

## Chapter 2

### Basic Ideas for a Critical Applied Metaphysic of Leadership

#### § 1. Epistemology-centered Metaphysics

We seek to develop a natural science of leadership. In order to do so it is essential that we base such a science on principles that have real objective validity for the natural world in which we live. Ultimately these principles arise from the premises we use to understand this world and are called metaphysical premises. If one's metaphysical premises and principles are invalid then one's understanding of the world eventually encounters irresolvable antinomies and paralogsms – in other words, the way we understand the world will not match up with all our actual experiences encountered in the world. It is the assertion of this treatise that only one system of scientific metaphysics has been found that stands in full agreement with human experience. That system is the one discovered and developed by Kant and is called Critical Metaphysics.

Furthermore, the topic of leadership is a humane topic, by which I mean that it is a topic involving human relationships. For this reason a science of leadership will be and can be nothing else than a science of human nature. The fundamental premise of Critical metaphysics is that *all* our objective understandings of nature are based on the nature of human knowledge arising from experience and founded upon the human being's innate capacities for knowledge and action. Put another way, everything we know is known to each of us *in the way we come to know it* because of the nature of the phenomenon of human *mind*. The Critical science of the nature of human mind is called *mental physics*.

Philosophers call a theory of knowledge *epistemology*. A theory of objects, on the other hand, is called *ontology*. Almost all systems of metaphysics that have been put forth over time began with some set of presuppositions concerning the nature of objects and went on from there to try to develop a theory of knowledge. Such a metaphysic is said to be *ontology-centered* because its epistemological principles and its applied principles are deduced as consequences of its ontological premises. It is the unbroken historical record of every ontology-centered system of metaphysics that these systems lead to paradoxes, antinomies, and paralogsms. This means nothing else than that these systems are fundamentally incorrect and lead us into falsehoods and irresolvable errors. It was this record of failure and disappointment that led Kant to try a different approach to answering fundamental questions, namely to try a science of metaphysics that was centered on epistemology and deduced the principles of ontology from that starting point. This epistemology-centered system is what is meant by naming Kant's system the Critical Philosophy. Kant lived before the word epistemology was coined in 1854 and the word he used in place of it

was *Kritik* (critique). Hence "critical philosophy" became his name for his revolutionary recasting of metaphysics. Your author claims – based on his own research work carried out over a term of four decades – that Critical metaphysics works, is free of the antinomies and paralogisms that signal the failure of ontology-centered systems, and that consequently a *science* of leadership can begin from no other foundation than the Critical system.

Critical metaphysics is the foundation of this treatise. To move from metaphysical first principles to a special science (leadership, in this case) what we must do is first make sure the connection between the science and its metaphysical basis is sound and is provided with principles that anchor interpretations of phenomenal observations securely to this foundation. This sort of connection is called the *applied metaphysic* of the special science and every special science – if it is to have objective validity and avoid becoming shipwrecked on the rocks of antinomy and paralogism – must have its own special Critical applied metaphysic. If it does not then it falls victim to unexamined and unscientific presuppositions individuals develop very early in life. Metaphysics is the way a person "looks at the world." A set of subjective prejudices used for looking at the world is called a *pseudo-metaphysic*. It is the nature of human understanding that if a person does not employ a scientific metaphysic in reasoning about the nature of any thing then he *will* employ an unscientific pseudo-metaphysic instead. Similarly, if he employs a system of metaphysics that is not objectively valid – and no ontology-centered system is objectively valid – then his conclusions will likewise ultimately lack objective validity. In both cases the outcome leads to the same eventual end: false conclusions and errors.

When one studies the development of human understanding what one finds is that it is the thinking nature of human beings to begin life as naive realists. This is not only embedded in the way the process of human thinking works according to Critical theory but is also borne out by an enormous body of empirical findings from experiments and observations developmental psychology produced in the twentieth century. A crucial lesson from this is that the experiential lessons of childhood produce an ontology-centered *bias* in the way each of us looks at the world. Simply put, ontology-centered presuppositions work well enough to let the child "make sense" of its earliest experiences. These earliest concepts become the starting points for all his later ones.

Consequently, these realist presuppositions exert an enormously powerful influence on the way every person comes to think about and understand everything. Thus by the time baffling questions and paradoxes are encountered later in life, it does not occur to us to question those deep-lying ontological presuppositions that previously served our needs so adequately. Yet these pseudo-metaphysical presuppositions are, in fact, the root causes of paradox. Resolution of them requires a deliberate effort to re-center one's principles and to place epistemological principles at

the center of how one understands nature. This re-centering is, somewhat poetically, called "Kant's Copernican turn." Just as in astronomy Copernicus placed the sun at the center of the solar system and made the planets revolve around it, so Kant placed epistemology at the center of science and made ontology, figuratively speaking, revolve around it.

Today, so many centuries after the days of Copernicus, the premise that the planets revolve around the sun instead of the earth does not seem strange to educated people in the maturity of their adulthood. Imagine, though, how absurd this premise looked to everyone back in the days of Copernicus. Look around yourself. Does the earth *look* like it moves? Does it *feel* like it moves? Had we not been taught otherwise, we would denounce Copernicus for a fool whose idea fails the test of common sense. Copernicus wrote to his Pope in the preface and dedication of his book,

I can reckon easily enough, Most Holy Father, that as soon as certain people learn that in these books of mine which I have written about the revolutions of the spheres of the world I attribute certain motions to the terrestrial globe, they will immediately shout to have me and my opinion hooted off the stage. . . . Therefore, when I weighed these things in my mind, the scorn which I had to fear on account of the newness and absurdity of my opinion almost drove me to abandon a work already undertaken. – Copernicus, *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*

Copernicus so feared the scorn and ridicule he knew his theory would arouse that he kept his work secret, except from a few of his closest friends, for almost thirty-six years. It was fortunate for us that his friends eventually persuaded him to publish his theory. In many ways Kant's Copernican turn is no less radical than what Copernicus did. Indeed, because of the very strong hold ontology-centered prejudices have on every one of us, his revolution in metaphysics is in many ways far more radical than Copernicus'. The single most difficult thing you, dear reader, will encounter in Critical metaphysics is the difficulty of breaking a lifetime of habits-of-thinking that plant ontology-centered presuppositions at the core of the way you view the world. "Reality" is not some mysterious entity that "stamps its impress" on the "wax tablet" of our minds. We are not born endowed with a fictional "copy of reality" mechanism, nor are our brains cameras taking snapshots of the world and setting them in a photo album. Modern neuroscience knows this, although neuroscientists have not been quick to grasp the full implication. Walter Freeman of the University of California at Berkeley, who is acknowledged as one of today's leading neuroscience theoreticians, writes,

Our brains don't take in information from the environment and store it like a camera or a tape recorder for later retrieval. What we remember is continually being changed by new learning when connections between nerve cells in the brain are modified.

A stimulus excites the sensory receptors, so that they send a message to the brain. That input triggers a reaction by which the brain constructs a pattern of neural activity. The sensory activity that triggered the construction is then washed away, leaving only the construct. That pattern does not 'represent' the stimulus. It constitutes the meaning of the

stimulus for the person receiving it.

The meaning is different for every person because it depends on their past experience. Since the sensory activity is washed away and only the construction is saved, the only knowledge that each of us has is what we construct within our own brains. We cannot know the world by inserting objects into our brains. – Walter Freeman, "The Lonely Brain," in *Mapping the Mind*, Rita Carter: University of California Press, 1998, pg. 146.

That all of us come to *understand* so much of the world in apparently much the same way is owed to the common nature of the phenomenon of mind, the fact that we interact with each other, and that we interact in situations of common context where we can *objectively* agree with each other on the nature of the objects of our common interaction *well enough to suit our practical purposes*. The fundamental nature of human mind is a *practical* nature at its root and our theoretical and speculative understandings are erected upon this practical foundation. Mental physics is the science of fundamental principles governing this construction process. This construction process begins in infancy<sup>1</sup> and continues *systematically* throughout the course of one's entire life. In a manner of speaking mental life is the on-going process of systematically "making sense out of everything" adequately enough to satisfy one's own practical purposes.

It is not practical to present a full treatment of Critical metaphysics within the limited scope of our present treatise. That treatment is provided by your author's earlier work, *Principles of Mental Physics*. It is, however, necessary to present basic ideas that pertain to the linkage between the underlying Critical system and its application to the study of leadership. These ideas go into the constitution of an applied metaphysic of leadership and serve to connect the ontology of leadership to the epistemological and ontological foundations of Critical Metaphysics proper. To put this another way, the applied metaphysic is the *bridge* between our particular topic (leadership) and the first principles that provide the foundation of all science in general. Because this bridge is a necessary part of our topic but does not constitute our entire topic, in this treatise the discussion will be limited to an exposition of these ideas. We will leave as the task of another treatise formal presentation of the deduction and development of the applied metaphysic from its grounding in Critical metaphysics and mental physics generally. It is the objective of *this* treatise to present the ideas of the applied metaphysic with sufficient clarity that you, the reader, will be able to *apply* these ideas *practically* in order to understand leadership.

