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Revised (2017/2019) version of "'Critique,' not 'Criticism'"(6 February 2017) in response to Rob Jenkins' "What is Critical Thinking, Anyway?"

Critique, Not Emotionless, Critical Thinking

When one encounters the word "critique," one readily thinks of a negative strategy, frequently of negative dismissal, in the spirit of "criticism," or perhaps one thinks of emotionless "critical thinking." As a consequence, it is easy to miss a profound difference between "critique" and "critical thinking." Given the difference in what each does with respect to the phenomena that initiates them, the difference is so great that one can even speak of "critique" as 180 degrees opposite to both "criticism" and "critical thinking."

Critical Thinking is Grounded in "Knowledge"

Rob Jenkins provides a succinct summary of "critical thinking" in the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* "Academy Today" from 2 February, 2017: "What is Critical Thinking, Anyway?" He suggests that there are two aspects to critical thinking: 1) thinking, which means "applying your brain" by cultivating discipline in a world in which the brain is frequently on "auto-pilot;" and 2) being critical, *which by no means consists in being merely negative*, but being a) as objective as possible, b) analytical in that one breaks problems down "into their component parts;" and c) dispassionate not to the absolute neglect of emotions, which are valuable in moments of "compassion," but rather not to base one's judgments on emotions, which are "not to be trusted."

Intentionally or not, thinking here means disciplining the brain (with no mention of the mind), as if thinking was the application of a tool, and critical thinking requires eliminating most if not all the subjective elements of one's experience, approaching experience as consisting of "building blocks" like bricks in a wall, and for all intents and purposes eliminating one's emotions. If that's what critical thinking is, then it is a strategy that undermines the very humanity it is meant to serve.

Both "criticism" and "critical thinking" elevate the critic above the object of their concern. A critic is understood to be competent when s/he offers "informed criticism," rather than mere opinion, about a region of investigation. Persons who offer excellent criticism are the better informed. Because of their "critical skills," they are able to determine for us what is "mere myth" and what are "the facts." "Trust me, I have a master's degree in science!"

Criticism begins as skepticism that doubts the evidence because "it knows better." In this form of skepticism, the skeptic is driven by her/his "superior" knowledge to instruct the less informed about the true facts of the case or circumstances in question. In other words, criticism and

critical thinking presupposes that the critic possesses the adequate knowledge and skills to determine validity of a claim or the "truth of the matter."

To be sure, a "good" critic is able not only to determine but, more importantly, to recognize and acknowledge where knowledge is limited by pointing out what has been critically determined to be the case and what remains uncertain with respect to the facts in the case. Nonetheless, what anchors the critics claims is her/his possession of "superior knowledge with respect to the "facts" of the case in question.

Critique is Grounded in "Necessities"

Whereas "criticism" and "critical thinking" elevate the critic above the object of their concern because of the critics "knowledge" of the case in question, "critique" humbles the critic, first, with the awareness that any and everything that we experience is a set of appearances rather than the result of direct access to the empirical facts themselves as well as, second, with the awareness that "knowledge" -- more appropriately, understanding because it is rarely certain -- involves *adding things to the phenomena in question that are not there in the phenomena*.

In contrast to "critical thinking," thinking for "critique" is not knowledge or the mere methodology for the acquisition of knowledge. Rather, knowledge presupposes thinking, or as Immanuel Kant says. "… [T]hinking is tantamount to making judgments or perceptions correlated generally to judgments.[1]" (Trans. McGaughey)) Hence, to adequately understand thinking, we must examine what is involved in making judgments to which we will return below.

At the moment, though, it is important to underscore that understanding and action are not grounded in "knowledge" but exactly the opposite:. As J.G. Fichte observed: "We don't act because we know; we know because we act.[2]" It would never occur to us to seek to understand anything were it not the case that we do and must act in a physical world. Understanding and action are *grounded*, then, not by knowledge, for there is little that we know with absolute certainty, but understanding is *grounded* by what the agent can determine to be *necessary* for her/him to experience the phenomena in the first place. To be sure, these *necessary* elements, themselves, can only be verified *indirectly* by the empirical evidence that they enable us to experience. They are incapable of empirical proof or disproof precisely because they are not empirical. However, these necessary elements have the advantage over perception in that they are, precisely, *necessary*! Without them, we wouldn't be able to act or understand. The "critique" that is Critical Idealism seeks to establish just what these *subjective elements* are that make action and understanding possible, and it maintains that they tell us a great deal about what it means to be(come) human. At the least "critique" warns us against the arrogance of the intellectual, "enlightened" elite by underscoring the limits to human reason.

