

KANT'S COMBAT AGAINST EMPIRICAL IDEALISM

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ABSTRACT

KANT'S COMBAT AGAINST EMPIRICAL IDEALISM

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This thesis is intended to scrutinize Kant's empirical realism along with his rejection of empirical idealism in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The central idea of the thesis is that Kant's empirical realism is robust or genuine and this is essential to his divorce from Humean skeptical empiricism, Cartesian skeptical idealism, and Berkeleian phenomenalism, all of which are forms of empirical idealism. In this context, I first deal with Kant's transcendental idealism and the "Transcendental Aesthetic" via the epistemological two aspect view. Second, I reconstruct the "Transcendental Deduction" and particularly focus on apperception, constitution of objecthood, and figurative synthesis. Here, I argue that Kant is anti-Humean, in that he shows a priori concepts are necessary for experience. Third, I examine the "Refutation of Idealism," suggesting that Kant ruptures from Cartesian epistemology and its representationalism. So, although the Kantian appearances are mind-dependent in the epistemological sense, they are mind-independent in the ontological sense. To elaborate further, on the reading I suggest, Kant holds the view that empirical objects are public and immediately cognized; in contrast, Cartesian epistemology claims that the cognition of empirical objects is mediate and private, viz., cognized via and derived from mental content. Finally, I advocate that Kant's idealism is not like

Berkeleian phenomenalism and provide several reasons for this. Thus, I suggest that reading Kant's account as phenomenalism is misleading.

Keywords: Empirical idealism, Empirical realism, Kant, Phenomenalism/Phenomenalist reading, Transcendental idealism.

ÖZ

KANT'IN EMİRİK İDEALİZMLE MÜCADELESİ

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Bu tez *Saf Aklın Eleştirisi* bağlamında Kant'ın empirik realizmini ve bununla birlikte empirik idealizmi reddedişini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tezin temel fikri Kant'ın empirik realizminin sağlam veya hakiki olduğu ve bunun onun Humecu şüpheci empirizm, Kartezyen şüpheci idealizm ve Berkeleyci fenomenalizmden ayrılması için esas olduğudur ki bunlar empirik idealizmin çeşitleridir. Bu bağlamda öncelikle Kant'ın transandantal idealizmini ve “Transandantal Estetiği” epistemolojik iki yön görüşü yoluyla ele alıyorum. İkinci olarak, “Transandantal Dedüksiyonu” yeniden yapılandırıyorum ve özellikle appersepsiyon, nesnelliğin oluşumu ve figüratif senteze odaklanıyorum. Burada Kant'ın a priori kavramların deneyim için gerekli olduğunu göstermesi bakımından bir anti-Humecu olduğunu savunuyorum. Üçüncü olarak, Kant'ın Kartezyen epistemolojiden ve onun temsilciliğinden koptuğunu öne sürerek “İdealizmin Çürütülmesini” inceliyorum. Dolayısıyla, Kantçı görüşlerin epistemolojik anlamda zihne bağımlı olsa da ontolojik anlamda zihinden bağımsız olduklarını öne sürüyorum. Daha ayrıntılı açıklamak gerekirse, önerdiğim okumaya göre, Kant empirik nesnelere kamusal ve doğrudan idrak edilebilir olduğu görüşünü savunur; buna karşılık, Kartezyen epistemoloji empirik nesnelere dair bilişin dolaylı ve özel olduğunu, yani nesnelere zihinsel içerik aracılığıyla idrak edildiğini ve bu

içerikten türediğini iddia eder. Son olarak, Kant'ın idealizminin Berkeleyci fenomenalizme benzemediğini savunuyorum ve bunun için birkaç neden sunuyorum. Dolayısıyla, Kant'ın yaklaşımını fenomenalizm olarak okumanın yanıltıcı olduğunu öne sürüyorum.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Empirik idealizm, Empirik realizm, Kant, Fenomenalizm/Fenomenalist okuma, Transandantal idealizm.

To my grandmother,

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Works by Kant are cited by the following abbreviations:

- Anth. : Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View
- Corre. : Correspondence
- CPR : Critique of Pure Reason
- MFNS : Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science
- NF : Notes and Fragments
- Prol. : Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Kant defends “transcendental idealism,” according to which we can know or cognize “appearances,” while “things in themselves” remain unknown but are merely thought of (*CPR* A42/B60). On the face of it, the distinction between “appearances” and “things in themselves” is bizarre and open to heavy misunderstandings. In Kant scholarship, unfortunately, there is no consensus as to how it should be understood. Rather, we find conflicting readings of transcendental idealism: one is the two-object view, offering that the difference consists of the difference of numerically distinct objects; the other is the two-aspect view, which comes with two variations—metaphysical and epistemological.

The '80s and '90s were the golden decades of the epistemological two-aspect view, notably defended by Henry Allison in the English-speaking world. According to this view, the distinction at stake is concerned with two different perspectives: one is the human standpoint, and the other is God’s point of view; furthermore, Kant’s theory is not metaphysical but an epistemological one. Recently, the first two decades in the 21st century have witnessed the rise of metaphysical two-aspect interpretations (e.g., those of Rae Langton, Lucy Allais, and Colin Marshall). For them, the distinction is about two properties of the same objects: in-itself and relational properties. Moreover, we can speak of metaphysical two-object views (e.g., Anja Jauernig’s) appearing today, according to which Kant contends that there are two levels of reality: empirical and transcendental. To sum up, scholarship about transcendental idealism is full of lively debates, and the last word has not yet been said. The intention of the study cannot be to say the last word—if there ever is one.

Furthermore, Kant states that transcendental idealism is not a traditional or ordinary form of idealism but rather entails “empirical realism” (*CPR* A370). How can one be

an idealist and a realist at the same time? This is one of the primary questions that led me to the thought process behind this research. In this study, I aim to make sense of the compatibility and interrelatedness of Kantian idealism and realism. Moreover, Kant's theoretical philosophy is sometimes considered, and was historically received by the majority, as phenomenalism. If this is the case, then Kant's commitment to "empirical realism" and the like would be misleading.

My view is that the bulk of the first *Critique* can be read as Kant genuinely defending an empirical realist position by rejecting some forms of empirical or subjective idealism. Therefore, the main intention of this thesis is to scrutinize Kant's empirical realism and conversely, his rejection of empirical idealism. I detect three "enemies" of this sort in the book: the Humean skeptical empiricist, the Cartesian skeptical idealist, and finally, the Berkeleyian phenomenalist. We will see that these three positions are intermingled, and Kant progressively distances himself from each.

During my research, I rely on the epistemological two-aspect reading of Kant. Therefore, I am greatly indebted to Allison's rendition. However, whenever I find as necessary to diverge from Allison's path, which happens at times, I offer reservations and develop my own way of reading Kant. As a result, I believe this study provides a somewhat original account that defends a moderately realist version of the two-aspect view.

I should also note that this study depends on the principle of charity, i.e., a broad insight that Kant's philosophy is somehow coherent or plausible position among others, and that it is defensible. This is not to claim that Kant's philosophy contains the ultimate truth but rather that it includes some truth. In my opinion, Kant's philosophy provides remarkable responses to his predecessors, which include: a response to the Leibniz-Clarke debate on the status of space and time, a response to Hume's skepticism about causality and thus justification of physics and mathematics, a response to the external world problem that remains problematic since Descartes. I am convinced that Kant performs remarkably well in all of these efforts. To wit, Kant secures empirical realism with a special emphasis on the fact that our world is perspectival and situated from the human standpoint. On my reading, Kant contends

that the empirical world is ontologically mind-independent but also is epistemologically mind-dependent; that is, our conceptual scheme, along with the special constitution of our sensibility, provides a normative requirement and is constitutive of human experience.

The structure of the study is as follows. The second chapter examines Kant's Copernican Turn in philosophy and the core issue or question of the *Critique*. Kant introduces an alternative and novel approach to philosophy. He seems confident that we can bid farewell to endless controversies pertinent to transcendent metaphysics (*CPR* Aviii). Instead, his new program centers on this core question: "How is synthetic a priori knowledge possible?"

The third chapter addresses the Transcendental Aesthetic. Here, Kant provides a theory of sensibility and space and time. Although it is the shortest section of the book, it may be considered the most controversial. The main idea in this section is that sensible intuitions consist of two components —i.e., form and matter— and that while matter corresponds to sensations, the form is a priori and pure, provided by the mind itself, which is space and time. Scholars dispute about various things here. What is the exact claim or claims Kant made? Are these claims valid or persuasive? Historically, several objections have been raised against Kant's position, most notably the "neglected alternative." In this chapter, I reconstruct the arguments in the Transcendental Aesthetic and try to overcome some objections against them.

The fourth chapter is intended to present the argument of the Transcendental Deduction. Scholars rightly complain about the density and obscureness of the argument (Paton 1936, p. 547) (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 202) (Guyer 2014, pp. 91-92). Here, I handle the required interpretive work and focus mostly on the B Deduction, dividing the argument into three main parts. The first part comprises §15 and §16, which concern apperception. The difficulty about apperception is to understand how it involves the activity of synthesis while incorporating an analytic proposition. Guyer objects to the latter point, but I argue that his objection is unpersuasive. The second part covers §17 through §20, where, in my view, Kant criticizes the Humean associativist account and purports to empirically robust concept of object. The third

part revolves around figurative synthesis or transcendental imagination, as in §24 through §26. Here, Kant completes the argument and ultimately contends that experience is conceptually governed. To elaborate further, Kant thinks that a priori concepts are required for knowledge and experience. He states that “intuitions without concepts are blind” (*CPR* A52/B76). It is somewhat obvious that without a priori concepts, no knowledge can arise. However, whether a priori concepts are required for experience, i.e., perceptual receptions of objects, is not easy to answer. Although some scholars, most notably Lucy Allais, argue that Kant is a nonconceptualist about experience, I contend that Kant is a conceptualist even with regard to experience. For instance, Kant says that the manifold of perceptions without the categories is devoid of objects and “less than a dream” (*CPR* A112). In my view, the phrase suggests that intuitions alone cannot provide a perceptual experience, even in a minimal sense, which involves at least awareness of self and distinct objects because even in dreams some perceptions, however strange or counter-scientific, occur.

The fifth chapter proposes a detailed analysis of the Refutation of Idealism. Kant takes a dissident stance against the skepticism about the external world, describing the lack of a response to this issue until his time as “the scandal of philosophy” (*CPR* Bxxxix). The Refutation is intended to counter the Cartesian skeptic, starting with the situation of the meditator in the Second Meditation, where a malicious demon deceives the cognitive subject, leaving her unable to know whether her thoughts correspond to anything in the external world. Thus, Kant aims to prove the external world. However, his proof is hard to understand. Some question whether it validly works in some respects (Guyer 1987, p. 284) (Allison 2004, p. 294) (Caranti 2007, p. 147). Furthermore, some argue that the Refutation is incompatible with transcendental idealism or the supposedly phenomenalist teaching in the A edition (Guyer 1987, p. 288). In this section, I reconstruct the argument to ensure that it proceeds persuasively and suggest that its core ideas are consistent with the rest of the book, particularly the Deduction. So, Kant’s philosophy does not exhibit blatant inconsistencies or radical shifts in position.

Finally, the sixth chapter investigates the relationship between Kant and Berkeley. Since the Göttingen Review was published in 1782, the dominant view about Kant’s

philosophy has been that it is like Berkeleyian phenomenalism. Here, I scrutinize the Göttingen Review and detect some misrepresentations of Kant's position. After this, I provide an overview of Berkeley's immaterialism and offer three reasons why Kant cannot be understood in this way. First, Kant's idealism is formal and not material like Berkeley's (*Prolegomena* 4:376). I interpret Kant's "formal idealism," such that Kant defends some sort of conceptual idealism or quasi-idealist epistemology, in which he accepts "phenomenal truthmakers," i.e., state of affairs that are independent of personal perceivers and yet situated from our conceptual scheme and the special constitution of our sensibility. Second, Berkeley's idealism is "visionary" (*Prolegomena* 4:294), degrading material things into illusion, but Kant, by contrast, accepts the ontologically mind-independent empirical world. Third, Kant commits to several "unobservable entities" in the first *Critique* (*CPR* A226/B273; A493/B521; A496/B521), which suggests that Kant does not think that "to be is to be perceived." Finally, I discern three presuppositions of the phenomenalist reading: that Kant is representationalist, i.e., adheres to the Cartesian way of ideas, that Kant is foundationalist about the subject, and that Kant's philosophy is patch-work. I contend that these presuppositions should be set aside. The phenomenalist reading too.

CHAPTER 2

REVOLUTIONARY KANT

Kant provides a new philosophical framework in which he rescinds the old paradigm. He calls the latter “transcendental realism” and the former “transcendental idealism.” The gist that the present chapter propounds is that Kant’s transcendental idealism represents a break with early modern metaphysics and needs to be qualified as revolutionary.

The present chapter is intended to expound on some revolutionary aspects of Kant’s theoretical project and is divided into three sections. The first section deals with Kant’s depiction of early modern metaphysics as the “battlefield,” which insinuates that the old paradigm has reached an impasse. The second section focuses on Kant’s Copernican turn in philosophy and his project of “transcendental idealism” as a resolution to that cul-de-sac. In it, I also attempt to capture the key distinction between appearances and things in themselves for transcendental idealism in an adverbial fashion. The third section reconstructs the central question of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*: “How is synthetic a priori knowledge possible?”

2.1. Transcendent Metaphysics as the Battlefield

Human reason, Kant says, has “a peculiar fate” (*CPR* Aviii) in that we are haunted by questions of a certain sort that we are not capable of answering. The questions are like this: Does the universe have a beginning? Do we have souls that endure after death? Are we free? Is there a God? (*CPR* A464/B492). In taking up these questions human reason regrettably “falls into obscurity and contradictions” (*CPR* Aviii). In front of such a disappointing picture, one might want to set about discovering and correcting mistakes that are supposed to be responsible for obscurity and

contradictions. That option, however, is out of the question at this level of highly abstract and speculative reasoning because, at this level, we surpass the bounds of experience and are deprived of a chance to reach a final verdict in which one may verify or reject a proposition without the tribunal of experience.

Kant states that the ineradicable and haunting questions belong to metaphysics. Metaphysics is described as “all cognition after which reason might strive independently of all experience” (*CPR* Axii) and is interested in “as the proper end of its investigation only three ideas” (*CPR* B395): God, freedom, and immortality. In dealing with them, Kant indicates, metaphysics incorporates “the battlefield of [...] endless controversies” (*CPR* Aviii).

It should not follow from this that Kant wants to undo all metaphysics like a premature positivist.¹ To be sure, one might say that Kant is not an empiricist, even though he comes to acknowledge that experience is an indispensable condition for knowledge. Kant’s position concerning metaphysics, in general, is more subtle, distinguishing two sorts of metaphysics: the first is “metaphysics as a natural disposition” and the second is “metaphysics as a science.” The first is actual in all human beings, intending to attempt “making our concept [i.e., the transcendental ideas] sufficiently free from the fetters of experience” (*Prol* 4:363). In other words, metaphysics as a natural disposition arises from the fact that we are naturally inclined to count some principles that we employ within the experience as applicable to the beyond of the sphere of experience. Therefore, this metaphysics wishes to attain so-called knowledge containing “only objects for the pure understanding which no sensibility can reach” (*Prol* 4:363).

