

Philosophy and Critical Thinking
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Lecture 28: Immanuel Kant

Welcome in lecture 28. Today we are going to talk about again Immanuel Kant, and as I have said in last class that Immanuel Kant is a very important philosopher, in western philosophy, and also in our course, however, we will be discussing this Immanuel Kant in very basic level. We will not be discussing in very detail. In last class we have discussed the Immanuel Kant idea of duty of duty's sake in ethics. Now for in ethics as a part of your course, we have completed that part from the western philosophy. However, we will be discussing some ethical concept from the Indian perspective when we start the Indian philosophy in this class onwards. Today we are going to talk about Immanuel Kant theory of knowledge. Now theory of knowledge is an important concept because in this course we have been discussing two different arguments if you take it in broader sense. One is the empiricism, one group whose beliefs argues that knowledge is the product of our experiences and another group who believes that through sense perception we cannot get a genuine knowledge or through sense perception genuine knowledge is not possible. So, in this course, if you see this our last many classes before the ethics, we have discussed well in detail about the empiricism and rationalism. For example, Rene Descartes, Spinoza who talks, who argues that sense perception cannot produce genuine knowledge, we cannot have a genuine knowledge of sense perception. On the other side, Locke, Hume, who argued that through sense perception only we can have genuine knowledge. Now the question is if there are two different side, we have seen their argument how Locke has talked about the idea and impression, Hume talked about it, how Rene Descartes has argued about the genuine knowledge. So, there is an argument in each side and if you read for example Rene Descartes or Spinoza start believing that how the Rene Descartes argument is really strong and we tend to believe or accept the Rene Descartes philosophy. Later on, if you started reading this Lockean idea, Tabula Rasa that also looks as a very strong argument and appears in strong argument. Is there any further detail or further argument who is going to conclude that? Now in this question it is very important to tell you that in philosophy as many philosophers we have been discussing, they are like more concerned about the genuine knowledge. What is genuine knowledge and how we can get the genuine knowledge and then they have given a own set of arguments. Next philosopher is coming and rejecting his previous philosopher's argument and giving another set of argument. So, in this course we have seen a kind of the development of an idea where we are started from the very basic philosophy from like the pre-Socratic philosopher and then we have discussed the empiricism, rationalism and little bit about the idealism. Now the question arises that where to go and what to accept. I believe, this is my personal belief that the job

of philosophy is to teach you, to train you that how to think and this is what I have been doing in that class. In every class is to take a new concept or new concept from the new philosopher and discussing the idea, argument, giving a different perspective of the same idea. So, that is how you will learn and you can train your mind in philosophy. So, there is, to see one thing from the one perspective and next time when we are coming, we are also looking at the same thing and from a different perspective, different set of arguments. And this is how the philosophy talks about and argues for a concept. But in the question which I ask that whether it is possible to conclude that is something which is not possible. Every philosopher is coming with your own idea, his own idea or sometimes strong as a Rene Descartes argued that if you apply the mathematical method and philosophical method then we can have some certain knowledge. Certain knowledge means which is in a beyond this controversy, like in a mathematical knowledge. Now he did that, he talked about, he claimed many things and then many philosophers came, other philosopher for example, John Locke argued against the Rene Cartesian idea of the new idea. Now and this is how philosophy is all about where we can build our own strong argument. And it is a reason that in the first class I talk about that philosophy will teach you how to think. Now, so how to think if you want to learn then you have to read this basic arguments of the different philosopher, different philosopher. And reading and understanding these arguments will train you that how to think. Now then why is Immanuel Kant? Now Immanuel Kant will give you a different perspective. So let us say that we have argument from the empiricism, we have argument from the rationalism. Now today we are going to talk about a philosopher, he has tried something different. So at least you will have some idea that even it is not about the for and against, even some philosopher has seen things from different perspective. So let us start the Immanuel Kant that how this Immanuel Kant has argued for the genuine knowledge because all the philosopher is main concern of a philosopher was genuine knowledge to get certain knowledge and that is an important. Similarly, Kant also has same problem thinking of genuine knowledge, certain knowledge. Now let us see how this Kant has done that. Let me tell you Kant is a philosopher, we can have a discussion on Kant in many days. But since this course is on a very basic level, I have been saying that we will be discussing all the philosopher and their argument in very basic level so that you will have some idea of this philosopher or their argument and then we move on to the next philosopher. From the Western world as if you see the course content or content you realize that it is in a divided, it is in a basically two parts. First part talks about the Western philosophy, it is from Western philosophy and second part from the Indian philosophy. And this talk is the last talk from the Western philosophy. So, we have talked about the theory of knowledge from the different philosopher and then also we talked about the ethics from the Western philosophy. What I have chosen in the sense that will have give you some idea of a same problem which we have been discussing in many days from a different argument or different perspective. Therefore, I believe the Kant is, discussing Kant is an important. But I will be discussing this Kant in basic level so that it