In some ways this tactic goes against the habitual grain of academic pedagogy, which more often holds that one starts from first principles (Critical epistemology) and then advances

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<sup>1</sup> Neurological research presents evidence that this construction process probably begins even before birth, possibly by about the twenty-third week of pregnancy. If this is so, then it is about at this time where one can say with objective validity that the mental life of the fetus as an *individual* human being begins. Prior to this there would be no scientifically objective validity in regarding the fetus as an individual living human.

"outward" (figuratively speaking) inch by inch to eventually reach the point of application (in the present case, leadership theory). However, one of the basic theorems coming out of mental physics states that human understanding advances *from* the particular case *to* the general (and therefore abstract) case. This is the route by which one "makes sense" of ideas and develops one's deep understanding of the topic. Only *after* this route is taken does it become practical for a person to thereafter start with the general theory and apply it to *other* particular cases.

For example, unless you are already a mathematician if I tell you, "A functional is a function that has a domain that is a set of functions and a range belonging to another set of functions," this abstract definition is likely to be gibberish in your ears. But if I first show you, by means of particular examples and cases, what is meant by "function," "domain," "range," and "set," and then show you how these are put together to build the idea of a "functional," you would find that you have no great difficulty understanding the abstract idea of a "functional." This is what is meant by human understanding proceeding *from* the particular *to* the general. This aspect of the phenomenon of mind is not only a consequence of basic Critical principles but, in addition, is borne out by observations in a great many psychological studies.

The aim and objective of this treatise is to develop a scientific understanding of leadership such that the theory can be *reduced to practice*. A theory that cannot be reduced to practice is a theory that cannot be used. Such a theory is therefore rightly called *useless*. Your author presumes that if you, dear reader, are putting yourself to the trouble of reading this book it is likely because you are interested in understanding leadership and putting this understanding to use. Interest is crucial to learning. That which one has no interest in learning will not be learned. This is why this treatise takes the tactical approach it does.

## § 2. Leadership is a Social-Dynamical Phenomenon

One crucial finding emphasized in Critical Metaphysics is that *context* is essential for every conceptualization in human understanding. This comes in at a very fundamental level, namely in the Critical *Realerklärung* (real explanation) of what it means for any thing to be regarded as "real." In the Critical metaphysics no thing is real to a person if he does not have a concept of the object that is connected through judgments with other concepts that give the concept of that object its *real context*. For example, the ghost of Hamlet's father is real in the context of it being a character in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* but it is not real in the context of it being a spirit haunting actual places and living people in Denmark. Another example: Achilles has a real context as a mighty Greek warrior who *might have* actually fought in the Trojan War, but the Achilles of *The Iliad* is not a real man because *this* Achilles was the son of a sea goddess and there are no non-

fictional sea goddesses. *All things are real in some contexts and are unreal in other contexts.* There is no thing that is unconditionally real independently of contexts that delimit its conceptual reality. If the concept of a thing and the concept of some context are independent of one another (i.e. the context does not take in the thing) then the object of the concept of the thing is non-real with respect to that context. An object is *real* in a context in which that object can be an object of experience; an object is *unreal* ("is-not real") in a context in which there is no possibility of actually experiencing that object or its immediate effects; an object is *non-real* in any context that does not contain the concept of that object.<sup>2</sup>

Critical context (*Zusammenhang*) is the sphere of concepts (combined by judgment with the concept that is said to "be in this context") that delimits the applicable scope involving that concept for understanding nature. Indeed, the real concept of "nature" *is understood in the context* of Nature being the "world model" each person *constructs* in his own understanding through experience. [When I wish to emphasize the contextual reality of "nature" I do so by writing it as Nature (capitalized)]. This is an epistemology-centered *real explanation* of "nature" that frees "nature as a thing" from occult qualities and quantities of speculation that otherwise render the idea of "nature" quite meaningless and its concept inapplicable *in practice*.

The consequence of applying this *Realerklärung* of what "to be real" *means* is the following. If we are to have a scientific understanding of a thing we must have an adequate understanding of its conceptual contexts and confine ourselves to these contexts when theorizing about it. By "adequate understanding" I mean a conceptual context sufficient to make *practical use* of the concept of a thing without falling victim to speculative falsehoods and illusions. Kant's Critical doctrine teaches us that we cannot ever be *certain* that our understanding of something is *absolutely* adequate but that we *are* able to recognize when our understanding of it is *inadequate*.

In a quite practical way scientific research can be regarded as the practice of discovering inadequacy in our understanding of things *with* a subsequent expansion and accommodation of our concepts in order to *improve* the adequacy of our understanding. This is called "making one's understanding of something more perfect." In this context we can view every infant as a busy little scientist if we but pause to consider how much an infant has to learn about itself and the rest of the world and does in fact learn, beginning from its natal day. Psychologist Jean Piaget noted,

I think that human knowledge is essentially active. To know is to assimilate reality into systems of transformations. To know is to transform reality in order to understand how a

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<sup>2</sup> I call "being," "reality," and "existence" the three troublesome words of philosophy. In every ontology-centered system of metaphysics, these ideas become so confounded and intertwined with each other that they tend to lose all comprehensible meaning through a vicious circle of definition in terms of one another. In the Critical epistemology these ideas remain quite specific and separable from one another.

certain state is brought about. By virtue of this point of view, I find myself opposed to the view of knowledge as a copy, a passive copy, of reality. In point of fact, this notion is based on a vicious circle: in order to make a copy we have to know the model that we are copying, but according to this theory of knowledge the only way to know the model is by copying it, until we are caught in a circle, unable ever to know whether our copy of the model is like the model or not. To my way of thinking, knowing an object does not mean copying it – it means acting on it. It means constructing systems of transformations that can be carried out on or with this object. Knowing reality means constructing systems of transformations that correspond, more or less adequately, to reality. . . Knowledge, then, is a system of transformations that become progressively more adequate. – Jean Piaget, *Genetic Epistemology* (1971)

Piaget based this conclusion on decades of experimental research in developmental psychology. The conceptual system of divers contexts intersecting at the same object-concept is, by the Critical doctrine, the essential factor in the possibility of knowing an object through acting upon it. In this, Piaget's empirical finding agrees with Kant's system. Piaget concluded from empirical grounds that all knowledge of objects is at root practical; Kant concluded the same thing from metaphysical grounds – *epistemology-centered* metaphysical grounds.

Now let us bring this down to the less general and look at what it implies for leadership. The topical Object<sup>3</sup> for a science of leadership is the leader. Leadership ability is some sort of *Kraft* a person (the leader) exhibits. But the concept of a leader has contextual reality only in terms of relationships between the leader and others we call the followers. Outside this relational context "leader" has no real meaning. Thus the relationship *grounding* the real explanation of "leader" is the type of relationship we call a *social* relationship. Going further and inquiring into the nature of "social relationship," what one finds is that the social relationships have for their real ground *active practical interactions* between leader and followers exhibited by human behaviors. Thus we can make a refinement to our concepts and call the relationship between leader and follower a *social-dynamical* relationship because to have real meaning the relationship must be one of interacting human behaviors empirically observable by us.

This kind of relationship belongs to a specific class of relationships called relationships in a *Relation*<sup>4</sup> of community. What this means is that the actions of the leader affect the actions of the follower and, *at the same time*, the actions of the follower affect the actions of the leader. Such a relationship is said to be *co-determining* because the acts of both leader and follower are regarded

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<sup>3</sup> There is an important Critical distinction between an Object (*Objekt*) and an object (*Gegenstand*). Practically speaking, the object is what one's conceptual understanding refers to, the Object is the union of this object and the structure of contextual concepts that constitute one's understanding of the object. This is to say that Object means the union of what is empirically real (the object) and what is idealistic (concepts). Kant wrote, "The transcendental idealist is an empirical realist."

<sup>4</sup> The technical term Relation (capitalized; in German, *der Relation*) refers to a logical form by which contextual concepts are connected in judgments in conceptualizing and understanding an object. It is not a synonym for "relationship" (*Verhältnis*). The reader wishing to understand this in greater detail should consult *Principles of Mental Physics*.

as having an effect on each other *and simultaneously* as being the effect of the others' actions. The *conjoint* action of leader-and-follower is thus said to be an **emergent property** of their mutual interaction because without this interaction their specific individual behaviors would not happen as they do. The Critical Relation of community is an important theoretical construct in Critical metaphysics that is not properly apprehended in ontology-centered systems. It is key to resolving a great many paradoxes encountered in scientific theories that have been centered on ontology or on pseudo-metaphysical prejudices. Indeed, the very idea of emergent properties has objective validity *only* in terms of a Relation of community and has *no* objective validity when viewed in terms of temporal causality-and-dependency Relation ("X happened and then caused Y").

Nonetheless, it is also a fundamental principle of mental physics that the individual human being is the *self*-determining cause of *all* his own actions. Put succinctly, I can exert no special power that *makes* you do something nor can you do that to me. Whatever you do, you determine *yourself* to do. Indeed, this character of being human is the *operational* definition of "free will."

The question is how to reconcile the two principles just stated (mutual co-determination and self-determination) and this brings us to the Critical notion of causality. **Causality** is the notion of the determination of a change by which the change is established according to general rules. Cause and causality do not mean the same thing. A **cause** is the notion of the agency of something insofar as it contains the ground for the actuality of the determination of a change. A **causatum** is a rule for the determination of a change under the condition of a cause that acts as a ground for applying this rule.

