

5:93 The distinction of the *doctrine of happiness* from the *doctrine of morals*, in the first of which empirical principles constitute the whole foundation whereas in the second they do not make even the smallest addition to it, is the first and most important business incumbent upon the Analytic of pure practical reason, in which it must proceed as *precisely* and, so to speak, as *scrupulously* as any geometer in his work. A philosopher, however, has greater difficulties to contend with here (as always in rational cognition through mere concepts without construction of them), because he cannot put any intuition (a pure noumenon) at its basis. He has, however, the advantage that, almost like a chemist, he can at any time set up an experiment with every human practical reason in order to distinguish the moral (pure) determining ground from the empirical, namely, by adding the moral law (as a determining ground) to the empirically affected will (e.g., that of someone who would gladly lie because he can gain something by it). When an analyst adds alkali to a solution of calcareous earth in hydrochloric acid, the acid at once releases^m the lime and unites with the alkali, and the lime is precipitated. In just the same way, if a man who is otherwise honest (or who just this once puts himself only in thought in the place of an honest man) is confronted with the moral law in which he cognizes the worthlessness of a liar, his practical reason (in its judgment of what he ought to do) at once abandonsⁿ the advantage, unites with what maintains in him respect for his own person (truthfulness), and the advantage, after it has been separated and washed from every particle of reason (which is altogether on the side of duty), is weighed by everyone, so that it can enter into combination with reason in other cases, only not where it could be opposed to the moral law, which reason never abandons but unites with most intimately.

But this *distinction* of the principle of happiness from that of morality is not, for this reason, at once an *opposition* between them, and pure practical reason does not require^o that one should *renounce* claims to happiness but only that as soon as duty is in question one should *take no account* of them. It can even in certain respects be a duty to attend to one's happiness, partly because happiness (to which belong skill, health, wealth) contains means for the fulfillment of one's duty and partly because lack of it (e.g.,

^m *verläßt*

ⁿ *verläßt*

^o *will nicht*

poverty) contains temptations to transgress one's duty. However, it can never be a direct duty to promote one's happiness, still less can it be a principle of all duty. Now, because all determining grounds of the will except the one and only pure practical law of reason (the moral law) are without exception empirical and so, as such, belong to the principle of happiness, they must without exception be separated from the supreme moral principle and never be incorporated with it as a condition, since this would destroy all moral worth just as any empirical admixture to geometrical principles would destroy all mathematical evidence, which (in Plato's judgment) is the most excellent thing in mathematics, surpassing even its utility.

But instead of the deduction of the supreme principle of pure practical reason – that is, the explanation of the possibility of such a cognition a priori – nothing more could be adduced than that, if one had insight into the possibility of freedom of an efficient cause, one would also have insight into not merely the possibility but even the necessity of the moral law as the supreme practical law of rational beings, to whom one attributes freedom of the causality of their will; for, the two concepts are so inseparably connected that one could even define practical freedom through independence of the will from anything other than the moral law alone. But no insight can be had into the possibility of the freedom of an efficient cause, especially in the sensible world: we are fortunate if only we can be sufficiently assured that there is no proof of its impossibility, and are now forced to assume it and are thereby justified in doing so by the moral law, which postulates it. For, there are many who believe that they can nevertheless explain this freedom in accordance with empirical principles, like any other natural ability, and regard it as a *psychological* property, the explanation of which simply requires a more exact investigation of the *nature of the soul* and of the incentives of the will, and not as a *transcendental* predicate of the causality of a being that belongs to the sensible world (although this is all that is really at issue here); and they thus deprive us of the grand disclosure brought to us through practical reason by means of the moral law, the disclosure, namely of an intelligible world through realization of the otherwise transcendent concept of freedom, and with this deprive us of the moral law itself, which admits absolutely no empirical determining ground. It will therefore be necessary to add something here as a protection against this delusion, and to show *empiricism* in all its bare superficiality.