Metaphysics as a natural disposition might lead to “transcendent metaphysics,” which is speculative metaphysics that goes beyond the sphere of experience and

¹ Although Kant regards traditional or rationalist metaphysics as somewhat illusory, the same might be said of the dogmatic empiricist—nowadays referred to as a naturalist or positivist—in the sense that the dogmatic empiricist is positioned in the antitheses and the dogmatic rationalist in the theses of the Antinomies. As Allison puts it, “transcendental illusion is not avoidable, and certainly not by the simple expedient of assuming an anti-metaphysical stance” (Allison 2004, p. 332). In other words, both the empiricist and the rationalist—or, equivalently, the positivist and the idealist—do not escape from metaphysics.

pretends to extend theoretical knowledge. In this case, Kant disapproves of it because it generates what Kant calls “transcendental illusion” (*CPR* A297/B353). However, metaphysics might be approached and approved from a context other than the theoretical—namely, under the axis of the practical. In this context, Kant approves and endorses metaphysics as a natural disposition on the basis that it incorporates a reminder that, at least practically, speaking human beings are not satisfied with *what is* and have the universal conception of *what ought to be*. As Wood laconically puts it, while the ideas of reason in the theoretical context “need not be presupposed and remain transcendent, in their practical use [they] become immanent and constitutive” (Wood 1970, p. 150).²

Therefore, it is obvious that Kant rejects transcendent metaphysics while wishing to retain metaphysics as a natural disposition for moral purposes. Furthermore, if we stick to his theoretical philosophy, Kant offers his own project for scientific metaphysics instead of again transcendent metaphysics. This Kantian scientific metaphysics incorporates the second sort of metaphysics. It refers to Kant’s critical project, in which the borders and capacity of metaphysics are restricted and, therefore, its employment is legitimized. It turns out that this metaphysics deals only with the sphere of possible experience which is called “immanent metaphysics.”

Kant advocates that the controversies pertinent to transcendent metaphysics cannot be resolved. Here, Kant discerns three main figures in the dispute. The first is the dogmatist, whose main defect is taking for granted the capacity of reason naively and too optimistically. In other words, the dogmatist can never entertain the idea that a critical delimitation of our epistemic capacities is required before all claims of knowledge. The second is the skeptic or empiricist (Kant seems to employ these

² Cf. “At times, however, we find, or at least believe we have found, that the ideas of reason have actually proved their causality in regard to the actions of human beings as appearances, and that therefore these actions have occurred not through empirical causes, no, but because they were determined by grounds of reason” (*CPR* A551/B579). We should underscore that the whole sentence is highly hectic and tense. That is so because Kant here intends to hold the “empirical realism” of appearances in terms of theoretical reason, but he also at the same time wants to say the ideas of reason fulfill their constitutive role and open another reality under the perspective of practical reason. According to the latter, the moral agents enjoy freedom and the grounds of phenomena are to be considered lie in the noumena. Otherwise expressed, the practical reason says that the ground or the cause of phenomena is the noumena, but the theoretical reason says not so but leaves the issue as open or at least non-contradictory, such that the practical reason takes the attitude at stake.

terms interchangeably), whose central intention is “through a certain physiology of the human understanding” (*CPR* Ax) to cast doubt upon the claims of the dogmatic metaphysics.³ Finally, the third is the indifferentist, which corresponds to some sort of fatigue resulting from all the frantic and useless disputes. This exhaustion and even boredom seem to represent the general attitude of Kant’s time. Given its popularity, the menace it poses to philosophy is significant. The indifferentist, in fact, engenders the threat for philosophy that it is ignored or not taken seriously. However, recall that Kant sees the questions of philosophy and metaphysics are such that they are ineradicable in human reason. Nevertheless, indifferentism might be seen as a signal of the need for a critical project. Indifferentism, Kant indicates, is not “the effect [...] of the thoughtlessness of our age, but of its ripened power of judgment” (*CPR* Axi).

Kemp Smith rightly indicates that Kant’s language in the Preface to First Edition is overtly that of *Aufklärung*, in that Kant’s ultimate trust in reason is overarching (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 12).⁴ Kant’s term “ripened power of judgment” should be understood as a reference to *Aufklärung*. That ripened power of judgment wishes to get rid of “illusory knowledge” and to this end, it is necessary to obtain reason’s “self-knowledge” (*CPR* Axi). This means that we need to establish a boundary between the knowable and the unknowable, or equivalently, to limit the capacity of pure reason thereby which we can cancel the pretensions of knowledge that attempt to go beyond the sphere of the knowable. For this, reason must know itself. This enterprise is what Kant calls the “critique of pure reason.”

To paraphrase, Kant’s venture is to critically assess the conditions and limits of pure reason. The important point is that, while being assessed, reason must be depended

³ In the Preface to First Edition, he speaks of Locke while mentioning skepticism. Moreover, he qualifies skepticism as “the censorship of reason” (*CPR* A761/B789) in which dogmatic pure reason is rendered more circumspect in the Discipline of Pure Reason and he refers to Hume who accordingly is “the most ingenious of all the skeptics” (*CPR* A764/B792). Kemp Smith verifies my observation by pointing out: “‘Empiricism’ and ‘skepticism’ [Kant] interprets as practically synonymous terms” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 9).

⁴ Ameriks likewise points out that Kant’s philosophy remains “fundamentally rationalist” even though criticizing its rationalist predecessors because “in its epistemology it requires certain and pure principles for empirical knowledge (or morality, or taste) that takes us beyond a completely a naturalistic framework” (Ameriks 2003, p. 5).

on again its own rules. Therefore, the limitation of pure reason is a matter of self-limitation. Hence, the question Kant takes up in the first *Critique* is the following: “What and how much can understanding and reason free of all experience?” (*CPR* A xvii)

As it will turn out, there is nothing much to be known apart from the tribunal of experience. As noted above, transcendent metaphysics leads to nothing but a transcendental illusion. Nonetheless, Kant considers another type of metaphysics, i.e., immanent metaphysics,⁵ in which reason and understanding conceptualize and order experience, as possible and indeed necessary. Thus, the basic aim of immanent metaphysics is to discern the formal conditions of knowledge.

2.2. Copernican Turn in Philosophy

One of Kant’s basic aims in his enterprise is to regiment metaphysics as a natural science and reorganize it in scientific terms. According to Kant, metaphysics remains at the stage of “merely groping about” and is far from the “secure course of a science” (*CPR* Bxviii). The battlefield of transcendent metaphysics reflects the fact that, up until Kant, metaphysics had not yet entered the secure path of science and was stuck in a premature stage because “the different co-workers [do not] achieve unanimity” (*CPR* Bvii).

The criterion for counting as science proper is to contain a priori knowledge. In other words, science as such includes what Kant calls “pure part” (*CPR* Bx). Both expressions, i.e., a priori knowledge and pure part, roughly speaking, amount to knowing what is at stake without appealing to, and prior to, experience in general. I will deal with the topic of a priori knowledge in detail in the subsequent section. This rendition suffices for current purposes.

Kant states that mathematics and physics contain pure parts and determine their objects a priori. What is particularly important is that Kant argues both sciences were

⁵ I borrow the term “immanent metaphysics” from Kemp Smith (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 22) to indicate the type of metaphysics that is applicable only within the sphere of experience.

established thanks to revolutions or revolutionary turns. That is to say, geometry, for Kant, is not generated by empirically “tracing what [one] saw in [a] figure” nor dogmatically “trac[ing] its mere concept, and read off, as it were, from the properties of the figure” (*CPR* Bxii). Rather, it is “construction [...] according to a priori concepts” (*CPR* Bxii) that makes a geometrical figure possible. Thus, the first person who constructed a figure is probably the founder of geometry; this was not possible without “a new light broke upon the first person” (*CPR* Bxii).

Likewise, a revolution in physics takes place as well. Kant here refers to the experiments of Galileo, Torricelli, and Stahl. The issue at stake is that the revolutionaries in physics do not depend on mere observation but rather they appeal to controlled experiments. Thus, Kant states: “Accidental observations, made according to no previously designed plan, can never connect up into a necessary law, which is yet what reason seeks and requires” (*CPR* Bxiv). For observation to take place, what Kant calls “reason’s design” (*CPR* Bxiv) is required. Therefore, Kant says:

[R]eason has insight only into what it itself produces to its own design; that it must take the lead with principles for its judgments according to constant laws and compel nature to answer its questions, rather than letting nature guide its movements by keeping reason, as it were, in leading-strings [...] Reason, in order to be taught by nature, must approach nature with its principles in one hand, according to which alone the agreement among appearances can count as laws, and in the other hand, the experiments thought out in accordance with these principles –yet in order to instructed by nature not like a pupil, who has recited to him whatever the teacher wants to say, but like an appointed judge who compels witnesses to answer the questions he puts to them.” (*CPR* Bxiv)

In the last sentence, Kant seems to recall the etymological root of *Vernunft* (i.e., reason), which derives from *vernehmen*, meaning “interrogate someone by a judge or police.”⁶ The important point is that Kant here appears to anticipate the Kuhnian theory-ladenness of perception (Kuhn 1996, p. 150). According to my reading, the common idea in both Kant and Kuhn is that “naked perceptions,” prior to introducing any theory, have no meaning or reference and, therefore, cannot function for picking up one theory instead of another. For perception to mean something, Kant asserts, the scientist must formulate a hypothesis and question it through experiments where the

⁶ See (<https://www.dwds.de/wb/Vernunft?o=vernunft>) (<https://www.dwds.de/wb/vernehmen>).

scientist squeezes out the phenomena. After this, one may wait for the answer of nature.

Therefore, as Kemp Smith correctly indicates, Galileo relies neither on mere observation nor on his own conception but rather he “determine[s] the principles according to which [...] concordant phenomena can be admitted as laws of nature, and they by experiment compel[s] nature to answer the question which these principles suggest” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 18). In other words, modern physics is neither completely empirical because it contains “controlled” experiment, which means that it is governed by “reason’s design,” nor purely rational in the dogmatic sense, as it appeals to controlled “experiment”, meaning it cannot exclude the tribunal of experiment.

Kant claims that metaphysics might become a proper science through the revolution offered by his critical project. The sketchy history of mathematics and physics insofar as Kant generates aims to persuade us toward this view. He says, “Up to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects” (*CPR* Bxvi). Under this hypothesis, unfortunately, all attempts to find out a priori cognition in metaphysics “come to nothing” (*CPR* Bxvi). Now Kant suggests that we might presuppose the reverse, assuming “that the object must conform to our cognition” (*CPR* Bxvi). Kant wishes by this hypothesis to attain a prior cognition pertinent to metaphysics.

As Allison rightly points out, the two hypotheses should be considered as incorporating two different and conflicting paradigms: transcendental realism and transcendental idealism. The former hypothesis, according to which cognition conforms to the object, is the main thesis of transcendental realism for it assumes the objects of knowledge are things in themselves. Kant woefully observes that nothing can be known a priori under this presupposition. In contrast, the latter hypothesis, according to which object conforms to our cognition, is the chief thesis of transcendental idealism because it contends that the objects must “conform to the conditions under which we can alone represent them to ourselves as objects” (Allison 2004, p. 37). Furthermore, it needs to be kept in mind that transcendental realism is

the very paradigm that leads to transcendent metaphysics, which we have seen in section 2.1, while transcendental idealism is intended as an antidote to it which is supposed to beget immanent metaphysics.

It should be accentuated that Kant's hypothesis suggests that our minds are responsible for the formal conditions of the objects, such that we can know things "as they appear to us" and we cannot know things as they are in themselves. This means that we cannot cognize a putative mind-independent reality qua itself. There is a huge and prolonged debate in the secondary literature as to the ways in which the appearance and things in themselves distinction should be construed.⁷ For our current purpose, it suffices to say that the epistemological two-aspect view seems better suited to textual evidence for three reasons.

First, Kant clearly says that the distinction should be understood between two perspectives concerning the same thing (*CPR* Bxxviii). Second, Kant suggests that the central project of the *Critique* is epistemological rather than ontological or metaphysical (*CPR* A247/B304). Third, Kant underscores that he does not posit supersensible entities alongside appearances, contrary to how the two-object view construes his position (*CPR* A289/B346).

In this context, it is important to recognize that Kant insists his position involves empirical realism; if the unknowable things in themselves were existing entities apart from appearances, then, as Heidemann puts it, "we cannot rule out the skeptical possibility of being fundamentally deceived in our cognitive claims" (Heidemann 2022, p. 520). As we will see in Chapter 5, Kant obviously desires to debunk such skepticism.

Famously, Kant gives a way to understand the rivalry between transcendental realism and transcendental idealism, by comparing the Kantian turn philosophy to the Copernican turn and transcendental realism to Ptolemaic astronomy (*CPR* Bxvi). At this point, we should take a closer look at the analogy. It is not entirely clear how the analogy should be understood, and a few ways seem available.

⁷ For an account of the debate, see (Ameriks 2003, ch. 3).

One way to construe the analogy is the following. The old paradigm, i.e., transcendental realism naively focuses on things in themselves. In terms of geocentric astronomy, the earth corresponds to the objects or things, as both are considered at the center while the sun corresponds to human reason, which is seen as having only derivative importance at best in the sense that it turns around the object. The upshot is that the pre-critical framework considers objects primarily and overlooks the constitutive aspects of subjectivity, according to which subjectivity amounts to not contribution but distortion in terms of cognition.

In contrast, Kantian philosophy reverses this order, amounting to a revolution in which philosophy is turned critically and reflectively toward the human mind. Now, human reason occupies the center and corresponds to the sun and the objects or things, corresponding to the earth, are no longer seen as inert but as the products of an activity of the cognitive subjects. In a nutshell, the earth symbolizes the object of knowledge, and the sun symbolizes the subject of knowledge. While the Ptolemaic or pre-Kantian perspective considers the former at the center, the Copernican or Kantian perspective places the latter at the center.⁸

To illustrate, Descartes, a transcendental realist, speaks of “clear and distinct perceptions” (Descartes 2008, p. 25) of objects in order to attain true knowledge of them. As I understand it, this suggests that the subject contaminates or renders dubious knowledge and the proper role of the subject is mirror-like. The main root of the error according to Descartes is the exacerbation of the will; hence, Descartes advises pacifying the subject to avoid falling into error (Descartes 2008, p. 42). Similarly, Hume, also a transcendental realist, speaks of “bastards of imagination” (*Prol* 4:258) in a way that indicates the subject’s imagination can only produce deceitful outputs and whatever is added to sensory impressions has no rightful claim on knowledge.⁹

⁸ For instance, Heine understand the analogy in this way (Heine 2007, p. 83).

⁹ Braver correctly points out that pre-Kantian philosophy presupposes what he calls the “passive knower hypothesis” in that it equates the subjective contribution with illusion. In contrast Kant advocates the “active knower hypothesis,” according to which the mind organizes and constitutes experience (Braver 2007, p. 36).

