

Philosophy 203
History of Modern Western Philosophy

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Class #26
The Synthetic *A Priori*
Forms of Intuition
Concepts

Business

- Papers *or* End-of-Unit-4 Writing Assignment are due now.
 - Put them in the folder (or emailed pdf is good, for the paper)
- The list of questions for the final is posted.
- The End-of-Unit-5 Writing Assignment will be distributed next week.
 - Draw questions on the last day of class.
 - Due at the time of the final.
- Final Peer Evaluations will go out next week, too.

Kant's Big Claim

	<i>A priori</i>	Empirical
Analytic	Logic/ Beams in the House	--
Synthetic	Most Mathematics, Metaphysics, and Some Physics	Empirical Judgments

- *A priori* judgments may be synthetic or analytic.
 - Logic is analytic
 - Metaphysics, mathematics, and some physics are largely synthetic.
- “Experiential judgments, as such, are one and all synthetic” (A7/B11, AW 725a).
 - As with Hume

Team Activity

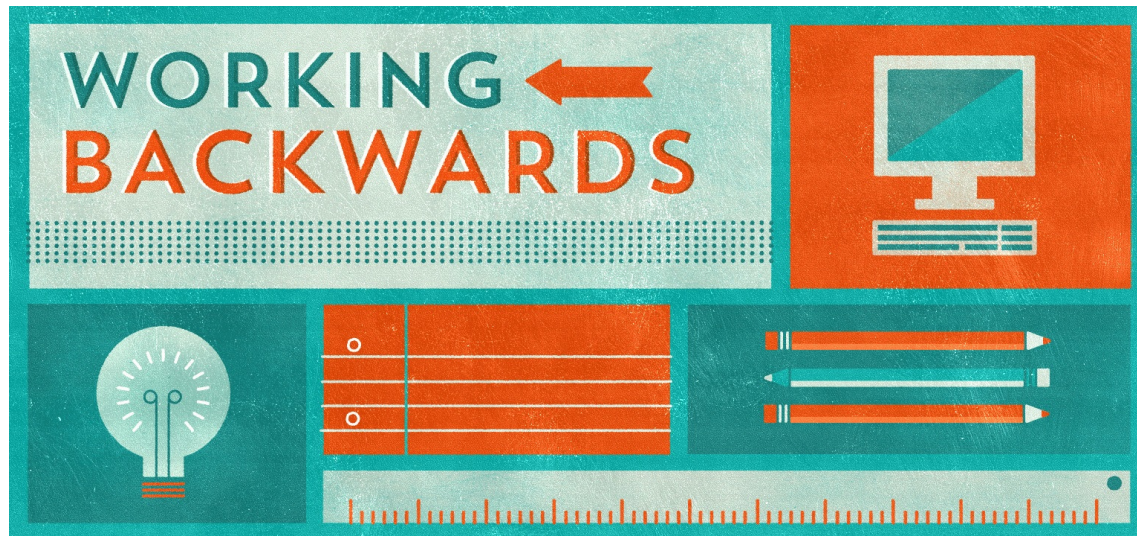
The Synthetic *A Priori*

Which of the given claims would Kant classify as synthetic *a priori*?

1. $7 + 5 = 12$
2. $7 + 5 > 7$
3. Every effect is an event in space and time.
4. Every effect has a cause.
5. A straight line is has no bends in it.
6. A straight line is the shortest distance between two points.
7. Material objects take up space.
8. The world exists.
9. The world is beautiful.
10. The world has a beginning.

Transcendence

- Kant's *Critique* works backwards (transcendentally) from synthetic *a priori* judgments to the nature of our cognition.
 - to the conditions that must obtain in order for us to have such knowledge
- Such conditions will be the necessary structures of our logic, or reasoning.