will be easy for you to understand. Now what Kant is doing, Kant like thinking like discussing these theories, empiricism, rationalism and all and criticizing where the empiricism fails. It does not mean that Kant rejecting the empiricism. So, for example when Locke was arguing he was rejecting some other philosophy, other theory. When Descartes is arguing he is rejecting some other theory. He is claiming that okay fine this genuine knowledge we cannot get the genuine knowledge through the experience organs cannot give you a genuine knowledge. Here Immanuel Kant is arguing that where this empiricism fails, a different way to see. He argued that empiricism can never guarantee universal and necessary element in empirical proposition. Remember we have discussed Hume, David Hume and how David Hume had talked about that this causation is just our habit to see two things together. So, Hume argued that if X and Y two things and we have seen these two things together many times, thousand times for example. Now if you saw X we are thinking of or inferring Y. I also have discussed in terms of Indian philosophy, Chavakian idea where he argued that how this cause and effect is not possible. Because if you are going to establish the relation between X and Y let us say the fire and smoke. Before establishing this relation between fire and smoke you have to check all the events, all the examples of these two events fire and smoke. And since we cannot do that we cannot check that all the past present and future to make sure that in all the events there is an X is followed by Y, and therefore we cannot establish relation between X and Y. Hume has a different argument and he says also added the argument that saying that apriori. So, if you have like seen first time X and Y for you it would be difficult to talk about the relation between X and Y. So, you are saying that X and Y there is a causation between X and Y because of your repeated experience of X and Y. So, empiricism is worth can never guarantee any universal and necessary elements in empirical propositions. Again, empiricism cannot elucidate knowledge as is found in mathematics and physics. On other hand the Kant also rejected the rationalism. Rejection means that where rationalism fails right. So, the independent empiricism is not right. Independently or only rationalism is not right. In that sense Kant is resulting. But Kant does not mean that rejecting completely and going for the new concept. He is trying to just explain that look where the empiricism fails, where the rationalism fails. But whatever the empiricism has accepted and the rationalism accepted, Kant also is like agreeing with them, their philosophy, their argument. But where they are failing, Kant is like pointing out saying that look this is the time, this is the place where empiricism cannot explain, empiricism cannot be justified. And then Kant said that rationalism on the ground that it dealt with an airy structure. I mean there is a fact but there is no correspondence with facts. So, you have knowledge but there is no correspondence with the fact. Fact something which is on the outside. We can check right. So, this way he talked about that how the empiricism and the rationalism both had failed to explain knowledge because both of them were based on a common assumption concerning the status of object. Kant argues because empiricism or rationalism, both of them believe that there is an object outside. So, you have some and then you apply some idea and then