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The concept of causality as *natural necessity*, as distinguished from the concept of causality as *freedom*, concerns only the existence of things insofar as it is *determinable in time* and hence as appearances, as opposed to their causality as things in themselves. Now, if one takes the determinations of the existence of things in time for determinations of things in themselves (which is the most usual way of representing them), then the necessity in the causal relation can in no way be united with freedom;

5:95 instead they are opposed to each other as contradictory. For, from the first it follows that every event, and consequently every action that takes place at a point of time, is necessary under the condition of what was in the preceding time. Now, since time past is no longer within my control, every action that I perform must be necessary by determining grounds *that are not within my control*, that is, I am never free at the point of time in which I act. Indeed, even if I assume that my whole existence is independent from any alien cause (such as God), so that the determining grounds of my causality and even of my whole existence are not outside me, this would not in the least transform that natural necessity into freedom. For, at every point of time I still stand under the necessity of being determined to action by *that which is not within my control*, and the series of events infinite a parte priori which I can only continue in accordance with a predetermined order would never begin of itself: it would be a continuous natural chain, and therefore my causality would never be freedom.

If, then, one wants to attribute freedom to a being whose existence is determined in time, one cannot, so far at least, except this being from the law of natural necessity as to all events in its existence and consequently as to its actions as well; for, that would be tantamount to handing it over to blind chance. But since this law unavoidably concerns all causality of things so far as *their existence in time* is determinable, if this were the way in which one had to represent also the *existence of these things in themselves* then freedom would have to be rejected as a null and impossible concept. Consequently, if one still wants to save it, no other path remains than to ascribe the existence of a thing so far as it is determinable in time, and so too its causality in accordance with the law of *natural necessity, only to appearance, and to ascribe freedom to the same being as a thing in itself*. This is certainly unavoidable if one wants to maintain both these mutually repellent concepts together; but in application, when one wants to explain them as united in one and the same action, and so to explain this union itself, great difficulties come forward, which seem to make such a unification unfeasible.^p

5:96 If I say of a human being who commits a theft that this deed is, in accordance with the natural law of causality, a necessary result of determining grounds in preceding time, then it was impossible that it could have been left undone; how, then, can appraisal in accordance with the moral law make any change in it and suppose that it could have been omitted because the law says that it ought to have been omitted? That is, how can that man be called quite free at the same point of time and in regard to the same action in which and in regard to which he is nevertheless subject to an unavoidable natural necessity? It is a wretched subterfuge to seek to evade this by saying that the *kind* of determining grounds of his causality in accordance with

^p *untunlich*

natural law agrees with a *comparative* concept of freedom (according to which that is sometimes called a free effect, the determining natural ground of which lies *within* the acting being, e.g., that which a projectile accomplishes when it is in free motion, in which case one uses the word "freedom" because while it is in flight it is not impelled from without; or as we also call the motion of a clock a free motion because it moves the hands itself, which therefore do not need to be pushed externally; in the same way the actions of the human being, although they are necessary by their determining grounds which preceded them in time, are yet called free because the actions are caused from within, by representations produced by our own powers, whereby desires are evoked on occasion of circumstances and hence actions are produced at our own discretion). Some still let themselves be put off by this subterfuge and so think they have solved, with a little quibbling about words, that difficult problem on the solution of which millennia have worked in vain and which can therefore hardly be found so completely on the surface. That is to say, in the question about that freedom which must be put at the basis of all moral laws and the imputation appropriate to them, it does not matter whether the causality determined in accordance with a natural law is necessary through determining grounds lying *within* the subject or *outside* him, or in the first case whether these determining grounds are instinctive or thought by reason, if, as is admitted by these men themselves, these determining representations have the ground of their existence in time and indeed in the *antecedent state*, and this in turn in a preceding state, and so forth, these determinations may be internal and they may have psychological instead of mechanical causality, that is, produce actions by means of representations and not by bodily movements; they are always *determining grounds* of the causality of a being insofar as its existence is determinable in time and therefore under the necessitating conditions of past time, which are thus, when the subject is to act, *no longer within his control* and which may therefore bring with them psychological freedom (if one wants to use this term for a merely internal chain of representations in the soul) but nevertheless natural necessity; and they therefore leave no *transcendental freedom*, which must be thought as independence from everything empirical and so from nature generally, whether it is regarded as an object of inner sense in time only or also of outer sense in both space and time; without this freedom (in the latter and proper sense), which alone is practical a priori, no moral law is possible and no imputation in accordance with it. Just for this reason, all necessity of events in time in accordance with the natural law of causality can be called the *mechanism* of nature, although it is not meant by this that the things which are subject to it must be really material *machines*. Here one looks only to the necessity of the connection of events in a time series as it develops in accordance with natural law, whether the subject in which this development takes place is called *automaton materiale*, when the machinery is driven by matter, or

