

The Antinomy Of Pure Reason

4th Conflict of the Transcendental Ideas

Thesis

- 1.1 Something belongs to the world which, either as its part or its cause, is an utterly necessary being.

Proof

- 2.1 The sense world, as the whole of all appearances, simultaneously contains a series of alterations.
- 2.2 For without these even the representation of the time series, as a condition of the possibility of the sense world, would not be given to us.*
- 2.3 But each and every alteration stands under its condition which precedes according to time and under which it is necessary.
- 2.4 Now each and every conditioned which is given, presupposes, with respect to its existence, a completed series of conditions leading back to the utterly unconditioned, which alone is absolutely necessary.
- 2.5 Therefore some absolutely necessary something must exist if a change exists as its sequence.
- 2.6 But this necessary something itself belongs to the world of sense.

Antithesis

- 1.1 Nowhere does any utterly necessary being exist, neither in the world, nor apart from it as its cause.

Proof

- 2.1 Suppose the world itself, or in it, were a necessary being, then in the series of its alterations either a beginning would be, which were unconditionally necessary, thus without cause, which is in opposition to the dynamical law of the determination of all appearances in time; or the series itself would be without any beginning and, although contingent and conditioned in all its parts, yet utterly necessary and unconditioned in the whole, which is contradictory because the existence of a multitude cannot be necessary if no single part of that possesses an existence necessary on its own.
- 3.1 On the other hand suppose there were an utterly necessary world cause apart from the world, then that cause, as the supreme member in the series of the causes of the world alterations, would first begin the existence of that member and its series.*

2.7 For suppose it were apart from that world, then the series of the world alterations would derive its beginning from it, but without this necessary cause itself belonging to the sense world.

2.8 Now this is impossible.

2.9 For since the beginning of a time series can only be determined through what precedes with respect to time, the supreme condition of the beginning of a series of alterations must exist in time, since this beginning was not yet (for the beginning is an existence before which there precedes a time in which the thing, which begins, did not yet exist).

2.10 Therefore the causality of the necessary cause of the alterations, thus also the cause itself, belongs to time, thus to the appearances (on which time alone is possible as its form), consequently it cannot be thought in isolation from the sense world as the sum-total of all appearances.

2.11 Therefore in the world itself something utterly necessary is contained (be it the whole world series, or a part of that).

3.2 But now it would still then also have to begin to act and its causality would belong in time, but just for that reason in the sum total of the appearances, i.e., in the world, consequently, it itself, i.e., the cause, would not be apart from the world, which contradicts the presupposition.

3.3 Therefore neither in the world nor apart from it (though in causal combination with it) is there any kind of utterly necessary being.

* Kant's footnote:

1.1 The word "beginning" is taken in a dual meaning.

1.2 The first is active, since the cause begins a series of states as its effect (infit).

1.3 The second is passive, since the causality itself arises in the cause (fit).

1.4 I infer there from the first to the latter.

* Kant's annotation:

- 1.1 The time precedes indeed objectively before this, as the formal condition of the possibility of the alterations, but subjectively and in the actuality of the consciousness this representation, as every other, is still only given through the occasion of the perceptions.

Remarks To The Fourth Antinomy

I. To the Thesis

- 3.1 In order to prove the existence of a necessary being, it is incumbent upon me to use no other argument than cosmological, i.e., which ascends from the conditioned in the appearance to the unconditioned in the concept, in that we consider this unconditioned as the necessary condition for the absolute totality of the series.
- 3.2 To attempt the proof out of the mere Idea of a supreme of all beings in general, belongs to another principle of reason, and hence will have to be presented separately.
- 4.1 Now the pure cosmological proof cannot establish the existence of a necessary being otherwise than by simultaneously leaving it undetermined whether this being be in the world itself, or be a thing

II. To the Antithesis

- 4.1 If at the ascension in the series of the appearances we allege to encounter difficulties against the existence of an utterly necessary supreme cause, these must also not be based merely on concepts of the necessary existence of a thing in general, and thus not be ontological, but rather must be found in advance from the causality combination with a series of appearances in order to assume a condition to that which itself is unconditioned, consequently be deduced cosmologically and according to empirical laws.
- 4.2 It must show namely that the ascension in the series of the causes (in the sense world) is never able to end with an empirically unconditioned condition and that the cosmological argument from the contingency of the world states, by virtue of their alterations, inveighs

distinguished from it.

4.2 For in order to ascertain the latter, principles are required which are no longer cosmological and do not advance in the series of the appearances, but rather are concepts of contingent beings in general (to the extent they are considered as objects of the understanding) and this entails a principle for connecting such with a necessary being through mere concepts, all of which belongs to a transcendental philosophy, but which is out of place here.