applying some reasons. So, through reason you will get proper knowledge or genuine knowledge. So, through reason only you can get them genuine knowledge. Now the Kant argues that if the objects be external to human mind which it has to approach to know that universal and necessary propositions concerning objects are not possible. He argues that senses furnish the material of our knowledge. Now this is how he is arguing. So, he just showed that what is the problem, how the empiricism and rationalism independently cannot handle the, cannot argue for the genuine knowledge. So, after showing their problem where they fail to understand the concept of genuine knowledge, he argues that basically what happens sense furnishes, furnishes the material of our knowledge and the mind arranges them in a way made necessary by its own nature. So now what Kant is doing, Kant is, as I said that Kant is arguing that where empiricism is accepting the idea or rationalism is talking about the method of getting a genuine knowledge. Kant not rejecting those things but Kant only showing that where though both the philosophy, both side is failing. Now and then Kant is putting together giving both sides of importance saying that look, it is not possible only through the sense organ or sense perceptions or only through the rational argument or reasons. So, now he argues that senses what is doing is giving you materials of our knowledge and mind what he is doing is arranging them in a way made necessary by its own nature. The content of our knowledge is derived from experiences but the mind thinks its experiences consist them according to its native and apriori that is a rationalism. So, when Kant is describing the genuine knowledge and the source of genuine knowledge, he is putting both things together empiricism and rationalism and arguing that both sides, the empiricism and the rationalism is important. You cannot go with alone with the empiricism or nor the rationalism. He argues that both things are important, both their arguments are valid and this is how he is talking about that how we are getting the knowledge. So, for knowledge, empiricism and the rationalism both is important. Kant argues that our knowledge begins with experience but does not necessarily originate from it. He argues as soon as sense perception register its impression on the mind, mind at once takes into its own activity and contributes its own ordering activity into discrete impressions. So, the knowledge is a product of both activities, the sense experiences and the mind and for the genuine knowledge or let us say the universal unnecessary knowledge, it is important to talk about the both activities. So, Kant knowledge begins with the sense, proceed tends to understanding and ends in reasoning. He writes, I entitled transcendental all knowledge which is occupied not so much with object as with the mood of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible aprioritize. So, for Kant, precepts and concept constitute the elements of our knowledge.

Now let us see how Kant is arguing for the genuine knowledge. He says that look every sensation must be referred to space and time. So, if you are perceiving any object or so that is must be referred in the particular time or particular space. However, he also argued that space and time are neither reality nor the qualities of thing. So, space and time is not like an object. Suppose we are perceiving an object like table or mobile, so we cannot perceive

space and time like table and when we are talking about the qualities of thing, when you are perceiving an object when we are discussing, when we have discussed John Locke, there we have discussed talked about very detail about the qualities of things. So, in that terms even space times are not the qualities of an object. So, the both side is not possible. Now this is Kant's idea is basically talking about the information which you have received, the one thing. But the question is that particular information which you have received from the senses is must be referred to some space and time. There are two things the space and time and there is information. Now, both things if you see the information, you can perceive but the space time you cannot perceive like an object. That is not possible. Like it is not a quality of thing. So, you can have an idea while looking at an object you can have an idea of the space and time. Kant argued the arrangements of sensation in space and time cannot themselves be sensation. So, for example as Kant argued that when we are perceiving a getting material through sense organ, sense perception, now it is in a mind what mind is doing is arranging things in the space and time. Now these arrangements of space sensation in space and time cannot themselves be sensation. So, there are three arguments. First is every sensation must be referred to space and time. So, if you have any sensation, you always must be referred to the space and time, the particular space, particular time, date and so on. Now this space and time are neither realities nor qualities. So therefore, we cannot like perceive the space and time like perceiving an object. Again, arrangements of sensation in space and time cannot themselves be sensation. Now, Kant again argues that things decide and Kant again argues and he writes that take away the thinking subject and entire corporeal world will vanish. Therefore, it is nothing but appearance in the sensibility of our subject. So, if you like remove the subject so the entire corporeal world will vanish. So, there will be no possibility of this world. He writes again that if you talk about the space we can think of space with no object. So, there is a space, there is an object. So, there is object in the space. Now it is possible for us to think of space with no object and therefore he argued space is necessary precondition of phenomena and hence are necessary apriori idea. The idea is, the argument is how the space is not a product of or the time and space are product of your experience. So, you have seen many times therefore you have an idea of space and time because it is not reality. Again, the space and time is not the qualities of an object. So, you cannot have an idea of space and time while perceiving an object. Again, it is not a product of an experience because it is an independent of experience. Now Kant argued that if you think of space with object and again, we can think of the space with no object. So, the idea of space, the space is necessary precondition of phenomena and hence are necessary prior idea. And the same line of argument he also writes to time and therefore he argued that space and time is a necessary apriori idea. Kant argued that there are three modes in which mind proceeds for ordering any empirical knowledge. In the first instance discrete sensations have to be organized into space and time to give rise to perception. So, now Kant argued that about, he is talking about the knowledge and then he said that three modes are important. First is knowledge and then what mind is doing is organizing the