The Transcendental Aesthetic and the Transcendental Analytic

The two functions of our psychology

- The transcendental aesthetic
 - How objects, and the world, are given to us
 - Sensation
 - Receptivity
- The transcendental analytic
 - How our minds determine and understand that which is given.
 - Application of concepts
 - Thinking
- We are presented, in sensibility, with a world having certain properties.
- We cognize that world, using understanding, according to certain concepts.
- By examining the properties that form the foundations of all our experiences, we will find the necessary properties of our experience.
- By examining the concepts that determine all our understanding, we will find the necessary properties of our thought.

The Transcendental Aesthetic

“Psychology shall once more be recognized as the queen of the sciences, for whose service and equipment the other sciences exist. For psychology is once more the path to the fundamental problems”
(Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* §23).

Intuition

- “The effect of an object on our capacity for representation, insofar as we are affected by the object, is *sensation*. Intuition that refers to the object through sensation is called *empirical* intuition. The undetermined object of an empirical intuition is called *appearance*” (A19-20/B34, AW 729b).
- Not all intuitions are empirical.
- But in empirical intuitions we can divide the matter from the form.
 - ▶ The matter is what corresponds to sensation in the strictest sense possible.
 - ▶ If I am holding a pen and looking at it, I am given some appearance in intuition.
 - ▶ Additionally, this appearance has certain abstract properties, a form, the particulars of which are unique to my experience of the pen, but which, in general, are properties of all such experiences.
- All experiences take place in space and in time.

Outer Sense

- We represent objects as outside of us using our outer sense.
- All objects are represented as extended in space.
- Space is the form of outer sense.
- “The representation of space must already be presupposed in order for certain sensations to be referred to something outside me (i.e. referred to something in a location of space other than the location in which I am)...We can never have a representation of there being no space, even though we are quite able to think of there being no objects encountered in it. Hence space must be regarded as the condition for the possibility of appearances...” (A23-4/B38-9, AW 730b-731a).

Inner Sense

- Similarly, time must be presupposed for all experiences.
- We represent objects according to our inner sense as in time.
 - Time is the form of inner sense.
- “Simultaneity or succession would not even enter our perception if the representation of time did not underlie them *a priori*” (A30/B46, AW 733a).



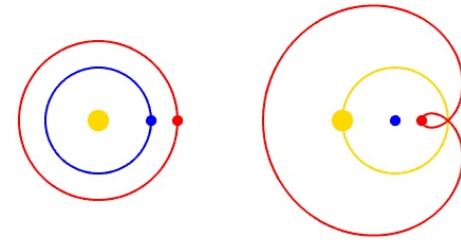
Team Activity

Pure Forms of Intuition

- “If from the representation of a body I separate what the understanding thinks in it, such as substance, force, divisibility, etc., and if I similarly separate from it what belongs to sensation in it, such as impenetrability, hardness, color, etc., I am still left with something from this empirical intuition, namely, extension and shape. These belong to pure intuition, which, even if there is no actual object of the senses or of sensation, has its place in the mind *a priori*, as a mere form of sensibility.”
- “The representation of space must already be presupposed in order for certain sensations to be referred to something outside me (i.e. referred to something in a location of space other than the location in which I am)... We can never have a representation of there being no space, even though we are quite able to think of there being no objects encountered in it. Hence space must be regarded as the condition for the possibility of appearances...”
- Which of the following best captures Kant’s view about the nature of space?
 - A. There is no space; that’s a materialist’s dogma.
 - B. Since all of my experiences are in space, I can predict that my next experiences will be in space, too.
 - C. Every object I have seen so far has been in space, so my mind naturally thinks of space as universal.
 - D. The nature of my experience is evidence that all experience presupposes space.
 - E. Since God is infinite, any property is instantiated. Space is just the way I happen to perceive the world.
 - F. Space is a concept which is innate in my mind.

The Copernican Revolution

Intuition Installment



- Kant's argument for the presupposition of space and time recalls Plato's argument for the doctrine of recollection, or *anamnesis*.
 - Plato: our knowledge of equality can not come from looking at equal things.
- Kant: our experiences with objects presuppose that they are given in space and time.
- The idea of a possible experience occurring outside of space or time is nonsense.
- Instead of despairing of learning of space and time from experiences which presuppose it, Kant inverts his account to make space and time subjective forms of intuition.
- They are ways in which we structure the world of things in themselves, not ways in which the world exists in itself.