In contrast, Kantian philosophy teaches us a revolutionary lesson: things are known and measured from the human standpoint, and subjectivity is constitutive. This might be one of the most important differences between transcendental realism and transcendental idealism. Allison rightly indicates that transcendental realism enjoys the “theocentric model of cognition” in which human cognition is analyzed and measured implicitly with reference to “God’s point of view” that putatively penetrates the reality qua itself (Allison 2004, p. 28). Contrariwise, Kant defends a conception of truth, according to which our claims to have an objective truth value there is no need for an idealistic “view from nowhere” and human cognition can legitimate itself. Therefore, the human mind is at the center of the inquiry, such that Kant’s philosophy does not deal with *an sich* reality but the conditions of cognition and mind (Allison 2004, pp. 35-36).

Some protest that the Kantian turn appears to be a “counter-revolution” in the following way: whereas Copernicus’s heliocentric model amounts to an attack on the geocentric model of the universe because in it we no longer occupy the center of the universe, at least the above interpretation of the analogy suggests that we are at the center of the universe. Some scholars thus argue that Kant’s turn should be qualified as more Ptolemaic than Copernican (Guyer 1987, p. 3).

In response to that objection, the analogy can be considered in another way. Accordingly, the earth should be equated with the cognitive subject and the sun with the object of knowledge.¹⁰ Under this interpretation, the analogy suggests that the subject is “active” or “dynamic” and the object is “passive.” Although the Ptolemaic universe, where the sun moves and the earth remains inert, seems plausible at the level of pre-reflective experience, Copernicus offers the opposite view depending on the relativity of motion and thereby makes good progress in the explanation of the celestial motions. Likewise, Kant here offers the opposite of pre-reflective realism. In pre-reflective realism, it is assumed that the object is what makes knowledge and the subject merely receives the impressions of the object in a passive manner; if the subject is active at all, this amounts to nothing but falsification. By contrast, Kant suggests that we suppose the opposite—just as Copernicus did when challenging the

¹⁰ I draw the second interpretation from Serrano’s reading of the analogy (Serrano 1999, p. 484).

Ptolemaic model of the universe—namely, that the active constituent of cognition is the human mind, while the passive part is the object. In this analogy, the subject is compared to the earth, and the object to the sun. In my view, the second interpretation seems better suited to counter the objection that Kant's turn is Ptolemaic. Moreover, the core lesson drawn from the first interpretation is preserved in the second: the role of the cognitive subject is constitutive or contributive.

Recall that Kant's Copernican turn amounts to that we are responsible for the formal conditions of objects, such that the objects must conform to the mind's objectivating conditions. This is precisely why transcendent metaphysics is rescinded. Nevertheless, the important point, as we have seen, is that Kant's rejection of transcendent metaphysics is not alike the positivist, in the sense that Kant does not say that the discourse on transcendental ideas is meaningless. It is important to underscore that the restriction applies to the theoretical discourse on these ideas because they are unknowable.

Here the difference between "thinking" and "knowing" is crucial in Kant's philosophy. The former depends on the logical possibility or the principle of noncontradiction, while the latter depends on the real possibility. This distinction makes room for thinking of but not knowing (in the theoretical sense) the transcendental ideas, which becomes fruitful in Kant's moral philosophy.

To illustrate, consider God. Presumably, I can think about God because it is logically possible, i.e., thinking God is not self-contradictory. However, mere thinking does not provide a piece of knowledge or "an assurance whether or not there is a corresponding object somewhere within the sum of all possibilities" (*CPR Bxxvi*). Beyond logical possibility, in order to know something, that something must be "really possible," meaning one must either ostensively point to the object at stake or give a causal story about how it possibly exists (*CPR A225/B272*). Therefore, Kant states, "In the *mere concept* of a thing no characteristic of its existence can be encountered at all" (*CPR A275/B272*). The result is that the objects of transcendent metaphysics cannot be theoretically known because "we can never get beyond the boundaries of possible experience" (*CPR Bxx*).

Moreover, the distinction between thinking and knowing comes in handy in addressing the following old and overly hasty objection: If things in themselves are unknowable, how can we even talk about them? According to some scholars, Kant commits that things in themselves exist.¹¹ Holding both that we cannot know things in themselves and that (we know) things in themselves exist, Kant seems inconsistent.

In response, it must first be said that we cannot say that things in themselves exist. Recall that in order to say something exists, we must have a perception of it (*CPR* A225/ B272) and an existential claim cannot be argued from “the *mere concept* of a thing” (*CPR* A275/B272). Since we cannot have a perception of things in themselves and only have an (empty) concept of them, the claim that they exist seems unjustifiable. As Rescher puts it, “the ‘thing in itself’ is accordingly a creature of understanding arrived at by abstracting from the conditions of sensibility” (Rescher 1981, p. 291) (also see Breitenbach 2004, p. 143).¹² This empty concept, the thing in itself, therefore, can only be thought but not known. In this way, the objection is avoided.

The unknowability of things in themselves, Kant says, has two advantages. The first is that it avoids contradictions that stem from the pretension of knowing things in themselves, as described in the Antinomies. The second is that, by limiting the theoretical use of reason, the *Critique* gives way to practical reason: since we cannot know anything about God, freedom, and immorality, they can be the objects of “faith” and become significant in the practical context. Hence, Kant says: “I had to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith” (*CPR* Bxxx).

¹¹ Langton contends that things in themselves are substances with intrinsic properties and that the unknowability thesis amounts to that we can know only the relational properties of these substances (Langton 1998, p 13). Likewise, Allais argues that Kant sees things in themselves as actually existent and metaphysically fundamental beings (Allais 2015, ch. 1).

¹² In response, Allais asserts that we can appeal to the unschematized category of existence, and the fact that existence is not a real predicate poses no difficulty in defending the claim that things in themselves exist because Kant counts the latter as a “conceptual truth” (Allais 2015, pp. 69-70). However, it seems these responses are not cogent, as they are incompatible with Kant’s idea that existence is not a real predicate and cannot be presented by mere conceptual investigation, which is the basis of his rejection of the ontological proof (*CPR* A603/B631-A614/B642).

2.3. Synthetic A Priori Knowledge

Kant writes: “Although all our cognition commences with experience, yet it does not on that account all arise from experience” (*CPR* B2). The thought is that knowledge needs a raw material of sense impressions, but this much is not sufficient; furthermore, our minds are somehow capable of putting some elements out of themselves to knowledge. At this point, Kant introduces a bifurcation between empirical and a priori knowledge (*CPR* B3).

The division at stake is epistemological. To say that a cognition is a priori or empirical is to say how one cognizes it: the former is independent of experience, while the latter arises by means of experience. The criterion of independence, Kant emphasizes, is a very strong one, which means that “we will understand by a priori cognitions not those that occur independently of this or that experience, but rather those that occur *absolutely* independently of all experience” (*CPR* B3).

Kant contends that empirical knowledge conveys only contingent and particular cases. Otherwise expressed, it is attained only by induction and always admits of (possible) exceptions. By contrast, a priori knowledge enjoys “strict necessity” and “universality” (*CPR* B4).

Furthermore, Kant makes a distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments. The distinction is not epistemological but concerned with the structure of judgments. The key criterion of the distinction is “containment.” The judgment in which the predicate concept is contained within the subject concept is called analytic. By contrast, if the predicate concept “lies entirely outside the [subject] concept” (*CPR* A7/B11), the judgment is called synthetic.

To illustrate, “All bodies are extended” is an analytic judgment because extension is already contained within the concept of body and what the judgment is doing is analyzing or clarifying what is already contained in the subject concept. In contrast, “All bodies are heavy” is a synthetic judgment because being heavy is the result of the interaction with other bodies. To be more explicit, one cannot conceive of a body

without extension; however, one can certainly conceive of a non-heavy body, which would be equivalent to an object existing alone in a completely empty space (*CPR* A7/B11). Therefore, Kant also states that analytic judgments are logical truths in that the principle of noncontradiction suffices to make them true (*CPR* A7/B11). When it comes to synthetic judgments, there are two candidates for what makes them true. First, a synthetic judgment can depend on experience; indeed, all empirical judgments are synthetic (*CPR* A8/B12). Second, a synthetic judgment can be both true and a priori. For instance, “Everything that happens has its cause” is like this. This means that the proposition does not amount to logical truth and is by no means analytic. Put differently, Kant contends that causality somehow refers to extra-logical necessity, in that it does not amount to mere subjective necessity or “a mere figment of the brain” (*CPR* A158/B197) stemming from habit and custom.

Kant’s conception of synthetic a priori judgment should be captured within its historical context. The main issue is that Kant divorces from both Humean empiricist and Leibnizian rationalist accounts. For Leibniz, all our knowledge bifurcates into two varieties: what he calls “truths of reason,” which are necessary and true by virtue of logical principles because they can be analyzed into identity statements, and what he calls “truths of fact,” which are contingent and known through experience. Interestingly, Hume likewise makes a distinction between what he calls “relations of ideas” and “matters of fact”: the former are necessary and analytic, including mathematics, while the latter are contingent, as their contradiction is always conceivable (Gardner 1999, p. 34). The upshot is that, in both accounts, necessity is concomitant with only analyticity and contingency is with experience; thus, they overlook the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge, which is necessary and yet concerned with (the formal structure of) experience.

In both accounts, some problems arise. Most importantly, Hume’s fork presents a conundrum for explaining the possibility of Newtonian mechanics. Mathematics is on one side of the fork (“relations of ideas”), and knowledge about physical existents is on the other side (“matters of fact”). The problem is that Hume’s empiricism cannot account for how nature can be quantified under mechanistic physics. This is because necessity, according to Hume, is the mark of relations of ideas or analyticity,

whereas empirical existents are just contingent (Hume 2007, p. 21). Therefore, Hume appears to mistakenly—or at least contrary to the expectations of scientific and commonsense realisms—reduce all necessity to logical necessity.

On the other hand, Leibniz's fault seems to reduce empirical contingency into conceptual truth. According to Leibniz, if we had infinite analytical capacity regarding substances, what appears to be empirical and a posteriori truths about them would reveal themselves as belonging to the concepts of substances and thus analytical. (Leibniz 2020, p. 18). To summarize, contingency arises due to the limited capacity of our reason and is somewhat deceptive. In this account, it is not clear how contingency and free will can be held (Jolley 2005, p. 48).¹³

The important point is that Kant here distances himself from both empirical and rationalist accounts. Against Hume, Kant wishes to do justice some extra-logical necessity pertaining to the structure of experience. Contra Leibniz, Kant insists that analytic judgments have a very constrained employment and that synthetic judgments are required to increase our knowledge.

Kant thinks that certain types of knowledge are synthetic a priori: arithmetic, geometry, and metaphysics. It is obvious that arithmetic judgments are necessary and a priori but being synthetic is not. Both Leibniz and Hume suppose that they are analytic. By contrast, Kant argues, e.g., “ $7 + 5 = 12$,” is a synthetic judgment because the subject concept, i.e., “ $7 + 5$,” does not contain the predicate concept, i.e., “ 12 ”. The subject only says the unification of both numbers in a single one and “not that this sum is equal to the number 12” (*CPR* B16). Besides Kant advocates that geometrical propositions have the same status. Again, “the straight line between two points is the shortest” is synthetic because, according to Kant, “my concept of the straight contains nothing of quantity but only a quality” (*CPR* B17). The upshot is that Kant thinks arithmetic and geometry require intuition and construction upon that intuition —more precisely, arithmetic is a construction upon time and geometry is upon space.

¹³ The common view in the secondary literature is that Leibniz is some kind of necessitarian. For instance, see (Frankel 1984) For a criticism of this traditional exegesis see (Torres 2024).

Kant states that metaphysics likewise contains a priori synthetic knowledge. This must be so; otherwise, the knowledge in metaphysics would lack necessity and universality. Additionally, recall that synthetic knowledge is required for “amplifying our cognition” (*CPR* B19). Therefore, the problem of pure reason is the following: “How are a priori synthetic judgments possible?” (*CPR* B19)

Some possible drawbacks in Kant’s reasoning must be pointed out. First, Kant’s views on mathematics and geometry seem, to say the least, controversial. According to Gardner, while Kant’s view that arithmetic is synthetic is defensible, the same cannot be said for the apriority of geometry. Geometry is divided into two branches: pure geometry, which consists of formal systems based on axioms, does not claim truth, and applied geometry, whose truth is determined empirically (Gardner 1999, p. 38).

Furthermore, Kant’s analytic/synthetic distinction has been subject to criticism. There are three criticisms. To begin with, it has been claimed that the criterion of containment “is metaphorical and therefore too vague” (Körner 1990, p. 22). In response to this objection, it should be noted that we can make a clear sense of the concept containment in traditional logic. As Anderson puts it, a higher genus is “contained in” its lower species concepts (Anderson 2010, p. 87). Consider the judgment “Red is a color.” To say that this is an analytic judgment is to say that the subject contains the predicate, which means that red is a sub-class of the genus of color.

Another objection is that containment is too subjective. For example, a scientist’s concept of the metal gold is significantly richer than a layman’s or child’s concept. Therefore, the same judgment might appear analytic to the former, although it might appear synthetic to the latter (Van Cleve 2003, p. 18). In my view, this objection does not undermine Kant’s analytic/synthetic distinction. Moreover, the complaint seems to stem from the fact that we are tempted to think the traditional logic, at least available in Kant’s time, in terms of Fregean contemporary logic. It should be noted that the basic component of the Kantian logic is “judgment,” which involves assertion or warrant to a proposition. The Kantian judgment includes some sort of

subjective “layer” and does not consist of solely “judgeable content” in the Fregean sense. The latter must be objective in the sense that a proposition is separable from the propositional attitude. In Kant, however, a specific propositional attitude, “assertion” can never be decoupled from the proposition itself.¹⁴

The final objection is that Kant overlooks the necessary a posteriori and contingent a priori propositions. For Kripke, the proposition that water is H₂O is necessary because consisting of H₂O is a necessary property of water. However, we know that water is H₂O a posteriori (Kripke 1990, p. 128). Additionally, some contingent propositions, Kripke maintains, such as the statement that the standard meter in Paris is one meter long, are known a priori (Kripke 1990, pp. 54-56).

Again, we are not confronted with a real threat to Kant’s project. Two points need to be remarked upon here. First, the account concerning contingent a priori propositions seems dubious, especially since Kripke’s example of the standard meter appears tricky. As Wittgenstein says, the standard meter in Paris is neither one meter long nor is it not one meter long, functioning a peculiar role in our language games. (Wittgenstein 1986, p. 25) The nub of the problem is that the standard cannot be applicable to itself for otherwise, an infinite regress begins (Allen 1993, p. 123). Second, the discrepancy between Kripke and Kant as to whether necessary a posteriori seems to stem from the incongruence between the judgment, which consists of assertion and proposition, and just the proposition, or the judgeable content apart from the propositional attitude.