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[1] "… Denken [ist] so viel als Urtheilen, oder Vorstellungen auf Urtheile überhaupt beziehen,." (*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* AA: IV, 304; from Birgit Recki, *Ästhetik der Sitten. Die Affinität von ästhetischm Gefühl und praktischer Vernunft in Kant* [Frankfurt a.M: Vittorio Klostermann, 2001]: 126, n. 17).

[2] See Fichte, *Die Bestimmung des Menschen*, pp. 264-5, 280, and 284. In addition, see pp. 145-311, particularly the third book entitled "Glaube" or "Faith," pp. 253-309. That humans cannot not act is what protects Fichte's project from solipsism, for he insists that one does not understand in order to act; rather, one acts therefore one can (and must seek to) understand.

"Critique" involves acknowledgement that *understanding depends upon what one adds to the phenomena* when one can *never be certain that what one adds is absolutely correct; one can only be certain that perception and understanding require elements in addition to the perception itself*. In short, whereas "criticism" and "critical thinking" assume that we possess knowledge with certainty, "critique" assumes that understanding *necessarily* requires that the individual contribute things to the activity of understanding that are exclusively accessible *only in and through the mind* – not to be confused for the mere brain.

Critical Idealism rather than Empiricism or Critical Realism

The "Critical Idealist" who engages in the strategy of "critique" is different not only from the objective "Empiricist" who believes that we get to reality simply by opening our eyes but also from the "Critical Realist." The differences between the Critical Idealist and the Empiricist couldn't be greater. The former acknowledges the necessary, subjective elements to all action and understanding whereas the Empiricist insists that one merely need open one's eyes in a "disciplined[3]" fashion, that is, objectively, analytically, and dispassionately to obtain truth.

However, when it comes to the contrast between the Critical Idealist and the Critical Realist, the alternative is NOT that between a subjective "Idealist" and an objective "Empiricist!" The subjective "Idealist" (but *not* the "Critical Idealist") believes that reality is an eternal, absolute system of mental elements (call them "ideas," "essences," "universals," or "forms") that exist independent of any and all physical phenomena. This form of "Idealism" is frequently called Platonism. In fact, though, the very notion that "ideas" exist is a *non sequitur*, given that "existence" requires spatial location and, by definition, "ideas" are incapable of being physically located in space.

Therefore, the alternative between "Critical Idealism" and "Critical Realism" is subtly and profoundly different than the alternative between "Subjective Idealism" and "Objective Empiricism." Each has come to recognize that strict Idealism and strict Objectivity are illusions. The "Critical Idealist" has been forced to acknowledge through the very process of understanding that there is more to understanding phenomena than simply "opening one's eyes." However, s/he also has been forced to acknowledge by the very process of understanding that there is more to understanding phenomena than simply "closing one's eyes" to perceive absolute "ideas" that are found, somehow, only in the mind.

The "Critical Realist," agrees with the "Critical Idealist" that there can be no certain knowledge of empirical phenomena because we do not have direct and immediate access to the world "as it is" in itself -- rather, we only experience the world "as a set of appearances." Nonetheless,

[3] „Discipline" can mean, of course, both self-discipline and a professional discipline. Self-discipline is frequently the subordinating of the self to the *objective* expectations and measurements of success established by a professional discipline. Self-discipline, however, can mean the Copernican Turn to *a priori* synthetic judgment in methodological skepticism that identifies the necessary conditions of possibility for one's "opening one's eyes" and, more importantly, understanding and agency Pedagogically, the difference couldn't be greater. (See *Critique of Pure Reason* B 736 ff.

where the "Critical Realist" differs from the "Critical Idealist" is that the "Critical Realist" insists that the physical world consists of an absolute, empirical order that we are capable of knowing. Mathematics constitutes the paradigm of knowledge according to the "Critical Realist" -- without recognizing the subjective nature of mathematics!

Whereas admittedly the power of mathematics for understanding the physical world is astonishing, it itself does not provide absolute understanding because mathematics is a symbol system that is not found "naturally" in phenomena but must be *added to the phenomena*. We don't get "one" or "two," much less "zero," simply by opening our eyes. The insistence that the physical world *must* (!) *conform to the laws and logic of mathematics* is a *dogmatic claim*, not an empirical claim. We don't and cannot ever know that mathematics applies to all circumstances at all times. What we have come to understand is that, the more we are able to apply mathematical symbols in the form of an ever-expanding grasp of a system of universal laws to the empirical phenomena, the more we appear (!) to be able to understand, but even that mathematical understanding is subject to revision ...

