

# Immanuel Kant

## Pt. 1

HUMN2001 – VIDEO LECTURE – WK7  
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# Kant's Life and Work

- Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)
- One of the most significant philosophers of all time (in any tradition)
- Arguably the greatest German philosopher of all time.
- Reoriented modern European philosophy



# Kant's Life and Work

- Born and lived his entire life in and around Königsburg, Prussia (now in modern day Russia).
- Was known to be extremely rigid in his routines, but also very amiable and gregarious.



# Kant's Life and Work

- Was a Professor at The University of Königsburg, teaching subjects as varied as:
  - mathematics, physics, logic, geography, anthropology, and metaphysics.
- His most important works, his three *Critiques*, he didn't begin writing until he was in his fifties.



# Kant's Life and Work

## He is known for:

- Synthesizing insights from both rationalism and empiricism;
- Providing a completely novel understanding of the relationship between human reason and its consequences for knowledge on the basis of a complex theory of mind and experience.





# Kant's Life and Work

This theory of mind and experience, called his 'critical project', is elaborated in **three major works or Critiques**:

- ***The Critique of Pure Reason***  
(*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*) (1781)
- ***The Critique of Practical Reason***  
(*Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*)  
(1788)
- ***The Critique of the Power of Judgment*** (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*)  
(1790)



# Kant's Life and Work

- He tried to synthesize our understanding of natural science with rational free will as the source of morals and ethics
- In doing so he set limits on Reason
- Making speculation about metaphysical absolutes meaningless or idle
- This included theological speculation about the nature and existence of God (though Kant himself was a fairly devoted protestant thinker).



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Conditions of Possibility and Forms of Experience

- Synthetic *a priori* truths
  - Neither empirical, i.e. synthetic *a posteriori* (like the data of experience)
  - Nor analytic *a priori* (logical truth which can be known independent of experience)
  - These are what Kant calls 'transcendental' and refer to the conditions of possibility of experience, i.e. to the faculties and forms requisite in order of experience to have the sensibly and conceptually tractable character which is has.

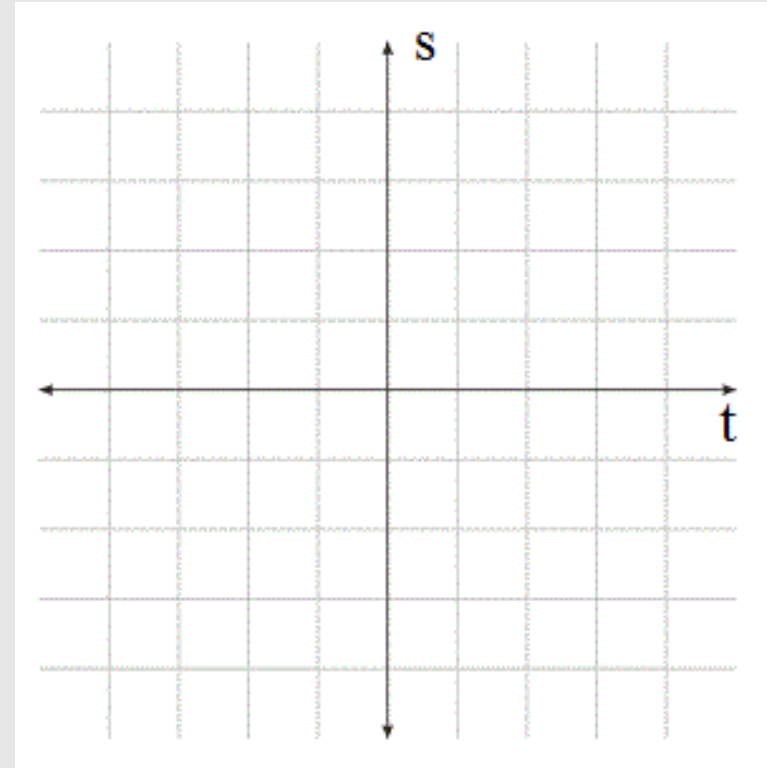




# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## The Transcendental Aesthetic

