

Philosophy 203
History of Modern Western Philosophy

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Class 27 - May 3
Overview of the Deduction
The Refutation of Idealism
The First Antinomy

Van Cleve on the Deduction

1. *The Unity Premise*: All representations of which I am conscious have the unity of apperception.
 2. *The Synthesis Premise*: Representations can have such unity only if they have been synthesized.
 3. *The Category Premise*: Synthesis requires the application of Kant's categories.
- Conclusion*: The categories apply to all representations of which I am conscious.





Unity and Synthesis

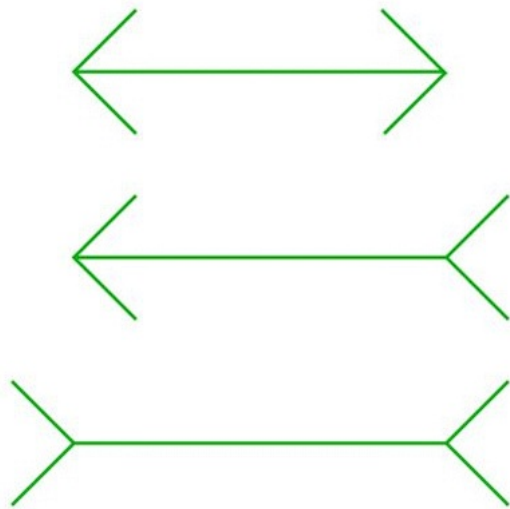
1. *The Unity Premise*: All representations of which I am conscious have the unity of apperception.

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Conclusion: The categories apply to all representations of which I am conscious.

- The unity is both objective and subjective.
 - It is subjective because it is my unity.
 - “Just as appearances exist not in themselves but only relatively to the subject in whom the appearances inhere insofar as the subject has senses, so the laws exist not in the appearances but only relatively to that same being insofar as that being has understanding” (B164, AW 754b).
 - It is objective, since it represents to me external objects
 - “We must now explain how it is possible, through *categories*, to cognize *a priori* whatever objects *our senses may encounter* - to so cognize them as regards not the form of their intuition, but the laws of their combination - and hence, as it were, to prescribe laws to nature, and even to make nature possible” (B159-60, AW 753a).
- Contrast:
 - ‘if I support this body, then I feel a pressure of heaviness’
 - ‘this body is heavy’
- Since we have knowledge of physical laws, we are able to make the latter claim.
- Unless the subjective unity of apperception were also objective, we could only make the former claim.



Objectivity

- Relations among appearances are not merely arbitrary or accidental.
- We know of causal relations.
- Thus, we must be able to make objective claims about objects, not merely subjective claims.
 - Hume's skepticism was problematic precisely because we do know about causal relations.
 - Balls of uranium and balls of gold
- Intuitions become objects for an individual, but they are still objects.
- Instead of opposing subjectivity merely to objectivity, Kant is making a three-part distinction:
 - subjective
 - objective
 - transcendental/noumenal
- We are not making the noumenal world possible.
- But, nature is not a property or aspect of the noumenal world.
- It is a result of our structuring the raw data of experience that we are given in intuition.
- We can distinguish between fantasies and appearances.

The Category Premise

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3. *The Category Premise*: Synthesis requires the application of Kant's categories.

Conclusion: The categories apply to all representations of which I am conscious.

- Establishing the Category Premise is a long affair, taking Kant deep into the *Analytic of Principles*.
- Kant shows that the categories apply to all creatures that use intuition, that represent the world.
- Even my own existence is known only through the categories, only as an appearance.
 - “Although my own existence is not appearance (still less mere illusion), determination of my existence can occur only in conformity with the form of inner sense and according to the particular way in which the manifold that I combine is given in inner intuition” (B157-8, AW 752b).
- An infinite mind might work by direct awareness, not by representation.
 - That mind would have no use for the categories.
- Any pure concepts will only apply to objects of possible experience.
 - Mathematical propositions hold only for objects of possible experience.
 - “The pure concepts of the understanding, even when they are (as in mathematics) applied to *a priori* intuitions, provide cognition only insofar as these intuitions...can be applied to empirical intuitions... Consequently the categories cannot be used for cognizing things except insofar as these things are taken as objects of possible experience” (B147-8, AW 751a).

The Categories and Inner and Outer Sense

- When I turn the empirical intuition of a house into a perception by apprehending the intuition's manifold, then in this apprehension I presuppose the *necessary unity* of space and of outer sensible intuition as such; and I draw, as it were, the house's shape in conformity with this synthetic unity of the manifold in space. But this same unity, if I abstract from the form of space, resides in the understanding, and is the category of the synthesis of the homogeneous in an intuition as such, i.e. the category of *magnitude*. Hence the synthesis of apprehension, i.e. perception, must conform throughout to that category (B 162, AW 754a).
- This synthetic unity, as an *a priori* condition under which I combine the manifold of an *intuition as such*, is - if I abstract from the constant form of *my* inner intuition, i.e., from time - the category of cause; through this category, when I apply it to my sensibility, *everything that happens is, in terms of its relation, determined by me in time as such*. Therefore apprehension in such an event, and hence the event itself, is subject - as regards possible perception - to the concept of the *relation of effects and causes*; and thus it is in all other cases (B163, AW 754a).