On Kripke’s account, although mathematical truths are necessary, one can learn them by virtue of experience, e.g., by asking a mathematician or using a calculator (Kripke 1990, p. 159). Therefore, the necessity is concerned with judgeable content alone, and a posteriority is related to the subject’s attitude to the content. However, as we have seen, the judgeable content and the propositional attitude are not decoupled for

¹⁴ Körner rightly states that Kant’s classification is “not of propositions, but of judgments, i.e., of propositions asserted by somebody. He is concerned not with the proposition that the cat is on the mat but with the judgment by some person to that effect” (Körner 1990, p. 18). Likewise, Longuenesse points out that Kant’s primary focus is *judging* as a mental activity rather than *judgments* emerging from this activity (Longuenesse 2000, p. 5).

Kant. For this reason, Kant rules out necessary a posteriori “judgments.” For Kant, necessity pertains not only to the content but also to the “judging” of the content, i.e., the assertion; and apriority amounts to that claims are assertable or warranted not thanks to experience but independently of it.¹⁵ This means that Kripke might be right that one can know a mathematical theorem a posteriori, i.e., learning from a mathematical teacher. However, the issue for Kant is that one is not warranted to “assert” a mathematical theorem on the mere ground that a teacher says so. The assertion can only be legitimate on a priori grounds, which means that the warrant conditions for a necessary truth have nothing to do with our way of actually learning it.

¹⁵ Divers maintains that apriority is “not the feature of the proposition itself [...] but feature of certain warrants for that proposition” (Divers 1999, p. 24).

CHAPTER 3

THE TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETIC: REVOKING TRANSCENDENTAL REALISM

In Kant's philosophy, human knowledge has "two stems" (*CPR* A15/B29): sensibility and understanding. Kant writes the Transcendental Aesthetic to expose the structure of the former. This chapter aims to construe and scrutinize the Transcendental Aesthetic. The main contentions of the Transcendental Aesthetic are as follows. First, our representations of sensibility consist of two components: form and matter. Second, while the matter of representations of sensibility is empirical and a posteriori, the form must be pure. Third, these pure forms of appearances are space and time. Fourth, things in themselves cannot be considered as spatial and temporal; this is known as the transcendental ideality thesis, according to which space and time are empirically real but transcendently ideal. In this way, Kant revokes transcendental realism that maintains space and time are transcendently real/empirically ideal.

This chapter wants to analyze the arguments in the Transcendental Aesthetic, responding to some perennial objections and criticisms against Kant. It is divided into four sections. The first clarifies Kant's abstract terminology and aim in the Transcendental Aesthetic. The second and third respectively analyze the Metaphysical and Transcendental Expositions of space. Since the expositions of space and time are parallel, I will not examine the latter for the sake of brevity. Finally, the fourth reconstructs the doctrine of transcendental ideality and addresses the neglected alternative objection.

3.1. Preliminary Remarks on the Transcendental Aesthetic

Kant states that human knowledge has "two stems" (*CPR* A15/B29) without further argument. These are the sensibility and the understanding. Relatedly, Kant also

distinguishes two sorts of representation: the first is intuition, which relates itself to the object immediately and is singular; the second is concept, which relates itself to the object mediately and is general. The former is the main element of the sensibility, and the latter is the understanding. Furthermore, Kant says that intuition gives the object (*CPR* A20/B34), which is due to “affection.” Therefore, sensibility is defined as “the capacity (receptivity) to acquire representation through the way in which we are affected by the objects” (*CPR* A20/B34). The important point is that sensibility is a receptive and passive capacity, whereas understanding is a spontaneous and active one.

Kant says that empirical intuition is such that it relates to the object through sensation (*CPR* A34/B20). At this point, one needs to consider Allais’s reading of intuition, according to which intuitions are not sensations, and assimilating the former to the latter is an interpretive mistake. On Allais’s understanding, the essential difference lies in the fact that whereas intuitions are intentional or object-relating (so they “give the objects to us”), sensations are not so, referring to the sole modifications to the cognitive subject (Allais 2010, pp. 60-61) (Allais 2015, ch. 7).¹⁶

It seems to me Allais’s rendition is implausible for one reason: the object-directedness of experience is a success of the understanding and depends on the application of a priori concepts.¹⁷ Therefore, the correct maneuver, in my opinion, is to take objects that intuition gives us are not objects in the ordinary sense, (i.e., those we encounter in our experience or perception of the world), but rather as material, in the sense that intuition is responsible for providing extra-mental *something* but not an ordered or determined *thing*. In a nutshell, intuitions supply not perceptually individuated intentional objects but pre-intentional existential loading, or equivalently, the raw data of pre-objective content without which a priori concepts could not gain objective validity and would become solely logical “thought-entities.”

¹⁶ For some agreeing with Allais on the “object-dependence” of intuition and understanding intuition as a kind of “objective cognition,” see (Wuerth 2021, p. 188) (Smith 2021, p. 256).

¹⁷ Grüne correctly says that to perform a representative capacity, intuition requires synthesis of the understanding; the function of intuition is to deliver, not individuated objects but material to be processed by the understanding, without which the manifold is “neither object-directed nor conscious” (Grüne 2011, p. 476).

Empirical intuition lacking conceptual determination brings an “undetermined object” that is called “appearance” (*CPR* A20/B34). In line with what we have seen, Kaye points out that an undetermined object cannot be “the *referent* of the intuition but rather its *content*, since after all, an undetermined object is not really an (external) object at all” (Kaye 2015, p. 13). Now Kant says that appearance has two components: form and matter. Whereas it is the matter that corresponds to sensation, the form “allows the manifold of appearance to be intuited as ordered in certain relations” (*CPR* A21/B34). It should be emphasized that the form of appearance alone does not impose order upon the matter, but Kant says that the form is what makes the manifold *orderable*. To complete the ordering of the manifold, as we will see, conceptualization is necessary.¹⁸

For our current purpose, it suffices to clarify the form-matter distinction. As Jauernig puts it, the matter should be understood as a “sort of black-box placeholder for all those aspects of appearances that are not due to the nature of our cognitive faculties” (Jauernig 2021, p. 70). In contrast, the form of appearance amounts to the aspect that is contributed by us.

More importantly, Kant contends that the matter of appearance, or equivalently, sensation cannot be responsible for the ordered and structured way in which we perceive. According to Kant, sensation is just input that receptive capacity is registered. This means that sensation cannot organize itself. Furthermore, Kant seems to believe that sensation only delivers us punctiform inputs in the sense that what we receive is just diffused patches of successive sensations.¹⁹ Hence, Kant says, “[t]hat within which the sensations can be ordered and placed in a certain form cannot itself be in turn sensations” (*CPR* A21/B35). The upshot is that the matter of appearance “is only given to us a posteriori, but its form must lie ready for it in the mind a priori” (*CPR* A21/B35). In other words, the form of appearance is the a priori component in our intuitions that holds sensations in a certain structure and renders *orderable*.

¹⁸ Allison correctly remarks, “To fulfill their representational function, intuitions must actually be brought under concepts. [...] [I]t is necessary to distinguish between a determinate or conceptualized and an indeterminate intuition, only the former of which constitutes a *repraesentatio singularis*” (Allison 2004, p. 82).

¹⁹ To more about this see (Henrich 1994, p. 130) (Van Cleve 2003, p. 72).

Kant's aim in the Transcendental Aesthetic is to expose a priori intuitions that are forms of appearance. Since intuition involves the extra-mental something and thus depends on affection, the idea of a priori intuition seems, at first glance, puzzling (*Prol* 4:282). However, the bafflement vanishes when we recall that the sensibility, besides the matter, contains the form. As we will see, the pure forms of sensibility are space and time. This means that they are a priori intuitions.

3.2. The Metaphysical Exposition

Kant employs the term "exposition" to indicate the medium of presenting his arguments here. The choice of the word is deliberate and subtle. The reason why Kant employs the term "exposition" and say, not "deduction" is that the chief aim in this section is to expose or make clear the representation of space (*CPR* A23/B38). According to Kant, the spatial structure of empirical intuition seems self-evidential, such that no one seriously doubts the arguments in the Metaphysical Exposition; however, when it comes to the a priori conceptually governed structure of experience, the case lacks self-credibility and therefore one might become suspicious, for instance, that the category of cause and effect might be just a "figment of the brain" (*CPR* A158/B197) or "bastard of imagination" (*Prol* 4:258). In other words, a priori concepts are in a crisis of legitimacy in the epistemological sense whereas pure forms of intuition are not so (*CPR* A90/B122).

In the Metaphysical Exposition, Kant offers two arguments for the apriority of space and two for its intuitiveness. The first apriority argument says that space cannot be derived from outer experience because outer experience involves experiencing things located in different places from the percipient subject and other things, and for this, the representation of space is already presupposed (*CPR* A23/B38). In other words, any spatial object must have a unique region in space if it is to be perceived in the first place. Therefore, one cannot inductively attain the representation of space via experiencing outer things because space is a necessary condition for outer representation from the outset.

The first argument raises some controversy, as it has been questioned whether Kant can conclude from this first argument that space is a priori, or whether the import of

the argument is simply that we cannot form an experience of spatial objects before the introduction of space. If the latter is the case, there is a remaining possibility that the experience of outer objects and space as the form of outer experience might be simultaneous, in the sense that space cannot go “after” the experience of spatial objects but from this, it does not necessarily follow that it goes “prior” to the experience. A contemporary critic of Kant, J. G. Maass, a Leibnizian raises that objection (see Allison 2004, p. 103). Guyer likewise says,

It is not obvious that we can exclude that in the course of our early cognitive development we gradually acquire the representation of space as a whole along with our ability to represent distinct objects in space – say, during the first six or twelve or eighteen months of development. It might seem plausible that the baby who first formulates the idea of the space of her crib or her room does not conceive of it as part of a larger space (Guyer 2014, p. 66).

In response, we should say that the Kantian conception of a priori is not to be understood as some sort of rationalist innate idea that actually exists in the mind before experience. Although some of Kant’s wording seems to suggest that space and time are grinds in the head that “lie in the mind” (*CPR* A90/B123) or “precede” (*CPR* A26/B42) to empirical representations, such language needs to be understood metaphorically. As Paton correctly says, the Kantian conception of a priori depends on logical priority rather than temporal one (Paton 1936, p. 177). Furthermore, it should be said that Kant’s theory of experience in general is to be construed as not a temporally arranged description as to how the mind psychologically functions but rather as an analysis functioning on the logical or epistemic level (Bird 1962, p. 9). The upshot is that the Kantian a priori does not suggest rationalist nativism; the objection, however, depends on the misunderstanding that the Kantian a priori amounts to being prior in that temporal sense. Furthermore, it should be noted that in the first argument, Kant does not say yet that space is an a priori representation but he only says that it cannot be derived empirically. As Shabel points out, by taking the two apriority arguments together, Kant is able to say that space is not a simultaneous, but a priori representation (Shabel 2010, p. 99).

The second apriority argument intends to argue for an “asymmetrical” relation between space and spatial objects, according to which space is “a necessary

representation, a priori, which is the ground of all outer intuitions” (*CPR* A24/B39). While the first argument attacks the empiricist account that suggests space is empirically derivable, the second opposes the Leibnizian view that space is or might be of the same status as the spatial objects. To prove the asymmetrical relation, Kant states: “One can never represent that there is no space, although one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it” (*CPR* A24/B39). It follows from this that space is to be understood as “the condition of the possibility of appearances, not as a determination dependent on them, and is an a priori representation that necessarily grounds outer appearances” (*CPR* A24/B39).

If the two arguments above succeed, one thus may conclude that space is a priori. However, at least the second argument seems problematic in two respects. First, as I have said above, while the Kantian conception of a priori must be the logical priority, Kant in the second argument appears to defend the “psychological” apriority of space, in the sense that “the ground upon which the whole argument is made to rest is the merely brute fact [...] of our incapacity to think except in terms of space” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 103). This seems to be a problem. We have seen in the second chapter that Kant against Hume wants to preserve some strict and extra-logical necessity without assimilating it to logical and reducing it to merely subjective and deceptive necessity. If Kant’s criterion of apriority is psychological, then we cannot make sense of Kant’s struggle against Hume.

Second, it has been recorded that Kant denies the possibility that we can somehow perceive empty space or time (Paton 1936, p. 113) (Allison 2004, p. 106). For instance, Kant says, in the *Anticipations of Perception*,

[E]very sensation, thus also every reality in appearance, however small it may be, has a degree, i.e., an intensive magnitude, which can still always be diminished, and between reality and negation there is a continuous nexus of possible realities, and of possible smaller perceptions (*CPR* A169/B211; also see A521/B549).

If one cannot perceive an empty space, presumably one cannot represent or think of it. Therefore, Kant seems to be incoherent.

In response, we should say the following. For the first problem, we might follow Allison and construe the second apriority argument not as solely about or stemming

from our psychological incapacity, but rather as an epistemological claim, according to which “we cannot represent outer appearances without also representing them as in space” (Allison 2004, p. 105). So construed, Kant does not appeal to a psychological brute fact but indicates that space is ineliminable in terms of appearances, in the sense that spatiality is necessarily concomitant with the physical objects but other sensuous qualities, such as color, odor, weight, and so on, are eliminable. Thus, Kant says, “[I]f one eliminates from the empirical intuition of bodies and their alterations (motion) everything empirical, that is, which belongs to sensation, space and time still remain” (*Prolegomena* 4:283). The thought is that space is necessary for, and enjoys special priority over the other sensuous qualities.

For the second problem, we might follow Sutherland and emphasize that the targets of the Transcendental Aesthetic and that of the Transcendental Analytic are different, in that the former deals with non-discursive and pure intuitive space, while the latter is concerned with discursive and conceptualized space (Sutherland 2022, pp. 37-40). There is no inconsistency here. Furthermore, the Transcendental Aesthetic might be considered provisional or preparatory in comparison with the Transcendental Analytic. I will revisit this point in section 4.5, where I discuss a famous footnote in §26 of the B Deduction that states the unity of space involves a synthesis that does not belong to sensibility—this point, however, is excluded in the Transcendental Aesthetic.

The other group of arguments in the Metaphysical Exposition is intended to prove that space is intuition. Now, we should consider this group of arguments. Recall that Kant distinguishes our representations into two sorts, i.e., intuitions and concepts. Kant thinks that if we prove that space is not a concept, we can conclude that it must be intuition. Also, recall that intuition has two characteristics: singularity and immediacy, in contrast to a concept’s universality and mediacy. The two intuitiveness arguments address these two characteristics in turn.

The first intuitiveness argument says that our representation of space is singular and unified. If one thinks of many places, they will be “only parts of one and the same unique space” (*CPR* A25/B40). The parts cannot precede this “single all-

encompassing space” (*CPR* A25/B40) because they “rest merely on limitations” (*CPR* A25/B40). Therefore, space is singular in that “one can only represent a single space” (*CPR* A25/B40).

Allison says that the first intuitiveness argument is concerned with the extensional difference between a concept and an intuition while the second deals with the intensional difference between them (Allison 2004, p. 109). When the first argument says space’s extension is singular, a concept’s must be plural; for instance, the extension of the concept of human contains plural individual persons. Kant thus contends that space is not *compositum* of parts but rather the parts of space depend on the unified whole, which means that space is *totum* (*CPR* A440/B 468).

