

Some Philosophers on Knowledge

1. Plato's **Divided Line**:

Rational Intuition or Pure knowledge D	Higher Forms D'
Thinking C	Lower Forms C'
Belief B	Things, Objects B'
Imagination or Conjecture A	Shadows, Images, Reflections A'
Modes of awareness	Objects of awareness

Basic Divisions:

1. Visible world (A' & B')
2. Intelligible world (C' & D')
3. Opinion (A & B)
4. Knowledge (C & D)

2. Rene Descartes' **Method of Doubt and Certainty**

I doubt.

I think (and that's indubitable!)

If I think, I must exist (cogito ergo sum!)

If I exist, God must exist.

If God exists, then the world must exist as I perceive it to be.

Hence, I exist, God exists, and the world exists!

3. Immanuel Kant's **synthetic a priori**

Kant's Copernican revolution: instead of mind conforming to objects, objects conform to the mind (instead of the sun revolving around the earth, the earth rotates on its axis and revolves around the sun!)

Noumenal and phenomenal worlds.

Synthetic a priori categories of the mind organize experience and make it meaningful to us.

Analytic statements: All bachelors are unmarried men.

Synthetic statements: John is a bachelor

Apriori: prior to experience

Hence, there are meaningful categories about reality that are priori to and formative of experience.

12 categories: quantity (unity, plurality, totality), quality (reality, negation, limitation), relation (substance, causality, community or reciprocity), modality (possibility-impossibility, existence-non-existence, necessity, contingency)

#### 4. Soren Kierkegaard's **truth is subjectivity**

Objective truth: truth independent of personal opinions and beliefs

Subjective truth: truth dependent upon human subjects

Scientific truth (the way the world is)

Personal truth (religion and ethics)

“What is truth but to live for an idea? It is a question of discovering a truth which is truth for me, of finding the idea for which I am willing to live and die.”

Soren Kierkegaard, Journals