These three notions – causality, cause, and *causatum* – take us fairly deep into the technical details of the Critical theory of mental physics. Nevertheless it is important for us to appreciate Kant's hair-splitting technical distinctions. A person's self-determination comes under the notion of causality. The specific self-determination this person makes comes under the notion of *causatum*, which we can envision as a practical self-rule for the person's actions. When we say the leader is the cause of a follower's action we view *the agency of the leader* as something the leader does that *stimulates the follower to self-invoke* his *causatum* rule. The same reasoning applies when we say the follower is the cause of the leader's action; in this case we assign agency to the follower. From this we come to understand the nature of the leader-follower social dynamic as relationship in terms of the ability of the agent (e.g. the leader) to stimulate in the mind of the patient (e.g. the follower) *the perception of a condition* under which his *causatum* is self-invoked. The perception can be cognitive (i.e. pertaining to thinking) or it can be affective (i.e. pertaining to what we usually call emotions, values, and interests) or it can simultaneously be both cognitive and affective (which we say is *judicial*).

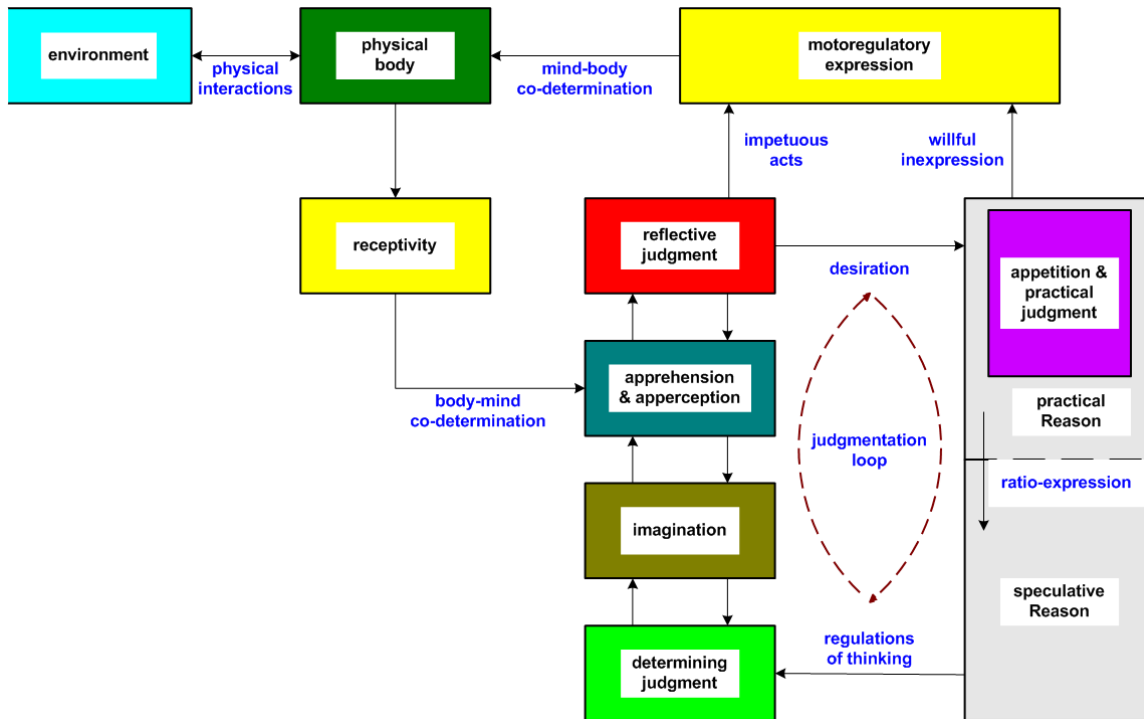


This understanding puts us in a position to also better understand the nature of what in chapter 1 was called "guidance provided by a leader." In this understanding we can identify *leadership skill* as *the ability of a leader to stimulate a follower to self-invoke his own internal practical rules in such a way that the follower self-determines his actions in a manner congruent with what the leader intended*. If the follower judges the resulting outcome of these actions to be beneficial in some way he will then often call the leader's influence *guidance*. If, on the other hand, he perceives this outcome to be to his own disbenefit and, furthermore, thinks that this disbenefit is something congruent with the leader's intention, he will often call what the leader did *manipulation*. In this context "guidance" by the leader might equally well be called "benevolent manipulation" and "manipulation" might equally well be called "malevolent guidance."

*Leading* can now be understood as *the actions of the leader that stimulate the follower to self-invoke practical rules resulting in actions satisfying to what the leader intended to produce as the effect of the leader's actions*. What, then, is the nature of the stimulation so provided in the leader's actions? We will begin taking up this question in the next chapter, where we will follow Aristotle's dictum of starting with those things most clearly perceivable to us. We could metaphorically call these "the buttons the leader tries to push" in his efforts to stimulate the follower and the means by which he tries to do so. First, however, we must set the stage by discussing some additional Critical groundwork.

### § 3. Organized Human Being: The "Atom" of Social-Natural Science

Every social science doctrine capable of being the doctrine of a natural science, regardless of specific discipline, can take its fundamental ground for objective validity in Nature from only one thing: the individual human being. Every social science has something to do with people – what they do, why they do it, how they do it, and so on. If one cuts the cord between the individual human being and the doctrine, then what remains is a Platonic idol that may perhaps be mathematically pleasing but in the end fails to impart true practical knowledge applicable to the world of human experience. This statement is likely to be vigorously protested by present day academics, yet a slowly growing realization of its truth has been gaining momentum for at least forty years now. The social sciences have not succeeded in keeping pace with the advance of knowledge in physics, chemistry, biology, and engineering, and have not been able to address the growing list of real social problems this widening knowledge gap has been steadily producing. Most people with no professional stake in any of the isolated silos of the social sciences will tend to call this a failure. Each of us, regardless of vocation, does have a *personal* stake in the long term success or failure of the social sciences because these issues affect all our lives.



**Figure 2.1:** The functional structure of the phenomenon of mind in mental physics.

If we are to achieve a social-natural science for any special topic – and in the particular for the case of this treatise, a social-natural science of leadership – then we must have a propaedeutic appreciation of the mental Nature of being a human being. The theory for this in mental physics is called the Organized Being model of *Homo sapiens*. For the discussions that follow it will be very useful to grasp at a qualitative level of understanding the *functional structure* of the processes and capabilities in this model. It is not a practical possibility to go into great detail here in this treatise; that detail is treated in *Principles of Mental Physics*. But we will need to discuss key determinants of human behavior and human interaction. For this the overview of the functional structure of mind illustrated by figure 2.1 provides a useful contextual reference point for the other discussions that follow in the rest of this book.

The first thing we must note about this theory is that it is holistic. It makes no real division between the phenomenon of mind and the phenomenon of body, nor does it subordinate one of these to the other. Instead the division between "mind" and "body" is a merely *logical* division; it is a theoretical and mathematical *tactic* useful in categorizing these twin aspects of being of a human being. In a living person – who is the theoretical "atom" of any social-natural science – we always *jointly* encounter things we assign to "mind" and things we assign to "body." There is no real objective validity in presuming there is *any* kind of *real* division between the two found in actual experience. To presume a real division actually exists in nature is a fundamental

ontological error and it is an irrecoverable error *producing* a "mind-body problem" paradox.

Accordingly, Critical epistemology categorizes human experiences using a four-fold logical system of perspectives. Those phenomena open to the methods of the physical sciences are placed in either the category of **environment** (that which is not-the-individual-person) or of **soma** (that which pertains to the person's physical body). That which pertains *strictly* to psychological objects and phenomena called "mental" – none of which are directly observable through the methods of physics, chemistry, or biology – are placed in the category of **nous** (from the Greek word for "mind"). Those that pertain to the real mutual relationship between body phenomena and mental phenomena are placed in the category of **psyche**, which is the category that deals with principles of mind-body co-determination. But, again, it must be clearly understood these divisions are nothing more than useful theoretical divisions for organizing and treating theoretical factors, and that outside this *strictly mathematical* context these divisions are non-real.

Figure 2.1 depicts functional processes with boxes and depicts specific types of information transformations by which these processes interact by solid black lines. The functional processes in the division of *psyche* are depicted by the yellow boxes. The sciences that study the division of *psyche* are called psychophysics and cognitive neuroscience. For purposes of this treatise we can regard these boxes as the information-transforming processes that link mental phenomena to body phenomena and vice versa. The physical body (division of *soma*) and the environment of the individual human being as a physical-thing-in-nature each have one box. All the others belong to the logical division of *nous* and deal exclusively with mental objects and phenomena that fall beyond the range of physics, chemistry, and biology to *directly* observe and measure. The *empirical* science having this division for its principal topic is psychology. Mental physics is the science grounding and unifying **all** these more specialized sciences.

Your author's purpose in providing this figure is so you will have something you can look at during the specialized discussions presented in the following sections. One thing that is propaedeutic to the material that follows is the idea that there are three different types of knowledge constructs *implicit* in figure 2.1. Each belongs to one of the boxes labeled "judgment" in the figure. *Structured knowledge of objects*, called the **manifold of concepts**, is the construct built by determining judgment. The manifold of concepts underlies the phenomenon of human *understanding*. *Knowledge of subjective factors* – the sort of factors we call by such names as emotions, motivations, values, and interests – is the construct put together by reflective judgment. This construct is called the **manifold of Desires**. This manifold underlies what some call the "emotional intelligence" of a human being. Finally, *practical knowledge* that underlies actual human actions and behaviors is the knowledge structure called the **manifold of rules**. It is built by

the process labeled practical judgment.