In the second argument, Kant deals with the immediacy of intuition and its intensional difference from concept. The argument asserts that a concept’s intension contains an “infinite set of different possible representations [...] under itself” (*CPR* A25/B40). However, only intuition contains “an infinite set of representations within itself” (*CPR* A25/B40). Space “is represented as an infinite given magnitude” (*CPR* A25/B40).

The gist of the argument, as I understand it, is that only an intuition can involve infinity “within itself” or “simultaneously,” whereas a concept does not involve infinity in this way, but as containing an indefinite series of sub-class concepts via the addition of differentia that fall under the concept. The sub-class concepts are indefinite and diachronic, which is to say, at a given time I can represent one concept and pass on to another at a different time via the addition of differentia.²⁰ However, when I represent space, the infinity is given and simultaneous, which is to say, the representation of space is immediate.

Finally, it seems no insoluble problem arises in any of the four arguments in the *Metaphysical Exposition*. Therefore, it is safe to say that Kant is correct in arguing that space is an a priori intuition.

²⁰ E.g., the genus “color” can be divided into the species “primary color” and “accent color”; the latter into “green” and “purple” and so on. The point is that the sub-class concepts fall under (not within) the genus.

3.3. The Transcendental Exposition

Besides the Metaphysical Exposition, Kant also offers the Transcendental Exposition of space, which Kant defines as “the explanation of a concept as a principle from which insight into the possibility of other synthetic a priori cognitions can be gained” (*CPR* B41). This definition seems admittedly a bit opaque. To put it roughly, the basic idea is to reveal the representation of space in a way that explains how a group of other a priori synthetic knowledge is possible. Geometry, for Kant, a priori synthetic knowledge. Now geometry is defined as a “science that determines the properties of space synthetically and yet a priori” (*CPR* B41) How geometry as a priori synthetic knowledge is possible, Kant argues, is rendered intelligible by the fact that space is a priori intuition. To say space is intuition allows us to elucidate that geometry is synthetic. And to acknowledge that space is a priori allows us to clarify that geometry is pure or non-empirical, which means that “geometrical propositions are all apodeictic, i.e., are combined with consciousness of their necessity” (*CPR* B41).

To paraphrase, the possibility of the synthetic apriority of geometry hinges on the fact that space is a priori intuition. So construed, geometry is not possible “not otherwise than insofar as [space] has its seat merely in the subject, as its formal constitution for being affected by objects” (*CPR* B41).

One interpretive problem about the Transcendental Exposition is whether it contains a more advanced argument than the Metaphysical Exposition in terms of arriving at the desired conclusion of the Transcendental Aesthetic, namely, space is transcendently ideal and refers to the human standpoint which amounts to things in themselves cannot be considered as spatial. Although the conclusion of the Transcendental Aesthetic will be discussed in detail in the next section, it should be considered Guyer’s reconstruction of “the argument from geometry.”

According to Guyer, the Metaphysical Exposition is useless in importing the desired conclusion of the transcendental ideality of space; and only “the argument from geometry” in the Transcendental Exposition can give an account for it (Guyer 2014, p. 66). On Guyer’s understanding the Metaphysical Exposition at best asserts:

(P 1) Space is an indispensable form of intuition.

However, in the conclusion of the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant needs to argue:

(P 2) Space is just a representation and not a feature of things in themselves.

There is an obvious gap between (P 1) and (P 2) which is that space can be both a representation and a feature of things in themselves (Guyer 1987, p. 345). Now Guyer maintains that Kant rejects this logical possibility and hence conceives that from (P 1) it follows (P 2). This is so because Kant has an additional assumption according to which the features of things in themselves “could at best known to do so contingently but not necessarily” (Guyer 1987, p. 359). Therefore, the apodeictic necessity of the Euclidian geometry amounts to spatiality is known a priori which means things in themselves cannot be spatial. This is why Guyer indicates that the transcendental ideality of space logically depends on “the independent assumption of the necessary truth of geometry” (Guyer 1987, p. 367).

In my view, Guyer’s reconstruction of the Transcendental Exposition is mistaken. The subtle point is that, on Guyer’s reading, Kant is supposed to defend the *de re* or absolute necessity of (Euclidian) geometry (Guyer 1987, p. 351). In the case that Kant defends the *de dicto* or subjective necessity, it seems that Kant could not reject the logical possibility that things in themselves are spatial because the *de dicto* necessity covers (P 1) and not (P 2). However, it is not obvious whether Kant in fact holds the *de re* necessity. It seems to me that the apodeictic necessity of geometry is about the truth conditions of the propositions and not the properties of the geometrical objects (*CPR* B41).

In other places, Kant likewise ascribes the necessity not to the objects themselves, but to the judgments about them (*CPR* A24/B39; A25/B40; A47/B65; A594/B622). This is also coherent with Kant’s chief target throughout the whole *Critique*, which is not the objects naively understood (that would be transcendental realism!) or the judgeable contents decoupled from the propositional attitude (that would be Fregean logical calculus!), but the judging activity, as we have seen in section 2.3.

Furthermore, Paton indicates that the pre-critical Kant entertains the possibility that there might be other kinds of spaces that have other dimensions (Paton 1936, p 161). It seems to me such a possibility is not rescinded in the critical period (*CPR* A231/B284).²¹ Although the unschematized categories follow from or are parallel to the logical forms of judgments and cannot be not so different from those other kinds of finite and discursive minds possess, the forms of sensibility are emphatically ascribed to human standpoint; this means that other kinds of discursive minds can have other kinds of space and therefore geometries. The upshot is that Kant does not seem to think of (Euclidian) geometry as absolutely necessary. Finally, as Ameriks remarks, “Kant claims that we cannot make absolute claims about phenomenal features; thus, the Fourth Antinomy indicates we need to be agnostic about saying that the world is absolutely necessary or saying that it is absolutely contingent” (Ameriks 2003, p. 108).

In conclusion, Guyer’s claim that the Transcendental Exposition contains a more advanced argument than the Metaphysical Exposition, such that the latter is useless and the former is logically required for asserting the conclusion of the Transcendental Aesthetic, i.e., the transcendental ideality of space, seems implausible. Guyer’s rendition that Kant allegedly holds that Euclidian geometry is absolutely necessary, as we have seen, is indefensible. Therefore, we can say that the Metaphysical Exposition as well as the Transcendental Exposition should lead us to the ideality of space, which will be our concern in the next section.

3.4. Transcendental Ideality and The Neglected Alternative

After the Metaphysical and Transcendental Expositions Kant draws the two conclusions that have been the subject of heated controversy. He says that “(a) Space represents no property at all of any things in themselves nor any relation of them to each other”; and “(b) Space is nothing other than merely the form of all appearances of outer sense, i.e., the subjective condition of sensibility, under which alone outer intuition is possible for us” (*CPR* A27/B43).

²¹ Some scholars, such as Abacı and Stang, point out that Kant denies we can take the other forms of experience as really impossible (Stang 2011, p. 455) (Abacı 2013, p. 133).

The first conclusion amounts to a revoking of Newton's and Leibniz's accounts of space. Newton argues that space is an absolute reality that is eternal, infinite, self-subsistent and non-entity (*CPR* A40/B57), which means he believes that space is a property of things in themselves in Kant's vocabulary. On Kant's understanding, this view seems to require that our representation of space is derived empirically, which, as we have seen, is impossible. And Leibniz maintains that space is just an abstraction from the relations between the things in themselves (*CPR* A40/B57), which is refuted by the second apriority argument in the *Metaphysical Exposition*.

Furthermore, Kant seems to have in mind further reasons in rejecting both accounts. Against Newton's view, the First Antinomy appears to be the main reason for Kant to deny that space is transcendently real.²² We see in the First Antinomy that if space and time are the properties of things in themselves, we are forced to say that the universe is both finite and infinite (*CPR* A498/B526-A507/B535). The upshot is that Newton's account generates a contradiction and cannot be true. And in opposition to Leibniz's, Kant urges the necessity of geometry and arithmetic, which depend on the construction of a priori intuition in space and time. However, Leibniz's account takes space and time as "only creatures of imagination" (*CPR* A40/B58) and therefore violates the necessary characteristics of mathematics.

The second conclusion gives Kant's understanding of space, which is merely the form of appearance. To elucidate this point, Kant says space is "transcendentally ideal," which means that spatiality is referable from the human standpoint and, apart from it, "signifies nothing at all" (*CPR* A27/B43). This means that in terms of things in themselves, namely, "without taking account of the constitution of our sensibility" (*CPR* A28/B44), we cannot speak of space. In contrast, space is said to be "the constant form of [...] sensibility [that] is a necessary condition of all the relations within which objects can be intuited as outside us" (*CPR* A27/B43), which means that space is "empirically real" and "objectively valid" "in regard to everything that can come before us externally as an object" (*CPR* A28/B44).

²² Cf. "It was, it would seem, the existence of the antinomies which first and chiefly led Kant to assert the subjectivity of space and time" (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 113).

The argument, or more precisely, the move from the contention that spatiality is an ineliminable aspect of human sensibility to the claim that things in themselves are (or to be considered) not spatial, is protested as an invalid move by some commentators. For instance, Guyer says,

If we somehow know a priori that we can only perceive objects distinct from ourselves in space, indeed in three-dimensional Euclidean space, why isn't the explanation of our success in perceiving some particular outer object precisely that it really is spatial indeed three-dimensional, quite apart from our representing it as such? (Guyer 2014, p. 72)

The nub of the problem is, as we have a glimpse of it in the previous section, there seems to be a gap between the Expositions and the desired conclusion of the Transcendental Aesthetic. The issue at stake is whether Kant overlooks the possibility that space might be both the form of appearance and the property of the things in themselves, which is why it is named as the “neglected alternative objection” in the secondary literature. To put it in more detail, Kant seems to consider only two alternatives: either space is objective (i.e., a property of things in themselves) and known a posteriori or subjective and known a priori. However, Kant neglects, according to the objection, a third alternative in which space can be both subjective and known a priori and the feature of the things in themselves (see Gardner 1999, pp. 70-73) (see Kemp Smith 2003, pp. 113-114).

We have seen that Guyer, in the “argument from geometry,” attempts to rescind the objection, according to which Kant not neglects but consciously rejects the alternative third possibility. However, Guyer seems to fail in characterizing Kant's understanding of geometry, and we have concluded that Guyer's reconstruction is not acceptable.

In my view, there is a way out of the neglected alternative objection and a way to make sense of Kant's strategy in the Transcendental Aesthetic. Recall that the beginning of the Aesthetic deals with sorts of our cognition and our cognitive capacities. The question here is not primarily: What is space? But it is: What is the pure form of appearance? Or equivalently: How is pure intuition possible? We have acknowledged that pure intuition is possible because it amounts to the pure form of

appearance, and this is our representation of space. Therefore, Kant wishes to convey that our representation of space cannot be derived empirically, which is to say, this representation is not gained from our acquaintance with the things in themselves.

It is important to recognize Kant's claim is that our representation of space is neither the property of things in themselves nor the relation between them. This is so because our representation of space is contributed by the subject. Therefore, Kant says, spatial relations evaporate “in one were to abstract from all subjective conditions of intuition” (*CPR* A26/B42). As I understand it, the assertion that space is “merely the form of all appearances” simply reiterates the claim that space has nothing to do with the matter of appearances. In so doing, it answers our primary question: How is pure intuition possible? In other words, how does sensibility, which is receptive, nonetheless, make its own contribution to the matter of appearance?

A form of sensibility, as Jauernig correctly puts it, for Kant “is not a general form that happens to apply, among other things, to presentational contents; rather a form of sensibility is a form that could never apply to anything other than presentational contents because it itself a presentational content” (Jauernig 2021, p. 139). To put it more simply, space, as a form of sensibility, applies only to intuitions because it is itself an intuition. To say something is both a representation which is subjective and known a priori, and not representation and the feature of things in themselves, does not seem like a logical possibility that Kant neglects to consider. The claim might be numerical identity or qualitative identity. The former obviously is a blunt contradiction; the latter likewise does not seem to have much meaning, in the sense that the form sensibility is defined as mind-dependency and a putative feature of the things in themselves as mind-independency, such the situation seems to speak of “a qualitative identity between a sensation and something that is exactly like a sensation, except for the fact that it cannot be sensed” (Allison 2004, pp. 129-130).²³

²³ Cf. Allais says that Kant's exact claim is not that things in themselves are not spatio-temporal but rather is that “space and time do not present us with mind-independent features of reality” (Allais 2010, p. 70). In the case that not numerical but qualitative identity, the neglected alternative objection seems not promising again for Allais, in the sense that whereas here the claim that there might be something like space in mind-independent reality, “this something would not be that of which our representation of space is a representation” (Allais, *ibid*).

In my view, the governing assumption of the neglected alternative objection seems that Kant is doing a kind of ontology, committing the existence of things in themselves as numerically distinct objects, and incorporating a supersensible realm. So, the objector goes:

“When it is asserted one object has the property F, it does not follow that the other object does not have the property F. Consider that F is ‘being red.’ The claim that one object, say, my shoes are red does not entail that another object, say, my shirt is not red. Now replace ‘my shoes’ with ‘appearances’, ‘my shirt’ with ‘things in themselves’ and ‘red’ with ‘spatial’. The claim that appearances are spatial does not entail that things in themselves are not spatial.”

We have seen in section 2.2 that appearances and things in themselves distinction cannot be considered as denoting two objects, and there is substantial textual evidence to go with the epistemic two-aspect view, which suggests that things in themselves are not metaphysically existing entities. We now see that the transcendental ideality thesis should be considered in epistemic terms. Following Allison, we might say that our spatial intuiting is the formal aspect of what is intuited and our spatial predicates apply to only objects of sensibility, which entails that these predicates cannot apply to things in themselves (Allison 2004, pp. 119-27). As a result, the transcendental ideality thesis hints at the unknowability of things in themselves; this is so because we cannot apply the spatial or temporal predicates to them.

In a nutshell, this chapter suggests two things. First, the epistemic two-aspect view is preferable, in that this view offers a more successful strategy to respond to the historical objections, such as those of Maass and the neglected alternative. In contrast, the two-object view, as Guyer exemplifies it, fails to give a promising account for overcoming these objections. Second, transcendental idealism revolves around the transcendental ideality thesis; the latter should be interpreted in epistemic and not metaphysical terms. Since the former revolves around the latter, the latter too needs to be construed as likewise. So construed, Kant revokes transcendental realism that holds space and time are transcendently real/empirically ideal. In so doing, he also escapes from the transcendent metaphysics depending on transcendental realism. To put it differently, leaning on the transcendental ideality thesis and transcendental

idealism, Kant can perform a kind of immanent metaphysics that is apt to argue for empirical realism. In the next chapters, we shall see Kantian empirical realism as its combat against empirical idealism.