What distinguishes the Critical Idealist from the Critical Realist is that the former insists that understanding must conform to a set of necessary but unprovable ideas if we are to understand, whereas the Critical Realist insists that the world is a realm of absolute, empirical truths that can only be approximated by objective strategies. These objective strategies completely eclipse the role of the subject in acting and understanding. The difference here between Critical Idealism and Critical Realism, then, couldn't be greater although it is flagged only by the word "necessary."

Cassirer and Symbolic Systems

What do we call those elements of understanding that must be *added to the phenomena for understanding* if these "necessary" elements for understanding cannot be demonstrated to *exist independent of the world of appearances to which they apply* and if the "necessary" elements for understanding cannot be proved/disproved by the empirical evidence to which they must be applied? Clearly, they "go beyond" the merely empirical phenomena, but, given that we encounter them only in relationship to a world of physical phenomena, we are incapable of proving/disproving that they actually *exist* independent of the world of phenomena that we experience.

Experience requires a world of particular phenomena. We have never only experience a realm of *universals* independent of the world of *particular* phenomena just as we have never experienced the physical world *in and for itself*. However without a world of particular phenomena, it would not be possible for us to even search for universals. As we observed above, the very notion of "existence" requires spatial location, so that any insistence on the part of "Subjective Idealism" that universals *must exist independent of the world of phenomena* is as much a dogmatic claim as that of the "Objective Empiricist" who insists that the physical world *must be entirely accessible in empirical perception.*

"Critical Idealism" speaks of these elements that must be added to phenomena as "transcendental." This is potentially misleading because "transcendental" is most readily

associated with "Subjective Idealism" to apply to elements of experience that absolutely "go beyond" the physical world. In contrast, "Critical Idealism" employs the term "transcendental" to apply merely to those non-empirical elements of experience that are *necessary for us to experience, understand, and act in the empirical world in the manner that we do*. It would never occur to us to seek out "transcendental" *necessities* were we not to experience a world/universe of phenomena both physical and mental as a ceaseless flow of appearances that we appear to be able to understand.

"Thinking" according to Critical Idealism's consists of the task of identifying and (properly) applying to understanding, decision taking, and action those *necessary transcendental elements of experience* that are the condition of possibility for us to experience the world as we do. The first task of "Critical Idealism," then, is to determine what is *necessary* for us to understand (!) physical phenomena. These include what Ernst Cassirer called "symbol systems" that allow humanity to understand and engage the world to a degree incapable for other species who engage the world primarily by mere instincts. It is because humanity is able to insert symbols into the midst of the binary stimulus-response structure of perception that it shares with other species that humanity is not only capable of acting on the basis of instinct but also of understanding with conscious intentionality.

Critical Idealism distinguishes between theoretical and practical reason. Theoretical reason is concerned with the transcendental conditions of possibility for understanding phenomena. Practical reason is concerned with humanity's unusual causal power to initiate sequences of events that nature cannot accomplish on its own.

Theoretical reason involves everything from our ability to experience the "space" and "time" in which events occur to include, in addition, an entire system of categories and laws (not just isolated ideas) that is by no means exhausted by, but exemplary in, mathematics. Not only does no other species, as far as we know, concern itself with the identification of these "pure," *necessary, transcendental elements* for understanding phenomena, but also no other species, as far as we can determine, can look at the sun and insist that it is standing still and that we are rotating on the surface of the earth at a speed of some 1,000 miles/hour. Theoretical reason investigates these *necessary* elements of our transcendental capacity inaccessible to the senses that make it possible for us to understand.

Kant's *first critique*, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, is devoted *initially* to describing how theoretical reason functions. However, the *first critique* investigates far more than mere theoretical reason as it seeks to call attention to "pure" ideas of reason that are *necessary* for us to be able to engage in theoretical reason itself and are "pure" because they can never appear in the senses. These pure ideas of reason are God, cosmology/freedom, and the soul,[4] which

[4] „God" is defended as a necessary assumption as ultimate origin and condition of unity to any and all phenomena. As the ultimate Noumenon, it is inaccessible to humanity. Before this ultimate origin and the identification of what its necessary contributions must be for us to experience, understand, and act as we do, humanity must remain silent because of our limits. Otherwise, we storm the divine throne to elevate ourselves above God. „Cosmology/freedom" refer to the givenness of the physical and causal orders of experience. There is one physical order that is the basis of all experience. Yet, „on top of" that physical order and its physical causality is an extra-*ordinary* causality of autonomous freedom that humanity exercises in order to initiate events that physical

indicate humanity's capacity to rise *above* theoretical to an activity of reason by no means exhausted by theoretical reason: practical reason.

