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God is Necessary to be Good!

Abstract

This paper proposes that, although one best avoid invoking an anthropomorphic deity, belief in God is, nonetheless, a necessary assumption for the exercising of humanity's moral capacity. This invokes the notion of the "good," which will be parsed according to an amoral, a categorical, and a hypothetical good that grounds (or is necessary for) *autonomous freedom's* ability to intentionally initiate sequences of events that, otherwise, nature on its own cannot accomplish, which, in turn, makes moral effort possible. Denial of this set of themes is, of course, conceivable, but methodological skepticism's Copernican Turn points out that such scoffing amounts to misanthropy.

The paper rejects both moral "naturalism," which proposes that morality is the mere consequence of successfully negotiating a social world to accomplish one's ends, and Utilitarian "consequentialism," which involves violating human dignity and fostering ignorance to the benefit, especially, of a privileged elite. Rather than reduce morality to teleology, the paper will propose the crucial elements exposed by an archaeology of humanity's autonomous capacity for understanding its dependence upon God in order to be good – without succumbing to speculative, heteronomous theonomy.

Introduction[1]
Metaphor Clarifications

In light of the fact that Kant dismisses the validity of the cosmological, teleological, and ontological arguments for God,[2] it might come as a surprise to some that he consistently defended *belief* in God throughout his entire writing career. The claim appears in his very first publication, and, already in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (AA III, B 651), he anticipated the defense that he employed in the "Critique of Teleological Judgment" presented in the *Critique of Judgment* (AA V, 357 ff) of theoretical reason's use of the physico-theological argument for the *understanding* of nature but *not for an objective proof of the existence of God*.

Before turning to the core thesis of this paper, though, a few metaphors require clarification to avoid an anachronistic of Kant's Critical Idealism:

Morality is not Ethics: Ethics is concerned with the social norms of humanly constructed institutions (for example, civic laws, the work-place norms of corporations, educational institutions, social clubs, etc.). However, ethics presupposes that its practitioners are moral. A "higher" morality governs

[1] Special thanks are due to Prof. James R. Cochrane for reading and commenting on an early draft of this paper.
[2] See the discussion of the ontological argument in the *Critique of Pure Reason* III, B 620 ff, the cosmological argument in *ibid*., B 632 ff, and the physico-theological (i.e., teleological) argument in *ibid*., B 649 ff.

ethics' pursuit of the successful negotiation of a social world. Thus, one can be immoral although one performs everything "properly" according to ethical norms. For example, fulfilling the stipulations of the civic law in itself does not guarantee justice.

Reason is not merely Giving Reasons: H*uman beings are rational beings*, not merely a species governed exclusively by natural causes. "*Reason*" here means *an imperceptible, immaterial, indivisible, and immeasurable, supersensible capacity*[3] *that adds elements to perceived phenomena, which are not given with the phenomena themselves,*[4] *as well as capable of adding imperceptible schemes of concepts and "laws" to phenomena in order to understand them* (for example, physical "laws," statistics, and algorithms for physical phenomena as well as moral "laws" for creative agency) in *a priori* synthetic judgment.[5] Reason, here, does not mean the ability "to give reasons" for one's merely instrumental reason and linear thinking under the conviction that we can know the way things are. Reason is limited to appearances. According to Critical Idealism's definition of "reason," then, so-called Artificial Intelligence is not rational although capable of employing instrumental reasoning.

Freedom is not Liberty: Humanity's self-understanding involves the necessary assumption that we possess *autonomous freedom* that can consciously and intentionally initiate sequences of events that nature on its own cannot.[6] Consequently, we *are capable* of self-legislating moral principles (though, compatible with this freedom, neither determined nor required) to govern our decisions and actions. "Autonomous" in this context does not mean independence from cultural institutions (family, religion, society) but rather, at least to a degree, independence from physical causality.