The labels given to the other boxes in figure 2.1 are intended to convey a qualitative appreciation for other mental capabilities – e.g. empirical consciousness (apperception) or perception (apprehension) – that have familiar enough usages to convey a "gut feel" for what their role in the overall system is. A quantitative and deep understanding of these human capacities must defer to the in-depth treatment provided in *Principles of Mental Physics*. Think of figure 2.1 as a kind of roadmap for the intellectual journey that lies ahead.

Two more general notes are in order at this point. The box labeled "Reason" and subdivided into two pieces (practical Reason and speculative Reason) serves the functional role of being the *master regulator* of all mental acts. It is, as it were, the "control function" for all non-autonomic human actions. Specific mental acts *expressed* in observable somatic actions (via motoregulatory expression) originate from reflective judgment. But the acts of this functional process are such that they must be called *impetuous* ("irrational"). The control function depicted by practical Reason has the executive role in determining what acts of reflective judgment will actually be expressed (the *emotivity* of acts of reflective judgment). This role is such that it should not be called "free will" because its basic act is *negative* – a "veto power" that would more properly be called "free won't." The *positive* acts of practical Reason (ratio-expression through speculative Reason) regulate the human capacity to think and to understand.

The second general note is that all the acts of every box in *nous* are mutually co-determining. These boxes are mere logical divisions for breaking down mental phenomena so we can better understand their nature. It is because the division is merely logical and mathematical that the specific processes must be view conjointly. To use engineering jargon, the system is a closed-loop feedback system and its overall active process is called the process of *judgmentation* (a technical term used to translate Kant's technical term *Beurtheilung*). This is what is meant and intended by the dashed line labeled "judgmentation loop" in figure 2.1.

With this picture as our context, let us now begin to examine some of the deep-underlying ideas pertinent to the Nature of human behavior and social relationships.

#### § 4. Affectivity, Practical Choice and Cognitive Decision-making

Let us ask: Whenever a person takes some action *why* does he choose to undertake that action instead of some other? This is a difficult question much fought over throughout the history of philosophy, religion, and science. Disagreement and debate over the answer or answers to this question have been on-going for at least twenty-four centuries. Is there some one single answer to this question or is this question one of those for which no one single root answer exists? If there is

some one single answer, this answer would stand as the first principle of human action. If we are to have a *social-natural* science of leadership as a proper science we find ourselves committed by the nature of this objective to seek such a first principle until and unless it can be proven no one such all-encompassing and objectively valid principle is possible.

Researching in a systematic manner whether there is such a first principle has historically been chiefly the domain of philosophers, theologians, political scientists, jurists, and, to a lesser extent in the twentieth century, psychologists. Any dispassionate evaluation of these efforts would have to conclude that the results of all this intellectual labor have so far produced something less than a science, although these efforts do provide matter for what Kant would call an historical doctrine of the topic. Psychologists Blum and Naylor wrote,

Most research on leadership and most attempts at developing theories of leadership have tended to emphasize the human relations or interpersonal dimension. More recently, however, greater attention has been devoted to an examination of the process of decision making or "choice behavior" per se. This is, in our opinion, a long overdue occurrence. As we pointed out earlier, it is really the decision-making function which *defines* the leadership role. It is very difficult to conceptualize a leadership situation which does not involve making a decision of some type. . . .

Each of us makes so many decisions in the course of a normal day that we may tend to view the decision process as a simple, relatively uncomplicated act. It is only when we find ourselves faced with one of those very "tough" decisions in which we just cannot seem to make up our minds that we begin to appreciate all the complexities of the process that a person goes through in trying to decide upon an appropriate course of action. – Blum and Naylor, *Industrial Psychology*

What the leader is trying to do, of course, is to get the follower to come to a decision to take action in a manner that serves to satisfy a purpose the leader is trying to realize (make actual). This is why in this treatise we must be concerned with the root nature of what many psychologists call "choice behavior per se."

When one asks different people, "Why did you do that?" in reference to some action this individual has carried out, most of the time the first given answer is very specific, e.g., "I went to the grocery store because I was out of groceries." The more habitual the activity is, the more pragmatic or technical the given answer is likely to be once we get past answers of the "because that's the way it's done" variety. For example, your author once asked ten different professional musicians this question: "When you're playing, how do you decide what to play when you're playing a riff?" Nine of those ten musicians gave exactly the same answer: "I play what sounds good." The tenth gave a somewhat more technical answer: "I play variations on the scale." We may note that the majority answer in this survey is ends-directed (desired outcome) while the tenth is means-directed (how to achieve the desired outcome). *None* defined "what sounds good."

When we pursue the basic question, "Why did you do that?" in more depth we find that we get

down to a relatively small set of abstract answers. These tend to be one of the following four: (1) "because it was good to do that"; (2) "because it was the right thing to do"; (3) "because if I had not done that it would have been bad"; (4) "because not to do that would have been wrong." Along with these four there are two more common responses that boil down to: (5) "Oh, I don't know. It seemed like the thing to do"; or (6) "I didn't have time to think about it. I just did it." These are more or less cognitive answers. Also of pertinence to our exploration are those responses that are primarily subjective and emotive such as, (7) "I just got so mad I had to do it." Finally, when we ask someone why he did *not* take some positive action – e.g. the eyewitness to a crime or an accident who stood by and did not get involved – a common cognitive answer is, (8) "I just didn't know what to do" while a common affective answer is something like, (9) "Because I was too scared to do anything."

Responses such as these clearly forewarn us that understanding the Nature of action-decisions requires us to understand the interplay between affectivity and cognition. Because affectivity is a subjective factor there are many people who presume we will never be able to make a science of decision-making and choice and, as its corollary, a science of leadership is likewise not feasible. Similar ontological prejudice has been applied by some to other arenas of scientific investigation. Political science and history provide examples of this. In 1929 Charles A. Beard, a professor of history and political science, said, "No science of politics is possible; or if possible, desirable."<sup>5</sup> It is possible to raise numerous objections and arguments against the possibility of political science actually being a science. Most such objections cite factors such as the uniqueness of each political situation, the fact that different people hold different political views and do so more or less unpredictably, and that controlled laboratory experiments like those used in physics and chemistry are not possible for political science. These factors are valid, the objection is not.

History-as-a-science has had similar critics. E.M. Hulme, who was a professor of history at Stanford, flatly disagreed with the proposition that history could be a science. He based his view on three points<sup>6</sup>: (1) it is impossible to include every facet of past events in any narrative of history and, consequently, the subjective human element of selection of which facts are to be included is too great; (2) the historian cannot avail himself of experimentation and, consequently, can take no steps to confirm an historical theory; and (3) Hulme assumed man has an occult free will and, consequently, the number of possible cause-and-effect relationships at work in every historical event is virtually unlimited. Another historian, H.B. George, rejected the idea history

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<sup>5</sup> C.A. Beard in *Research in the Social Sciences: Its Fundamental Methods and Objectives*, Wilson Gee et al. (eds.), NY: McMillan, 1929, chap. IX.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Maslin Hulme, *History and Its Neighbors*, NY: Oxford University Press, 1942.

could ever be a science in extraordinarily strong terms<sup>7</sup>: "To sum up briefly the results of our investigation into historical evidence: There is no such thing as historical knowledge in the strictest sense of the word . . . It is, strictly speaking, belief based on the testimony of others; and that belief may be of any degree." Critical epistemology tells us he is quite wrong about this.

It is not universally conceded that the presence of subjectivity in a topic of study necessarily rules out the possibility of making a science for that topic. Indeed, to make such a concession is to concede it is impossible for any humane study, other than biology and its related intellectual fields, to be constituted as a science. Critical epistemology utterly rejects this concession and does so on deep-lying metaphysical grounds. It finds instead that the relationship between affective judgment, practical choice, and rational cognition is very tight. One of its findings is that answers such as (5)-(9) above can be subsumed under answers (1)-(4) *with objective validity*. Indeed, it finds that cognition is a unified process of *determining* judgment, imagination, apprehension, and apperception, and it is driven and directed, at a fundamental level, by the process of *affective* (i.e., reflective) judgment and by *appetition*. This conclusion finds support from empirical evidence unearthed in neuroscience research. Respected neurologist Antonio Damasio writes,

In recent years both neuroscience and cognitive neuroscience have finally endorsed emotion. . . Moreover, the presumed opposition between emotion and reason is no longer accepted without question. For example, work from my laboratory has shown that emotion is integral to the process of reasoning and decision making, for worse and for better. This may sound counterintuitive, at first, but there is evidence to support it. The findings come from the study of several individuals who were entirely rational in the way they ran their lives up to the time when, as a result of neurological damage in specific sites in their brains, they lost a certain class of emotions and, in a momentous parallel development, lost their ability to make rational decisions. Those individuals can still use the instruments of their rationality and can still call up the knowledge of the world around them. Their ability to tackle the logic of a problem remains intact. Nonetheless, many of their personal and social decisions are irrational, more often disadvantageous to their self and to others than not. I have suggested that the delicate mechanism of reasoning is no longer affected, nonconsciously and on occasion even consciously, by signals hailing from the neural machinery that underlies emotion. . .