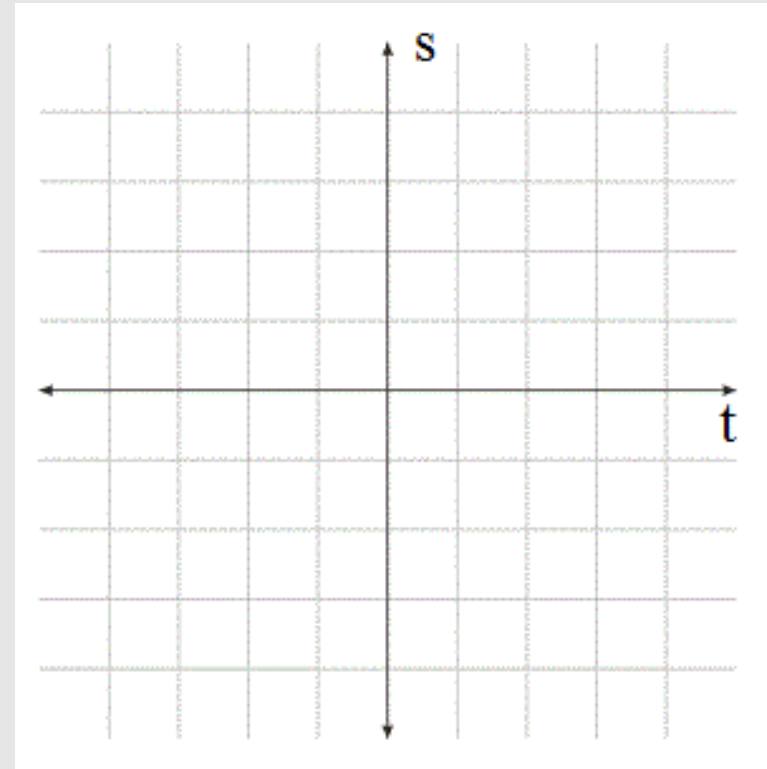
- Kant thought that there were forms required by the mind, within which our capacity of sensibility to receive the matter, or sensible data, of experience required in order for 'phenomena' to appear.
- These forms of *intuition* were **space** and **time**



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## The Trans. Aesth. Cont.: Forms of intuition - Space and Time

- **Space** was required for 'outer sense' within which the extended objects of experience of the physical world co-exist
  - He thought that our intuition of space was the transcendental ground of geometrical knowledge
- **Time** was required for both 'inner' and 'outer sense' in order for 'phenomena' to be ordered in a sequence.
  - This was the ground of arithmetical knowledge.



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Concept and Intuition in the CPR

- But the transcendental aesthetic was not enough to get ordinary experience off the ground; it is little more than a backdrop.
- You also need concrete sensible matter, **particular intuitions** or sensations, given by really existing objects (things-in-themselves) to the passive or receptive faculty of sensibility. (these would be the particular qualities of experience)
- But you also need **concepts**, in order to make phenomena intelligible to the mind, and not merely sensible.



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Concept and Intuition in the CPR

- In order to arrive at the ordinary units of experience—which Kant understood to be *objects* or empirical concepts of individuals or particulars—the mind synthesizes ‘pure concepts of the understanding’ with particular intuitions in what Kant called ‘schemata’ under the forms of space and time in the transcendental aesthetic.
- The faculty of the ‘imagination’ does the work of binding these concepts with these intuitions.



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Concept and Intuition in the CPR

- **Pure Concepts of the Understanding** are the forms of the faculty of thought which we *must* take in order to experience things as thus and so
- These concepts are **Categories** of the understanding.
- They are about the world, because we cannot have any concepts of objects w/ out them.
- They are necessary for cognition and are therefore grounds of knowledge, along with the forms and matter of intuition.
- They are especially important for our understanding of natural law





# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Categories

**Kant's categories were:**

- Quantity
  - Unity
  - Plurality
  - Totality
- Quality
  - Reality
  - Negation
  - Limitation
- Relation
  - Inherence and Subsistence (substance and accident)
  - Causality and Dependence (cause and effect)
  - Community (reciprocity)
- Modality
  - Possibility
  - Existence
  - Necessity

# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Judgment before the CPJ

- Judgment play a central role in the theory of reason in Kant's philosophy, both regarding Pure and Practical reason
- With respect to knowledge, judgment is the faculty of making valid claims, or having sensical beliefs about the experience.
  - Without judgment, experience itself would just be an uninterpretable sensuous manifold, a mess of unordered sensations.



