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Critique Of Practical Reason

By *Immanuel Kant*

English Translation By

Lewis White Beck

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PREFACE

Why this *Critique* is called simply *Critique of Practical Reason* and not *Critique of Pure Practical Reason*, though the parallelism between it and the critique of speculative reason seems to demand the latter title, will be sufficiently shown in the treatise itself. Its task is merely to show that there is a pure practical reason, and, in order to do this, it critically examines reason's entire practical faculty. If it succeeds in this task, there is no need to examine the pure faculty itself to see whether it, like speculative reason, presumptuously overreaches itself. For if pure reason is actually practical, it will show its reality and that of its concepts in action, and all disputations which aim to prove its impossibility will be in vain.

With the pure practical faculty of reason, the reality of transcendental freedom is also confirmed. Indeed, it is substantiated in the absolute sense needed by speculative reason in its use of the concept of causality, for this freedom is required if reason is to rescue itself from the antinomy in which it is inevitably entangled when attempting to think the unconditioned in a causal series. For speculative reason, the concept of freedom was problematic but not impossible; that is to say, speculative reason could think of freedom without contradiction, but it could not assure any objective reality to it. Reason showed freedom to be conceivable only in order that its supposed impossibility might not endanger reason's very being and plunge it into an abyss of skepticism.

The concept of freedom, in so far as its reality is proved by an apodictic law of practical reason, is the keystone of the whole

前 言

这个批判为什么被简单地题名为实践理性批判,而不是其与思辨理性批判的对应关系看似要求的纯粹实践理性批判,将会在论述本身中得到充分说明。这个批判的任务仅在于表明纯粹实践理性是存在的,而为做到这一点,它又须批判性地检验理性的全部实践能力。如果在这一方面成功了,它就无需批判性地检验纯粹能力本身来发现其是否像思辨理性那样专横地超越了自身。因为如果纯粹理性确实是实践的,那么它将在活动中展现它的实在性以及它的概念的实在性,而旨在否认这种可能的一切诡辩都将是徒劳的。

凭借理性的纯粹实践能力,先验自由的实在性也会得到证实。当然,所证实的是绝对意义上的先验自由,思辨理性在运用因果性概念时需要此种自由,以便当它在因果链条中思考无条件者时能够将它从不可避免陷入其中的二律背反中解救出来。对于思辨理性而言,自由的概念是有疑问的,但也并非没有可能;也就是说,思辨理性能够毫无矛盾地思考自由,却又无法确保其客观实在性。理性之所以指出自由是可能的,仅仅是因为它所假定的不可能之事不会危及理性的存在,使它陷入怀疑主义的深渊。

既然自由概念的实在性已经被一条无可争辩的实践理性法

architecture of the system of pure reason and even of speculative reason. All other concepts (those of God and immortality) which, as mere Ideas, are unsupported by anything in speculative reason now attach themselves to the concept of freedom and gain, with it and through it, stability and objective reality. That is, their *possibility* is proved by the fact that there really is freedom, for this Idea is revealed by the moral law.

Freedom, however, among all the Ideas of speculative reason is the only one whose possibility we know a priori. We do not understand it, but we know it as the condition^① of the moral law which we do know. The Ideas of God and immortality are, on the contrary, not conditions of the moral law, but only conditions of the necessary object of a will which is determined by this law, this will being merely the practical use of our pure reason. Hence we cannot say that we *know or understand* either the reality or even the possibility of these Ideas. Nevertheless, they are conditions of applying the morally determined will to the object (the highest good) which is given to it a priori. Consequently, the possibility of these conditions can and *must* be assumed in this practical context without our knowing or understanding them in a theoretical sense. To serve their practical function, it suffices that they not contain any internal impossibility (contradiction). Here we have a ground of assent which, in contrast to speculative reason, is only subjective, but which is just as objectively valid to an equally pure but practical reason. Thus, through the concept of freedom, the Ideas of God and immortality gain objective reality and legitimacy and indeed subjective necessity (as a need

① To avoid having anyone imagine that there is an inconsistency when I say that freedom is the condition of the moral law and later assert that the moral law is the only condition under which freedom can be known, I will only remind the reader that, though freedom is certainly the *ratio essendi* of the moral law, the latter is the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom. For had not the moral law already been distinctly thought in our reason, we would never have been justified in assuming anything like freedom, even though it is not self-contradictory. But if there were no freedom, the moral law would never have been encountered in us.