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[3] Kant calls this inward character of unified, illimitable self-experience "apperception," which constitutes the "unity" of the self (see *Critique of Pure Reason* AA III: B 134-136, 574, 812 and *Metaphysik Mrongovius* AA XXIX: 878-879, 906) and its "I think" (see *Critique of Pure Reason* A 353-354) that, as far as we are able to tell, distinguishes us from other animals (see *Critique of Pure Reason* AA III: B 574 and *Metaphysik Mrongovius* XXIX: 906) and is the content of the mathematical and dynamical sublime (see the "Analytic of the Sublime" in *Critique of Judgment* AA V: 244 f).

[4] Kant calls this *a priori* synthetic judgment. However, he does not mean synthesis as *nexus* but as *compositio* (see *Critique of Pure Reason* AA III, B 201*). In contrast to analytic judgments, which are "elucidating" (*Erläuterungsurteile*), synthetic judgments are "enhancing" (*Erweiterungsurteile*) (see *Critique of Pure Reason* A 7 and *Metaphysik Mrongovius* XXIX: 968). Furthermore, *a priori* synthetic judgment is what makes possible "determining" and "reflecting" judgments, with reflecting judgment serving as the ground of all determining judgment. On the distinction between "determining" and "reflecting" judgment, see "IV. On Judgment as an *a priori* Legislative Faculty" in the "Introduction" to the *Critique of Judgment* AA V: 179-181. On the "temporal priority" of reflecting over determining judgment, see *ibid*., AA V: 187.

[5] Kant speaks of two "domains" in experience for which it is possible for rational beings to apply "laws:" nature (by means of theoretical reason) and autonomous freedom (by means of practical reason) (see *Critique of Judgment* AA V: 174 ff).

[6] The notion of autonomous freedom is not new with its placement along with cosmology under the three "ideas of reason" in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) (i.e., God, the soul, and freedom/cosmology) but is already formulated in 1746 with his very first book, *Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces*" (*Gedanken von der wahren Schätzung der lebendigen Kräfte und Beurteilung der Beweise derer sich Herr von Leibniz und andere Mechaniker in dieser Streitsache bedienet haben, nebst einigen vorhergehenden Betrachtungen welche die Kraft der Köper überhaupt betreffen*) in *Vorkritische Schriften bis 1768*, Weischedel Edition Band I (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1998) where he distinguishes between compulsory-determining, "mechanical" causality (26 ff.) and self-determining, animated causality (43 ff.), and it appears in 1755, the year in which he earned his master's degree and began teaching at the university as a Privatdozent, which was 26 years before publishing the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in *Neue Erhellung der ersten Grundsätze metaphysischer Erkenntnis* (*New Illumination of the First Principles of Metaphysical Understanding*) in *Vorkritische Schriften bis 1768*, Weischedel Edition (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1998): 453, see also 459.

Critique and Critical is not Criticism: Hence, the capacity for morality is illuminated by *the critical turn* to identify the conditions necessary for humanity to understand the world and to construct ethical systems to govern human praxis. "Critical" in this context does not mean merely empirical analysis and drawing of judicious distinctions (διάνοια[7]) between and among empirical or mental phenomena. A critical investigation involves elements that can never be given in merely empirical phenomena because the conditions of possibility for understanding empirical phenomena, much less for creative agency and moral responsibility, are not themselves empirical.

Necessity is not Determinism: Not all necessities are determining of understanding and action. Some necessities are merely the required conditions in order to understand and accomplish something, but these requirements do not determine one's understanding and action in advance.

Morality involves an even "deeper," necessary condition of possibility than the experience of moral principles themselves. In order for us to experience moral principles, we must possess and exercise *autonomous freedom*, which is the necessary condition of possibility for moral principles, not vice versa. This necessary condition of morality is "above" nature but, as far as we have experienced, never separable from nature.

On Physical and Moral Laws: There is rarely even a discussion when it comes to accepting that there are physical "laws" (an invisible, predictable order taken to apply to all physical events at all times and places) that govern physical phenomena. We have even grown accustomed to accepting that physical order as "blindly determining" of all events. In fact, this form of determinism has come to dominate over both the divine determinism of Augustinian double predestination and the capricious determinism of animism, at least in the "First World." However, absolute determinism in all of its forms is misanthropic in light of the fact that, in order to be the species that we experience ourselves to be, we must understand human beings as at least capable of constituting an open-ended, rational project "above" nature yet within the limits of nature's "lawfully," determining order.