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with Leibniz *spirituale*, when it is driven by representations; and if the freedom of our will were none other than the latter (say, psychological and comparative but not also transcendental, i.e., absolute), then it would at bottom be nothing better than the freedom of a turnspit, which, when once it is wound up, also accomplishes its movements of itself.

Now, in order, in the case at hand, to remove the apparent contradiction between the mechanism of nature and freedom in one and the same action, one must recall what was said in the *Critique of Pure Reason* or follows from it: that the natural necessity which cannot coexist with the freedom of the subject attaches merely to the determinations of a thing which stands under conditions of time and so only to the determinations of the acting subject as appearance, and that, accordingly, the determining grounds of every action of the subject so far lie in what belongs to past time and *is no longer within his control* (in which must be counted his past deeds and the character as a phenomenon thereby determinable for him in his own eyes). But the very same subject, being on the other side conscious of himself as a thing in itself, also views his existence *insofar as it does not stand under conditions of time* and himself as determinable only through laws that he gives himself by reason; and in this existence of his nothing is, for him, antecedent to the determination of his will, but every action – and in general every determination of his existence changing conformably with inner sense, even the whole sequence of his existence as a sensible being – is to be regarded in the consciousness of his intelligible existence as nothing but the consequence and never as the determining ground of his causality as a *noumenon*. So considered, a rational being can now rightly say of every unlawful action he performed that he could have omitted it even though as appearance it is sufficiently determined in the past and, so far, is inevitably necessary; for this action, with all the past which determines it, belongs to a single phenomenon of his character, which he gives to himself and in accordance with which he imputes to himself, as a cause independent of all sensibility, the causality of those appearances.

The judicial sentences of that wonderful capacity in us which we call conscience are in perfect agreement with this. A human being may use what art he will to paint some unlawful conduct he remembers as an unintentional fault,⁹ – as a mere oversight which one can never avoid altogether, and so as something in which he was carried away by the stream of natural necessity – and to declare himself innocent of it; he nevertheless finds that the advocate who speaks in his favor can by no means reduce to silence the prosecutor within him, if only he is aware that at the time he did this wrong he was in his senses, that is, had the use of his freedom; and while he *explains* his misconduct by certain bad habits,