Hume's Influence

- Taking space and time to be forms of intuition, Kant extends Hume's claims about causation.
- Hume reinterpreted 'cause' as a mental phenomenon.
- Kant takes space and time to be forms of our intuition, rather than things in themselves.
- Consequently, Kant is able to take objects in space and time to be empirically real.
- "Our exposition teaches that space is *real* (i.e. objectively valid) in regard to everything that we can encounter externally as object, but teaches at the same time that space is *ideal* in regard to things when reason considers them in themselves, i.e., without taking into account the character of our sensibility. Hence we assert that space is *empirically real* (as regards all possible outer experience), despite asserting that space is *transcendentally ideal*, i.e., that it is nothing as soon as we omit [that space is] the condition of the possibility of all experience and suppose space to be something underlying things in themselves" (A28/B44, AW 732b).

Kant's Twin Doctrines

Empirical Realism and Transcendental Idealism

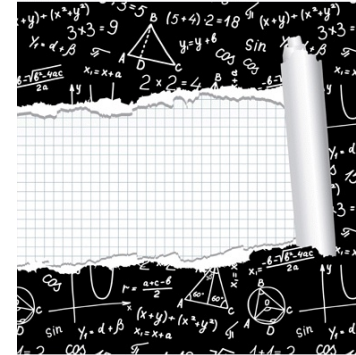
- We can say nothing of the noumenal world of things in themselves.
 - not even that they are in space and time
- Berkeley's empirical (or material) idealism made the mistake of denying an outer, material world on the basis of the transcendence of the noumenal world.
- The rationalists, as transcendental realists, made the mistake of asserting knowledge of things in themselves.
- Kant's claim is that we can have significant knowledge of an external world (of appearances) without claiming any knowledge of the noumenal world.
- Space and time are properties of our representations of the world, and not the world as it is in itself.
- Space and time are real properties of empirical objects.

Team Activity

Empirical and Transcendental Realism and Idealism

- Kant calls himself an empirical realist and a transcendental idealist. His use of these categories presupposes the following possible positions.
 - ▶ Empirical Realism
 - ▶ Empirical Idealism
 - ▶ Transcendental Realism
 - ▶ Transcendental Idealism
- Apply the appropriate names of positions to each of the following philosophers:
 1. Descartes
 2. Locke
 3. Berkeley
 4. Hume

Mathematics and the Pure Forms of Sensibility



- Kant's transcendental exposition of space and time explains how we can have certainty of both geometry and pure mechanics.
- Geometry is the study of the form of outer sense, of pure, *a priori* intuitions of space.
- Arithmetic and pure mechanics are focused on the form of inner sense, time.
 - ▶ "Only in time can both of two contradictorily opposed determinations be met with in one thing: namely, *successively*. Hence our concept of time explains the possibility of all that synthetic *a priori* cognition which is set forth by the - quite fertile - general theory of motion" (A32/B48-9, AW 734a).
- But, constructing numbers in intuition requires the synthetic unity of apperception behind the categories of the understanding.

From Intuition to Understanding



- The faculty of intuition gives us appearances.
 - ▶ Appearances are the raw data, the content, of experience.
 - ▶ Our intuitions are passive.
- What is given in intuition is not necessarily structured by the understanding.
- We are given appearances in space and time, but without any conceptual structure.
 - ▶ “Appearances might possibly be of such a character that the understanding would not find them to conform at all to the conditions of its unity. Everything might then be so confused that, e.g., the sequence of appearances would offer us nothing providing us with a rule of synthesis and thus corresponding to the concept of cause and effect, so that this concept would then be quite empty, null, and without signification. But appearances would nonetheless offer objects to our intuition; for intuition in no way requires the functions of thought” (A90-1/B 123, AW 744a).
 - ▶ “Thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind” (A51/B76, AW 737b).