5.1 But if we once begin the proof cosmologically by laying the series of appearances as a foundation, along with the regression in that series according to empirical laws of causality, we cannot afterwards digress from that and go over to something which does not belong at all in the series as a member.

5.2 For in just the same meaning something must be considered as condition in which the relationship of the conditioned is taken to its condition in the series, which was supposed to lead in continuous advance to this highest condition.

5.3 Now if this relationship is sensitive and belongs to the possible employment of the empirical understanding, then the supreme condition or cause can resolve the regression only according to laws of

against the assumption of a first cause and one commencing the series utterly first.

5.1 But in this antinomy a rare contrast is revealed, namely that out of just the same proof basis, from which the existence of an original being was inferred in the thesis, the not-being of that being is inferred in the antithesis, and indeed with the same edge.

5.2 It went first: there is a necessary being because the entire past time embraces in itself the series of all conditions and with this, therefore, also the unconditioned (the necessary).

5.3 Then it went: there is no necessary being precisely for the reason that the entire elapsed time embraces within itself the series of all conditions (which thus are all together in turn conditioned).

5.4 The cause for this is as follows.

5.5 The first argument looks only to the absolute totality of the series of the conditions, in which the one determines the other in time, and in that way obtains an unconditioned and necessary aspect.

5.6 On the other hand, the second draws the contingency into consideration, because everything which is

sensitivity, thus only as belonging to the time series, and the necessary being must be considered as the supreme member of the world series.

- 6.1 Nonetheless, some have taken upon themselves the liberty of such a leap (μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος).
- 6.2 They inferred, namely, from the alterations in the world to the empirical contingency, i.e., to the dependence of the alterations upon empirically determined causes, and obtained an ascending series of empirical conditions, which was also entirely proper.
- 6.3 But since they could find no first beginnings and no supreme member in this, they suddenly diverged from the empirical concept of contingency and took the pure category, which occasioned then a mere intelligible series, the completion of which rested upon the existence of an utterly necessary cause, which moreover, since it was bound to no sensitive conditions, was also freed from the time condition of beginning its causality itself.
- 6.4 But this procedure is entirely inappropriate as can be inferred from the following.
- 7.1 Contingent, in the pure sense of the category, is that, the contradictory

determined in the time series (because a time precedes before each, in which the condition must in turn itself be determined as condition), in which way then everything conditioned and all absolute necessity, is entirely eliminated.

- 5.7 Meanwhile the inferential manner in both is entirely commensurate even to common human reason which often runs into a situation of quarreling with itself after considering its object from two different standpoints.
- 5.8 Herr von Mairan held the conflict of two famous astronomers, which arose out of a similar difficulty about the choice of the observational standpoint, to be a sufficiently notable phenomenon, to justify the composition of a particular essay about it.
- 5.9 One reasoned in this wise: the moon rotates about its axis because it continually shows the same side to the earth; the other: the moon does not rotate about its axis because it continually shows the same side to the earth.
- 5.10 Both inferences were correct, considering the standpoint from which the moon's movement was observed.

opposite of which is possible.

- 7.2 Now we cannot at all infer from the empirical contingency to the intelligible contingency.
- 7.3 Whatever is altered, its opposite (of its state) is actual at another time, hence also possible; hence this is not the contradictory opposite of the previous state. This latter requires that in the same time when the previous state existed, its opposite could have been able to be in the position of that, which cannot be at all inferred from the alteration.
- 7.4 A body, which is in movement = A, comes to rest = non-A.
- 7.5 Now from a state contrarily opposed to state A following upon this, it cannot at all be inferred that the contradictory opposite of A be possible, thus A being contingent; for to do that it would be required that in the same time when the movement was, rest could have been instead of that movement.
- 7.6 Now we know nothing further than that the rest in the following time was actual, thus also possible.
- 7.7 But movement at one time and rest at another time are not contradictorily opposed to one another.

- 7.8 Therefore the succession of contradictorily opposed determinations, i.e., change, in no way proves the contingency with respect to concepts of the pure understanding and, therefore, can also not lead to the existence of a necessary being with respect to pure understanding concepts.
- 7.9 The change proves only the empirical contingency, i.e., that the new state could not have taken place for itself at all without a cause which belongs to the preceding time, and consequently to the law of causality.
- 7.10 This cause, and even if it is accepted as utterly necessary, must still be encountered in time in this manner and belong to the series of the appearances.

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