In contrast, when it comes to moral principles, there is anything but common agreement concerning their reality, their source, or their purpose. For example, having failed to distinguish between "ethics" and "morality," Patricia Churchland equates the two[8] and defines morality as the "attempt to manage well in the existing social ecology" (that is, the successful negotiating of a social world). In the language of Critical Idealism, Churchland is equating morality with the socially constructed, particular rules that govern our shared, external world (the "doctrine of right") that is more appropriately called ethics, not the personal, internal world of universal principles that are taken to apply at all times and all places and can only be self-legislated by the individual (the "doctrine of virtue"). By Churchland's definition every Mafia Clan and Drug Cartel can define itself as "moral/ethical."

Given that humanity's rationality is limited – particularly, because of its dependence upon appearances of sense perception – it is impossible empirically to prove or disprove either physical or moral "laws" much less the autonomous freedom that grasps and can apply them. An empirical proof requires confirmation in sense perception, whereas reason has access to causes and "laws" only indirectly through their effects (appearances) and not by direct experience of them.

What causal explanations, in general, as well as physical and moral "laws," in particular, have in common is that they are all *necessary assumptions* for our understanding of physical events (theoretical

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[7] What Plato called "understanding" in distinction to "reason" (νοῦς) in his "Simile of the Line" in Book VI of the *Republic* 511d.

[8] See Patricia S. Churchland, *Braintrust¨ What Neuroscience Tells Us about Morality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011): 9.

reason) and for our understanding and assumption of responsibility for our autonomous freedom (practical reason). *Denial of these assumptions would constitute a claim that it is impossible for us to understand anything much less pursue responsibly the creative agency that is evidenced by its products. In short, denial of these assumptions would be misanthropic.*

World is an Open-System not a Zero-Sum Game: In other words, for there to be such a thing as a moral principle (actually, a system of moral principles), there must be a place in the natural order that is open and not merely a closed system of physical cause and effect. The world is neither a zero-sum game to the extent that we recognize and seek to realize our humanity nor a dualistic order of mental and physical substances. Experience consists of a unified totality of appearances. Dualism is a problem of subreption, not an issue for Critical Idealism.

Our age appears to be doing its best to deny that there is such an exception to the natural order. However, all we require is the acknowledgement of one moral principle in order to confirm the reasonableness of assuming the reality of *autonomous freedom* because only a "creature" capable of intentionally initiating a sequence of events is capable of experiencing a moral principle. Kant writes that moral principles are the *ratio cognoscendi* of autonomous freedom whereas autonomous freedom is the *ratio essendi* of moral principles.[9]

Duty is not Legalism: One further distinction is required for the following discussion of the role of God in being good: *duty* is not mere *legalism*. To be sure, duty is concerned with *autonomous,* universal, moral principles or "categorical imperatives." However, duty is neither concerned with the externally obligatory legalisms of "heteronomous imperatives" imposed from without, such as ethical norms, nor with "hypothetical imperatives" demanded by technical skills and the pursuit of personal, pragmatic interests.[10] This distinction is important for the recognition that *not everything that is "right" is "moral"* and for acknowledgement that "(f)antastic virtue is a concern with petty details which, were it admitted into the doctrine of virtue, would turn the government of virtue into tyranny."[11] Virtue is not slavish submission to particular, *narrow rules* that govern external freedom but commitment to universal, *broad, moral principles* that govern internal, creative freedom.[12] In short, duty does not mean "crucifying

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[9] See *Critique of Practical Reason* AA V, 4*. In conformity with the self-legislating (not creation) of moral principles, Critical Idealism speaks of criteria for, rather than an exhaustive list of, universal, broad, moral principles. Three criteria are subsumed under the notion of the *categorical imperative* (See Section II of the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* AA IV, 421, 429, 431). The first formulation is negative: In order to avoid acting merely on the basis of personal (or group) self-interest, we should select a moral principle (not an ethical rule) that we would "want to be universal as if a law of nature." The second and third formulations are positive: "So act that you use humanity, in your own person as well as in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means" (the key to respecting human dignity in contrast to the "worth" of the individual [see *Groundwork* AA IV, 434 ff]) and acknowledge "the idea of the will of every rational being as a universally legislating will." The forms of the categorical imperative provide a ready litmus test for evaluating the necessary but not determining principle one ought to invoke when one gives oneself permission (or to prevent) doing something.