则所证明,那么它就构成了纯粹理性体系,乃至思辨理性体系的全部建筑的拱顶石。而所有其他概念(上帝的概念和不朽的概念)作为单纯理念原本是不被思辨理性中的任何事情所支撑的,现在依附于自由概念,与它一起并通过它获取稳定性和客观实在性。也就是说,因为自由这一理念是为道德法则所揭示的,所以其他理念的可能性则会因自由确实存在的事实而得到证明。

但是,在思辨理性的全部理念中,自由是我们先天地知道其可能性的唯一理念。虽然我们不理解它,但是它却作为我们所知道的道德法则条件^①而为我们所知。相反,上帝和不朽的理念却并非道德法则的条件,而仅仅是道德法则所决定的意志的必然客体的条件,这一意志单纯是我们纯粹理性的实践运用。于是,对于这些理念的实在性,甚至于可能性,我们都不能认识或者理解。不过它们却是将道德上被决定的意志运用于其先天被给予的客体(至善)时的条件,从而,虽然我们无法在理论意义上对这些条件加以认识和理解,但是它们的可能性却能够而且必须在此种实践的背景下被认定。为了履行其实践功能,它们必须不包含任何内部的不可能之事(矛盾)。这里,我们就有了一个同意的根据,虽然与思辨理性相比它只是主观的,但是,它正像一个同等单纯却又实践的理性那样是客观有效的。这样,通过自由的概念,上

① 当我现在说自由是道德法则的条件,而在后面的论述中断言道德法则是自由得以被认识的唯一条件时,为了避免有人所想象的前后矛盾,我只想提醒读者,虽然自由的确是道德法则的存在理由,但是道德法则却是自由的认知理由。因为假使道德法则没有预先在我们的理性中被清晰地思考,那么我们决不会被证明有正当理由去认定像自由一样的事物,即便它并不自相矛盾。但是,如果没有自由,那么在我们的内心中就绝不会遇到道德法则的问题。

of pure reason). Reason is not thereby extended, however, in its theoretical knowledge; the only thing which is different is that the possibility, which was heretofore a problem, now becomes an assertion, and the practical use of reason is thus connected with the elements of theoretical reason. This need is not just a hypothetical one for some *arbitrary* speculative purpose, of the kind that one must assume if he *wishes* to complete the use of reason in speculation; it is rather a need, *with the status of a law*, to assume that without which an aim cannot be achieved which one *ought* to set before himself invariably in all his actions.

It would certainly be more satisfying to our speculative reason if those problems could be solved just by themselves without such a detour and if insight into them could be put up for practical use; but our speculative faculty is not so conveniently disposed. Those who boast of such elevated knowledge should not hold it back but present it for public testing and acclaim. They wish to *prove*; very well, let them prove, and the critical philosophy will lay down its weapons before them as victors. *Quid statis? Nolint. Atqui licet esse beatis.* Since they do not actually wish to prove, presumably because they cannot, we must again take up these weapons and seek, in the practical use of reason, sufficient grounds for the concepts of God, freedom, and immortality. These concepts are founded upon the moral use of reason, while speculation could not find sufficient guarantee even of their possibility.

Now is explained the enigma of the critical philosophy, which lies in the fact that we must renounce the objective reality of the supersensible use of the categories in speculation and yet can attribute this reality to them in respect to the objects of pure practical reason. This must have seemed an inconsistency so long as the practical use of reason was known only by name. However, a thorough analysis of the practical use of reason makes it clear that the reality thought of here implies no theoretical determination of the categories

帝和不朽的理念获得了客观实在性,合法性以及真正的主观必然性(作为纯粹理性的一种需要)。但是,理论并不因此在理论知识方面有所扩展;不同之处仅在于,此前仍是问题的可能性,现在变为一个断言,而理性的实践运用也因此与理论理性的原理连接起来了。这个需要并非是思辨的某些任意意图的假设性的需要:如果有人希望完善理性在思辨中的运用,他就必须设想某种东西;这个需要乃是具有法则地位的需要:认定某种东西,没有它,一个人在其全部行为前总是要树立的目的将无法完成。

如果那些问题仅靠自身就能够被解答而无需这般的曲折,如果对于它们的洞见能够为了实践运用而被提供,那么我们的思辨理性的确会更加满意;然而我们的思辨能力却没有如此便利的禀赋。那些自诩有这种高妙知识的人,不应该有所隐瞒,而应将这种知识提交给公众检验,并赢得喝彩。他们希望证明,那好,就让他们证明,而批判哲学将会在作为成功者的他们面前放下自己的武器。“他们还在等什么?或许他们不愿换,他们原本是可以幸福的。”既然他们并不是真的希望证明,大概是因为他们不能证明,那么我们必须再次拿起武器,在理性的实践应用中寻觅上帝、自由与不朽概念的充足根据。这些概念建基于理性的道德应用,但是即便对于它们的可能性,思辨也无法觅得充分的保证。

