

Freedom - Real Property of the Will or Presupposition of Practical Reason

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ABSTRACT: There is no freedom, in absolute value, in the sense of unconditional possibility, without reality and reality without causality. Nature does not present itself as a realm of freedom, but as a vast melting pot of causality, operating on the principle of continuous endogenous and exogenous conditioning. Every phenomenon derives from another phenomenon and not from a noumenon. In this immense chain of causalities, it seems that there is no place for freedom either as a thing in itself or as a phenomenon. The phenomenon exists in nature, it is part of the nature of things and its laws, as well as of human sensibility, the noumenon is part of reason, of the thing itself, of divinity and even of the immortality of the soul, an idea so dear to man, who lives both in the *empirical*, that is, in the sensible, in the universe of things, of phenomena, that is, in the law of nature, of causality, and in the *rational*, that is, in the world of thought, of faith, of reason, of the thing itself, of the noumenon. In vain shall we seek the sources of freedom in the laws of nature. Nature does not operate according to the principles of freedom, but according to those of causality. This issue has been - and still is - debated at length in the human world. So entrenched and, at the same time, so fluid, so uncertain, has this debate been implemented in the science and art of thought, which may be a possible fragment of the ongoing definition of philosophy and its place in the world, that no one today is bothering with it anymore. There are other more pressing and handier things to do on planet Earth and in the Universe. And yet, man lives not only in the empirical universe, in the sensitive universe, but also in the universe of thought, of reason, of will, not only in the real, identifiable, cognizable universe but also

in the rational, virtual, transcendental universe, in the universe of knowledge, of desire and of the capacity to create, to produce cognition. Here, in this rational and voluntary *modus vivendi* of human beings, which has, in its essence, as a necessary determination, research, discovery, the world of concepts, reflection and thought finds its sources of freedom. It follows that it too is conditioned.

KEYWORDS: freedom, thought, reason, law, will

Another perspective on the concept of freedom

From the outset, it must be said that freedom does not belong to nature, which is dominated by causal determinism, by the cause-effect binomial. So freedom, in the sense of unconditioned, of disobedience to law, cannot exist in nature, i.e., in the causal chain, in the chain of becoming, change and transformation of objects. We do not know whether there is a boundary between the sensible and the intelligible, but a consonance certainly exists. Certainly in the space of knowledge. Hegel understands by intelligible something that in an object is not phenomenon. That something which, in the sensible world, is a phenomenon also contains, in its interiority, a quality which is not an element of sensible intuition, but can nevertheless be the cause of phenomena. We can therefore regard causality in at least two respects: as intelligible from the point of view of its action as a thing in itself and as sensible from the point of view of its effects as a phenomenon in the sensible world.

About the faculty of such a subject we can have an *empirical concept* of its reality and an *intellectual concept* of its causality. They are, however, components of the same effect.

The quality of an object to have two sides (an empirical, i.e., sensible, side and an intellectual side) does not contradict any of the concepts we have to make about phenomena and possible experience. Phenomena are dynamic and complex. Not being things in themselves, i.e., objects of sensible intuition, they must be based on a transcendental object which determines them as mere representations. Therefore, in Hegel's conception, we can attribute to this transcendental object, apart from the property by which it appears as a phenomenon, a causality which is not a phenomenon, although its effect is found in the phenomenon. But, "if we are to succumb to the illusion of transcendental realism, there remains neither nature nor freedom." (Kant 1969, 447)

There is a natural, empirical causality that underlies the transformation and becoming of things, as a simple natural effect, on the one hand, but on the other hand an effect of freedom. But for natural causes from phenomenon there cannot be something that begins absolutely and of itself demands it, since, from nothing, nothing is made. Any action that produces an event is itself an event.

The law of nature according to which everything that happens has a cause, and the causality of this cause i.e., action cannot have always existed. And it has its cause among the phenomena by which it is determined, and therefore all happenings are empirically determined in a natural order. (Kant 1969, 446-447). Although he was dealing with a chain of causes, which does not allow for absolute totality in regressing to their conditions, yet this difficulty was removed in the *general appreciation of the antinomy of reason*, when it tends towards the unconditioned in the series of phenomena. If we are to yield to transcendental realism, writes Hegel in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, there remains neither nature nor freedom. If we know the whole series of all events only as a necessity of nature, it is nevertheless possible to consider this necessity which, on the one hand, is only a simple natural effect, it is nevertheless, and on the other hand, an effect of freedom, if there is a direct contradiction between these two species of causality.

The causal chain is complicated, ramified, impossible to put under the control of reason - much less subjective will - but it does not follow from this that there is absolute freedom within such a rigorous determinism. The lion's freedom to roam unhindered through the jungle is relative, since, however powerful he may be, there are powers even greater than his own that make him fearful. The fact that one event follows on from another, and in this whole series, there is no freedom, only predictability and even unpredictability, in the sense that at some point external conditions may intervene and change its course. But these do not contradict or cancel out the causal chain, they only amplify it.