These findings suggest that selective reduction of emotion is at least as prejudicial for rationality as excessive emotion. It certainly does not seem true that reason stands to gain from operating without the leverage of emotion. On the contrary, emotion probably assists reasoning, especially when it comes to personal and social matters involving risk and conflict. I suggested that certain levels of emotion processing probably point us to the sector of the decision-making space where our reason can operate most efficiently. . . Well-targeted and well-deployed emotion seems to be a support system without which the edifice of reason cannot operate properly. These results and their interpretation . . . also make it possible to view emotion as an embodiment of the logic of survival. – Damasio, *The Feeling of What Happens*

The doctrine of mental physics tells us that Damasio's hypothesis is much more than just an

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<sup>7</sup> Rev. H.B. George, *Historical Evidence*, Oxford, UK: The Clarendon Press, 1909.

hypothesis. With appropriate changes to his ontological premises and some slight amendments mandated by the Critical system, it tells us that this is not an hypothesis but rather a *theorem* that stands as a direct consequence of the mental physics of the phenomenon of mind. With this objectively valid connection of affectivity, practical choice, and cognitive reasoning we remove the prejudicial roadblock to developing social-natural sciences.

Returning now to the four classes of answers from above, further analysis shows that these four can be reduced to just two classes. The first involves (1) and (3) from the list above as species under its genus and is typically named "good-and-evil" by philosophers and theologians. The second involves (2) and (4) as species under its genus and is commonly named "right-and-wrong." It is easy to see that each of these two classes is a pairing of opposites and so can be regarded as "poles" of a common Object. So far as we refer these ideas to acts, "good" and "right" can be viewed as reasons for doing something while "evil" and "wrong" can be viewed as reasons for not doing something.

It is important we not leap too far ahead of ourselves too soon in positing conclusions from this. For example, someone might point out that a criminal knows his criminal activity is "wrong" but that he does the deed nonetheless. This way of thinking ignores the important point that, for the criminal, it is not the fact society at large condemns his actions that enters into *his* evaluation of the "goodness" of his action. I won't like it if he steals my car, but the fact I disapprove is irrelevant to the car thief and, indeed, might be seen by him as "one of the good things" about his action. Attitudes such as this make up an attribute of what psychiatry calls an antisocial personality. A second example someone might wish to bring up is one involving the time honored aphorism of "having to choose the lesser of two evils." If somehow my possible actions are so constrained that "some evil will come of" anything I could do (including a decision to do nothing at all), I might well conclude, and probably would conclude, that "causing the least amount of damage or grief" is "the right choice." The point here is *it can never be "wrong" to not do something a person is simply not capable of doing.*

Something that might be fairly obvious at this point is that our discussion is taking us into the realm of academics known as moral reasoning and the theory of ethics. This is so. However, it is very important to note that moral theory and ethics are not the exclusive property of religion or theology even though those organized religions that possess a comprehensive theological doctrine always include within it *a* theory of morals and ethics. It is equally important to ask if any such theory can ever be objective rather than exclusively subjective. It is, or at least should be, clear that if moral theory is a necessary part of any social-natural science such a theory must be objectively valid and cannot call upon any religious doctrine whatsoever if what we are to have is



a *science*. Looking ahead a bit, what we will find is that such a theory is possible as a scientific doctrine but only if we adopt epistemology-centered metaphysics, i.e. the Critical system. In this case the theory is known as *deontological ethics* and it alone among the historical approaches to moral theory possesses the required property of universal objective validity and is thereby congruent with science proper. Deontological ethics is less romantic than the other two primary classes of moral theory (consequentialist ethics and virtue ethics, neither of which can satisfy the fundamental requirement of universal objective validity), but it does connect intimately with an important point Piaget laid his finger upon when he wrote,

Logic is the morality of thought just as morality is the logic of action. – J. Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*

Epistemology-centered Critical metaphysics tells us that there is at all time an intricate and on-going relationship of co-determination at work between affective processes of mind, practical determination of actions, and cognitive understanding and planning. That which we call morality is a consequence of this interactive relationship. This includes the "immorality" of persons with antisocial personality disorders, although for them their "moral code" is far different from and usually very repugnant to what the majority of people call "morals."

It is not out of place here to note that Kant himself erred in his own theoretical treatment of moral law. This is because on this point he failed to maintain a firm grasp on epistemology-centered thinking and slipped back into the hard-to-break habits of thinking in terms of ontology-centered presuppositions. As a result of this error the specific moral theory Kant developed makes predictions that have been directly refuted by modern scientific evidence obtained from studies of sociopaths and the phenomenon of antisocial personality disorder. Kant's error is an especially ironic case where ontology-centered thinking unhinged the objective validity of a theory.

When the theory is properly re-centered upon Critical epistemology once more, its findings are not contradicted by either psychology or neuroscience. On the contrary, empirical science tends to support it. Indeed, it was the lack of congruence between Kant's formulation of the theory (which produces as a theorem the finding that the phenomenon of antisocial personality disorder should not be possible) and modern empirical evidence that pointed out Kant's mistake. This is a testimony to the wisdom of one of Piaget's dictums, i.e.,

In short, every epistemology . . . raises questions of facts and thus adopts implicit psychological positions . . . The first aim of genetic epistemology is, therefore, if one can say so, to take psychology seriously and to furnish verifications to any question epistemology necessarily raises, yet replacing the generally satisfying speculative or implicit psychology with controllable analyses . . . To repeat: if this obligation should have always been respected, it has today become more and more urgent. – J. Piaget, *Psychology and Epistemology*

As a corollary, we should also note that the reverse is true. Psychology must take epistemology seriously.

## § 5. The Practical Rule Structure

Kant's key error came when he equated the idea of what he called *the categorical imperative of pure practical Reason* with another idea he called "the moral law." Psychology as a science had not yet come into existence in Kant's day. The word "psychology" was then strongly linked to religious and spiritual ideas of "soul" and was so used by the Wolffian school of rationalism that held sway in Prussia at the time. As a result, Kant had to rely upon what Piaget called "generally satisfying speculative or implicit psychology," and in doing so he overlooked ontology-centered prejudices that accompany such considerations. Nothing but what we would have to call historical doctrines of psychology existed in Kant's day so there was no real scientific evidence that could have alerted Kant to his error. This is not the case today and the proper – that is to say, Critical – resolution of Kant's error is laid out in *Principles of Mental Physics*. Contrary to Kant's supposition, human beings are not born with a built-in "moral law" of any kind. Instead, human beings are born with an *a priori* capacity to *construct* a system of practical laws, including a practical if quite individual system of moral laws, on the basis of one's own experiences.

Furthermore, it is the nature of the phenomenon of mind that each of us *will do so*. My "moral code" and yours may be quite different, and we may use different names for them, but we each have one of our own. What sets the sociopath apart from the greater number of people is the extreme antagonism between the "moral code" he constructs and those constructed by the great majority of human beings. In a peculiarly ironic way, the existence of sociopaths and the nature of sociopathic phenomena provide some of the most compelling pieces of empirical evidence we have supporting the mental physics doctrine of the nature of human choice and decision making.

As explained in *Principles of Mental Physics*, the functioning structure of the phenomenon of mind contains three co-determining processes of judgment. These are: (1) reflective judgment for judging affective perceptions and impetuous sensorimotor responses to these perceptions; (2) practical judgment, which is part of the general regulatory "control system" of Reason and is tasked with the construction of the *system* of practical rules (*causatum* rules) referred to earlier in this chapter; and (3) determining judgment, which deals with objective concepts and the construction of a structure of interconnected concepts that constitutes human understanding. These three processes of judgment are co-determining – which is to say each acts upon the other two and in turn is acted upon by the other two. The co-determining process of this interaction is called the process of judgmentation.

Reflective judgment pertains to psychological phenomena we vaguely call emotional and motivational; practical judgment pertains to practical rules of choice and action; and determining judgment pertains to thinking and understanding. There is a noticeable similarity between the Critical structure of mind and Freud's tripartite ideas of the ego, the id, and the superego, although Freud's theory suffers from a number of debilitating ontology-centered prejudices and eventually fails as a consequence of this. The alignment between Freud's ideas of the ego, id, and superego is not one-for-one with the processes of reflective, practical, and determining judgment. Roughly, though, Freud's idea of the id somewhat aligns with reflective judgment, Freud's idea of the ego somewhat aligns with determining judgment, and his superego roughly aligns with practical judgment. Thus Freud's theory contains a number of useful insights even though his theory as a whole is incorrect.

Because the topic of this treatise is leadership, our primary focal point of interest is on practical judgment and the rule structure it constructs. We also have a strong secondary focal point of interest on reflective judgment, the outcomes of which provide the stimulating conditions for the evocation of these practical rules. This is not to leave out the role of determining judgment because, as stated above, all three processes of judgment are in on-going mutual interaction and so the products of determining judgment affect reflective judgment through cognitions. Note how in figure 2.1 reflective judgment and determining judgment mutually interact through the processes of apprehension, apperception, and imagination.

