

Freedom in Kant: Theoretical and Practical Dimensions

Freedom takes a central place in Immanuel Kant's philosophy. In the *Preface to the Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant claims that "the concept of freedom [...] constitutes the *keystone* of the whole structure of a system of pure reason" (5:3). With this metaphor he seems to refer to the fact that the concept of freedom constitute a link or uniting element between his practical and theoretical philosophy. In my contribution, I want to give an account of what theoretical and practical reason, according to Kant, contribute to our understanding of freedom. In the first part, I present an overview over Kant's resolution of the third Antinomy in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, where he argues that freedom and determinism are compatible. This establishes the *logical* possibility of freedom: Theoretical reason allows us to *think* that there is absolute freedom, without thereby contradicting the principle of natural causality. In the second part, I turn to Kant's practical philosophy, where he argues that on the basis of practical considerations, notably our consciousness of the moral law, we can go beyond the mere logical possibility established by theoretical reason. We have practical reasons to assume or "postulate" that we are free. I focus on the general idea of a postulate in order to show, in the third part, how this idea can be fruitfully applied to account for two more issues that are bound up with our freedom: The unity of our noumenal and empirical self, and the free choice of our own character.