

Lecture 24 : Kant Part 3

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1 More on Space

1.1 Some Definitions

- **Exposition** of a concept: “a clear representation of what belongs to it, though not necessarily of everything that belongs to it.
 - **Metaphysical** exposition of a concept: an exposition that “brings out the concept’s status as something given a priori.” It “lays bare (some of) the content of the concept.”
 - **Transcendental** exposition of a concept: “an explanation of its role in enabling us to understand the possibility of other synthetic a priori knowledge.” It “explains the concept’s role in the acquisition of [synthetic] a priori knowledge.”

1.2 Some Deductions

- i. Space is a necessary a priori representation, which underlies all outer intuitions.
 1. We can think of space without any object in it, but we cannot think of an object not located in any space.
 2. Therefore, “we have to regard space as a pre-condition for the possibility of appearances, not as a conceptual construct out of them.”
- ii. The representation of space isn’t a discursive or general concept, but rather a pure intuition.
 1. Space is “essentially single,” i.e. “We can only represent a single space.”
 2. This representation of a single space could not have arisen from representations from “parts” of space, “for our only thought of the parts is of them as in the one space.”
 3. “Thus, all our spatial concepts have underlying them an a priori intuition of space.
- iii. Space is represented as an infinite given magnitude.
 1. Space is represented as an infinite given magnitude.
 2. “There’s no way of thinking a **concept** as containing an infinite set of representations within itself...”
 - a. “Now every concept must be thought in a representation which is contained in an infinite number of different possible representations (as their common character), and which therefore contains these *under* itself.” So infinite extension/reference of a concept is possible.
 - b. “but no concept, as such, can be thought as containing an infinite number of representations *within* itself.” Infinite intension/sense of a concept is *not* possible.
 - c. Yet “it is in this latter way...that space is thought; for all the parts of space coexist ad infinitum.”
 3. So the “basic representation of space is an a priori intuition, not a concept.”

1.3 Upshot

- Space (and likewise time) must exist in the minds of all humans prior to first perception.
- Space is **not** a quality of things-in-themselves, only a concept that is necessary to perceive the ideal/phenomenal world.

2 Scope

2.1 Locke's Distinction

- **Reality:** via the ideas produced by primary qualities (mind-independent)
- **Appearance:** ideas from secondary qualities (mind-dependent)
- Big idea: perception can give us ideas that are independent of the mind.

2.2 Kant's Context

- What happens when we accept **Transcendental Idealism**?
 - Space and time are true of appearances/phenomena, not of “noumena”/things in themselves
- We can access synthetic a priori truths via the sensible forms of intuition: space and time. For example,
 - Truths of geometry.
 - Predicates not contained within the subject.
 - Causation – more on this later.

3 Two Interpretations

3.1 Two objects

- It contains a metaphysical distinction between mental and noumenal objects.
- It posits appearances as representations.

3.2 Two aspects

- No metaphysical distinction between mental and noumenal objects: only one kind of thing.
- Appearances of an object are just parts or aspects of that object. The noumenal side is baked in like the dark side of the moon.

4 Extraneous Discussion

4.1 What would Locke say a priori synthetic ideas?

- We start with no propositional knowledge, including that which is a priori true.
- We still need to learn a priori propositions, at which point knowledge of their truth does not rely on any particular experience.
- Locke would agree that there is some existing framework that we use to perceive the world.
- Kant says that the framework of the mind has some synthetic a priori truths that fall out of it.
- Kant doesn't need to disagree with Locke that knowledge begins with perception, only on what the source and nature of synthetic a priori ideas.

4.2 Why have a noumena?

- Berkeley hits a lot of the same notes, but ultimately rejects matter and mind-independent existence.
- Why would Kant include the idea of the noumena when he's otherwise so committed to idealism?
- Perhaps to attribute real causes to our perceptions via matter in a Cartesian sense.
- Perhaps because we cannot otherwise conceive of the world (we believe that everything must have a cause, even though that might not be true).
- Perhaps to not rely on God so much.