Practical judgment belongs to the logical division of *nous* called practical Reason, and this division is aptly describable by saying it is cognitively dark and affectively cold. The rules it constructs are practical and unconscious. The factors that evoke the application of these rules, however, are conscious in regard to sensible perception and unconscious in regard to the motor actions of the body. The affective and cognitive divisions of mind are, in a manner of speaking, the gateway by means of which actions of the leader affect the follower. The process of judgmentation co-determines acts of affectivity, cognition, and reasoning through the co-determination of reflective, determining, and practical judgment.

Nonetheless, it is an *acroam*<sup>8</sup> of mental physics that the individual human being is *self-determining*. Guidance and manipulation by the leader amounts to nothing else than attempts by the leader to, in a manner of speaking, bias in his favor the self-determined decisions the follower makes. Now, in the constructed system of practical rules produced by practical judgment we find a rule hierarchy. The simplest and most primitive of these are low-level practical rules

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<sup>8</sup> An *acroam* is a fundamental principle of Critical metaphysics proper. They are in effect the basic natural laws of the phenomenon of mind.

constitutive of the most basic human actions. These are the rules implicated by such descriptions of behaviors as being "instinctive" or "reflex." These rules are gradually provided with a coordinated structure of intermediate rule-sets called *maxims*. Finally, at the top of the hierarchy, we find the most general structured rule systems under the most generalized practical rules.

The last are, logically, the highest rules in this structure<sup>9</sup> by virtue of having other lower rules subsumed under them while not themselves being subsumed under even higher rules. These highest rules are called *practical hypothetical imperatives* of pure practical Reason. These rules have the "force and flavor" of a moral code (in the context that "morality is the logic of action") albeit a quite *personal* moral code because they are products of the individual's life experiences. The individual *will never act in any manner that knowingly contradicts these imperatives*. Likewise, if the condition for invoking one of these imperatives is presented (by reflective judgment), the individual will *always* act according to the imperative. The only way his behaviors ever come to change is when the actual outcome of an action is judged *ex post facto* (through the process of judgmentation) to have violated a master *formula* of practical self-determination called *the categorical imperative* of pure practical Reason. This is because the highest regulative principle of the phenomenon of mind is *conformity of the practical rule structure to the practical formula called the categorical imperative*.

We can gain a first appreciation of this from something moral philosopher Onora Nell once wrote:

It was assumed that it could be discovered when an agent's maxim was appropriate to his situation or to his act, or when the agent was acting on the basis of a mistaken means/ends judgment. But when we act we are not in that position. Once all reasonable care has been taken to avoid ignorance, bias, or self-deception, an agent can do nothing more to determine that his maxim does not match his situation. Once an agent has acted on his maxim attentively, he can do no more to ensure that his act lives up to his maxim. We cannot choose to succeed, but only to strive. Once he has taken due care to get his means/ends judgments right, he can do nothing further to ensure that they are right. Agents are not simultaneously their own spectators. In contexts of actions they cannot go behind their own maxims and beliefs. We can make right decisions, but not guarantee right acts.  
– Nell, *Acting on Principle*

Put less academically, "sometimes things don't turn out the way we expected." The most basic requirement the formula of the categorical imperative places as a restriction on the structure of practical rules is that a practical hypothetical imperative be universally applicable *with no known exceptions* to the rule under all occasions when the rule is evoked. Experience sometimes unveils situations where the individual discovers by experience (*ex post facto*) that his practical

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<sup>9</sup> It is important to bear in mind that this manifold of practical rules is constructed, out of experience, and is an *open* system. This means a currently highest practical rule will not necessarily remain one because it is subject to being made subordinate to a still-higher constructed rule practical judgment might later produce.

hypothetical imperative is *not* universally applicable as the categorical imperative requires. The categorical imperative regulates for the achievement of a specific organic condition<sup>10</sup> and if the action does not *produce* this condition then the act fails to conform to the formula. When this happens the process of practical judgment *accommodates* the rule structure, and it is by this accommodation that new higher practical rules are produced in an *open system* of practical rule structure. One particularly important and potent type of experience for effecting such a change in the manifold of rules is *educational* experience.

Maxims do not carry the "moral force" of practical hypothetical imperatives and thus the great majority of all adult human actions have no "moral" implication. Nonetheless, every maxim is still conditioned by the hypothetical imperatives it stands in connection under and so cannot be evoked under circumstances that gainsay this conditioning. *Habits* come to be unmade through accommodation of the structure of this conditioning.

Evoking a practical hypothetical imperative produces a *necessitated* (made necessary) action whereas stimulating the rule of a lower maxim without the stimulating *causatum* of an imperative produces a *permitted* action. It is the character of an action as being necessitated by imperative that *operationally* defines what is Critically meant by the phrase "moral force." It is important to note that imperatives "carrying moral force" in the mind of a child most often undergo later accommodations by which what was an imperative is "demoted" to the standing of a mere maxim. Thus, what the child acts upon with what we might call "moral fervor" becomes for the adult something "with no moral implication" and has merely technical or pragmatic expedience. Some interesting and even amusing examples of this are documented in Piaget's *The Moral Judgment of the Child*. More detailed discussion of this is provided in *Principles of Mental Physics*.

We must take note of the "free won't" character of this system. The process of Reason knows no objects and feels no feelings. If an impetuous act of reflective judgment does not conflict with the conditions established by the manifold of rules, its action will be expressed; it is "permitted." If the impetuous act does conflict with the practical rule structure, its expression will be blocked. Metaphorically speaking, the regulation of Reason does not say "I will do this"; rather, it says "I won't do that." This, not coincidentally, is very much the character of all *empirical* moral codes. The American philosopher George Santayana wrote,

The relation between æsthetic and moral judgments, between the spheres of the beautiful and the good, is close, but the distinction between them is important. One factor of this distinction is that while æsthetic judgments are mainly positive, that is, perceptions of

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<sup>10</sup> By "organic condition" I mean a holistic condition of the Organized Being as a single entity, thus "in mind as well as in body." Remember, the mind-body division is merely logical, not *ontological*.

good, moral judgments are mainly and fundamentally negative, or perceptions of evil. . . . The truth is that morality is not mainly concerned with the attainment of pleasure; it is rather concerned, in all its deeper and more authoritative maxims, with the prevention of suffering. . . . The sad business of life is rather to escape certain dreadful evils to which our nature exposes us, – death, hunger, disease, weariness, isolation, and contempt. By the awful authority of these things, which stand like specters behind every moral injunction, conscience in reality speaks – George Santayana, *The Sense of Beauty*

The formula of the categorical imperative of pure practical Reason is *a law mandating for formal organic equilibrium in the overall state of the Organized Being* – physical as well as mental. As it is the master formula governing the construction of the manifold of rules, Santayana's "sad business of life" is an apt description of the function it serves and so it is hardly puzzling in light of this context that the "free won't" character of practical Reason should produce practical codes of behavior that take in "the moral" as well as the merely pragmatic and technical. The categorical imperative is the ground for the *possibility* of moral codes but is not a moral *law per se*.

## § 6. Critical Bases of Choice

Causality regarded as an act is the determination of a change by which the change is established according to general rules. When that change involves action by a human being this is denoted by the term *practical causality* in Critical metaphysics and by the term psychological causality in empirical psychology. Practical causality is thus the determination of the action the individual will take. The practical ability of the person to take an action, and thereby be the efficient cause of the actuality of the object of the action, is called the *Begehrungsvermögen* or **appetitive power** of practical Reason. It is by reference to appetitive power that we come to the Critical *Realerklärung* for the notion of "good" and for that of "evil."

Good is the Object of practical Reason by which an object is mentally represented (by the person to himself) as a necessary object of appetitive power. It is a practical rather than cognitive representation by the power of Reason and refers to a choice to effect or maintain the actuality of an object. Saying good is an Object of practical Reason denotes nothing more than a relationship between the structure of practical rules and the affective condition presented by the process of reflective judgment. It does not involve an immediate judgment of whatever object (objective) might be the material aim of actions that follow from the determination of appetitive power. The Critical idea of good pertains to the act of determination itself. The "goodness of or in an object" is a judicial by-product that is better regarded as the *expedience* of a material object or objective of action as a means of satisfaction. This Critical explanation of good forbids any ontological reification of the idea of "good" by which this Object would be transported to some specious

thing outside of the person himself, and this is one of the main pillars of *deontological* ethics. The Critical notion of good is contained *in the act of practical determination* of appetitive power and is never in the outcome of the action taken (the end) or in the action itself (the means).

The Critical notion of evil is the opposite of good. In a manner of speaking, Critical evil is "negative good" in the sense that it refers to a practical determination to prevent or abolish the actuality of an object. Just as realization of a "good object" is a means of striving to achieve a satisfaction, negation of an "evil object" is a means of striving to abolish a dissatisfaction. Like Critical good, the notion of Critical evil has objective validity only in regard to appetitive power and can never be reified as something external to the human being nor transferred to the outcome of an action or to the action itself.