[10] On the distinction between "categorical" and "hypothetical" imperatives, see *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* AA IV, 414 f. On the distinction between autonomous and heteronomous imperatives, see *ibid*., AA IV, 433, 446-447, 452, 460-461).

[11] *Metaphysics of Morals* AA VI, 409. In the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* AA IV, 429-430, Kant lists four such moral "duties" owned both to ourselves and to others (reject suicide out of disgrace, don't lie, develop one's talents, and respond to the suffering of others), and in the "Doctrine of the Methods of Ethics" that concludes *The Metaphysics of Morals* (AA VI, 477-484, he provides other examples of what it means to self-legislate a broad, *universal* moral principle to govern one's decision and action.

[12] See "VII [Internal] Ethical Duties are of *Wide* Obligation, Whereas [External] Duties of Right are of *Narrow* Obligation" in *ibid*., AA VI, 390-391. Kant distinguished between "narrower" (unrelenting, *unnachlaßlichen*) and "wider" (meritorious, *verdienstlichen*) duty already in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* IV, 424.

of the flesh[13]" or the denial of "sensuousness[14]" by subordinating all of one's actions to the legalism of an heteronomous, external or internal finger in one's face. Rather, duty is concerned with those *autonomous,* internal, broad, universal moral principles that one is capable of self-legislating to govern one's decisions and actions in contrast to the, otherwise, *heteronomous* rules of life. Duty is no limitation placed on humanity's *autonomous freedom* that squeezes all joy out of life[15] by demanding one always "do the right thing." What is essential to human living is our autonomous freedom above but never separated from nature. Moral principles and duty do not place creativity in a straightjacket of norms. In other words, duty for Critical Idealism has nothing to do with the domination of a Freudian super ego but with living up the highest of which, as human beings, we are capable.

Although happiness is not the goal of morality, respect for the moral law by no means results in the loss of happiness. In fact, one gains a kind of personal, internal satisfaction incapable of being experienced by any other individual that elevates the significance of whatever happiness that one might experience in life. In other words, curtailing of one's self-interest[16] by conforming to universal, autonomous, moral principles above particular, heteronomous, external rules is grounded in individual creativity and constitutes the path to genuine happiness.

The Good: Amoral, Categorical, and Hypothetical

Since at least Aristotle, morality has been defined teleologically in the sense of consequences of one's decisions and actions: its goal (*telos*) is "the good." To be sure, Aristotle acknowledged universal, unchanging "intellectual virtue," but his discussion of "moral virtue" in the *Nicomachean Ethics* has come to dominate what he meant by ethics (i.e., "Virtue Ethics").[17] Aristotle's moral virtue aims at "excellence" as a "mean" (not a statistical median) that is relative to the individual and is a "mean" between excess and deficiency with respect to those things in life of which one can have too much or too little. One's moral virtue depends upon one's grasp of the consequences of one's avoiding extremes (e.g., the effect of too much or too little food for one's health) by determining what is the "mean" of excellence for one's own body. Obviously, Aristotle's moral virtue doesn't apply to lying because one cannot "more or less" lie.

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[13] In fact, the "flesh" ("animality") is affirmed as the most fundamental, material basis of any and all experience (see *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* AA VI, 26-27), and it is necessarily presupposed for the two "higher" capacities (*Anlagen*) achievable by a rational being: "humanity" as status and prestige in the eyes of others and "personality" as respect for the moral law as sufficient incentive for governing one's moral responsibility (see *ibid*., AA VI, 27-28).

[14] See *ibid*., AA VI, 408 but also 384, 390, 394, and 405.