⁹ *Versehen*

which by gradual neglect of attention he has allowed to grow in him to such a degree that he can regard his misconduct as their natural consequence, yet this cannot protect him from the reproach and censure he casts upon himself. This is also the ground of repentance for a deed long past at every recollection of it, a painful feeling aroused by the moral disposition, which is empty in a practical way to the extent that it cannot serve to undo what has been done and would even be absurd (and Priestley,¹⁰ a genuine *fatalist* proceeding consistently, declares it absurd; and for this candor he deserves more applause than those who, while maintaining the mechanism of the will in deeds' but its freedom in words, yet want it to be thought that they include it in their syncretistic system, though without making the possibility of such imputation comprehensible); but repentance, as pain, is still quite legitimate because reason, when it is a question of the law of our intelligible existence (the moral law), recognizes no distinction of time and asks only whether the event belongs to me as a deed and, if it does, then always connects the same feeling with it morally, whether it was done just now or long ago. For, the *sensible life* has, with respect to the *intelligible* consciousness of its existence (consciousness of freedom), the absolute unity of a phenomenon, which, so far as it contains merely appearances of the disposition that the moral law is concerned with (appearances of the character), must be appraised not in accordance with the natural necessity that belongs to it as appearance but in accordance with the absolute spontaneity of freedom. One can therefore grant that if it were possible for us to have such deep insight into a human being's cast of mind, as shown by inner as well as outer actions, that we would know every incentive to action, even the smallest, as well as all the external occasions affecting them, we could calculate a human being's conduct for the future with as much certainty as a lunar or solar eclipse and could nevertheless maintain that the human being's conduct is free. If, that is to say, we were capable of another view, namely an intellectual intuition of the same subject (which is certainly not given to us and in place of which we have only the rational concept), then we would become aware that this whole chain of appearances, with respect to all that the moral law is concerned with, depends upon the spontaneity of the subject as a thing in itself, for the determination of which no physical explanation can be given. In default of this intuition, the moral law assures us of this difference between the relation of our actions as appearances to the sensible being of our subject and relation by which this sensible being is itself referred to the intelligible substratum in us. From this perspective, which is natural to our reason though inexplicable, appraisals can be justified which, though made in all conscientiousness, yet seem at first glance quite contrary to all equity. There are cases in which human beings, even with

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¹⁰ *in der Tat*. For a definition of "deed" see *The Metaphysics of Morals* (6:224).

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the same education that was profitable to others, yet show from childhood such early wickedness¹ and progress in it so continuously into their adulthood that they are taken to be born villains and quite incapable of improvement as far as their cast of mind is concerned; and nevertheless they are so judged for what they do or leave undone that they are censured as guilty of their crimes; indeed, they themselves (the children) find these censures as well founded as if, despite the hopeless natural constitution of mind² ascribed to the, they remained as accountable as any other human being. This could not happen if we did not suppose that whatever arises from one's choice (as every action intentionally performed undoubtedly does) has as its basis a free causality, which from early youth expresses its character in its appearances (actions); these actions, on account of the uniformity of conduct, make knowable a natural connection that does not, however, make the vicious³ constitution of the will necessary but is instead the consequence of the evil and unchangeable principles freely⁴ adopted, which make it only more culpable and deserving of punishment.

But a difficulty still awaits freedom insofar as it is to be united with the mechanism of nature in a being that belongs to the sensible world, a difficulty which, even after all the foregoing has been agreed to, still threatens freedom with complete destruction. In this danger there is at the same time, however, a circumstance that offers hope of an outcome still favorable to maintaining freedom, namely that the same difficulty presses much more strongly (in fact, as we shall presently see, presses only) upon the system in which existence determinable in time and space is held to be the existence of things in themselves; hence it does not force us to give up our main supposition of the ideality of time as a mere form of sensible intuition and so as merely a way of representing things that is proper to the subject as belonging to the sensible world; and thus the difficulty only requires us to unite this supposition with the idea of freedom.

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That is to say: if it is granted us that the intelligible subject can still be free with respect to a given action, although as a subject also belonging to the sensible world, he is mechanically conditioned with respect to the same action, it nevertheless seems that, as soon as one admits that *God* as universal original being is *the cause also of the existence of substance* (a proposition that can never be given up without also giving up the concept of God as the being of all beings and with it his all-sufficiency, on which everything in theology depends), one must admit that a human being's actions have their determining ground in *something altogether beyond his control*, namely in the causality of a supreme being which is distinct from him and

