous state, as though with that act the agent had started<sup>e</sup> a series of consequences entirely from himself. This blame is grounded on the law of reason, which regards reason as a cause that, regardless of all the empirical conditions just named, could have and ought to have determined the conduct of the person to be other than it is. And indeed one regards the causality of reason not as a mere concurrence with other causes, <sup>e</sup> but as complete in itself, even if sensuous incentives were not for it but were indeed entirely against it; the action is ascribed to the agent's intelligible character: now, in the moment when he lies, it is entirely his fault; hence reason, regardless of all empirical conditions of the deed, is fully free, and this deed is to be attributed entirely to its failure to act.<sup>f</sup>

In this judgment of imputation, it is easy to see that one has the thoughts that reason is not affected at all by that sensibility, that it does

<sup>a</sup> *Princip*

<sup>b</sup> *Mensch*

<sup>c</sup> *köme* (singular present subjunctive, indicating that the lie is the subject); in the first edition, the text reads *können* (plural, indicating that the consequences as well are included in the subject of the verb along with the lie).

<sup>d</sup> *Naturells*

<sup>e</sup> *Konkurrenz*. Although in modern German this means "competition" Kant used this term as an equivalent of *concursum*; in a theological context, it means divine assistance.

<sup>f</sup> *ihrer Unterlassung*; "reason" is the only grammatically possible antecedent of the possessive pronoun.

not alter (even if its appearances, namely the way in which it exhibits its effects, do alter), that in it no state precedes that determines the following one, and hence that reason does not belong at all in the series of sensible conditions which make appearances necessary in accordance with natural laws. It, reason, is present to all the actions of human beings in all conditions of time, and is one and the same, but it is not itself in time, and never enters into any new state in which it previously was not; in regard to a new state, reason is **determining** but not **determinable**. Therefore one cannot ask: Why has reason not determined **itself** otherwise? But only: Why has it not determined **appearances** otherwise through its causality? But no answer to this is possible. For another intelligible character would have given another empirical one; and if we say that regardless of the entire course of life he has led up to that point, the agent could still have refrained from<sup>a</sup> the lie, then this signifies only that it stands immediately under the power<sup>b</sup> of reason, and in its causality reason is not subject to any conditions of appearance or of the temporal series; the difference in time might be a chief difference in appearances respecting their relations to one another, since these are not things in themselves and hence not causes in themselves, but it makes no difference to action in its relation to reason.

A 556/B 584

Thus in the judgment of free actions, in regard to their causality, we can get only as far as the intelligible cause, but we cannot get **beyond it**; we can know<sup>c</sup> that actions could be free, i.e., that they could be determined independently of sensibility, and in that way that they could be the sensibly unconditioned condition of appearances. But why the intelligible character gives us exactly these appearances and this empirical character under the circumstances before us, to answer this surpasses every faculty of our reason, indeed it surpasses the authority of our reason even to ask it; it is as if one were to ask why the transcendental object of our outer sensible intuition gives precisely only the intuition of **space** and not some other one. Yet the problem which we had to solve does not obligate us to answer these questions, for it was only this: Do freedom and natural necessity in one and the same action contradict each other? And this we have answered sufficiently when we showed that since in freedom a relation is possible to conditions of a kind entirely different from those in natural necessity, the law of the latter does not affect the former; hence each is independent of the other, and can take place without being disturbed by the other.

A 557/B 585

\* \* \*

<sup>a</sup> *unterlassen*<sup>b</sup> *Macht*<sup>c</sup> *erkennen*



A 558/B 586

It should be noted that here we have not been trying to establish the **reality** of freedom, as a faculty that contains the causes of appearance in our world of sense. For apart from the fact that this would not have been any sort of transcendental investigation having to do merely with concepts, it could not have succeeded, since from experience we can never infer something that does not have to be thought in accord with the laws of experience. Further, we have not even tried to prove the **possibility** of freedom; for this would not have succeeded either, because from mere concepts *a priori* we cannot cognize anything about the possibility of any real ground or any causality. Freedom is treated here only as a transcendental idea, through which reason thinks of the series of conditions in appearance starting absolutely through what is sensibly unconditioned, but thereby involves itself in an antinomy following its own laws, which it prescribes for the empirical use of the understanding. [To show] that this antinomy rests on a mere illusion, and that nature at least **does not conflict with** causality through freedom – that was the one single thing we could accomplish, and it alone was our sole concern.<sup>a</sup>

A 559/B 587

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<sup>a</sup> Kant notes: "Morality is that which, if it is correct, positively presupposes freedom. "If the former is true, then freedom is proved." (E CLXXVI, p. 52; 23:42)