[15] See, for example, „Ethical Ascetics §53" of *The Doctrine of Virtue* in *The Metaphysics of Morals* AA VI, 484-485: "[…] monkish ascetics, which from superstitious fear or hypocritical loathing of oneself goes to work with self-torture and mortification of the flesh, is not directed to virtue but rather to fantastically purging oneself of sin by imposing punishments on oneself […] [I]t cannot produce the cheerfulness that accompanies virtue, but rather brings with it secret hatred for virtue's command." (*Ibid*., 485)

[16] The issue with self-interest is not that we should eliminate it entirely. Rather, Kant acknowledges that we can never be certain whether or not we are acting out of self-interest. See the opening paragraphs of Section II of the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* AA IV, 406 ff. A key, if not the key, purpose of the first, "*universalizing*" form of the categorical imperative (see footnote 9) is to recognize that intentionally acting on the basis of self-interest alone is certainly not to act on a moral law "as if it were universal like a law of nature" because self-interest is concerned only *particular* ends.

[17] For Aristotle's discussion see "Book II Moral Virtue" in *The Nicomachean Ethics*, and "Book VI Intellectual Virtue" in *ibid*. For the priority of Intellectual virtue (θεωρία: *theoria*/contemplation: 1177a18) over Moral virtue (above activity: 109a 16-17; 109a 12-18) see "Book X Pleasure, Happiness" in *ibid*. On Virtue Ethics, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

Rather than defining morality in terms of teleology, Critical Idealism embraces the Copernican Turn[18] in ethics away from a focus on "consequences" to investigate the "conditions of possibility" for morality (an "archaeology" of morality). Whereas Critical Idealism calls for our assumption of control over those aspects of our rational agency that we can control (that is, self-legislation, not creation, of the broad, universal principles of one's agency), it rejects "consequentialist" accounts of ethics as sufficient. One has little if any control over consequences, one is unable to calculate even short-term consequences at times much less long-term consequences,[19] and a "Utilitarian" calculation of the "greatest good for the greatest number" undermines personal moral effort by making the interest of "group well-being/happiness" the goal (*telos*) of morality, which, in fact, eliminates morality not only because "group well-being/happiness" is driven merely by self-interest but also because "well-being/happiness" is not capable of universalization; hence, it ends up serving the interests of the few and intentionally violating the dignity of the individuals it means to serve. To be sure, the seductive attractiveness of Aristotle's moral virtue is that it leaves open to flexibility the notion of "excellence" that governs it. This is because the "mean" of excellence is, precisely, not the same for all persons and the "mean" applicable to one point in one's life can be different from the "mean" at another.

Critical Idealism calls for *an "archaeology" of capacities rather than a "calculation" of consequences* as the basis of morality. Rather than the focus on the calculation of "means" and their consequences, Critical Idealism asks: What is necessary for there to be such a thing as moral principles, in the first place? An inescapable and irreducible condition is that there must be a being/species capable of intentionally doing things to which moral principles are relevant. If all beings are blindly determined by "natural," physical causality, then moral principles are an illusion. We are, then, mere marionettes or automatons.[20] Neither the individual nor the group would have responsible control over her/his/its actions. The necessary condition for moral principles, then, is that there must be a rational being who possesses *autonomous freedom*.[21]

In other words, the shift that is the Copernican Turn in morality allows for the identification of a lawful, causal order that we ourselves experience as (to a degree) independent of the blind, mechanical, and determining lawful order of nature. Both autonomous freedom and its broad, universal moral

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[18] On the Copernican Turn, see *Critique of Pure Reason* AA III, B xvi-xvii. Kant calls this strategy methodological skepticism in distinction to mere skepticism. Mere skepticism questions the content of all experience. Methodological skepticism turns the focus from content to conditions: What are the necessary conditions that make skepticism possible. See *ibid*., B 451, B 535, B 786.

[19] John Stuart Mill responded to the charge "that there is not time, previous to action, for calculating and weighting the effects of any line of conduct on the general happiness" by saying that "[…] there has been ample time, namely, the while past duration of human species" (*Utilitarianism* [Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2001]: 23) fails to acknowledge that no two circumstances are exactly the same and that the "openness" in nature that is humanity's agency by definition is constantly creating new circumstances unanticipated in the past.