Beyond Theoretical to Practical Reason

In other words, there is more to Critical Idealism than the theoretical reason that is concerned with understanding physical phenomena. Humanity does not merely understand its world; it can consciously change it. This capacity involves more than mere "theoretical" reason and is appropriately called "practical" reason because it involves the application of understanding in *praxis*. Practical reason is the focus of Kant's so-called *second critique*, the *Critique of Practical Reason*.

There is a set of transcendental and "pure," *necessary* capacities that make this conscious and intentional transformation of the world possible. In addition to, but never separate from, a grasp of "pure" space and time and to employ schemata of concepts to understand phenomena by "theoretical" reason, these necessary capacities include "creative" or "autonomous" freedom, that is, the ability to consciously initiate a sequence of events that nature on its own could never accomplish. As with all "pure" and *necessary*, *transcendental* elements, we are incapable of proving or disproving that we possess this "autonomous" freedom, but we couldn't experience ourselves as capable of doing what we do without assuming that we possess "autonomous" freedom.[5] It is because of these transcendental capacities that we are *capable of holding* ourselves morally accountable for what we do with these capacities even if, in fact, we don't hold ourselves accountable. It is clear that we don't hold other species or expect other species to hold themselves morally responsible for what they do. One can even go so far to say that this set of capacities is what makes it possible for us to be more than animals – without denying or calling for the ignoring of our animality. In short, we are a moral species not because we act morally but because *we can act morally*, that is, we can do the right thing because it is right and not act exclusively on the basis of self- or corporate interests.

Critical Idealism reminds us, because it cannot force anyone, to be moral. The practical reason of Critical Idealism can only issue a challenge: Why be less than human? The answer we give depends upon our ability to distinguish between "critique" and "critical thinking."

Critique Shatters the Ambition that Reason can be Emotionless

causality on its own cannot accomplish. That these two systems of order function complementarily is a necessary condition for us to be able to be the species that we are. Finally, the „soul" as an enduring identity is a necessary condition of possibility for us to be the „individual" that each of us is. However, as with God and cosmology/freedom, the identity of the self is entirely inaccessible to the senses (they are all „pure" ideas of reason) and inscrutable except for their being *necessary*. (See *Critique of Pure Reason* B 699 ff.)

[5] For this reason, Kant refers to autonomous freedom as a „fact of reason," which is a contradiction because autonomous freedom is a pure idea of reason and incapable of being a „fact," which would require empirical phenomena for its determination as a fact. See *Critique of Pure Reason* B xxvii-xxviii, 586-587. Yet, autonomous freedom is so inseparable from our experience of ourselves that its denial would be a denial of our very selves. See the *Critique of Practical Reason* (AA V, 31; 42-3) as well as two more passages in the second critique that address the theme without the term (AA V, 56-57 and105). There is another explicit discussion of the „fact of reason" in the third critique (AA V, 473-474).

Contrary to Rob Jenkins' portrayal of "Critical Thinking" as requiring the bracketing of emotions, both theoretical and practical reason are impossible without the motivating power of feelings as Birgit Recki meticulously points out in the *Ästhetik der Sitten*. Because "theoretical" reason always involves *adding things to phenomena* in order to understand, calculate, and predict empirical phenomena and because "practical" reason involves the intentional initiation of sequences of events that nature cannot accomplish on its own, there is nothing about reason that is merely passive. Both theoretical and practical reason are activities of an individual. No one can think for another person, and no one can act and assume responsibility for the actions of another person. How is it possible that reason is profoundly an event initiated by an individual and not simply a passive "state of mind" over against a world?

The central theme of Kant's so-called *third critique*, the *Critique of Judgment*, is the examination of the ubiquitous presence of this active function in both theoretical and practical reason. He calls it a "critique" of judgment not because he dismisses judgment generally as some kind of misconception. Rather, the process of judgment is at the core of both theoretical and practical reason, and, equally important, this process is something initiated by the individual.