sensation where into space and time and that gives rise into perception. So, the first instance discrete sensation has to be organized into space and time to give rise to perception. And this precept has to be organized further still by the Kantian idea of twelve categories. He talks about the twelve categories of the understanding in order to give rise to judgments. So, Kant has talked about twelve categories and believe that this is going to plays a very important role in understanding. These categories again, these categories are different group. So, first group is of quantity and in quantity there are category unity, plurality, totality and second group of quality. There is one, first one is reality, negation, limitation. Third group of relation where the category is inherence, substance, causality, dependence and third is community. Fourth category of modality, first one is possibility-impossibility, second with existence-non-existence and necessity-contingency. So, in this case, if you put together there are twelve categories in the manner of Kant and he argued that these categories are independent of experiences. Again, these categories which Kant has mentioned, it is not a product of our experiences and therefore, he argued that these categories are independent of our experience. Now, again Kant argue that these categories serve or make experience possible. Now he talked about the empiricism and rationalism. Now he argued that how the empiricism and rationalism is important. So, you are getting material to sense perception and mind is arranging where in the space and time. Again, he argued that how the space and time is an apriori idea. Now if you reach to the any judgment, for the judgment you need categories. These categories are into well in kind. Now these categories are very significant in Kantian philosophy because it serves to make experience possible. Without these categories, the experience will not be possible first. Second these categories are independent of experience. It only means that these categories are not product of our experiences. Now he gives an example, it will be easy to understand how the Kant has talked about idea and knowledge. So, as an act of perception of the freezing of water, would be impossible unless the mind apprehends two ways things, solid and liquid as related in time and connected them in a single act of thought. So, this is an, it is not possible to any experience without the category. So, if you are going to talk about or see any freezing of water, water is a liquid and then solid, it will be impossible if the mind does not apprehend two ways states, liquid and solid as related in time and connected them in a single act of thought. So, if this process is not possible, you are not going to do that and if you see the process without categories which Kant has talked about, will not be possible. So, this process is only possible because of the category. Now the Kant argued that our world of experience is made possible only by the categories. However, he also talked about that this process which Kant is arguing, it is only possible where or we can only apply in legitimately employed only in the field of actual and possible experience. It does not mean that this we are talking about the process and its categories, it can apply in any way. So, it is only possible where in this field of actual possible experiences, where we are this, we are talking about in terms of the categories. So, this is how the Kant has explained the perception, explained the knowledge and argued that how we can have a

genuine knowledge let us say. And this theory was a very important and significant impact in the philosophical world, and Kant said something which is very different and very strong argument. So how this, this is how the Kant what he did, he just brought together this idea of or argument of from the empiricism and argument from the rationalism. And Immanuel Kant is a very interesting philosopher. This philosophy if you read how there are many things to talk about Immanuel Kant, like for example categories and self and many things which is I am not going to talk about in this course because that will be not on the basic level, but the Kant is also again is a very interesting philosopher. So, I have given references for this Frank Thilly History of philosophy and the Critical history of Western philosophy which also will give you in detail explanation of the Kant if you are interested. However, since this course is in a philosophy and critical thinking is in a very basic level as for the undergraduate or a person who is from the philosophy background and therefore, I suppose to discuss in a very basic level so you will have a similar some idea of the philosophy and it is the reason that I just talked about this Immanuel Kant in very basic level. However, if you are interested you can just read the book or for the material and I will be coming up maybe up next course where we will discuss this philosopher well in a day.

So this is what we had things to discuss from the Western philosophy. We have discussed starting from the pre-Socrates to the Rene Descartes and Spinoza, Locke, Hume and then we also talked about some ethical theories and finally even in ethics we have talked about Immanuel Kant and this is we have discussed how the Immanuel Kant has given a very important theory in ethics and not only in ethics but also in the theory of knowledge and this philosophy is very significant in the sense that this is how he brought together this empiricism and rationalism, and therefore I believe the reading of Kant is a very important but at the same time also you need a very detailed explanation of this Kantian philosophy. So, you can plan in future come up with a course where we can discuss this philosophers well in detail. So, for our course as an update this was the last lecture from the Western philosophy and next class onwards we will start the Indian philosophy so you will have an idea of the Indian philosophy as well. So, thank you so much for your kind attention. Thank you.