现在批判哲学存在于下述事实的谜团该被解释了:我们必须断绝各种思辨范畴在超出感觉应用时的客观实在性,但是涉及到纯粹实践理性的客体,我们却又将这一实在性归属于它们。如果仅从字面意思来认识理性的实践运用,那么这看起来必定是前后矛盾的。但是,彻底地分析理性的实践运用会使得下述事实清晰:这里所思考的实在性并不暗含概念的理论决定,也无关

and no extension of our knowledge to the supersensible. One then perceives that all that is meant in attributing reality to those concepts is that an object is attributable to them either in so far as they are contained in the necessary determination of the will a priori or be cause they are indissolubly connected with the object of this determination. The inconsistency vanishes because the use which is now made of these concepts is different from that required by speculative reason.

So far from being incoherent, the highly consistent structure of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is very satisfyingly revealed here. For in that work the objects of experience as such, including even our own subject, were explained as only *appearances*, though as based upon things regarded as they are in themselves; consequently, even in that *Critique* it was emphasized that the supersensible was not mere fancy and that its concepts were not empty. Now practical reason itself, without any collusion with the speculative, provides reality to a supersensible object of the category of causality, i. e. , to freedom. This is a practical concept and as such is subject only to practical use; but what in the speculative critique could only be thought is now confirmed by fact. The strange but incontrovertible assertion of the speculative *Critique*, that the thinking subject is only an appearance to itself in inner intuition, now finds its full confirmation in the *Critique of Practical Reason*; the establishment of this thesis is here so cogent that one would be compelled to accept it even if the first had not already proved it. ①

In this way I can also understand why the most weighty criticisms of the *Critique* which have come to my attention turn about these two points: first, the reality of the categories as applied to noumena, which is denied in theoretical knowledge but affirmed in practical; and, second, the paradoxical demand to regard one's self, as subject to freedom, as noumenon, and yet from the point of view of nature to

① The union of causality as freedom with causality as the mechanism of nature, the first being given through the moral law and the latter through natural law, and both as related to the same subject, man, is impossible unless man is conceived by pure consciousness as a being in itself in relation to the former, but by empirical reason as appearance in relation to the latter. Otherwise the self-contradiction of reason is unavoidable.

我们知识向超感观世界的扩展。人们察觉到,将实在性归属于那些概念仅仅意味着一个客体可归因于它们,或者就它们能够被包含在先天必然的意志决定中而言,或者是因为它们与这一决定的客体不可分割地关联着。这样,那个前后矛盾就消失了,因为现在在这些概念所形成的运用与思辨理性所要求的并不相同。

这里非但不是前后矛盾,反而非常令人满意地揭示了《纯粹理性批判》高度一致的结构。因为在那本著作中,经验对象本身,甚至包括我们的主体在内,虽然建基于物自身,但是仍然仅被当作现象而加以解释;相应地,即使是那部《批判》也强调,超感性的东西并非单纯的想象,而它的概念亦非空洞的。现在实践理性自身并未与思辨理性相约定,就将实在性赋予因果性范畴的超验对象,即自由。虽然这是一个实践的概念,也仅适用于实践应用,但是在思辨批判中仅能被思维的东西现在却为事实所证实。思辨批判那个奇怪却又无可争辩的主张,即思维主体仅是在内感觉中对它自身而言的一个现象,现在于《实践理性批判》中得到了充分证实;这一论题的确立是如此的令人信服,以至于人们不得不采纳它,虽然第一批判并未给出证明。^①

由此我也明白了,为何那些最为厚重的并引发我注意的关于批判哲学的驳难可以归结为以下两点:第一,在理论知识中被否定,却在实践知识中被确认的应用于本体的范畴的实在性;第二,那个荒谬的要求,即:既把自己看作自由的主体、看作本体,又从

① 通过道德法则而被确立的作为自由的因果关系与通过自然法则而被确立的作为自然机制的因果关系,除非其所共同关联的主体,人,在涉及到前者时被纯粹意识设定为存在者本身,而在涉及到后者时被经验理性设定为现象,就不可能统一。否则,理性的自我矛盾将不可避免。

think of one's self as a phenomenon in one's own empirical consciousness. So long as one had no definite concept of morality and freedom, no conjecture could be made concerning what the noumenon was which should be posited as the ground of the alleged appearance, and even whether it was possible to form a concept of it, since all the concepts of the pure understanding in their theoretical employment had already been assigned exclusively to mere appearances. Only a detailed *Critique of Practical Reason* can set aside all these misconceptions and put in a clear light the consistency which constitutes its chief merit.