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Judgment before the CPJ

- But it play a central role not only in our ability to acquire knowledge about the empirical world, and thus to reason about what is external the community of rational agents.
- It is the bedrock of our understanding of ourselves as rational, autonomous beings, who make reasoned ethical, moral, and aesthetic decisions and who hold ourselves and others accountable or responsible for decisions the that we make. For this normative judgments are absolutely fundamental.



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Judgment before the CPJ

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# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Judgment before the CPJ

- Along with the Categories of the Understanding there is also **the Categorical Imperative** of practical reason
- The categorical imperative is an unconditional requirement of any agent acting morally, according to Kant.
- It reads: “Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law.” (GMM, 30)
- This means that no one is justified in performing an action themselves that they would not justify if it were anyone else performing the same action. In order to be morally justified, what is good for you to do, must be equally good for anyone else to do.





# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Judgment before the CPJ

- The fact that we make moral judgments, and hold ourselves and others responsible, implies that we and they have **autonomy**.
- That in order to follow a moral precept, it must have been possible for you to do otherwise.



# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Judgment before the CPJ

- The means that rationality and morality imply freedom, according to Kant.
- Acting morally toward rational beings means treating them as subjects with autonomy, just as you treat yourself.
- This implies treating them as ends in themselves, not as mere means. In other words, respecting their agency, even if it goes against our wishes and whims.



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# Kant's Critical Philosophy

## Judgment in the CPJ

- According to Kant, judgments come in two varieties, separated by their relationship to the universal
  - 1) **determining judgments** are those used in concert with the understanding and allow us to subsume a given particular under the rule of the universal. (e.g. this particular thing, apple, is an instance of the genus 'apple').
  - 2) **reflective judgments** are those for which the situation is reversed. They have a given particular and search for the universal to which it replies.
    - **Aesthetic judgments** (like those of the beautiful and the sublime) are of the second kind.



## Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

“In order to decide whether or not something is beautiful, we do not relate the representation by means of understanding to the object for cognition, but rather relate it by means of the imagination (perhaps combined with the understanding) to the subject and its feeling of pleasure or displeasure. The judgment of taste... [is] aesthetic, by which is understood one whose determining ground cannot be other than subjective.” (CPJ, 89)



## Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

“Here the representation is related entirely to the subject... which grounds an entirely special faculty for discriminating and judging a that contributes nothing to cognition but only holds the given representation in the subject up to the entire faculty of representation, of which the mind becomes conscious in the feeling of its state.” (90)

## Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

"The satisfaction that we combine with the representation of the existence of an object is called interest. (90)

"It is readily seen that to say that it is beautiful and to prove that I have taste what matters is what I make of this representation in myself, not how I depend on the existence of the object. Everyone must admit that a judgment about beauty in which there is mixed the least interest is very partial and not a pure judgment of taste." (91)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## 3 Satisfactions

- **The Agreeable and the Good are not Beautiful**
  - **Both imply interest**
    - **Agreeable = interest of the immediate sensation of pleasure/displeasure**
    - **Good = interest of reason, the determination of rational ends**
- **The Beautiful is disinterested.**

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Disinterest

“For since it is not grounded in any inclination of the subject (nor in any other underlying interest), but rather the person making the judgment feels himself completely free with regard to the satisfaction that he devotes to the object, he cannot discover as grounds of the satisfaction any private conditions, pertaining to his subject alone, and must therefore regard it as grounded in those that he can also presuppose in everyone else; consequently he must believe himself to have grounds for expecting a similar pleasure of everyone... (96-97)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Disinterest

