

A priori [anticipated metaphysics for science]

1. Reasoning: premises about ontologically prior; from cause to effect. Opposed to a posteriori (from effect to cause) and a simultaneo (from concept)
2. Propositions: Kant distinguishes relatively and absolutely a priori
relatively: he could have known a priori that if he undermined foundations his house would cave in; only relative because experience needed to know gravity
absolutely: independent of all experience; any instance of strict necessity or strict universality, for experience is only of factual and only of what ~~usually~~ ordinarily happens
Kant assumes and no one seems to dispute that analytic propositions are a priori in this sense; but Kant claims that there also are synthetic a priori propositions in which the predicate is not simply an explicitation of the concept of the S
Some scholastics admit a priori synthetic propositions; eg Joseph de Vries, Denken und Sein, Herder 1937; vR 5472; eg principle of contradiction, of causality, are extensive, vR 553; Denken und Sein 114 f. Inasmuch as not-A not included in A, or 'the other as cause' not included in concept of contingent being.
3. Contents: Kant holds that there are a priori intuitions and a priori concepts which are reached by eliminating everything contingent in the sensibly given and everything learnt from experience in the concept. B 5 f. NKS 45
J. Marechal admits this in sense that cognitional potencies have formal objects,; the formal object expresses the law or the universal selective rule of the potency. vR 289.

Meaning of issue: how much of knowing is from subject and how much from object

Significance of issue: varies with notion of knowledge; if knowing radically is taking a look, the more it is from the object, the more objective it is; if however knowing is an ontological perfection, the more it is from the subject, the more perfect the subject is.

Question of fact: how much is from subject and how much from object.

* what do we know by nature, and what do we know by acquisition

- a) knowing is natural to us; eg there are beings that are not knowers; and we are knowers because of what we are; again, not all knowers have the same mode of knowing, eg: man in this life, separated soul, angel, God.
- b) knowing = knowing being; but knowing is natural; therefore knowing being is natural; therefore, by nature, we have knowing being, some element is a priori in some ~~real~~ sense (though a priori is misleading; by nature and by acquisition is real issue)
- c) to what extent is being known not by acquisition but by nature // on object
 - a') God by his nature knows himself, all possibles, everything actual; no dependence
 - b') ~~known~~ by nature angels know themselves actually, know God in themselves as in an image, know other things by 'connaturally infused species' habitually
 - c') we have no actual knowledge by nature; but by nature we have knowledge potentially; because our actual knowledge is not from nature, the actualization of our potencies to know depends upon action, and the action is partly from an external cause
if sight is actuated we see colors; if hearing, we hear sounds
our intellects not only acquire acts but also habits: species impressa
besides acquired habits, there are infused habits (faith, gifts) and a natural habit of principles, that regard being
reason: there cannot be a species of being other than divine essence
reason: our intellects themselves, potens omnia facere et fieri, are of themselves created participations of uncreated light, orientated to being, naturally desire to know God by essence, ens-per-essentiam per essentiam

[sense, image
not because
is disposition
but every object]

A priori (con'd)

d) to what extent is our intending, conceiving, knowing being absolutely independent of experience.

a') on level of potency it is natural: natural that we desire to understand, that desire works out through inquiry insight formulation reflection grasp of unconditioned judgement further inquiry

b') experience is just occasion for transition from pure desire to inquiry: we cannot inquire, wonder, without data; but the data alone are not sufficient (had in animals) to account for desire, inquiry

cf. insight's grasp of necessary or possible unity or relation, where phantasm is not mere ~~condition~~ occasion (Plato) disposition (Avicenna) but agent object (Aristotle, Aquinas: as colours to sight, so phantasm to insight)

c') in conception, formulation of insight:
abstract ~~inherent~~ ^{concept} = humanity, depends on insight and data + abstraction
particularized abstraction = this humanity, from insight + data + concretion
NB abstraction and concretion both equally work of intelligent subject
universal or particular thing = man, this man; adds intention of being
NB thing is not just essence but includes intention of existent
~~intention of existent is not knowledge of existence, but ground of~~ ^{question} ~~intention of existent~~, An sit
intention of existent not just tacked on: a priori imposition of category
not only is essence abstracted constituent
but also what is abstracted is understood as condition of what can be: id quo
intention of existent goes beyond pure desire by means of thought-essence
this going beyond is not absolutely independent of experience
it is absolutely dependent on intelligibility of thought-essence
but it is not exclusively dependent: intelligence is needed (not automatic process)

d') in critical reflection, intentio entis ~~and~~ as based on exigences of pure desire, of intellectual and rational consciousness, becomes a criterion, a requirement
to assert that X is, demands virtually unconditioned
is not rationally possible without virt uncon

e') the virtually unconditioned as requirement to be met, depends on rat consc
the virt uncon as requirement that is met depends on
intelligent grasp of link
experiential ~~grasp~~ fulfilment of conditions
reflective grasp ~~is~~ of both

judgement is not released as effect from cause; emanatio intelligibilis;
work of rational consciousness as such; procession of act from act because of nature of rational consciousness

f') intention of being operates as intelligently and rationally conscious
finality, guide, requirement
finality: question for intelligence, further qq
guide: what? why? how often? is it?
requirement: thought essence must be such as can be thought to be affirmed being must be grounded on absolute
essence and existence of thing derive their whole content from experience
qua intelligible and grounded