[20] See *Critique of Practical Reason* AA V, 101.

[21] There is and can be no proof or disproof of *autonomous freedom* (see *Critique of Pure Reason* AA III, B 586) because it is a causality, and all causes are only indirectly experienced through their empirical effects, which makes it possible to always be able to proffer an alternative cause of the effects. Although we can be skeptical about autonomous freedom, what we cannot doubt are the conditions that would have to exist if we are capable of autonomous freedom. Those conditions include a causality that is at least to a degree independent of all other causes and is capable of intentionally bringing about things that nature cannot accomplish on its own. Furthermore, causality is no one-off exception to a predictable order. It is a "lawful" system. In contrast to nocturnal dreams in which we have three-dimensional clarity and distinctness of perception without a causal order, causal systems are coherent and allow for prediction – at least to a degree even if they are not able to be proved absolute. Whereas heteronomous, physical "laws" govern the causal system of the natural world, autonomous, moral "laws" govern autonomous freedom. However, unlike the physical "laws" of the causal system of nature that blindly determines physical events, the moral "laws" of the causal system of autonomous freedom must be freely, self-legislated or else they would determine, hence negate, the autonomous causal system to which they apply.

principles, then, are *necessary presuppositions* in order for us to experience ourselves as the species we take ourselves to be. Were we to deny these *necessary presuppositions*, we would be misanthropic.

We can identify now three forms of the good that apply to human experience: The first is an *amoral* good that is the transcendental set of capacities that are autonomous freedom and its system of moral "laws.[22]" Without this transcendental set of capacities of theoretical and practical reason, we could not be the species and individuals that we experience ourselves as capable of being. Presumably, it is good that we possess these transcendental capacities, but this "goodness" does not mean that we will be good; hence, it is amoral.

The second form of the good is the good of *categorical* imperatives. It is "categorical" because it comes exclusively from our autonomous freedom and is knowable only to the individual, not because it is an external obligation to achieve a hypothetical end and some kind of absolute obligation that is "clear to everyone." In other words, categorical imperatives are transcendental, revealed by the skeptical methodology of the Transcendental Turn's *archaeology of capacities*, and independent of the blind, mechanical causality of the physical world to some degree.[23] The categorical good is our capacity to self-legislate a good, moral principle to govern our decisions and the basis of which we can assume personal responsibility for them and our actions that nature cannot do on its own.

The third form of the good is the good of *hypothetical* imperatives, which constitute the necessary means to achieve a teleological goal.[24] There are two kinds of hypothetical imperatives: *technical* and *pragmatic* imperatives.[25] Technical imperatives are the proper steps that must be followed in order to achieve a specific goal (*telos*) in the physical world (for example, the construction of a house). Pragmatic imperatives, in contrast, are the steps that must be followed in order to achieve a personal goal (*telos*) in the physical world (for example, the training one must undergo in order to practice a particular profession). These are *hypothetical* because they are governed by an original "if" (if I want to build a house, I must …; if I want to be a physician, I must …) that is imposed externally on the self, and they are "good" because they are the "proper" way to achieve the chosen goal. Nonetheless, the ultimate determination of the "goodness" of the goal depends upon the categorical good.

God as a Necessary Presupposition for the Good

Just as physical events themselves cannot create either the original conditions that make them possible or the physical laws to which they *must* conform, so too, rational agents themselves cannot create either the original conditions that make their agency possible or the moral laws to which their agency *ought to* conform. This crucial, complicating difference that borders on a fissure in the unitary fabric of

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[22] This is what is proposed by the claim that "the seed of good [in the individual], in its entire purity […], can neither be eradicated nor corrupted …" (*Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* XX VI, 45; see as well, *ibid*., 41, 43-44)

[23] On the goodness of categorical imperatives, see *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* AA IV, 420-421.