CHAPTER 4

THE TRANSCENDENTAL DEDUCTION: A RESPONSE TO THE HUMEAN SKEPTICAL EMPIRICISM

It is important to recognize that Kant does a kind of epistemology that replaces (transcendent) ontology. One of Kant's chief epistemological proposals seems to be the discursivity thesis, according to which cognition requires both concepts and intuitions (Allison 2004, p. 14). We have seen the latter ingredient in our cognition in the Transcendental Aesthetic. What is needed now is to understand the nature and function of the former ingredient. So, the objective of the present chapter is the conceptual component of our experience. To this end, I first deal with the Metaphysical Deduction. After this, I try to interpret the Transcendental Deduction, which Kant treats as the heart of the book (*CPR* Axvi). In this chapter, I intend to dig into the Kantian core idea that experience or knowledge involves a conceptual compartment in which we stumble into a priori concepts correlative to a priori intuitions. In defending this view, Kant wants to respond to Humean skeptical empiricism.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section is concerned with the Metaphysical Deduction. Here, Kant aims to do justice to extra-logical necessity embedded in our cognitive process against Hume, and for this purpose, he appeals to the logical forms of judgment as the "clue." Afterward, I deal with the Transcendental Deduction, in which I focus mainly on the B version and consult selectively to the A version.²⁴ The second section assesses Kant's strategy, in which

²⁴ Some commentators of Kant maintain that there is a dramatic difference between the A and the B Deductions (see Longuenesse 2000, pp. 59-60). However, the only significant difference at stake, in my opinion, concerns the presentation of the argument, as Kant suggests (*CPR* Bxxxix). More importantly, the B Deduction seems to be more improved argument, as only the B Deduction explicitly refers to the Metaphysical Deduction and the relation between apperception and judgments, those of which appear, as Guyer points out, absent or obscure in the A Deduction (Guyer 2010, p. 134). Presumably, that deficiency in the argument seems to be removed in the B Deduction (Longuenesse 2000, p. 56).

he is concerned with *quid juris* and not *quid facti*, viewing that Kant's target in the Transcendental Deduction is to respond to the "Humean problem." The third section reconstructs apperception (§15-§16) with respect to incorporating an analytical proposition and involving the activity of synthesis. The fourth section interprets the constitution of objecthood (§17-§20), wherein Kant criticizes the Humean associativist account and purports to empirically robust concept of object. Finally, the fifth section deals with figurative synthesis or transcendental imagination (§24-§26), thus completing the argument of the Transcendental Deduction.

4.1. Metaphysical Deduction or "The Clue"

We now consider the section named "On the Clue to the Discovery of all Pure Concepts of the Understanding," shortly known as the "Metaphysical Deduction." In it, Kant intends to give a "clue" or "guiding thread" as to how pure concepts are possible and legitimately involve our experience. Accepting this is of key importance in Kant's philosophy.

Kant underscores that for cognition both concepts and intuitions are required. He says, "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (*CPR* A52/B76). Recall that the chief question of the *Critique* is how synthetic a priori cognition is possible. Therefore, our present task is to detect a priori concepts alongside a priori intuitions discovered in the Transcendental Aesthetic. Hopefully, if we uncover that we have a priori concepts as well as intuitions, the question of the *Critique* is answered.

It is important to recognize, for our current purpose, that the Transcendental Aesthetic concludes that space and time are a priori forms of intuitions which are themselves intuitions that contain pure manifold (*CPR* A 77/B 103). Manifold is a technical term in Kant's lexicon, referring to the disorganized content of intuition, which can be known by synthesis (*CPR* A77/B83). We do not need to go into detail about the activity of synthesis here. The pertinent point is that, as Paton puts it, this pure manifold supplies the content without which the a priori concepts are empty (Paton 1936, p. 261). That is to say, the idea is that, in addition to the formal and a

priori concepts that we have in the formal logic, we have, or at least might have concepts that a priori and are gained pure content.

Therefore, Kant says, that formal logic has two characteristics. First, it “abstracts from all contents of the cognition of the understanding and of the difference of its objects” (*CPR* A54/B78) and second, it has nothing to do with empirical principles in that “everything in it must be completely a priori” (*CPR* A55/B79). Furthermore, it is transcendental logic that preserves the second characteristic but drops the first. Therefore, transcendental logic gains some pure content, such that it “concern[s] the origin of our cognition of objects insofar as that cannot be ascribed to the objects” (*CPR* A56/B80). Here, Kant’s motivation is to do justice to extra-logical necessity embedded in our cognitive process against the Humean skeptical empiricism. The transcendental logic is the exact device for capturing this extra-logical necessity, which is called the “logic of truth” (*CPR* A63/B88).²⁵

At this stage, depending on the formal or general logic, Kant describes the understanding or more exactly, the human understanding, such that it is discursive, which is to say, it functions with the concepts. Just as intuitions are dependent on affection in that they occur as a result of it, it is said now that concepts are dependent on “function,” which is defined as “the unity of the action of ordering different representations under a common one” (*CPR* A68/B93). Although this definition is a bit obscure, it becomes clear that the function is equivalent to the judgment or the activity of judging, when Kant says that “the understanding can make no other use of [...] concepts than that of judging by means of them” (*CPR* A68/B93). Kant defines judgment as “the mediate cognition of an object, and hence the representation of a representation of it” (*CPR* A69/B94). To paraphrase, Kant says that judgment operates in a way that distinct representations are bound together under a more general concept, thereby determining the former via the latter. Consider the judgment “All bodies are divisible” (*CPR* A69/B94). Here we have two concepts that relate to

²⁵ As Gardner correctly says, “the very notion of transcendental logic involves a rejection of empiricism” (Gardner 1999, p. 82). Furthermore, along with Longuenesse, it needs to be said that the transcendental logic also suggests a divorce from the Leibnizian idea that the formal or general logic gives us directly an ontological mapping, in the sense that the transcendental logic is not directly related to objects *an sich* in Leibnizian fashion but is concerned with our intellectual conditions in the constitution of objecthood (Longuenesse 2007, p. 135).

each other, where the subject concept, the body is less universal and has more direct but still mediate contact with the object, and the predicate concept, divisibility is more universal and that which determines the body. That is to say, when we assert this judgment, what we are doing is determining the body as divisible, which means that the unified set of individuals called bodies is subsumed under the concept of divisibility.

According to Kant, to think is to use concepts, and to use concepts is to bind them together, or equivalently, to judge them. In sum, to think is identical with to judge (*Prolog* 4:305), which is to say, “we can [...] trace all actions of the understanding back to judgments, so that the understanding in general can be represented as a faculty for judging” (*CPR* A69/B94). As Paton correctly says, Kant holds that concepts are “predicates of possible judgments,” which is to say, “concepts do not precede judgment but rather are abstractions from judgment” (Paton 1936, p. 251).

So far, it has been argued that judgment possesses a logical structure, in that the subject is attached to the predicate, and in doing so the former is determined via the latter. From this Kant too quickly and without further argument concludes that all judgments must have definite forms which is named as the Table of Judgments. It is like this. Quantity: Universal, Particular, Singular. Quality: Affirmative, Negative, Infinite. Relation: Categorical, Hypothetical, Disjunctive. Modality: Problematic, Assertoric, Apodeictic (*CPR* A71/B96).

The claim should be understood as meaning that any judgment is shaped with respect to four “heads,” i.e., quantity, quality, relation, and modality. Recall the earlier example, “All bodies are divisible.” The judgment at stake in regard to *quantity* is *universal* because it quantifies *all* bodies; as respects *quality*, it is *affirmative* for it qualifies what the bodies *affirmatively* are; as concerns *relation*, it is *categorical* on the basis that it *unconditionally* binds the bodies with being divisible; and when it comes to modality, it is *assertoric* because it says the bodies *actually* are such and such.

The way in which Kant presents the Table of Judgment has been heavily criticized by the majority of the commentators. First, the problem is that Kant does not give an

account of how this Table arises and is organized (Gardner 1999, p. 87) (Guyer 2014, p. 84). When Kant offers the Table, he seems to depend on “the customary technique of the logicians” (*CPR* A71/B93). The empirical character of the Table of Judgments, along with its dependence on Aristotelian logic, seems to be a considerable problem, in the sense that Kant seems to “presuppose” the Aristotelian logic in his crusade against Humean skepticism (Körner 1990, p. 50).²⁶ Second, Kant says that the table is exhaustive; however, whether it is so has been a matter of controversy. To say the least, the Table excludes mathematical judgments as well as judgments involving indexicals and proper names (Allison 2004, p. 136). Third, some specific distinctions made by Kant have been questioned. For instance, the infinite judgments are distinguished from affirmative and negative ones, which is not easy to understand how so and is criticized by some (Young 1999, pp. 107-108). In the name of overcoming these problems, some solutions are offered.²⁷ However, we might say none of these solutions have gained wide acceptance among scholars. In the scope of this project, I could not engage with the relevant literature. Therefore, I pretend that there is nothing deeply problematic the way in which Kant offers the Table of Judgments, setting aside the issues mentioned above for the sake of argument.

After introducing his account of the unity of representations in judgment, Kant develops his account of synthesis. In this context, he reminds us that space and time, as priori intuitions, “contain a manifold of pure a priori intuition” (*CPR* A77/B103). To cognize this manifold, the activity of synthesis is required, in which the manifold “be gone through, taken up, and combined in a certain way” (*CPR* A77/B83). Kant

²⁶ It is evident that Kant is overconfident about the Aristotelian logic when he notes that “what is [...] remarkable about logic is that until now it has [...] been unable to take a single step forward and therefore seems [...] to be finished and complete” (*CPR* B viii). Notably, Hegel criticizes Kant’s overconfidence about and dependence on the Aristotelian logic. However, as Longuenesse indicates, “in the first section of his *Subjective Logic*, Hegel too expounds four titles and for each title, three divisions of judgment that exactly map the titles and divisions of Kant’s table, although Hegel starts with the title of quality rather than quantity” (Longuenesse 2007, p. 153).

²⁷ For instance, Wolff presents a highly intelligible reconstruction of Kant’s Table of Judgments, which contains an efficacious defense against the charge of empirical or arbitrary fabricating of the Table. The rough idea is that the four heads follow Kant’s subtle distinctions as regards the logical use of understanding. According to Wolff, the logical function of the understanding is divided into two: the activity of judging and the concept using in a judgment, which while the former gives us the modality, the latter is again divided into two: there are predicative concepts and non-predicative concepts. Now whereas the former gives us the quantity, the latter is once more divided into two: the non-predicative concepts refer to an object immediately or mediately, which the former gives us the quality and the latter the relation (Wolff 2017, pp. 87-96).

defines synthesis as “the action of putting different representations together with each other and comprehending their manifoldness in one cognition” (*CPR* A77/B83). The central idea is that the content of intuition is indeterminate, chaotic, and scattered representations, and cognizing that content requires gathering it together into a unity in a certain way. Synthesis, thus, is a necessary component of knowledge, “without which we would have no cognition at all” (*CPR* A78/B104).

The complementarity between synthesis and judgment is deliberate. Paton indicates that “for Kant, every judgment [...] involves a synthesis and [...] this synthesis is thought in the very form of the judgment itself” (Paton 1936, p. 221). More specifically, the claim at stake is that the synthesis that processes the manifold—such that it orders and comprehends the manifold as its unity—and the judgment, in the logical form that attaches the subject to the predicate and unifies them, are activities that complement each other. To put it more simply, synthesis and judgment belong to “the same function” (*CPR* A79/B105). Moreover, the latter, viz. the judgment in the logical form, and the former, i.e., the synthesizing of the manifold are called “the very same actions [...] [of] the same understanding” (*CPR* A79/B105).

Following Allison, we may detect Kant’s chief contention, which is that there is a certain complementarity between formal and transcendental logic, or more precisely, between the logical and the real use of understanding (Allison 2004, p. 152). The former involves connecting representations by bringing them under concepts, while the latter stands for determining sensible intuition and thus generating a determinate content of thought. It follows from this that a priori concepts, which are supposed to determine sensible intuition, have a definite structure and are organized likewise judgments. So, the structure of judgments operate as a clue for the discovery of categories. Kant calls a priori concepts as the categories, following Aristotle. The Table of Categories is in this shape. Quantity: Unity, Plurality, Totality. Quality: Reality, Negation, Limitation. Relation: Inherence and Subsistence, Causality and Dependence, Community. Modality: Possibility-Impossibility, Existence-Non-existence, Necessity-Contingency (*CPR* A80/B106).

Admittedly, the assertion of the Metaphysical Deduction is preparatory to the Transcendental Deduction, and nothing proves but only assumes the ways in which

the unity of representations though in a judgment and the synthesis of the manifold in an intention are complementary functions of pure understanding. Guyer captures the same point in taking the argument of the Metaphysical Deduction in the conditional form. For him, the Metaphysical Deduction concludes thus: “*If* we are to conceive of objects at all, *then* we must employ (at least some of) the categories that have just been identified” (Guyer 2010, p. 129).

According to Guyer, the Metaphysical Deduction suffers from some problems, even though its conclusion is mildly formulated. First, Guyer says, it is not clear why we must assume that *all* logical forms are necessary for judgments about empirical objects. More importantly, the problem is whether hypothetical judgments are necessary or not. If they are, then the category of cause and effect can be validated; but if they are not, Kant’s attack on Humean skeptical empiricism abruptly fails (Guyer 1987, p. 98). Second, it is not obvious how we correlate the categories with the functions of judgment. Guyer’s point is not about the general correlation between the logical and the real uses of the understanding, which Kant, as we have seen, emphatically contends. But rather his question concerns the specific moments in each. In some cases, Guyer says, correlations, such as those in the quantity heads, “seem unimpeachable” in the sense that “it is hard to see how we could make judgments about ‘all’ and ‘some’ unless we could divide the contents of our experience into discrete objects” (Guyer, *ibid*). However, for Guyer, some cases, such as the correlation between the hypothetical judgments and the category of cause and effect, demand an explanation.

To respond to Guyer’s questions is not easy, but it is necessary. For the first problem, we might say that it suffices to display a form of judgment, such as a hypothetical, as a possible way to judge in order to place it in the Table of Judgments, since the Table must be exhaustive (*CPR* A69/B94). To paraphrase, the question of whether the hypothetical judgments occupy a valid place in the Table of Judgments, which I take as Guyer’s question so, is answered by the fact that understanding forms such judgments in its logical use. Kant gives an example of this. “If there is perfect justice, then obstinate evil will be punished” (*CPR* A73/B99). Therefore, the view that we can make hypothetical judgments is credible, and the first problem seems to

present no serious difficulty. At this stage, Kant does not need to show more than this or defend that causal judgments are required in cognition. This is the proper topic of the Second Analogy, not the Metaphysical Deduction.

Confessedly, the second problem is much harder than the first one. In my opinion, in response, we might point out that the correlation can be analyzable via the argument of the Schematism, which is supposed to give an account for pure categories to be schematized or applied to the intuitions.²⁸ To say the least, the problem again is not pertinent to the Metaphysical Deduction.

In sum, Guyer's reading of the Metaphysical Deduction seems overdetermined, in that he expects too much from the argument we have considered so far. However, as Paton rightly says,

Kant's argument in the Metaphysical Deduction is concerned, as he himself indicates, with the clue to the discovery of all pure concepts of the understanding. If we take it as offering a complete proof of the origin, nature, and objective validity of the categories, we cannot but regard it as arbitrary and superficial. Such a view fails to do justice to the subtlety of Kant's thinking, and we must recognise that we have here only the beginning of the long and complicated argument by which he seeks to establish his conclusions (Paton 1936, p. 297).