Cont. "...Hence he will speak of the beautiful as if beauty were a property of the object and the judgment logical (constituting a cognition of the object through concepts of it), although it is only aesthetic and contains merely a relation of the representation of the object to the subject, because it still has the similarity with logical judgment that its validity for everyone can be presupposed. But this universality cannot originate from concepts. For there is no transition from concepts to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure (except in pure practical laws, which however bring with them an interest of the sort that is not combined with the pure judgment of taste). Consequently there must be attached to the judgment of taste, with the consciousness of an abstraction in it from all interest, a claim to validity for everyone without the universality that pertains to objects, i.e., it must be combined with a claim to subjective universality." (96-97)



# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Reflective Judgments

“I can call the first the taste of the senses, the second the taste of reflection, insofar as the first makes merely private judgments about an object, while the second makes supposedly generally valid (public) judgments, but both make aesthetic (not merely practical judgments) about an object, regarding merely the relation of its representation to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure.” (99)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## **The Beautiful is not Determined by the Concept**

“If one judges objects merely in accordance with concepts, then all representation of beauty is lost. Thus there can also be no rule in accordance with which someone could be compelled to acknowledge something as beautiful.” (101)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Subjective Universality

“Now here it can be seen that in the judgment of taste nothing is postulated except such a universal voice with regard to satisfaction without the mediation of concepts, hence the possibility of an aesthetic judgment that could at the same time be considered valid for everyone” (101)

“it [the judgment] only ascribes this agreement to everyone, as a case of the rule with regard to which it expects confirmation not from concepts but only from the consent of others. The universal voice is thus only an idea” (101)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Subjective Universality

“Now if the determining ground of the judgment on this universal communicability of the representation is to be conceived of merely subjectively, namely without a concept of the object, it can be nothing other than the state of mind that is encountered in the relation of the powers of representation to each other insofar as they relate a given representation to **cognition in general**.

The powers of cognition that are set into play by this representation are hereby in a free play, since no determinate concept restricts them to a particular rule of cognition.<sup>21</sup> Thus the state of mind in this representation must be that of a feeling of the free play of the powers of representation in a given representation for a cognition in general.” (102)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## **Subjective Universality**

“The subjective universal communicability of the kind of representation in a judgment of taste... can be nothing other than the state of mind in the free play of the imagination and the understanding” (103)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Purposiveness without Purpose

“An object or a state of mind or even an action, however, even if its possibility does not necessarily presuppose the representation of an end, is called purposive merely because its possibility can only be explained and conceived by us insofar as we assume as its ground a causality in accordance with ends, i.e., a will that has arranged it so in accordance with the representation of a certain rule. Purposiveness can thus exist without an end, insofar as we do not place the causes of this form in a will, but can still make the explanation of its possibility conceivable to ourselves only by deriving it from a will.” (105)



# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Purposiveness without Purpose

“Thus nothing other than the subjective purposiveness in the representation of an object without any end (objective or subjective), consequently the mere form of purposiveness in the representation through which an object is given to us, insofar as we are conscious of it, can constitute the satisfaction that we judge, without a concept, to be universally communicable, and hence the determining ground of the judgment of taste.” (106)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Purposiveness as Pleasure

- The pleasure associated with the Beautiful is not that of charm or emotion, insofar as the former is pure. (108-9)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Beauty, Charm, and Form

“In painting and sculpture, indeed in all the pictorial arts, in architecture and horticulture insofar as they are fine arts, the drawing is what is essential, in which what constitutes the ground of all arrangements for taste is not what gratifies in sensation but merely what pleases through its form. The colors that illuminate the outline belong to charm; they can of course enliven the object in itself for sensation, but they cannot make it worthy of being intuited and beautiful, rather, they are often even considerably restricted by what is required by beautiful form, and even where charm is permitted it is ennobled only through the former. All form of the objects of the senses (of the outer as well as, mediately, the inner) is either **shape** or **play**: in the latter case, either play of shapes (in space, mime, and dance), or mere play of sensations (in time). The **charm** of colors or of the agreeable tones of instruments can be added, but **drawing** in the former and composition in the latter constitute the proper object of the pure judgment of taste” (110)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Beauty, Charm, and Form