¹ *Bosheit*

² *Naturbeschaffenheit ihres Gemüts*

³ *arge*

⁴ *freiwillig*

upon which his own existence and the entire determination of his causality absolutely depend. In fact, if a human being's actions insofar as they belong to his determinations in time were not merely determinations of him as appearance but as a thing in itself, freedom could not be saved. A human being would be a marionette or an automaton, like Vaucanson's,¹¹ built and wound up by the supreme artist; self-consciousness would indeed make him a thinking automaton, but the consciousness of his own spontaneity, if taken for freedom, would be mere delusion inasmuch as it deserves to be called freedom only comparatively, because the proximate determining causes of its motion and a long series of their determining causes are indeed internal but the last and highest is found entirely in an alien hand. Therefore I do not see how those who insist on regarding time and space as determinations belonging to the existence of things in themselves would avoid fatalism of actions; or if (like the otherwise acute Mendelssohn)¹² they flatly allow both to be conditions necessarily belonging only to the existence of finite and derived beings but not to that of the infinite original being, I do not see how they would justify themselves in making such a distinction, whence they get a warrant to do so, or even how they would avoid the contradiction they encounter when they regard existence in time as a determination attaching necessarily to finite things in themselves, while God is the cause of this existence but cannot be the cause of time (or space) itself (because this must be presupposed as a necessary a priori condition of the existence of things); and consequently his causality with respect to the existence of these things must be conditioned and even temporally conditioned; and this would unavoidably have to bring in all that is contradictory to the concept of his infinity and independence. On the other hand, it is quite easy for us to distinguish between the determination of the divine existence as independent of all temporal conditions and that of a being of the sensible world, the distinction being that between *the existence of a being in itself* and that of a *thing in appearance*. Hence, if this ideality of time and space is not adopted, nothing remains but Spinozism, in which space and time are essential determinations of the original being itself, while the things dependent upon it (ourselves, therefore, included) are not substances but merely accidents inhering in it; for, if these things exist merely as its effects *in time*, which would be the condition of their existence itself, then the actions of these beings would have to be merely its actions that it performs in any place and at any time. Thus Spinozism, despite the absurdity of its fundamental idea, argues more consistently than the creation theory can when beings assumed to be substances and *in themselves existing in time* are regarded as effects of a supreme cause and yet as not belonging to him and his action but as substances in themselves.

The difficulty mentioned above is resolved briefly and clearly as follows. If existence *in time* is only a sensible way of representing things which

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belongs to *thinking* beings in the world and consequently does not apply to them as things in themselves, then the creation of these beings is a creation of things in themselves, since the concept of a creation does not belong to the sensible way of representing existence or causality but can only be referred to noumena. Consequently, if I say of beings in the sensible world that they are created, I so far regard them as noumena. Just as it would thus be a contradiction to say that God is a creator of appearances, so it is also a contradiction to say that as creator he is the cause of actions in the sensible world and thus of actions as appearances, even though he is the cause of the existence of the acting beings (as noumena). If it is now possible to affirm freedom without compromising the natural mechanism of actions as appearances (by taking existence in time to be something that holds only of appearances, not of things in themselves), then it cannot make the slightest difference that the acting beings are creatures, since creation has to do with their intelligible but not their sensible existence and therefore cannot be regarded as the determining ground of appearances; but it would turn out quite differently if the beings in the world as things in themselves existed *in time*, since the creator of substance would also be the author of the entire mechanism in this substance.

5:103 Of such great importance is the separation of time (as well as space) from the existence of things in themselves that was accomplished in the *Critique* of pure speculative reason.

It will be said that the solution to the difficulty given here involves even greater difficulty and is hardly susceptible of a lucid presentation. But is any other solution that has been attempted, or that may be attempted, easier and more apprehensible? One might rather say that the dogmatic teachers of metaphysics have shown more shrewdness than sincerity in keeping this difficult point out of sight as much as possible, in the hope that if they said nothing about it no one would be likely to think of it. If a science is to be advanced, all difficulties must be *exposed* and we must even *search* for those, however well hidden, that lie in its way; for, every difficulty calls forth a remedy that cannot be found without science gaining either in extent or in determinateness, so that even obstacles become means for promoting the thoroughness of science. On the contrary, if the *difficulties are purposely concealed or removed merely through palliatives*, then sooner or later they break out in incurable troubles that bring science to ruin in a complete skepticism.