4.2. Preliminary Remarks on the Transcendental Deduction

As a result of the Metaphysical Deduction, one might expect that we have a priori concepts that are responsible for the synthesis of the manifold of intuition. However, the argument is not yet offered for why this must be the case, which is the proper task of the Transcendental Deduction.

To begin with, Kant confesses that the Transcendental Deduction (hereafter the Deduction only) is "the investigation that [has] cost [him] the most" (*CPR* Axvi) (also see *Prologomena* 4:261). Furthermore, he admits the obscurity of the argument at least

²⁸ Pure categories, Kant says, if devoid of any intuition to be applied over, turn into, or equivalently, regress the logical forms of thinking which cannot fulfill the role of cognition, and become "thought-entity" (*CPR* B149). I take this as indicating that unschematized categories are identical to the logical forms of judgment. Although the Schematism is notoriously hard to interpret and such an interpretation goes beyond the present section, I will give a brief account of Schematism at the end of section 4.5.

contained in the A version (*CPR* Bxxxix) (*MFNS* 474). Likewise, commentators mostly complain about the complexity and denseness of the argument.²⁹ The difficulty in understanding the Deduction, to a certain extent, stems from our failure to construe Kant's intention and strategy here properly. This section aims to avoid this failure. If we fail to do this, then as Paton puts it, "everything that [Kant] says will seem to be almost perversely nonsensical and to be written [...] in a kind of double Dutch" (Paton 1936, p. 547).

First of all, we should underscore that Kant's notion of deduction is not the same as what we most likely mean by the term. For us, the deduction amounts to syllogistic proof, in which one states premises and arrives at a conclusion. However, as Henrich warns us, if one assumes that Kant's notion of deduction is "a well-formed chain of syllogisms, we must arrive at a very unfavorable view about his capacity of carrying out such a program" (Henrich 1989, p. 31).

Kant says that he borrows the notion of deduction from the juristic jargon, according to which the deduction amounts to proof in terms of the *quid juris* (the question of right) and not the *quid facti* (question of fact) (*CPR* A85/B117). This means two things. First, if we are to prove the validity of a priori concepts, what must be proven is not *de facto* validity, which is to say, that we appeal to them in the course of experience, but is *de jure* validity, which means our appealing to them in experience must be justified, or equivalently, epistemically legitimized. The former is already admitted but the problematic thing is the latter. Second, the distinction between the *quid juris* and the *quid facti* comes with some heuristic implications, according to which our research program is concerned with "on what right" and not "in what empirical way" a priori concepts exist in our minds. Recall that the central question of the *Critique* is: "How is synthetic a priori knowledge possible?" It is not: "How is the faculty of thought itself possible?" (*CPR* Axvii) The upshot is that Kant's aim is

²⁹ Cf. Paton writes: "The crossing of the Great Arabian Desert can scarcely be a more exhausting task than is the attempt to master the windings and twistings of the Transcendental Deduction" (Paton 1936, p. 547). Furthermore, according to Kemp Smith, the Transcendental Deduction in the first edition has an "inconsecutive and strangely bewildering argumentation" and this is so because "the deduction is composed of manuscripts, externally pieced together, and representing no less than four distinct stages in the slow and gradual development of Kant's view" (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 202). And Guyer even says, "[Kant's] efforts were unrewarded; nobody understood the argument of the transcendental deduction" (Guyer 2014, pp. 91-92).

not to give an empirical or causal story about our thinking but precisely epistemological. Therefore, Kant wants to give an epistemic justification for a priori concepts being applicable in the realm of experience.³⁰

To paraphrase, the issue of the Deduction is to argue for a priori concepts of the understanding possess objective validity. As Kant says, with regard to the a priori forms of intuition, whether these forms necessarily relate to objects is answered very easily, “for since an object can appear to us only by means of such pure forms of sensibility” (*CPR* A89/B122). The reason for this is that we have no forms of intuitions other than spatiotemporal. Therefore, whenever we (i.e., human beings) intuit, our forms of intuition inevitably relate to the objects of intuition, which means the object must be spatiotemporal. However, Kant writes:

The categories of the understanding, on the contrary, do not represent to us the conditions under which objects are given in intuition at all, hence objects can indeed appear to us without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding and therefore without the understanding containing their a priori conditions. Thus a difficulty is revealed here that we did not encounter in the field of sensibility, namely how subjective conditions of thinking should have objective validity, i.e., yield conditions of the possibility of all cognition of objects; for appearances can certainly be given in intuition without functions of the understanding (*CPR* A90/B122).

The exact import of this passage seems to be ambiguous and is open to a variety of interpretations.³¹ I take this as saying that Kant here presents the challenge made by Humean skepticism and the precise target of the Deduction is to discredit it at the end. So, the possibility that intuitions present us objects independently of the categories is not a genuine possibility but seems to be a formal or merely logical one. We will come to acknowledge that a priori concepts are the necessary conditions for having representations of empirical objects throughout the Deduction.³²

³⁰ It seems that Kant simply does not choose to be concerned with the *quid facti*. However, this is not the case. Cf. “Kant is of the opinion that it is impossible to produce an adequate *species facti* about the acquisition of our knowledge. The text appears to suggest that the story about acquisition that Locke and others had to tell is possible, albeit irrelevant. However, from other sources we can clearly show that Kant’s position was a different one” (Henrich 1989, p. 36).

³¹ Allais takes this passage as meaning that the intuitions have the capacity to presentation of empirical objects independently of categories (Allais 2016, p. 7). In my view, such a straightforward reading of the passage is unavailable.

³² Several scholars interpret this passage in a similar way to me. For this, see (Bowman 2011, p. 422) (Ginsborg 2006, p 63).

As for now, we have not seen the argument of the Deduction and our current situation is in the grip of Humean skepticism.³³ Kant calls this “Humean problem” in the *Prolegomena* (*Prol* 4:258). To put it more in detail, Kant says that Hume problematizes how we come to apply the category of cause and effect, whereas, on Hume’s understanding, everything in matters of fact is contingent. In Hume’s analysis, the effect is not contained in the cause, and the causation does not stem from analytical necessity, which is correct. However, according to Kant, from this Hume

conclude[s] that reason completely and fully deceives herself with this concept, falsely taking it for her own child, when it really nothing but a bastard of the imagination, which, impregnated by experience, and having brought certain representations under the law of association, passes off the resulting subjective necessity [...] for an objective necessity (*Prol* 4:258).

The problem about the category of cause and effect must be generalized in that this category is not the only a priori concept. Rather, Kant says, “Metaphysics consists wholly of such concepts” (*Prol* 4:260).

In a nutshell, the target of the Deduction is to respond to the Humean problem. The way to do this is to show a priori concepts are necessary if we are to have objective representation of empirical objects. However, the necessity at stake cannot be some sort of psychological necessity. In that case, we are again left with Humean deflation against the objectivity of a priori concepts, according to which our knowledge about the external world is fictitious in the sense that it involves subjective and psychological construction delivered by the sense datum or sensory impressions that cannot present the mind-independent world. Kant is clear about this when he says,

The concept of cause, which asserts the necessity of a consequent under a presupposed condition, would be false if it rested only on a subjective necessity, arbitrarily implanted in us, of combining certain empirical representations according to such a rule of relation. I would not be able to say that the effect is combined with the cause in the object (i.e., necessarily), but only that I am so constituted that I cannot think of this representation otherwise than as so connected; which is precisely

³³ Cf. “To the extent to which a deduction can be produced, the claim of reason becomes definitely justified and the challenge of the skeptic is rejected” (Henrich 1989, p. 38). The skeptic that Henrich points out is not the skeptic about the external world but the skeptic “in the guise of the empiricist” (Henrich, *ibid*). The former type of skepticism becomes the target proper in the Refutation of Idealism.

what the skeptic wishes most, for then all of our insight though the supposed objective validity of our judgments is nothing but sheer illusion (*CPR* B168).

As I understand it, Kant's anti-Humean move is to elevate a priori concepts to be the necessary components in our experience. Therefore, Kant says that our objective experience cannot be analyzed via the Humean associativist account, or equivalently, merely by reducing the raw sensory impressions.³⁴ Furthermore, the key idea that Kant defends seems to me our epistemic claims are essentially not descriptive but normative, in the sense that one could not encounter mere sense data in cognition; this means that one's world cannot be reduced to the mere sense datum language. The upshot is that one is always already in a normative world, or "being in the world" in the Heideggerian sense of the term, in which our experience is conceptually governed.

Recall that in section 2.1., we have seen a linkage between Kant and Kuhn, according to which both consider our experience as not a naked and so-called objective indicator to pick one theory instead of another in the positivist sense of the term but come to acknowledge that our conceptual or theoretical capacity is operative in the very fabric of experience. Therefore, for Kant "knowing" becomes an achievement term like "seeing" in that our conceptual capacities are at work in the very process of knowing.³⁵ To a crucial extent, we are active or spontaneous in cognition, which means that we have to achieve something, and the mere passive reception of the object is not sufficient to know it.³⁶

³⁴ Cf. "[Kant's idea is that] the objective validity of the categories depends on their having a role to play, not just in explicit judgment, but also in our perceptual apprehension of the objects about which we judge. And this line of thought is [...] essential to the anti-Humean aspect of Kant's view in the *Critique*" (Ginsborg 2008, p. 70).

³⁵ According to McDowell, we construe Kant's discursivity thesis in the following way. "Experiences themselves are states or occurrences that inextricably combine receptivity and spontaneity. We must not suppose that spontaneity first figures only in judgments in which we put a construction on experiences, with experiences conceived as deliverances of receptivity to whose constitution spontaneity makes no contribution. [...] But conceptual capacities, capacities that belong to spontaneity, are already at work in experiences themselves, not just in judgments based on them" (McDowell 2000, p. 24). To put it more clearly, we must think not that sensibility and understanding work separately in that the former is responsible for perception and the latter is for judgments but rather that the two cooperate in our cognition, which suggests that the understanding is already operative in perceptual experience, i.e., confronting the deliverances of sensibility.

³⁶ McDowell suggests an implication between cognitive spontaneity and moral freedom (McDowell 2000, p. 13). It seems to me a more interesting point would be made if he said that epistemic normativity is a herald of moral normativity.

Moreover, we have seen in sections 2.2 and 3.4 that Kantian idealism should be understood in epistemic terms rather than metaphysical ones. As Allison puts it, Kant's main concern is epistemic conditions under which we can have representations of objects (Allison 2004, p. 4). The important point is that a Kantian epistemic condition is like a Humean psychological condition insofar as both are subjective; however, the essential difference consists of the fact that whereas the former has the "normative import," conveying what the cognitive subject *ought* to do, the latter could be only descriptive of what *is* (Allison 2004, p. 175). If so, I take Kantian epistemic normativity as the key to combat against the Humean descriptive or psychological account of knowledge. As I understand it, the Kantian epistemic normativity, at a minimum, asserts that intuitions are concept-laden and therefore there is no naked experience but all "conceptually clothed." This seems to me the core idea that Kant set forth against Hume, and in so doing, he proves *de jure* validity of a priori concepts.³⁷

In sum, a priori concepts amount to epistemic conditions without which empirical objects cannot become objects for us. If a priori concepts merely denote psychological conditions, as we have seen, we were doomed to skepticism. And they cannot be ontological conditions for us in that they have nothing to do with things in themselves. Therefore, the necessity of a priori concept is a moderate one. They cannot be necessary in the maximal sense and describe the world in itself. However, from this, it does not follow that they have the minimal or psychological necessity. To put it in a precise way, a priori concepts are necessary in the sense that thanks to them the object-relating or intentional experience becomes possible, which might be captured as saying that a priori concepts are "epistemic-normative tools" in generating the matrix of the object.³⁸

³⁷ Ginsborg in a very similar way to me maintains the following. "To say that synthesis involves understanding is simply to say that it involves a consciousness of normativity, or in other words, that in perceptual synthesis the subject does not merely combine or associate her representations, but in so doing, takes herself to be doing so appropriately, or as she ought" (Ginsborg 2008, p. 71). The important thought is that the normativity is operative for not only as to judgments about objects of perception but also concerning the perceptual objects themselves in the mode of for-me-ness, which is to say, not as they are in themselves (Ginsborg 2006, p 62).

³⁸ Allais tries to minimize the necessity that the categories have. She says that categories are not necessary for experience or perception, but they are so for only our scientific description of the world, according to which the world is subject to causal necessity and contains persisting substances. This

4.3. Apperception: Its Analyticity and Synthetic Unity

We now move on to the Deduction. To begin with, Kant in §15 starts from the Deduction by saying that intuition can be received only as a manifold and the combination of a manifold is possible not by virtue of sensibility but of understanding (*CPR* B130), which Kant calls this combination as “synthesis.” Kant’s view concerning manifold and synthesis is criticized in secondary literature. Findlay says that the Kantian concept of manifold is “mythical and mysterious” (Findlay 1972, p. 128) as well as “baseless and pernicious” (Findlay 1972, p. 137). Similarly, Van Cleve offers a so-called “phenomenological” objection that although Kant argues for synthesis in order to cognize, Van Cleve says, we (i.e., the cognitive subjects) are aware of no successive sensations (i.e., manifold) or synthesis out of manifold but simply encounter the objects at once (Van Cleve 2003, p. 86). As I understand it, both Findlay and Van Cleve take the Kantian view about manifold and synthesis such that Kant as though argues “knowing is [...] manufacture” (Findlay, *ibid*), in which we consciously (and in the course of time) construct the cognition out of manifold of intuition.³⁹ However, there is no reason to understand Kantian manifold or synthesis in this way. For our current purposes, it suffices to say that Kant might be seen as justified in holding the view concerning manifold, for manifold was a part of common vocabulary amongst empiricists in Kant’s time, including Hume and Tetens.⁴⁰ Kant’s intervention in the concept of manifold seems

description obviously cannot be generated from our sensibility but must be produced from our understanding (Allais 2015, ch. 11). Such a shrinking of the argument of the Deduction, however, is unacceptable. For one thing, that necessity seems to be indiscriminable from the Humean psychological one, in the sense that both argue for necessity is fictitious or at least constructed by our scientific discourse about the world, which is a neutral position as to the truth of scientific discourse. Likewise, Gomes objects to Allais’s weak reading of the Deduction for that much cannot be a proper answer to Humean skepticism (Gomes 2014, p. 12).

³⁹ In the Anglo-American literature, criticism that attributes Kant as a kind of “literal constructivism” has a well-entrenched history, starting from, to my knowledge, Prichard and 1900’s. For a criticism of Prichard’s view, see (Bird 1962, pp. 1-18). Prichardian view seems to have still an impact on recent Kant scholarship; e.g., Rockmore sees Kant as a constructivist, according to which there is no mind-independent reality but all is constructed by the mind (Rockmore 2005, p. 20) (Rockmore 2016, p. 36). However, there seem crucial differences between “synthesis” (which Kant uses) and construction (which Prichard or Rockmore attributes) and we should defer from conflating the two.