Kant defines what he means by "judgment" already in the introduction to the *third critique* (Section IV: "On Judgment as an *a priori* Legislative Capacity"). Judgment is the capacity to classify (i.e., subordinate) a set of phenomena under a concept. In short, judgment is giving the concept to the phenomena. Judgment has two forms: determining and reflective judgment. Determining judgment occurs when one already possesses the concept for classifying the phenomena. Reflecting judgment occurs when one is lacking an appropriate concept and has to "go looking" for it. Kant observes that there is an emotional valence to both forms of judgment. Whereas determining judgment involves the satisfaction of having understood the phenomena (frequently, only because one has memorized some list of concepts that one has acquired from someone else), reflecting judgment involves the "excitement" of searching for the appropriate concept. The successful resolution of the search brings with it the satisfaction of having understood something for oneself. Of course, both forms of judgment can be hindered by ennui, and reflecting judgment can be frustrating when one's efforts are not fulfilled. However, Kant's recognition that all "determining" judgment was once "reflecting judgment" anchors, but does not ground, the capacity of judgment squarely in feelings, when it comes to motivation. To be sure, the motivating feeling is not just any capricious feeling. It is a feeling driven by the transcendental commitment to order: the order of both theoretical and practical reason.

In order to exercise theoretical and practical reason, the individual must desire understanding and desire to act responsibly. It is no accident that, in the table of rational capacities at the end of the introduction to the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant labeled the highest cognitive capacity of reason the "capacities of desire." It is desire that makes the demands of theoretical reason attractive by overcoming all of the barriers like boredom and distaste for the self(!)-discipline required to achieve proper understanding. However, it is desire that is motivated by the satisfaction that comes when the "light-bulb" turns on when insight occurs as a consequence of one's own effort. Likewise, the desire not only to satisfy one's animal appetites or to achieve status and prestige in

the eyes of others[6] but also to take responsibility for one's actions – even, on occasion, doing so contrary to one's personal or community's self-interest – is the motivation that spurs one to engage practical reason.

The motivation to discover the concept or law appropriate to understanding and to the assumption of responsibility for one's creative efforts are core emotions at the heart of theoretical and practical reason, respectively. Kant accentuated the role of feelings in his own development in a famous comment made in his so-called "pre-critical" period that demonstrates the presence of profound continuity across his entire writing career:

„I [Kant] am myself a researcher by inclination. I feel entirely the thirst for understanding as well as the zealous agitation that comes along with that thirst to increase my understanding or, as well, for the satisfaction that comes with achieving it. There was a time in which I believed that this activity alone constituted human honor, and I disdained the rabble who knew nothing of it. Rousseau brought me to my senses […] This blinding preference vanished, I learned to honor humanity, and I would consider myself to be more worthless than any common handworker if I didn't believe that this view can bring to all others a worth, capable of achieving the rights of humanity.[7]" („Comments in the ‚Reflections on the Feeling of Beauty and the Sublime" [Trans. McGaughey])

Here Kant unequivocally indicates the emotional motivation for his desire for and achievement of understanding (theoretical reason) and his esteem of the moral worth (practical reason) that distinguishes humanity, as far as we know, from all other species.

In other words, the notion that reason suppresses feelings in order to pursue and achieve its ends is only partially correct and cuts the taproot of human curiosity. There is no acquisition of understanding in theoretical reason without the motivations of curiosity, hunger, satisfaction, and even disappointment. To be sure, motivation is not what makes for understanding. Understanding presupposes universal concepts and laws, rather than merely particular feelings. Nonetheless, one searches for concepts and laws out of desire.

Recki points out that the same is true for practical reason. Its moral principles are universal in that they bracket (but do not eliminate) self-interest, but the motivation to do anything, especially to do the right thing despite its harming one's self interest, is a feeling that not unlike

[6] In *Religion within the Boundaries of mere Reason*, Kant distinguishes three inalienable capacities of humanity: animality, humanity, and personality. Animality confronts us with our physical nature. Humanity is the quest for status and prestige (honor) in the eyes of others. Personality is the ability to decide and act on the basis of moral principles regardless of the consequences for our self-interest. See AA VI, 26f.