In treating the concept of freedom and freedom as such from a rational or voluntarist perspective, there is a detachment from the empirical, from sensibility. In the interiority of phenomenological causality, there cannot be something that can absolutely and by itself generate an action as a phenomenon. Everything that happens does not come from the absolute, but is merely a continuation of the series of events chained in the interiority of the

phenomenal. What happens is only a continuation of the series, and in it no beginning is possible that can produce itself. Thus all actions have their own natural causes and are, in turn, effects which in turn have their own causes.

The intellect sees in all phenomena only natural causes. But it is no impediment for him to consider that, among natural causes, there may also be some which have an intelligible faculty, his determination towards action never being based on empirical conditions, but on principles of the intellect. But these too are integrated into the phenomenon, according to all the laws of empirical causation, by an indissoluble dependence. If we want to ascend from the empirical to the transcendental object they should be regarded as purely intelligible (Kant 1969, 448).

Freedom does not refer to the causal chain of things, to phenomena, but to noumenon, to will, to reason. Man lives not only in physical nature, in Mother Nature, but also in human nature. The concept of freedom is both a product of will and reason. Of the subjective will, since it is very important for the interiority of the human being not only to accept, but also to will. Schopenhauer's assertion that the sun would not be in the sky if he did not see it, is about freedom of will and a certain kind of acceptance, of freedom between Yes and No, therefore conditional, even if the space between Yes and No is infinite.

Kant confined the science of all that is, the science of nature, to the space of experience, of causality. But neither the senses nor the intellect give knowledge, he says, but knowledge - which is an expression of freedom - results, in Kant's view, from the application of the concepts of the intellect to the intuitions given by the senses, to sensible intuitions.

Reason, as a principle of determining the will, more precisely of controlling it, places us above the world of natural phenomena, in noumenon, a world in which we make the law. But reason is not the producer of cognition, nor of action, but only their means, impartial judge and horizon-opener, wise guardian, filter of wisdom. Here, at this point, it becomes, especially in its practical dimension, a generator of freedom.

The reason for freedom in the human world derives from man's creative capacity, his exploratory, innovative and inventive function. Man's intellect is the only non-degradable potential in this world. Man creates cognition. And even though the act of creation is an extremely rigorous process, its motivation, its start and its horizons are an expression of the freedom of the intellect and man's power to see into the future.

The reason of freedom results from the freedom of reason to see beyond what is seen, supported by a solid culture and a huge cognitive heritage. Reason does not produce, but generates, justifies, sustains and maintains the work of the intellect and its freedom in the horizons of effective human action. In this vision, freedom is not only the essential condition for knowledge, discovery, the generation of the project and then its delivery to the rigorous level of implementation. Freedom is the supporting framework and the horizon opened by reason to the algorithm of creation and realization in all the horizons of man and his condition.

Freedom is not unrestricted in any way, an exit from principles, from any law, from any order, from any architecture, from any concept, etc., but only rational openness in cognitive space, openness generated and controlled by reason. Of course, this freedom is not a given, it is not a rule of law, even if it is part of natural law, as an imprescriptible right, but it is, as Plato and Hegel said, an *understood necessity*. Freedom as understood necessity and necessity as assumed freedom are two extremely important, complementary and quite precise notions.

In the human world, freedom is a necessity, even if there is nowhere an absolute freedom, understood as total freedom from all constraints, especially moral norms. Man's intellect, his ability to produce, create, etc., needs both an open working front and, at the same time, a concept of safety, of security. If you are not free to think (although the right to think can neither be controlled nor restricted, but only influenced through the education system), you cannot think, find solutions to the problems you face, create, work, exist and live.

Freedom does not mean slaloming through laws, but cognitive and creative arena supported by them. In human society, laws, including moral laws, must be pillars supporting freedom and not barbed wire fences. From this, it seems that freedom, as an understood necessity, can be taken (as is often the case in society) as a concept at the disposal of the rulers, who are careful to restrict its limits as much as possible. But freedom, in its essence, has no limits, only some possible constraints imposed by the natural right of humans to live and live together on planet Earth.

Without freedom, there is no man, no society, no way of life, no knowledge, no creation, no nothing. From this perspective, the need for freedom seems a pleonasm. Automatically, where there are people and society, there must also be freedom. It, freedom, is a concept of sufficient reason, more precisely, of necessary reason. But, as we know, man is an imperfect

being. He does not act according to the principles of reason and therefore the moral law must oblige him to respect the rules. In this respect, Kant introduces a key concept in the morality of human society: the categorical, *solemn* imperative. How such a concept reconciles with the rationale of freedom is hard to say. But then again, nothing is perfect in this world. Least of all freedom.

Conclusion

Freedom is both a product of practical reason, since it is a formal and conceptual architecture of the intellect controlled by reason, made up of interdependent levels that enable the human being to know the world in all its components, to generate concepts and actions and, at the same time, a real property of the will, since man is and remains the measure of all things, and in order to be and remain so, it is necessary to always create a horizon of necessary freedom.

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