"... a pure judgment of taste has neither charm nor emotion, in a word no sensation, as matter of the aesthetic judgment, for its determining ground." (111)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Beauty and Perfection

“... if I encounter in the forest a plot of grass around which the trees stand in a circle, and I do not represent a purpose for it, say that it is to serve for country dancing, then not the slightest concept of perfection is given through the mere form. But to represent a formal objective purposiveness without an end, i.e., the mere form of a perfection (without any material and concept of that with which it is to agree, even if it were only the idea of a lawfulness in general), is a veritable contradiction.” (112)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Free Beauty and Adherent Beauty

- **Free beauty** is pure, and unrelated to the concepts of the understanding, and thus to any end
- **Adherent beauty** is that feeling mixed with the intellect according to a rule use or standard of perfection. (114-115)



# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## The Ideal of Beauty

“From this, however, it follows that the highest model, the archetype of taste, is a mere idea, which everyone must produce in himself, and in accordance with which he must judge everything that is an object of taste, or that is an example of judging through taste, even the taste of everyone. **Idea** signifies, strictly speaking, a concept of reason, and **ideal** the representation of an individual being as adequate to an idea. Hence that archetype of taste, which indeed rests on reason's indeterminate idea of a maximum, but cannot be represented through concepts, but only in an individual presentation, would better be called the ideal of the beautiful...”  
(116-7)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## The Ideal of Beauty

“First, it should be noted that the beauty for which an idea is to be sought must not be a **vague** [free] beauty, but must be a beauty **fixed** [adherent] by a concept of objective purposiveness, consequently it must not belong to the object of an entirely pure judgment of taste.” (117)

“However, an ideal of a beauty adhering to determinate ends, e.g., of a beautiful residence, a beautiful tree, beautiful gardens, etc., is also incapable of being represented...” (117)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## The Ideal of Beauty in Humanity

“Only that which has the end of its existence in itself, the human being, who determines his ends himself through reason, or, where he must derive them from external perception can nevertheless compare them to essential and universal ends and in that case also aesthetically judge their agreement with them: this human being alone is capable of an ideal of beauty, just as the humanity in his person, as intelligence, is alone among all the objects in the world capable of the ideal of perfection” (117)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## The Normal Idea and the Idea of Reason

- **The normal idea** expresses the purposiveness of the form of a figure (or species)
  - E.g. the artistic image of a lion as the Idea of the species of the lion
  - The ideal figure as an average or limit
    - Greek (or Neoclassical) ideal human form
    - Relation to mathematics, and regular polygons
- The **idea of reason** determines the moral good, which in the expression of the human form through ideal beauty is given sensual (rather than cognitive) form (maybe?). (119-20).

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Common Sense

- State of communicability of an "indeterminate norm" or "ought"
- Between sensation and cognition?
- Common sense is that through which we feel, or appeal to the common feeling of our humanity, outside the discursive rationality through which we understand natural law, and the determine moral law.
- Common sense is "free lawfulness" or "lawfulness without law" (125)

# Reading Kant's "Analytic of the Beautiful"

## Common Sense

“This indeterminate norm of a common sense is really presupposed by us: our presumption in making judgments of taste proves that. Whether there is in fact such a common sense, as a constitutive principle of the possibility of experience, or whether a yet higher principle of reason only makes it into a regulative principle for us first to produce a common sense in ourselves for higher ends, thus whether taste is an original and natural faculty, or only the idea of one that is yet to be acquired and is artificial, so that a judgment of taste, with its expectation of a universal assent, is in fact only a demand of reason to produce such a unanimity in the manner of sensing, and whether the “should,” i.e., the objective necessity of the confluence of the feeling of everyone with that of each, signifies only the possibility of coming to agreement about this, and the judgment of taste only provides an example of the application of this principle – this we would not and cannot yet investigate here...” (124)