

Discussion Handout

Structure of the Critique of Pure Reason:

- **Introduction**
 - Key terms: Two Stems, Synthetic, Analytic, A Priori, A Posteriori, Transcendental Idealism, Transcendental Realism, Empirical Realism, Empirical Idealism
- **Transcendental Doctrine of Elements**
 - *Transcendental Aesthetic*
 - Key terms: Sensibility, Sensation, Matter, Intuition, Pure Intuition, Form of Appearance, Space, Time
 - *Transcendental Logic*:
 - Transcendental Analytic
 - Analytic of Concepts
 - On the Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding
 - Key terms: Understanding, Judging, Spontaneity, Concepts, Rules, Categories, Unity, Deduction, Transcendental, Objective Validity, Original Apperception, Form of Intuition, Formal Intuition, Appearances and Thing-in-itself
 - Analytic of Principles
 - Transcendental Dialectic
- **Transcendental Doctrine of Method**

Lectures:

- **Lecture 2**
 - **Main points**
 - Judgment as Unified, General, and Necessary (Absolute Idealism)
 - Act of applying the concept and understanding oneself to do that is one act of mind. Apply the concept and understand oneself to do so.
 - When I judge, I don't determine myself as a particular. Judgment determines the judgment, or the judge, or the power of judgment. We are looking at the constitution of an act of applying a concept. "I judge" is not a determination of myself as distinct to you, me-you. It is not about my superior judgment as opposite to yours.
 - Kantian Judgment as Bifurcated and the Problem of A Priori Synthesis (or Absolute Idealism)
 - Judgments that enlarge-synthetic or articulate the understanding, clarifying- analytic.
 - A priori does not depend on experience, does not depend on affection while A Posteriori does.
 - We run into a difficulty: when we think of our understanding as growing, we think of being first in a state of not knowing something,

and then coming to know. Ignorance and coming to know. So, judgment that emerges from ignorance seems to emerge from affection. It seems to depend on something other, and then knowledge can emerge.

- If the content of the concept depends on experience then a judgment that articulates that content will not be strictly speaking *a priori*, for there will be a place in which its claim to be knowledge depends on experience. Its claim to be knowledge will be nothing other than the concept's own original claim to knowledge.
- The question is how can there be a priori knowledge in the strict sense.

How can there be concepts that have a content, yet this content does not depend on affection?

- Synthesis as the Central Problem (What is it that is being synthesized in A Priori Synthesis?)
 - **The faculty of judgment cannot provide through itself its own content.**
 - A spontaneous representation (one that doesn't depend on affection) is empty. It has a content only through receptive representations. The concept as such is empty, has no content. The understanding is a faculty merely of combining, ***it is on its own no knowledge of what it combines***, says Kant. In the understanding, there is no content that is relation to an object.
 - Answer: The Transcendental Deduction (A Priori/Pure Content from something given)
 - Kant: Transcendental= what gives rise to a priori knowledge.
 - Kant thinks the constitution of content and the status of representation with this content as knowledge are the same.
 - **It means we cannot step outside the content of a judgment as attaining its character as knowledge.** There is no such thing as a conception of the content which leads to a separate act the qualification of it as knowledge. This is unintelligible. Therefore, there is **no point in making distinction content-knowledge**. Kant never makes such distinction!
 - Faculty of thought is faculty of combining. So, it's description is description of forms of combining. They are forms of judgment, because the concept is only used in judgment, because it doesn't relate to its object immediately. So, there might be the idea of a pure concept that as such through itself has its own content, it would be intellectual intuition, we find it everywhere in tradition. An act of insight. There is no such thing, there is only judgment (Sensibility and Understanding), because we have only sensory intuitions.
 - A Priori Content does not mean it is independent from the given (or self-given), it only indicates the spontaneity of the understanding.
 - The form of combining considered as a determination of the object is the formal concept. Thought exhibits a certain order, this order in so far as though is capable of being knowledge, must be thought of as order of objects.