[24] Kant distinguishes between the "culture of skills" and "moral culture." For his discussion of the "culture of skills," see the *Critique of Judgment* (AA V, 431-432): the "culture of skills" (*Kultur der Geschicklichkeit*) "is insufficient to promote the will in determining and selecting its goals" (in the sense of *what it ought to do*). In contrast to the "culture of skills," moral culture) consists in "liberating the will from the despotism of the appetites whereby we […] become incapable of personal choice because we allow ourselves to be chained by animal instincts […]" In *On Pedagogy* (AA IX, 470, 480), Kant formulated the distinction as the difference between "physical" and "practical" culture and called for the development of moral culture above physical culture. See, as well, his comments on culture in the *Metaphysics of Morals* (AA VI, 391-393) and *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (AA VII, 329-330).

[25] On technical and pragmatic, hypothetical imperatives, see *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* AA IV416-417; on the difference between a hypothetical and a categorical imperative, see *ibid*., 420-421.

the world[26] is the difference between physical events and rational agency or the difference between "must" (nature's causal system) and "ought" (the causality of autonomous freedom), not two kinds of substances.

Only a rational agent is able to raise the issue of ultimate origin and "lawful" order with respect to the difference between "must" and "ought." However, given the profound and inviolable limits of our reason, for us to understand the difference between "must" and "ought" as well as their respective conditions of possibility, it is necessary that we presuppose a monotheistic God[27] in order to understand this profound circumstance,[28] otherwise the unitary totality of experience is fragmented into chaos.[29] Our rational limits themselves, though, require that we can approach this supposition always and only "from below" and not "top down."

We compromise the very conditions of possibility of rational agency and its self-imposed capacity of responsibility when we either ignore our rational limits and assume occupancy of the divine throne when, in wild enthusiasm, we take the analogy, which fosters attribution of rational teleology to God, to be a literal and not merely a symbolic anthropomorphism.[30] In other words, *an anthropomorphic deity* is not impossible but *definitely not necessary* to be good.

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[26] In the „Introduction" to the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant speaks of an "*unübersehbare Kluft*" (obvious gap) between nature and autonomous freedom. However, this is not a gap of substance but of appearance because we don't experience substances. It is necessary that both nature and autonomous freedom have a common ground in the unity that is the supersensible so that autonomous freedom can pursue its goals in the world. The physical world is understandable by means of theoretical reason's grasp of the supersensible, physical "laws" whereas practical reason decides and acts on the basis of supersensible, moral principles (see AA V, 176). The archaeological capacity that allows for the unity of both theoretical and practical reason is "reflecting" judgment, the capacity to seek for a concept or "law" that one does not already grasp (see the definition of "reflecting" in contrast to "determining" judgment at *ibid*., V, 180; and for the unity of the supersensible ground of reflecting judgment, see *ibid*., V, 195 f).

[27] Having already described the difference between an argument κατ' ἄνθρωπον (according to human understanding) and κατ' ἀλήθειαν (according to objective truth) in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1787) AA III, B767-768, Kant wrote, again, in his (2nd place, prize essay behind Mendelssohn) "What Real Progress Has Metaphysics Made in Germany since the Time of Leibniz and Wolff?" (AA XX, 306) that the moral argument for God is an argument κατ' ἄνθρωπον, that is, heuristic for purposes of understanding experience but to be clearly distinguished from any theoretical-dogmatic argument for God κατ' ἀλήθειαν. Although there is no legitimate argument for God κατ' ἀλήθειαν, the moral argument for God "is a subjective argument sufficient for a moral being" (*Critique of Judgment* AA V, 451*). In light of the limits to reason, the notion of God is a "regulative idea" (that is, a "heuristic" not "ostensive," "constitutive" concept [see *Critique of Pure Reason* AA III, B 698-699]), and we are justified in assuming the necessity of a monotheistic deity as the condition for our confidence that we can understand experience as a coherent totality (see *Critique of Pure Reason* AA III, B 646-647, especially B843-847); see as well, *Critique of Judgment* AA V, 392*).

[28] On God as presumed, necessary "creator" of humanity's autonomous freedom without succumbing to determinism because freedom is supersensible, not a substance, see *Critique of Practical Reason* AA V, 102.