Transcendental Discovery of the Categories

- Abstracting space and time, we find that the categories were presupposed.
- We do not, via abstraction, create the categories.
- We discover them already imposed on our experiences.
 - “The *possibility of experience* is what provides all our *a priori* cognition with objective reality. Now experience rests on the synthetic unity of appearances, i.e., on a synthesis of appearances in general performed according to concepts of an object. Without such synthesis, experience would not even be cognition, but would be a rhapsody of perceptions” (A156/B195, AW 761a).
- The forms of intuition meet up with the categories of the understanding because they are both *a priori* impositions of the subject.
 - “Either experience makes these concepts possible, or these concepts make experience possible. The first alternative is not what happens as regards the categories (nor as regards pure sensible intuition). For they are *a priori* concepts and hence are independent of experience...The categories contain the grounds, on the part of the understanding, of the possibility of all experience as such” (B167, AW 755a-b).
- We don't know about the conditions on objects in the noumenal world.
- We do know that for us, experiences (i.e. appearances of objects in nature) must have certain abstract features.

After the Transcendental Deduction

- Kant explains, or transcendently deduces, all of the particular categories.
- Then, he shows how his transcendental idealism applies to a variety of traditional philosophical problems and paradoxes:
 - the question of the existence of an external world
 - whether space and time are absolute or relational
 - whether we have free will
- In some cases, Kant sides with the rationalists, claiming that we have knowledge.
 - certainty of mathematics
 - knowledge of an external world
- In other cases, Kant finds the rationalists' claims overly dogmatic, exceeding the limits of pure reason.

Three Last Topics in Kant's *Critique*

1. The refutation of idealism
2. Whether the universe is finite or infinite
3. The ontological argument for the existence of God

The Refutation of Idealism

Overview of the Refutation

- Kant argues that neither Berkeleyan idealism nor Humean skepticism are justified, given the conclusions of the Transcendental Analytic.
 - “**Theorem** The mere, but empirically determined, consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside me” (B275, AW 782a).
- First, Kant distinguishes between problematic idealism, which he attributes to Descartes, and dogmatic idealism, which he attributes to Berkeley.
 - The dogmatic idealist complains that space and time must be properties of the noumenal world.
 - But, since we can’t know anything of the noumenal world, then we must have no knowledge of space and time.
- By taking space and time to be pure forms of intuition, Kant provides a context for rejecting dogmatic idealism.
 - We can take them to be objective properties without committing to knowledge of the noumenal world.
- Thus, the real problem for Kant is the problematic idealist.
 - The skeptic of the First Meditation
 - “Problematic idealism...alleges that we are unable to prove by direct experience an existence apart from our own...The proof it demands must...establish that regarding external things we have not merely *imagination* but also *experience*. And establishing this surely cannot be done unless one can prove that even our *inner* experience, indubitable

Tlumak's Version of the Refutation, Part I

1. I am judging.
2. Some act of judging is occurring.
3. Any act of judging is an act of consciousness or awareness.
4. Acts of consciousness or awareness are representative (have a content).
5. Awareness of the instantaneous is impossible.
6. So the content of awareness is non-instantaneous.
7. Any non-instantaneous content is a successive content, that is, a series of items occurring in an order, and not all at a single instant.
8. So judgmental awareness is of a succession of items.
9. Awareness of succession implies awareness of a plurality of items as a plurality - awareness of a diversity or manifold.
10. Awareness of a plurality of items as a plurality requires that the plurality be apprehended as a numerically identical collection over the time during which the awareness is occurring.
11. This identity of the manifold over time requires that the act of awareness of this identical manifold connect up or relate the various elements which comprise it, that is, be aware of all the elements together.
12. Such a connective awareness requires that earlier items in the series be recognized together with the later items, and that all the items be recognized as belonging to this unity over time.
13. Only a persisting, identical subject of awareness can be connective; a series or collection of diverse subjects of consciousness is incapable of such connective activity.
14. So any act of judgment requires a persisting judger.

Tlumak's Version of the Refutation, Part II

15. An identical judger must be able to be aware of his unity of consciousness.
16. But awareness of an objectless awareness itself is impossible. I can be aware of consciousness only by being aware of the object of consciousness.
17. So awareness of a persisting consciousness requires awareness of a persisting object of consciousness.
18. So awareness of succession requires awareness of something persisting.
19. This something persisting cannot be an item in the series, or of the succession, since only by being aware of it can I be aware of the series.
20. This series of items (of acts of representation) constitutes my mental life.
21. So the persisting something is not part of my mental life.
22. But if something is not part of my mental life, it is existentially and attributively independent of me.
23. And since it is something which I can perceptually identify and which persists, it is re-identifiable.
24. So the persisting something required for awareness of succession, which in turn is required for judging, is an objective particular.
25. So I am aware of an objective particular.