This Critical perspective of good and evil is key to understanding how the same underlying laws of mental physics explain both the non-sociopath and the sociopath. Regardless of how heinous the deeds of a sociopath appear to the rest of us, to the sociopath himself the ground of his action is his self-determination of appetitive power and so *to him* is "good." The structure of practical rules is constructed out of experience through a process of practical judgment that is cognitively dark, affectively cold, and answers only to the regulation of the categorical imperative. Thus a criminal can commit a criminal action without feeling the least remorse for his deed and be utterly lacking in what we usually call a conscience so far as his action and its effect on others is concerned. As police officers sometimes put it, "He's only sorry he was caught."

If, on the other hand, the notions of good and evil are reified and misplaced from a context in appetitive power then the phenomenon of behaviors we might call saintly or sinful is utterly unexplainable except by invocation of some occult entity, e.g. a personal "spirit," a "demonic possession," an inspiration credited to a "holy ghost," etc. The majority of people throughout history who have sought for a universal moral theory have presumed that any such theory must ground its ideas of good and evil objectively by placing these ideas in some external thing. All such theories are ontology-centered in their metaphysical or pseudo-metaphysical premises. Ontology-centered theories of morality and ethics – which historically can be classified as either consequentialist ethics or virtue ethics – inevitably come to some occult necessitation, which is why no such moral theory has ever obtained universal assent from humankind. Deontological ethics, in contrast, *is* capable of grounding an *objective convention* of social morality despite the inherently *subjective* character of judgments of good and evil. How this is possible is a topic postponed until the later discussion on the nature of moral leadership because right now at this point in the treatise the foundation of this topic is not yet sufficiently completed.

The Critical *Realerklärung* of good/evil leads directly to two ideas of fundamental importance

to the decisions and choices made by a human being. These are the ideas of *obligation* and *duty*. Critical obligation is the necessity of a free act under a *theoretically*-categorical imperative of speculative Reason. A theoretically-categorical imperative is an action concept, placed in the person's concept structure, by which he objectively understands his moral tenets. A theoretically-categorical imperative is a concept that reflects a *practical* hypothetical imperative. Unlike the practical hypothetical imperative, which commands action as a practical empirical *law* for the human being, a theoretically-categorical imperative carries no more effective natural force for a human being than that of an "I *ought to* do such-and-such". This is why a human being is capable of acting in manners contrary to or even in contradiction of his own *conceptual* moral tenets.

An obligation is a personal *more* a person holds himself committed to respect and conform to in his deeds. It is a theoretical "rule of good conduct" he makes necessary (necessitates) for himself to cover a broad range of empirical situations. A duty is a necessitated and *objectively* practical act, in accordance with an idea of objective moral law, that excludes all personal inclinations from serving as the ground of his action. The distinction between obligation and duty is subtle but important. Even in those cases where a person's action decision in the particular has no immediate connection with whatever tenets he holds as theoretical duties of obligation, these tenets and the *practical* rules that underlie them are regulating factors in his actions and behaviors. For that reason we must look at obligation and duty in more metaphysical depth.

## § 7. **Obligation and Duty**

For many people the word duty evokes feelings of unpleasantness or reluctance, and this is often enough because the word is mistakenly associated, through misuse, with the idea of being coerced into having to do something at the wish of someone else. It is true enough that when one acts from duty the action is often enough something a person would not prefer to do. This is not always so, but there is no denying that this is often the case. However, it is a most serious error to think the idea of duty can in any way be based on the idea of coercion. Prudent or pragmatic submission to coercion is a frequent enough act, but defiant rebellion against coercion is also a frequent act. So is presenting a mere facade of submission while awaiting an opportunity to strike back in retribution against the coercer. Being coerced by force, by the threat of force, or by the threat of unpleasant consequences attending refusal to submit never fails to breed resentment in the mind of the person being coerced because the power to coerce is rightly regarded as a despotic power. No person ever commits himself to entering into any sort of honest social compact with other people through coercion even if this amounts to no more than a scolding.

The idea of duty is something quite opposed to compliance through coercion. The possibility



that there can even be such a thing as duty is grounded solely in the human power of self-determination. Kant took up the question of duty in his 1797 work, *Die Metaphysik der Sitten* (The Metaphysics of Morals):

*Obligation* is the necessity of a free act under a categorical imperative of reason.

[A theoretical] imperative is a practical rule through which an act, in itself contingent, is *made* necessary. It differs from a practical law in that this represents, to be sure, an act as necessary but takes no regard of whether this is peculiar to an inner necessity of the acting Subject . . . or is contingent to him (as in a human being); for the first is the case where there is no [theoretical] imperative. Hence an imperative is a rule for which its representation makes necessary a subjectively contingent act and hence represents the Subject as one who must be beholden (necessitated) to that in conformity with this rule. . . The ground of the possibility of [theoretically] categorical imperatives lies only in this: that they refer to no other condition of choice . . . than simply to its freedom. – Kant, *Die Metaphysik der Sitten*, 6:222

It is important to clearly understand the difference between theoretically categorical imperatives and *the* practical categorical imperative of pure practical Reason. The latter is the fundamental regulating law of *nous*; it is a natural law of the *mental Nature* of human beings. A human being can no more defy the law of the practical categorical imperative than he can defy the law of gravity. A theoretically categorical imperative, on the other hand, is a rational concept conceptualized and placed in a person's manifold of concepts through thinking. The ground of every theoretically categorical imperative is a practical *hypothetical* imperative in the manifold of rules. But the *concept* carries no more "natural force" than does a civil law instructing automobile drivers to stop at stop signs; it is only an "ought to." A person can *conceptualize* many theoretically categorical imperatives but he has only *one* practical categorical imperative. The former constitute a person's understanding of his self-constructed system of ethics; the latter is a natural law of mental physics.

Despots claim the prerogative to force others to unwillingly assume what the despot calls obligations. But this self-styled prerogative is in its inception unjust and false. ***No person can impose an obligation on another person.*** Obligations are only and can only be assumed from within by a person *taking it upon himself* to *make* a rule his obligation. Nothing else is congruent with the human power of self-determination. It is on this pathway from categorical imperative of Reason to free necessitation of obligation that we come at last to the fundamental idea of duty:

*Duty* is that act to which someone is bound. It is therefore the matter of an obligation, and there can be one and the same duty (in conformity with the act) although we can be bound to it in different ways. – [*ibid.*]

An obligation is merely *formal* in human self-determination. By itself an abstraction, obligation presents no specific point of application for an action, but all human actions are actions

taken *in the specific*. This is what Kant means by calling duty the *matter* of an obligation. It adds to the purely formal character of obligation the concrete *context* for the act. There are many varieties of duties a person takes upon himself: duties to one's family; duties to one's person; duties to one's faith; duties to one's neighbors; duties to one's country. Every duty takes its point of origin from the same wellspring, namely the human being's power of self-determination – a natural power he can no more resist than he can choose to give up breathing.

And yet one must also recognize that *conceptualizing* any specific duty in all of its implications and consequences is extremely difficult, made more so by the fact that what individuals come to conceive as their duties often pass into habit long before *the concept* is confronted by a need to make a choice not anticipated in his original conception of his duty. The comfort of habit tends to produce a false self-assurance of the complete correctness of one's theoretical maxims. Philosophy teachers adopt, as a part of the pedagogy of teaching moral philosophy, the posing of hypothetical situations in which one's self-confidence in the apodictic perfection one's own moral maxims can be severely shaken. The commerce of living does the same thing except that in living one's life these confrontations are not mere academic exercises. One favorite hypothetical is to theoretically place a person in some proposed situation wherein the problem presented is a "no-win situation." As an example: Your own two small children are trapped in opposite ends of a burning house; the fire is spreading so quickly that you can only save one or the other of them, but not both. Which one, if either, do you choose to save?

There are countless variations on this hypothetical game of the "no-win situation." Such scenarios, both merely academic as well as those actually encountered in life, give rise to the aphorism of "choosing the lesser of two evils." The sophism inherent in this way of looking at duty and moral choice comes from theoretical transferal of the concept of "evil" from the *basis* of one's act to either the *consequence* of one's action (consequentialist ethics) or to the *means* of achieving one's ends (virtue ethics). There are irresolvable antinomies easily unveiled in ethical systems based on either consequentialism or on virtue. A person has in his power only the capacity to make good choices within limitations physically and intellectually imposed on actions he is *capable* of performing. He does not have the omnipotence to guarantee none but good outcomes or good means. No *culpability* attaches to anyone simply because he is not all-powerful. It is not immoral to not do what one cannot do.

In his 1793 essay, *Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis* (On the common saying: That may be right in theory but no use in practice), Kant wrote,

The idea of duty in its complete purity is not only incomparably simpler, clearer, and, for

practical use, more readily grasped and more natural to everyone than any motive drawn from happiness, or mixed with it and with the regard for it (which always requires much art and consideration); it is also, even in the judgment of the most common human reason, far more powerful, forceful, and promising of results than all grounds of movement borrowed from the latter, selfish principle if only it is brought in this purity to the will of man, and even more with separation from, and, yes what is more, in opposition to this will. – Kant, *Über den Gemeinspruch*, 8: 286

Far from being obscure, Kant wrote, even a child could recognize what was *contrary* to duty. This is a direct consequence of the "free won't" character of pure practical Reason. In 1793 Kant's conclusion may have carried no more scientific weight than any other lay opinion, but it is notable that this claim by Kant was given empirical support in the twentieth century by experiments carried out by Piaget and his colleagues. Piaget was able to study the course of development of children's concepts of moral judgments. What he found was that while a child's conceptions of morality start off as something apparently quite different from an adult's, the force and impact of these judgments is no less significant to the child than the most refined of any adult moral sensibility is to a mahatma. While it is often difficult to recognize something as a duty and bearing the impelling force of obligation, it proves to be the case that it is far easier to judge something as being wrong – that is, as being contrary to duty – even when exactly what it is that is wrong is hard to put into words objectively and what is needed "to make things right" is unclear.