Cognition

- The raw data of intuition is processed in the understanding by the imposition of concepts.
 - ▶ “All our intuitions, as sensible, rest on our being affected; concepts, on the other hand, rest on functions. By *function* I mean the unity of the act of arranging various representations under one common representation” (A68/B93, AW 738b).
- This act of arranging what is given in intuition is what Kant calls synthesis of the manifold.
- This synthesis is then cognized by the structured application of concepts in the understanding.
 - ▶ If the synthesis is empirical, then we have an ordinary empirical cognition.
 - ▶ If the synthesis is pure, then we can arrive at pure concepts of the understanding, which are nevertheless the conditions of possible experience.
- The transcendental analytic explicates the categories of the understanding.
 - ▶ how we impose our conceptual apparatus on what is given in intuition

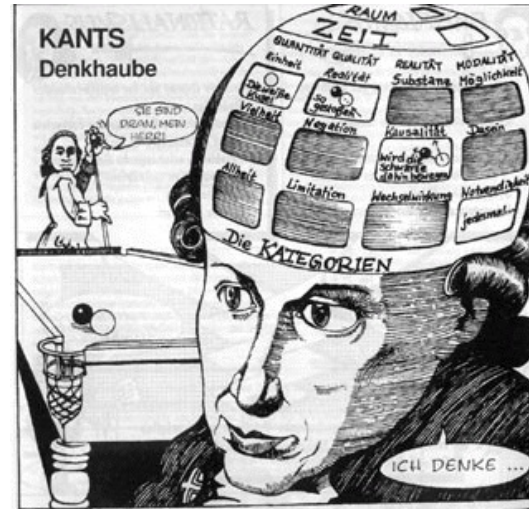
Our Conceptual Apparatus

both subjective and objective

- In order to think about appearances, we have to cognize them.
- We cognize using whatever conceptual apparatus we have.
- That conceptual apparatus is subjective, in that it belongs to us individually.
- But it is also objective, because the world of objects is precisely the world of appearances, what is given in intuition.



Metaphysical and Transcendental Deductions



- Kant presents two deductions of the concepts.
- In the Metaphysical Deduction, Kant presents the categories.
- In the Transcendental Deduction, he argues that they must apply to all understanding.

Kant and Aristotle

- The Transcendental Analytic is Kant's transcendental derivation of the concepts we impose on appearances given in intuition.
- Kant presents what he takes to be a complete table of concepts, dividing them into four classes.
- In presenting the table, he recalls Aristotle's work on the categories.
- Ten categories of being
 - ▶ A1. substance (e.g. man, horse)
 - ▶ A2. quantity (e.g. four-foot)
 - ▶ A3. quality (e.g. white, grammatical)
 - ▶ A4. relation (e.g. double, larger)
 - ▶ A5. where (e.g. in the market)
 - ▶ A6. when (e.g. yesterday)
 - ▶ A7. being-in-a-position (e.g. is-standing)
 - ▶ A8. having in addition (e.g. has-hat-on)
 - ▶ A9. doing (e.g. cutting)
 - ▶ A10. being affected (e.g. suffering, passion)
- According to Aristotle, all language, indeed all thought, belongs to one of these categories.
- When we say, or think, something, we combine instances from two or more of the categories.

Adapting Aristotle's List

- If Aristotle's list were complete, we could adopt it as a fundamental theory about our thought.
- If, further, this list were not merely accidentally complete, but necessarily complete, we might see it as indicating *a priori* conditions of human cognition.
- Such a list could not be gathered empirically.
- Hume presented an empirical collection of psychological capacities, as did Hobbes and Locke.
 - Look where it got those guys: skepticism!
- Kant wants to make sure that the list is complete and *a priori*.
- For Kant, the categories will function as laws of thought, as logical.
 - “[The categories] are concepts of an object in general whereby the object's intuition is regarded as *determined* in terms of one of the *logical functions* in judging” (B128, AW 745b).
- Kant's logic is thus a psychological program.