

(A) COPERNICAN REVOLUTION & RECONCILIATION OF RATIONALISM & EMPIRICISM.

[Introductory]

Kant is a rational thinker who revolutionised philosophy. He spent whole of his life as a student, teacher, and a writer. Some of his famous books to his credit are 'Critique of Pure Reason', 'The Critique of Practical Reason', 'The Critique of Judgement', 'Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason', and many more. Kant declares that knowledge begins with experience and it is nothing but connection of ideas. Thus, when we connect the idea of water & liquid, i.e. when we judge that water is a liquid is when we get knowledge. But every judgement does not amount to knowledge. Judgements are of 2 kinds :- Analytic and Synthetic. An analytic judgement only unfolds the connotation of subject, and gives no new information, eg:- man is a rational animal. While a synthetic judgement amounts to knowledge by it not only states the connotation of the subject but also gives new info. But, all synthetic judgements do not amount to knowledge.

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Copernicus held that instead of the sun going around the earth, it is the earth that moves around the sun. He thus created a revolution in the field of science, especially, changed the ^{concept of} hypothesis geo-centric hypothesis.

Kant similarly, changed the ^{perceptive} assumption that knowledge is a passive reproduction of independent nature. He held that mind actively interprets the

① material of senses & constructs the objects of experience with the help of its own inherent 'a priori' laws.

This is known as Kant's Copernican Revolution in philosophy. This revolution is called Copernican bcoz philosophers before Kant assumed that perceptions correspond to the characteristics in the ~~external~~ ^{external} world. As against this,

Kant held that objects must conform to the constitution of our minds. In other words, acc. to him,

② nature follows the laws of our mind, & the mind does not follow the laws of nature. }

Kant & Copernicus attributed to the human mind a characteristic that had previously been assigned to the

external world. Kant is actually more radical in his revolution than Copernicus because he claims that ~~even~~ the laws of mathematics & physics have originated from the mind & that they are validated. Thirdly, Kant & Copernicus explained that, ~~and~~ nothing is relative. ~~with~~ experience to ~~the~~ observer. In this sense, Kant's revolution in philosophy is described as Copernican. Kant solved the problem of synthetic a priori judgment, by establishing a general hypothesis concerning the mind & the objects. ~~His new hypothesis was that~~ ~~it is~~ the objects that conform to the operations of the mind & not the other way round. He did not mean to say that the mind creates objects nor did he mean that mind possesses innate ideas. His Copernican revolution consists rather in his saying that the mind brings something to the objects that he experiences. Like Hume, Kant agreed that our knowledge begins with our experience. But unlike Hume, Kant saw the mind as an active agent doing something with the objects it experienced. Hence, he says, the mind is structured in such a way, that it imposes its way of knowing, upon its objects. By its very nature, the mind actively

organises our experiences.

In other words, thinking not only involves receiving impressions through senses but also making judgements about what we experience. Just like a person who wears yellow glass & sees everything yellow, similarly, human beings think about the object according to natural structure of mind. Kant says that there are 2

* sources of human knowledge which springs from sensibility & understanding. Thus, knowledge is the co-operative affair b/w the knower & the thing to be known. Though we are able to distinguish b/w the knower & the thing, the mind plays an important role in structuring the very thought process.

Thus, to conclude, Kant believed that if synthetic a-priori judgement could be explained or justified in mathematics & physics, they could also be justified in metaphysics. He solved the problem of synthetic a-priori judgement by substituting a new hypothesis concerning the relation between mind & objects. Like Copernicus, he explained everything with reference to man & his object. In this sense, he created a revolution in philosophy which is

described as Copernican. Thus, his critical theory of knowledge is a priori theory of knowledge.

(B) CAUSATION

Causation is a doctrine which discusses the relationship between 2 events, namely, cause & effect. Both scientists & philosophers have contemplated on this doctrine to bring about a meaningful relation between these 2 events. In ancient times Aristotle, the great philosopher was a systematic thinker, who felt that the function of a philosopher is to satisfy the wonder & curiosity of a man. For him, to know a thing means to know its cause. He formulated the doctrine of causation by explaining 4 kinds of causes. Later, Hume presented the theory of causation in a skeptical way. According to him, there is no necessary connection b/w 2 events. His definition of cause is based on philosophical & psychological analysis.

Kant, the rationalist brought about the theory of causation in a most appealing manner. He totally denies ontological reality in causality. Though Hume & Kant believed in a sequence of

noumena - a thing independent of any perception/conceptual
X by the human mind (a thing in itself) PAGE NO. _____
phenomena - an experienced object/thing whose DATE _____
reflects the order and conceptual structure imposed upon
it by the human mind.

causality, their views are totally different. An important question arises, how can a subjective condition have an objective reality? Kant's only answer to this question is nature. Nature stands for a system of conditions & connections. Causality acc. to Kant is a category of understanding. It is this understanding that gives us the entire phenomena of the experience & not the noumena. Both, Hume & Kant have argued that empirical knowledge & universal knowledge have objective validity. As an empiricist, Hume has argued & discussed causality on the basis of association of ideas. He also included imagination which plays an important role in the formation of ideas.

Acc. to Kant, knowledge is connection of ideas. He maintains that we derive truth from events which have regular & uniform order. In other words, every antecedent must be followed by its consequent. Our understanding of ideas bring about this connection b/w 2 events. It is through this understanding which is an important faculty that we get ideas of laws of nature. This helps us to build a conceptual scheme & also to organise our knowledge.

Empiricism & rationalism take an extreme stand. Modern ~~critiques~~^{critics} claim that neither of them offer a satisfying solution for the theory of causation. For Kant, causality is not merely a subjective bond between ideas & events. Acc. to him, knowledge begins with experience but it cannot be derived totally from it. There can be no knowledge of reality without sensory experience. Hence, for him, perception & understanding are 2 different things. For e.g.:- 2 individual may perceive same objects but their understanding may be different. Sensation coming from the external world cannot give any knowledge unless it is connected with a mental activity. Thus, it is through one's mind or reason one forms a category of idea & thereby build up a system of knowledge. Kant refers to this as schema. It is defined as the rule to be followed, it is very helpful in building up the order of knowledge. In other words, imagination produces images & this schema of imagination is used as category of ~~imagination~~^{understanding}. Therefore, schema is applied in the case of causality, too.

Kant gives 3 faculties of knowledge:

- 1) Sensibility
- 2) Understanding
- 3) Reasoning.

Sensibility is applied in the form of perception of objects within space & time. As such time & space do not exist in things in themselves. So understanding is applied as a category of sensation because things are arranged in space & time. For Kant, substance, causality, numbers, are all subjective thought forms. These forms of sensibility & categories of understanding are not applied to noumena which is a thing itself.

Understanding is required after perception to bring about the connection between 2 events, while reason is a faculty of the mind which helps in the formation of ideas. It is not a pure theoretical idea but it is meant for practical reason. By while denying the ontological reality of causality, Kant says, there is no causality in noumena. Causality becomes real only with the sake of experiences. It can be applied to all kinds of experience which we try to

understand with the help of mind.
Thus, causality is applied to phenomena to make them intelligible & given to understanding. *Noumena* remains unknown & unknowable. Its existence is known but its nature is not known. *Nomina* is therefore, above understanding & it is intuitive.

To conclude, for Kant, causality is an important aspect to build a concept of schema. It remains as a subject category of understanding. It is one of the important 12 categories which we apply for experiences & interpretations. Therefore, for him, causation is not just mere succession of events. He says, all changes take place all through the meaningful connection between cause & effect.