[29] Kant makes this observation and claim for God as the key to a coherent, metaphysical totality already in 1755 435, 437, 439

[30] In the *Critique of Pure Reason* (B723-724), Kant poses three questions: 1) "[…] whether there is anything distinct from the world, which contains the ground of the order of the world and of its connection in accordance with universal laws[?]" He answers: Undoubtedly! 2) […] whether this being is substance […]? He answers: This question is meaningless because the limits of reason restrict our categories (of which substance is one) to objects of possible experience, which God is not. 3) […] whether we may not […] think this being, which is distinct from the world, in *analogy* with the objects of experience […]? He answers: Yes, "[…] but only as object in *idea* and not in reality" "[…] as a substratum, to us unknown, of the systematic unity, order, and purposiveness of the arrangement of the world […]." In the "Conclusion" to *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* AA IV, 350 f; especially, 355-358, Kant proposes speaking of a "symbolic anthropomorphism" when it comes to the "God question," apparently in order to avoid the usage of "analogy." On the heuristic value for understanding of the anthropomorphic analogy for understanding biological phenomena as well as Kant's emphasis stressing that these projections onto the divine

In fact, if history teaches us anything, it is that humanity is never more dangerous (and it already appears to be the most dangerous species on our planet) than when humanity takes God to be a rational agent like us and in turn, claims to be able to speak and act for God.[31]

Furthermore, literal, anthropomorphic projections onto God (the Noumenon of phenomena) undermine the very moral capacity that religion claims to foster because such literal projections reduce God to a finite, rational agent (ground enough to hesitate) and turn the issue of "doing the right thing" into a project of self-interest: One's primary concern becomes the task of pleasing this anthropomorphic deity that He (!) will bless me with His (!) grace?

At the very least, given our limits, a rational agent must pause in the face of the possibility that its own capacity "to do the right thing because it is right, not because it serves merely self-interest" is compromised by any claim to know the mind of the God who is necessary for the rational agent's physical condition and agency. Both theoretical reason (understanding of the physical world) and practical reason (moral agency) are profoundly limited as they are dependent upon conditions beyond their limits that cannot be known.

In order to understand ourselves and our capacities as individual agents and a species, we must necessarily presuppose a number of items that take us beyond the limits of our reason[32] but, nonetheless, are not merely ungrounded speculations that only serve self-interest. Methodological skepticism's Copernican Turn allows us to identify *necessary,* "archaeological," conditions of possibility for us to experience, understand, and (responsibly) act that rein in Pyrrhonian Skepticism by discerning *necessities*, not *certainty*. However, although anthropomorphic projections onto the Godhead are inescapable given the nature of finite, rational agency, our physical condition and moral capacities themselves limit those to *symbolic anthropomorphic projections* and only then *to the degree that such projections foster rather than hinder our understanding and assumption of moral responsibility for our own understand, decisions, and actions*.

As conclusions arrived at by methodological skepticism, not empirical proof or disproof, these *necessities* constitute a system of faith (*Fürwahrhalten*) that makes God an inescapable pre-supposition for any and all good. In short, Critical Idealism is not merely "Humanistic" but also "Theistic."

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Noumenon in no way justify drawing conclusions about "divine predicates," only conclusions about what is necessary for finite, human understanding, see "Part Two: Critique of Teleological Judgment" in *Critique of Judgment* AA V, 359 f.

[31] The claim to know that God is omniscient presupposes that finite, theoretical reason is able to make judgments beyond its limits about the capacity of omniscience (see *Critique of Judgment* AA V, 441, 480), and the destructive consequences easily follow.

[32] A list of the necessary presuppositions pointed to in this paper (but by no means an exhaustive list) are: a priori synthetic judgment as compositio (Critique of Pure Reason B201*) as the condition for determining and reflecting judgment; autonomous freedom; physical "laws;" broad, universal moral principles; apperception; the mathematical and dynamical sublime; and a symbolic anthropomorphic understanding of God as monotheistic Noumenon.

Footnote Themes

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