- In the end, we do have a priori knowledge but it is the knowledge that signifies lack.
 - An understanding of its own lack, and thus of its need to be given something so as to be what it wants to be or is to be, namely a synthesis (Lecture 4).
- Conclusion: Overcome the problem of a priori synthesis partially (the question, **how can there be concepts that have a content, yet this content does not depend on affection?** is somewhat answered but still left with the problem of emptiness. To completely overcome the problem, the deduction needs a second step.
- **Lecture 3**
 - **Main points**
 - Transcendental Deduction as proving the objective validity of concepts
 - **Step 1**
 - The idea of **objective validity**- depending on the object alone
 - §15 he starts with synthesis
 - §16 the original synthesis as the unity of self-consciousness (I think)
 - §18 represents that unity as objective unity: that by which the representations are referred to an object, i.e. have the objective validity.
 - Self-consciousness is an original act of combining, an articulated unity which contains difference in itself. The act of combining is spontaneous. The original idea of the object contained in self-consciousness of judgment, and in virtue of which judgment is objective, is nothing other than a manner of combining, i.e. empty.
 - Problem: The concept of the object is empty. We need a step to overcome emptiness. Acquire a content is to become a concept –not of an object in general, but a concept of an object given to the senses according to our forms of intuition. So, it is narrowing the first idea of object to object of senses.
 - The result of the first step of the deduction stated that all intuition necessarily stands under categories. But Kant said that this result is analytic! Cf. Problematic of analytic-synth distinction in the Introduction.
 - **Step 2**
 - Step 2 of the deduction overcomes this emptiness. It introduces something given. Heidegger says: all knowledge depends on something given; pure knowledge does too, for Kant. So, the 2nd part of the transcendental deduction introduces something given- given prior to any act of thought. What he means by prior is that what is given prior cannot be comprehended through the articulation of the self-understanding of the spontaneous act of

combining, which is the act of thought considered just in itself. It is thinking “one, one, one”: it is merely combining. “Where are the things I want to combine?”

- Since there is a certain form of receptivity – this is a condition-
the understanding can think a priori unity of what is given to the senses (faculty of sensibility).
- Condition that allows the understanding to do what it has to do. Form that underlies any receptive representation... it allows to think whatever may be given to our senses. and to think it reflecting nothing but **its form.**
- We have something give which has the character of being necessary and general: a form, the form of time.
 - In conjunction to apperception (space cannot be the form)
- We have acquired objective reality for the pure concept. Finally, with the first application to sensibility, thinking the pure manifold of time... we have knowledge. It is not empty!
- Limitations of Judgment
 - There is this limitation of the pure concept by a given form of sensibility. And Kant says clearly that it is a limitation.
 - The formal intuitions are nothing other than the thinking of what is given to the senses according to its form alone. In this way, they originate in the understanding. Space and time as the formal intuitions are given as (when?) the understanding determines sensibility. The formal intuitions are the determination of what is given to the senses by the understanding according to its form alone. Therefore, the formal intuition is the (product) thought of what is given intuition according to its form alone... In that sense, it belongs to the understanding.
 - But it belongs to the Aesthetic because there is something given in the first place namely the form of intuition can there something be that is thought.
 - That was the point in the second step of the transcendental deduction: we need to be able to think something a priori. How can we do this? Only because there is a form of intuition. So, we must treat transcendental aesthetic first. “We must locate it in the senses” “it must be given prior to the thought”.
 - On the other hand, the formal intuitions are not simply given. The given-ness of pure intuition is nothing other than the a priori determination of sensibility by the pure concept. That’s why we need the distinction of formal intuition and form of intuition, and through this distinction we comprehend both sides. We understand the given-ness, assigned to sensibility, and the representation of unity as the act of understanding in the shape of the productive imagination.
- The Thing in itself and the Pain of Reason

- The words “mind-dependent”, “mind-independent”. Things in themselves would be mind-independent. Things that we come to know are mind-dependent.
- The thing in-itself in its correct conception is more mind-dependent, because the thing in-itself is something that is fully knowable! It is knowable in such a way..., is the object of a kind of understanding that relates to the object directly. Not as appearance. That thing will be more internal to the knowledge of it than the appearance.
- It is precisely because thought cannot relate to the object directly that it is restricted to appearances.
- Our knowledge precisely by being limited to the object of the senses, is in tension with itself, is in pain. It relates itself to an ideal of knowledge.
- It cannot get satisfaction: This is the concept of thing in-itself as it appears in the transcendental dialectic, as the fully comprehensible. The knowledge of it can come to complete satisfaction.

The state abolishes, in its own way, distinctions of birth, social rank, education, occupation, when it declares that birth, social rank, education, occupation, are non-political distinctions, when it proclaims, without regard to these distinction, that every member of the nation is an equal participant in national sovereignty, when it treats all elements of the real life of the nation from the standpoint of the state.—Marx, the Jewish question

Spectacular government, which now possesses all the means necessary to falsify the whole of production and perception, is the absolute master of memories just as it is the unfettered master of plans which will shape the most distant future. It reigns unchecked; it executes its summary judgments. It is in these conditions that a parodic end of the division of labor suddenly appears, with carnivalesque gaiety, all the more welcome because it coincides with the generalized disappearance of all real ability. A financier can be a singer, a lawyer a police spy, a baker can parade his literary tastes, an actor can be president, a chef can philosophize on cookery techniques as if they were landmarks in universal history. Anyone can join the spectacle, in order publicly to adopt, or sometimes secretly practice, an entirely different activity from whatever specialism first made their name. Where ‘media status’ has acquired infinitely more importance than the value of anything one might actually be capable of doing, it is normal for this status to be readily transferable; for anyone, anywhere, to have the same right to the same kind of stardom.—Debord, Comments on the society of the spectacle