

Noumena

Concept

Towards the end of the 18th century the philosopher, in the face of ascendent science, David Hume advanced powerful arguments against the possibility of knowledge. Wishing to preserve the unity of thought and experience, Immanuel Kant devised a bridge between empiricism, which accepted reality as it appears to the senses, and Hume's skepticism. In so doing Kant invented critical theory, that is, a philosophic approach that studies the conditions of its own appearance. Kant's version of critical theory proposes that we have knowledge but it's limited to what's in our mind. The world as it is in itself, the so-called things-in-themselves, remain *noumenal*, unknowable and forever outside our grasp.

Script

Man and Woman on stage.

Man

I don't know what this thing is. (Gestures towards geometric figure.)

Woman

I explore my inner reality.

Man

We skim the appearance of things.

Woman

All we know is thought. This thinking here, concrete, in it's own reality.

Man

We sense a wall without escape, blocking our senses.

Woman

I escape through thought, through emotion. My feelings. Inner.

Man

Our feeling, lost in thought. Lost to history.

Woman

We have turned the world inside out. What was out is in, what was in is out. Thought, feeling. Is there anything more we can know?

Man

Thought. A dangerous trap. Can we take signs seriously? Trapped by logic. Logic can kill. It has always in the past. The future is dangerous.

Woman

A deadly game.

Man

Pounce on it, pursue your prey with deadly intensity. It's no point to debate. Action is the antidote, the bridge over the chasm, the brave rush of waves. Passage into the known and unknown and what lies between them, the unbridgable chasm. Passage to light. I wish I knew this light. How can we feel beyond feeling itself? To what does feeling point? Where is love in the world of thought, where we can never meet another like ourselves? A cold scaffold.

Woman

Where do we connect? With ourself? With each other? With the things, the things around us? With the things, the things in themselves?

END