All of us come to hold strong convictions of right and wrong, although our individual conceptions of this vary greatly from person to person and even more from culture to culture. Even the sociopath holds such convictions, although in his case these are the antithesis of what the great majority of people in any society hold, tend to be utterly centered on antisocial maxims, and exhibit such a pronounced lack of empathy for others and are at such great variance from social norms that we say of him, "He has no conscience. He is a monster." The most common trait found among sociopaths and people said to have an antisocial personality disorder is that these individuals have utterly no commitment to any sort of social compact, although they have no hesitation in taking every advantage they can get from the environment that life in the midst of a civilized community affords them the opportunity to seize. They truly live out their lives in a political state of nature with no concern for the effect their actions have on others. As police officers and judges often put it, "He has no remorse." The existence of sociopaths provides what may be the strongest evidence we have that obligations and ideas of duty originate from the human being's capacity for self-determination. Aristotle pronounced a fundamental truth when he wrote that a community's *system* of ethics must be *taught*.

Although obligation stems from the formula of a categorical imperative, all duties, in contrast,

can stem from nothing but hypothetical imperatives. This is because all duties, being both specific and concrete, involve incorporation of material *conditions*. The *obligation* of carrying out one's duties is unconditional, but the particular *duties* are not. Grounding every hypothetical imperative of duty is an overall and fundamental ground, without which no imperative is possible. This ground will stem from one of three possible relations between the Critical idea of good/evil and the general idea of duty. Issues touching upon this relation involve three considerations in how a person *determines himself* to uphold duties, on the basis of his ideas of good versus evil, so far as these duties: (1) relate to his *moral personality*; (2) relate to his *situation*; and (3) reciprocally relate himself *and the situation of others*.

By the term "moral personality" is meant the categorical Relation in which a person *respects himself as an individual* (rather than in regard to material conditions or as a part of any compact or association with other people) and sets terms by which he can and is willing to oblige himself to act on the basis of such material conditions or undertake such a compact *while not violating duties to himself he makes for himself*. In *Die Metaphysik der Sitten* Kant described this in the following words:

Now, the human being as a reasonable *natural being* . . . can be determined by his reason, as a *cause*, to deeds in the sensible world, and hereby the idea of obligation does not come into consideration. But this very same human being, thought according to his *personality* – that is, as a being endowed with *inner freedom* . . . – is a being liable to obligation and, indeed, obligation for himself (to the humanity of his own person); so the human being (regarded in these two senses) can acknowledge a duty to himself without falling into contradiction[.]– Kant, *Die Metaphysik der Sitten*, 6:418

The second relation pertains to duties to oneself in regard to physical, social, or other external circumstances in which he finds himself. These are called hypothetical duties to oneself. The categorical duties pertains to how a person's actions and decisions affect his own self-regard. The hypothetical duties pertain to how one's actions and decisions will bring on pragmatic or technical consequences. Submission to coercion by another person would be an example of this if I determine that resistance would bring on consequences to myself that I would find more disagreeable than the consequences of submitting. Suppose someone were to stick a gun in my face and demand, "Your money or your life." I certainly have no desire to hand over my money but I certainly do have a strong desire to not be shot (much less killed). Consequently, I might hand over my wallet.

On the other hand, it is possible I might feel so deeply dishonored by submitting to the robber that I decide it is preferable to resist by attacking him. This would be a situation where a categorical duty (e.g., "do nothing that causes loss of honor") exerts a stronger psychological effect on me than does a hypothetical duty to "play it safe." A third possibility, which appears to

be far more commonly encountered, would be to act under a maxim that can accommodate both the categorical and hypothetical duties. For example, such a maxim might be "submit now and get revenge later." Perhaps I also have a gun, concealed on my person, decide to hand over my wallet (feigned submission) and then as soon as the robber turns to go I pull it out and shoot him. This would be a moral maxim of the categorical kind (again, in the context of morality as the logic of actions).

Or, taking another example, suppose I hold extremely strong religious convictions against taking the life of another person, e.g. "do not kill" as a categorical duty *to myself*. I then submit because my moral maxim would be "if the only alternative to submission is to kill then submit." This would, of course, be a duty of the hypothetical kind. Maxims of duty based on the categorical and hypothetical relations jointly constitute one's *duties to oneself*. They serve as what Stanford psychology professor Harold Leavitt called "egoistic needs."

One outstanding exponent of growth motivation has pointed out that certain needs take operational precedence over others if both are unsatisfied at the same time. The ambitious man who is lost in the desert pays attention to his thirst, not his ambition. In general, the ordering of needs seem to be from the physical needs, which take first place when unsatisfied, to the social needs, to the egoistic needs, and perhaps beyond what we have called the egoistic group, to needs for self-actualization – that is, to needs for fulfilling one's self in one's own way. . .

People are born with physical needs. They later either acquire or blossom out with a host of other social and egoistic needs. These new psychological needs can be thought of as outgrowths of (1) physical needs, (2) the nervous system of the physical body, plus (3) dependency on other people. . . Satisfaction builds security and social needs; frustration builds insecurity, hostility, and egoistic needs. – H.J. Leavitt, *Managerial Psychology*, 2 (1972)

Theoretical maxims of duty falling under the third category above are called reciprocal duties. Here the difference is that the person has taken unto himself an obligation to some form of *social compact*. In the abstract we view this type of obligation as the synthesis of those of the first two kinds. It is the Relation that underlies all maxims of *duties one owes to others*. It is also the ground for all *expectations of duties owed to oneself by others*. Duties of this type serve as what Leavitt called one's social needs. As we will see later, this is the category of duty relations that ground the ideas of moral leadership and moral followership.

We are, each of us, the agents of our own deeds. Of the countless things each of us do every day, the great majority of our actions bear no immediate moral or ethical relationships to any duty. For most people it is a matter of complete *moral indifference* if he eats cereal vs. eggs for breakfast. How is this possible if what was just said above is true? The Critical factor here is whether or not whatever (in reflective judgment) stimulated invocation of a practical rule of Reason is irrelevant in relationship to any *higher* practical hypothetical imperative. At the root it

is the person's structure of practical hypothetical imperatives that operate as *necessitated* rules. Lower rules are contingent (not necessitated) unless the ground for invoking the practical rule is a higher rule in this manifold of practical rules. It is perhaps clearly appreciable just how complicated the web of this interrelated practical rules structure gets for every person. It is this complicated nature of practical rule structure that has always been responsible for the difficulties theories of leadership, motivational psychology, social psychology, and psychological theories of personality have often run up against.

Kant taught that every person does accept obligations for particular duties we owe to *ourselves* by virtue of our own humanity. The great majority of people also accept obligations for particular duties of the reciprocal kind between oneself and at least a limited number of other people. However *all obligation is inner self-consent*. No one, for example, can *externally oblige* me to carry out an act I deem to be evil or unjust, or that requires me to injure my own self respect, or to place myself in a situation where I might come to physical harm or death. Likewise, no one can externally oblige me to accept duties or obligations to others. Understanding this basic idea of mental physics is key to understanding the fundamental nature of leadership and followership, the fundamental nature of motivational psychology, and the fundamental nature of social psychology.

The social-dynamical relationship involved in leadership works within constraints imposed by this mental Nature of being a human being. The effect the leader's actions will have on the follower is determined *by the follower* on the basis of how his reflective judgment evokes rules in his practical manifold of rules. He will never go against any of his practical hypothetical imperatives, he will unhesitatingly take actions that follow from any *causatum* stimulating one of these imperatives, and he will self-determine (through judgmentation) the permitted action he will undertake when the *causatum* does not immediately evoke a practical hypothetical imperative. Reciprocally, how he reacts to the leader will stimulate the leader's actions in their conjoint dynamical relationship according to this same practical mental dynamic.

This is the big picture. In order to apply it we need to next consider the *empirical* character of the person's construction of his manifold of rules as well as the construction of his manifold of concepts. In a manner of speaking, the follower "builds the buttons available to the leader" and the leader must build an understanding of "how to recognize and press these buttons." Leadership directly involves the third (reciprocal) set of duty relations, but at the same time it is essential to recognize that when conceptualized reciprocal duty comes into conflict with the rule structure of duties to oneself, *duties to oneself always prevail* in an individual's self-determination of his actions. This is because *obligation* always takes its ground from categorical or hypothetical relations of good/evil, whereas reciprocal duties arise from conceptualizations of *matters* of

obligation.

This fundamental consideration is always present even when specific actions have no immediate relationship to ethical/moral maxims. This is because *permitted* actions are only permitted *because they do not oppose* the higher practical rules that ground ethical/moral maxims. The emotivity of acts of practical Reason has the character of a "free won't." We begin our exploration of this in our next chapter.

## § 8. References

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