So much for the justification of the fact that the concepts and principles of the pure speculative reason are now and again reexamined in this work, in spite of the fact that they have already been scrutinized in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This might not seem proper in the systematic construction of a science, since matters which have already been decided should only be referred to and not discussed again. But here it is allowed and even necessary, for these concepts of reason are now seen in transition to an altogether different use from that made of them in the first *Critique*. Such a transition makes necessary a comparison of their old and new employment, in order to distinguish clearly the new path from the previous one and at the same time to call attention to the connection between them. One must not, therefore, think that such considerations, including those devoted to the concept of freedom in the practical use of pure reason, are only interpolations which serve to fill out gaps in the critical system of speculative reason, for this is complete in its design. They are not like the props and buttresses which usually have to be put behind a hastily erected building, but they are rather true members making the structure of the system plain and letting the concepts, which were previously thought of only in a problematic way, be clearly seen as real.

This reminder pre eminently concerns the concept of freedom, for it is surprising that so many boast of being able to understand it and to explain its possibility, yet see it only psychologically. But if they had carefully pondered it from a transcendental standpoint, they would

自然的观点将自己看作自我经验意识中的一个现象。既然纯粹知性的全部概念在其理论应用中已经被归为单纯现象,那么只要人们还未拥有道德和自由的明确概念,他们就不能推测应当作为所谓现象的基础而被设置的本体是何物,甚至也不能猜想是否有可能形成一个有关它的概念。只有一部详尽的《实践理性批判》才能驳回所有这些误解,并使构成其首要优点的前后一贯性得到彰显。

到此为止,我所要辩护的就是:在这部著作中纯粹思辨理性的概念和原理会不时被重新考察,尽管在《纯粹理性批判》中它们业已被仔细检验。这种做法就系统地建设一门科学而言似乎并不正确,因为已经被决定的内容只应被引用而不是再次加以讨论。但是在这里,这种做法是允许的,甚至是必要的,因为这些理性的概念已经转化为另外一种应用,而与第一批判中构成它们的那种应用完全不同。这一转化使得对比它们的新旧两种应用成为必要,以便清晰地区分新旧两种路径,同时引发对二者之间联系的注意。因此,人们不应认为,这些考察,其中包括对于纯粹理性之实践应用中的自由概念的考察,仅仅是对思辨理性批判体系中的缺口加以补充,因为这一体系在其设计中本是完整的。它们不像给匆忙建造起来的楼宇后加的支撑和扶垛,但却是使这一体系的连接清晰起来的真实环节,使得我们清楚地看到那些原本仅以存疑的方式而被思考的概念是真实的。

这个提示对于自由概念尤为适用,关于这一概念,令人惊奇的是如此众多的人仅从心理学的角度加以审视,却自诩能够理解它,并解释其可能性。但是,如果这些人能够从先验的立场来

have seen its indispensability as a problematic concept in the complete use of speculative reason as well as its complete incomprehensibility; and if they subsequently passed over to the practical use of this concept, they would have been brought to the same description of it in respect to its principles which they are now so unwilling to acknowledge. The concept of freedom is the stumbling block of all empiricists but the key to the most sublime practical principles for critical moralists, who see, through it, that they must necessarily proceed rationally. For this reason, I beg the reader not to run lightly through what is said about this concept at the end of the *Analytic*.

I leave it to the connoisseur of this kind of work to judge whether such a system into which practical reason has been developed through a critique of this faculty has cost much or little trouble, especially in gaining the right point of view from which the whole can be rightly sketched. It presupposes the *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, but only in so far as that work gives a preliminary acquaintance with the principle of duty and justifies a definite formula of it;^① otherwise it is an independent work.

The reason the classification of all practical sciences is not completely carried through, as the *Critique of Speculative Reason* did this for the theoretical sciences, lies in the nature of the practical faculty of pure reason itself. For the specific definition of duties as human duties, which is necessary to a classification of them, is possible only if the subject of this definition (man) is known in his actual nature, at least in so far as this knowledge is needed in determining his relation to duty in general. Getting this knowledge,

① A critic who wished to say something against that work really did better than he intended when he said that there was no new principle of morality in it but only a new formula. Who would want to introduce a new principle of morality and, as it were, be its inventor, as if the world had hitherto been ignorant of what duty is or had been thoroughly wrong about it? Those who know what a formula means to a mathematician, in determining what is to be done in solving a problem without letting him go astray, will not regard a formula which will do this for all duties as something insignificant and unnecessary.