[7] „Ich [Kant] bin selbst aus Neigung ein Forscher. Ich fühle den gantzen Durst nach Erkenntnis und die begierige Unruhe darin weiter zu kommen oder auch die Zufriedenheit bey jedem Erwerb. Es war eine Zeit da ich glaubte dieses allein könnte die Ehre der Menschheit machen und ich verachtete den Pöbel der von nichts weis. Rousseau hat mich zurecht gebracht. […] Dieser verblendende Vorzug verschwindet, ich lerne die Menschen ehren und ich würde mich weit unnützer finden den wie den gemeinen Arbeiter wenn ich nicht glaubete daß dieser Betraqchtung allen übrigen einen Werth ertheilen könne, die Rechte der Menschheit herzustellen." ("Bemerkungen in den „'Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen'" [1764], newly edited anbd commented on by Marie Rischmüller [Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1991]: 38.)

autonomous freedom itself is inscrutable. Both autonomous freedom and the motivation that drives one to exercise theoretical and practical reason are *necessary* assumptions for us to understand ourselves as individuals and a species. Birgit Recki summarizes Kant's reflections on emotions and freedom in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*:

"'… it is … entirely impossible to understand (i.e., to make *a priori* comprehensible) how a mere thought that itself contains nothing sensory can generate a sentiment of desire or aversion … The possibility of a free will is subject to the same *ignorabimus* ["we will not know" (McGaughey)]: namely, it is the same difficulty with respect to attempting to explain, Kant expressly states, '*how pure reason can be practical*,' that is, 'how it is possible for freedom to be the will's causality' (*Groundwork*, AA IV 461). Because freedom is 'a mere idea' [of pure reason (McGaughey)] 'whose objective reality […] cannot be presented in any kind of possible experience' [any appearances (McGaughey)] (*Groundwork* AA IV, 459), it is impossible to give a proof of freedom … [N]onetheness, freedom is capable of being the object of an explication or, as Kant says, a 'defense' (*Groundwork* AA IV, 459) …[8]" (Recki, 275) [Trans. McGaughey]

Because freedom is *necessary* for us to be the species that we experience ourselves to be capable of be(coming), we can give an explication and defense of it.

Far from suppressing feelings as required by „critical thinking," both theoretical and practical reason embrace feelings that motivate us to find the „lawful" order both in phenomena and for governing our responsible behavior.

„Critique," then, is not to be confused with either „criticism" or „critical thinking." In contrast to both, „critique" turns the spy glass around to focus on the necessary, subjective conditions for there to be any experience of appearances in the first place that we might be capable of understanding as well as to focus on the necessary, subjective conditions that make it possible for humanity to be moral – although our species may never actually live up to its potential.

Most of Rob Jenkins' criteria for defining critical thinking (disciplining a physical organ, insisting on mere objectivity, analytical dismemberment of phenomena, and elimination of the emotions) are far more destructive to understanding and action than they are beneficial to

[8] "… es sei ‚… gänlzlich unmöglich, einzusehehen, d.i. a priori begreiflich zu machen, wie ein bloßer Gedanke, der selbst nichts Sinnliches in sich enthält, eine Empfindung der Lust oder Unlust hervorbringe … Die Möglichkeit eines freien Willens fällt unter dasselbe Ignorabimus: Es ist die nämliche Schwierigkeit, wie sie Kant ausdrücklich festhält für den Anspruch, zu erklären, ‚*wie reine Vernunft praktisch sein könne*', das heißt ‚wie Freiheit selbst als Causalität eines Willens möglich sei' (*Groundwork*, AA IV, 461). Da Freiheit ‚eine bloße Idee' [der reinen Vernunft (McGaughey)] ist, ‚deren objective Realität […] nicht in irgend einer möglichen Erfahrung [appearance of perception (McGaughey)] dargethan werden kann' (*Groundwork* aA IV, 459), ist ein Freiheitsbeweis nicht möglich … [N]ach diesem Eigeständnis kann Freiheit immer noch Gegenstand einer Explikation oder, wie Kant sagt, einer ‚Vertheidung' (*Groundwork* AA IV, 459) sein …" (Recki, 275)

humanity. The critique of Critical Idealism grounds understanding and action in *necessary* elements whose necessity is confirmed by the very way in which we experience the world.

In addition to this expansion of theoretical reason beyond the arrogance of critical thinking, critique includes the engagement of practical reason that grounds the dignity of every human being regardless of the sophistication of her/his grasp of theoretical reason. A proper understanding of both theoretical and practical reason is a necessary starting point for developing a pedagogy that encourages the individual to understand, act, and take responsibility for her-/himself. It places personal and social, moral improvement at the heart of the educational process, not as some secondary, frosting on the cake.

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