

Philosophy 203
History of Modern Western Philosophy

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Class 26
The Transcendental Deduction

Schedule (See website for page numbers)

- Today
 - Deduction(s) of the Categories
 - The categories necessarily apply to all possible experience
- Tuesday
 - Refutation of Idealism
 - First Antinomy (Whether Space is Infinite)
- Thursday
 - Second (Are There Simples?) and Third (Are We Free?) Antinomies
 - Ontological Argument
- May 11, 9am
 - Final Exam

Metaphysical and Transcendental Deductions

- We have seen how Kant argues that space and time are pure forms of intuition, rather than things in themselves.
- His argument is that they must be presupposed by experience, rather than derived from it.
- But, experience has two parts: intuition and understanding
- Intuition is what presents us with a raw manifold.
- Understanding orders and structures that manifold with the application of general concepts.
- These pure concepts are what must be presupposed by any thought, whatsoever.
- 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 such a 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)
- 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.
- But, 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 that it is 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.

Four Conditions for the Transcendental Analytic

- (1) The concepts must be pure rather than empirical.
- (2) They must belong not to intuition and sensibility, but to thought and the understanding.
- (3) They must be elementary concepts, and must be distinguished carefully from concepts that are either derivative or composed of such elementary concepts.
- (4) Our table of these concepts must be complete, and the concepts must occupy fully the whole realm of the pure understanding (A64/B89, AW 737b).

The Categories of Thought

twelve categories in four classes

- Quantity
 - Unity
 - Plurality
 - Totality
- Quality
 - Reality
 - Negation
 - Limitation
- Relation
 - Inherence and Subsistence (substance)
 - Causality
 - Community (Interaction)
- Modality
 - Possibility and Impossibility
 - Existence and Non-Existence
 - Necessity and Contingency

Transcendental Deduction and the Categories

- The development of these categories proceeds transcendently, rather than empirically.
- Hobbes, Locke, and Hume proceeded empirically, looking at our psychological processes and generalizing.
- Kant insists that such empirical deductions could never yield the necessity that underlies synthetic *a priori* reasoning.
- “Experience contains two quite heterogeneous elements: namely, a *matter* for cognition, taken from the senses; and a certain *form* for ordering this matter, taken from the inner source of pure intuition and thought. It is on the occasion of the impressions of the senses that pure intuition and thought are first brought into operation and produce concepts. Such exploration of our cognitive faculty’s first endeavors to ascend from singular perceptions to universal concepts is doubtless highly beneficial, and we are indebted to the illustrious *Locke* for first opening up the path to it. Yet such exploration can never yield a *deduction* of the pure *a priori* concepts, which does not lie on that path at all. For in view of these concepts’ later use, which is to be wholly independent of experience, they must be able to display a birth certificate quite different from that of descent from experiences” (A86-7/B118-9, AW 742b-743a).

Causation: A Case Study

- Consider the difference between an instance of causal connection and one of accidental conjunction.
 - A massive object falling to the surface of the Earth
 - Checking my mail and then having lunch at the diner
- The causal relation has an element that necessitates the effect.
- The accidental relation has no such aspect.
 - I could check my mail without going to the diner.
- If the world were Humean (i.e. a world of conjunction rather than connection), then all relations among events would be like that between the mail and diner.
- But, in fact, the world is full of causal connections.
- “This concept [causation] definitely requires that something, A, be of such a kind that something else, B, follows from it *necessarily* and according to an *absolutely universal rule*. Although appearances do provide us with cases from which we can obtain a rule whereby something usually happens, they can never provide us with a rule whereby the result is *necessary*” (A91/B124, AW 744a).