⁴⁰ Hume speaks of heaps of impressions, according to which the mind acquires but collections of impressions and abstract ideas are derived from the latter. And Longuenesse indicates that “the importance of Kant’s reading of Tetens during his completion of the first *Critique* is well known” (Longuenesse 2000, p. 34). It is said that Tetens already makes a distinction between impressions

to assert that acquiring manifold does not suffice to cognize, and synthesis is required to cognition. This intervention seems to me plausible, or to say the least, is far from baseless.

Synthesis is earlier defined as “the action of putting different representations together with each other and comprehending their manifoldness in one cognition” (*CPR* A77/B83). Therefore, synthesis is said to amount to the activity of the subjectivity and is not “given through objects” (*CPR* B130). To put it in more detail, the unity of the manifold involves apprehension, or equivalently, taking the manifold as *one* manifold (*CPR* B131). This “taking as” seems to be responsible for the unity of manifold.

It turns out that the origin of the unity is the transcendental and the original self-consciousness of the subject, or shortly, apperception. In §16 Kant states apperception thus:

[1] The *I think* must *be able* to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me that could not be thought at all, which is as much as to say that the representation would either be impossible or else at least would be nothing for me. [2] That representation that can be given prior to all thought is called *intuition*. Thus all manifold of intuition has a necessary relation to the *I think* in the same subject in which this manifold is to be encountered (*CPR* B131).

As I see it, [1] embodies a criterion of a representation to be *my* representation, which is to say, to occupy a place in the domain of for-me-ness, according to which that representation must be possible to think of it as *mine*. To paraphrase somewhat schematically, the claim amounts to for any representation *x*, if *x* is in the content of my consciousness, then the ‘I think’ must be able to accompany it.

Guyer reads [1] as follows: “I must be able to recognize every modification of my consciousness as such or self-consciously ascribe it to myself as mine” (Guyer 1987, p. 141). The important point is that, as Guyer says, “the plausibility of Kant’s claim

(*Empfindung*) and toward-impressions (*Nachempfindung*), in which only the latter amounts to intentional objects that presuppose the activity of the mind (Longuenesse, *ibid*) (cf. Guyer 1987, p. 74).

depends on its expression in the first person” (Guyer, *ibid*). Therefore, along with Guyer, I take [1] in the following way: *my* representations must be able to be ascribed as *mine*, if representation is a cognitively significant one, or equivalently, as Kant says, unless it would be nothing for me.⁴¹

It is important to understand that the modality of [1] is subtle in that Kant does not demand that ‘I think’ must actually and explicitly accompany my consciousness of any representation but rather the requirement is concerned only that it must be able to do so. To be sure, Kant admits that some or perhaps most of our representations are such that we have them in an unconscious way. He writes: “The field of sensuous intuitions and sensations of which we are not consciousness [...] is immense” (*Anth* 7:135).⁴² That issue of modality on my reading will come in handy in resolving the debate over the analyticity of apperception.

[2] simply says that a collection of intuitions, which, as we have seen, requires synthesis for taking as one collection, needs to be related to the ‘I think.’ In a case that relation is absent, the collection cannot be apprehended as embodying a unity. The important thought is that the unity of manifold requires the unity of the subject who apprehends the manifold; without the latter, the former cannot be formed. In other words, the criterion of [1] conjointly applies insofar as different representations such as x, y, and z, constitute a unified thought. To restate in a schematic fashion, for any unified thought, such as (x-y-z), the I who thinks x, y and z must be identical.

[1] and [2] together constitute Kant’s famous doctrine of apperception. In sum, Kant argues that the ‘I think’ must be able to accompany all my representations, which is the necessary condition for any representation to become a representation to me. And

⁴¹ To say that a representation is significant is to say that it has a referent to empirical objects in that it picks out and describes a portion of empirical reality. In short, representation is significant only if and if it amounts to cognition. As Guyer says, Kant’s apperception implies two things: “that I cannot actually have a representation without being aware of it, [...] [and] that I cannot be aware of any representation without recognizing its connection to my identical self” (Guyer 1987, p. 141) I detect these things as [1] and [2] above. Now Guyer says that [1] and [2] are connected only when “Kant simply equates unconsciousness with cognition” (Guyer, *ibid*). Although Guyer’s approach to Kant’s argument is unsympathetic, I take the equation as not fallacious but rather as it reveals that Kant’s concern is epistemic, in the sense that he deals with objective representations (i.e., cognition) and not mere fleeting contents of inner consciousness.

⁴² For an account of Kant’s view of unconscious representations see (Longuenesse 2000, pp. 65-66).

insofar as a manifold of representation constitutes a conjoined thought, the I who represents different representations pertinent to the same manifold must be identical. Otherwise, says Kant, “the empirical consciousness that accompanies different representations is by itself dispersed and without relation to the identity of the subject” (CPR B133). As I understand it, this makes the synthesizing activity the sufficient condition for the numerical identity of the I, in the sense that synthesis suffices to guarantee that the I is numerically identical. Kant expresses this in the following manner: “Because I can combine a manifold of given representations in *one consciousness* that it is possible for me to represent *the identity of the consciousness in these representations* itself” (CPR B134).

Kant, in a more cryptic form, writes: “The analytical unity of apperception is only possible under the presupposition of some synthetic one” (CPR B134). On my reading, the analytical unity appears to be equivalent to Kant’s claim that apperception embodies an analytical proposition. Kant writes: “The principle of the necessary unity of apperception is, to be sure, itself identical, thus an analytical proposition” (CPR B135). Furthermore, in the Paralogisms, Kant says: “The I of apperception [...] is a *single thing* that cannot be resolved into a plurality of subjects and hence a logically simple subject, lies already in the concept of thinking” (CPR B407-408). It seems to me the analyticity claim amounts to this: in order for any cognitively significant thinking process to occur, the numerically identical I is minimally required.⁴³ Kant is more talkative on this in the A Deduction. In it, he says:

If, in counting, I forget that the units that now hover before my senses were successively added to each other by me, then I would not cognize the generation of the multitude through this successive addition of one to the other, and consequently I would not cognize the number (CPR A104).

In other words, for counting, it is required that the counting subject preserves its numerical identity over time (“not forget which number she just counted and thus she

⁴³ Allison takes the analyticity claim as apperception amounts to “an [thesis] about how the thinking subject must be thought (or conceive of itself) qua engaged in such activity, and not a metaphysical thesis about the nature of the thing that thinks” (Allison 2004, p. 167). Longuenesse offers the following proposition that stands for the analyticity of apperception: “Each representation I call *my own* is related to the original synthetic unity of apperception” (Longuenesse 2000, p. 66). Here the predicate contains the subject which is “a representation I call my own” because a representation can be my own only when “it is taken up in the unified act of synthesis” (Longuenesse, *ibid*).

ought to count now”). We are now able to understand how the analytical unity of apperception is based on the “synthetic unity”, which means that if there is no manifold and the material of synthesis, the analytical unity of the I is not possible at all. To put it otherwise, the apperceptive I is not an independent existent entity over the manifold of intuitions. Rather they are coexistent. As Cassirer puts it, the identity of apperception is intellectual and stems from the understanding, which “is entirely barren so long as our intelligence is content simply to turn itself” (Cassirer 1954, p. 73). And the unity becomes “fruitful” (Cassirer, *ibid*) when the manifold is supplied from outside. In sum, the apperceptive I exists “performatively” in that apart from the performance of synthesis, it cannot be actualized. As Allais puts it, “Synthesis is bound up with the capacity to be self-conscious —the capacity to be aware of oneself as the subject of one’s thought, which [...] essentially involves being aware of oneself as a necessarily unified subject of thought” (Allais 2015, p. 271).⁴⁴

Guyer rejects that Kant’s apperception embodies an analytical proposition as Kant suggests. However, I find Guyer’s account misleading in some respects. For Guyer, if apperception is understood as an analytical proposition expressing a “mere tautology”, it follows only “the conditional necessity” which “cannot suffice to imply the existence of any absolutely necessary connection among [representations] that can be explained only by an a priori synthesis according to a priori concepts” (Guyer 1987, p. 132). And apperception must be taken “as an expression of a necessary *synthetic* truth which requires an a priori synthesis, obviously conducted according to a priori rules” (Guyer 1987, p. 134). Moreover, Guyer maintains, in the A Deduction Kant admits apperception as a synthetic proposition, which is, according to Guyer, required for a deduction proper.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ This binding, however, seems to Allais unclear, in that Kant sometimes appears to contend that the synthesis leads the apperceptive I and sometimes apperception leads or makes possible the activity of synthesis (Allais 2015, p. 271). I think there is no confusion. We might say that the relation between synthesis and apperception is like two sides of the same coin, or as Allison puts it, “reciprocal” (Allison 2004, p. 165).

⁴⁵ Guyer’s two claims should be distinguished: first, Kant in the A Deduction admits that apperception embodies a synthetic proposition and later in the B attempts to rescind this espousal; second, Kant must understand that apperception embodies a synthetic proposition, without which the aim of the Deduction cannot be fulfilled. In this section, I try to resist the second claim; when it comes to the first claim, the relevant statements in the B Deduction seem to be authoritative for dismissing it. Nevertheless, Guyer’s first claim is not without textual support. However, some scholars (correctly, in

To put it in more detail, the problem Guyer sees in Kant's argument is that apperception should be understood as a synthetic proposition that defends an absolute or *de re* necessity, whereas Kant in the B Deduction asserts it is an analytic one that could only import conditional or *de dicto* necessity, which just implies that "if I am conscious of my continuing identity with respect to several different representations, then there must be *some* synthesis by which I can connect them" (Guyer 1987, p. 140). However, according to Guyer, that conclusion is too weak for Kant's purpose in the Deduction and does not suggest apriority of apperception and a priori synthesis in the desired manner in the sense that "I must know independently of the occurrence and content of any particular representations that I *shall* be conscious of my identity with respect to them and therefore that I *can* synthesize them" (Guyer, *ibid*).

First, Guyer's primary error is presumably his nativist characterization of a priori, in which a priori amounts to temporal priority. However, as we have seen in section 3.2, the Kantian conception of a priori hinges on the logical priority rather than the temporal one, which Guyer overlooks in his following Maass's objection. Recall that Kant admits before (in the temporal sense) experience no knowledge arises. However, as Kant points out, this does not mean that all knowledge is drawn from experience and the mind has nothing to import to it. On Guyer's understanding, if apperception is a priori, this means that I "shall be" conscious of my identity independently of experience. It seems here that "shall" is operated as a modal verb that refers to the future. In other words, as far as I can see, Guyer interprets apperception such that it is evinced temporally before and as independent of empirical data. However, the alleged strong and isolated independence of apperception undercuts Kant's claim that apperception is "performative," which is to say, the intellectual identity of apperceptive I is actualized only when the manifold of intuition is supplied and thus synthesized.

Second, Guyer argues that only *de re* necessity works for detecting universal extra-logical rules; *de dicto* necessity is useless for this purpose and turns out the

my view) point out that apparent support is debatable and unwarranted in crucial respects (Bermudez 1994, p. 226-8) (Allison 2004, pp. 165-7).

psychological or subjective necessity which is operative in not “all” but only in “some” of our representations (Guyer 1987, p. 140). It seems that Guyer invokes a dilemma between *de dicto* (i.e., subjective, psychological) and *de re* (i.e., objective, universal) modalities of necessity, according to which only the latter is that which we can appeal to in referring to the extra-logical necessity of our experience. However, this dilemma, it seems to me, is a false one because, as we have seen in section 4.2, a Kantian condition contains moderate necessity which is stronger than the psychological and lesser than the ontological: this is an epistemic condition with normative import. Therefore, we might avoid lapsing into interpreting that apperception amounts to psychological or merely subjective necessity, which is obviously useless for Kant’s project, without committing to rendering it as *de re* or absolutely necessary condition.

In this way, we might interpret that apperception enjoys a conditional necessity; however, the conditionality is here a special one, which is to say, normative. It seems to me Kant’s dense formulation about apperception hints at this. Recall that Kant does not demand the I think must actually and absolutely accompany all my representations but rather the requirement is that it must be able to do so. Therefore, apperception is of necessity (“must”), however, this necessity is not straightforward or absolute but hinges on some ability (“be able to”), which is concerned with our performance of synthesizing manifold and thus constituting objective representation, or equivalently, cognition.

Interpreting erroneously Kantian apperception thus, Guyer says that Kant “relapses into Cartesianism in the transcendental deduction” (Guyer 1987, p. 369). This is so because for Guyer, apperception seems to substitute for Descartes’s cogito ergo sum, in the sense that Descartes’ ontological foundation becomes an epistemic one in Kant (Guyer 1987, p. 115). However, it is now obvious that Kantian apperception cannot be understood like Cartesian cogito in that the apperceptive I is neither an independently existing, supra-empirical substance,⁴⁶ nor is “fruitful” abstaining from

⁴⁶ Kitcher rejects the account that Kant’s theory of apperception has noumenal implications and is bound up with a noumenal subject (Kitcher 2016, p. 614).

the manifold of intuitions.⁴⁷ Therefore, the apperceptive I should be understood as denoting an epistemic requirement.

Allison underscores that “I” in apperception is cognitive and not a real subject and therefore the scope of Kantian apperception is not metaphysical but epistemic (Allison 2004, pp. 164-167).⁴⁸ In the course of this section, this becomes clear.

In sum, I maintain in this section that apperception has two aspects: in one aspect, which Kant calls the analytic unity of apperception, apperception can be captured via an analytic proposition and amounts to a formal constraint or minimal necessity for our thinking process; in another aspect, which Kant calls the synthetic unity of apperception, the analytic unity depends on, or equivalently, involves that synthesizing of the manifold of intuitions. Apparently, the two aspects are biconditional, in that the two are coexistent and imply each other; namely, for synthesizing, the numerical identity of apperceptive I is necessary, and for the apperceptive I to arise, the synthesizing activity is required, which is the reason why apperception is a “performative act.”

4.4. Constitution of Objecthood

We have seen that apperception is a performative act, in that synthesizing activity and analytical unity of the cognitive subject invites each other; from this, it follows that apperception or transcendental and original self-consciousness is responsible for intentionality or object-directedness of experience. Since apperception is bounded with synthesis, and the epistemic role of synthesis is to bring manifold into unity, Kant at this point says that apperception is operative “through [...] all of the manifold given in an intuition is united in a concept of the object” (*CPR* B140). In other words, the “objective” objects, or equivalently, referential objects of experience (recall that nonconceptualized intuitions can give us only raw data of pre-objective

⁴⁷ Gardner correctly indicates that Kant finds a midway between the Humean bundle theory, according to which the I does not refer to anything and the Cartesian cogito which is a transcendent substance (Gardner 1999, p. 97).

⁴⁸ Similarly, Cassirer clarifies that Kant does not conceive the thinking self as independently real that abides in the beyond of experience (Cassirer 1954, p 72).

content) depend on what Kant calls “the transcendental unity of apperception,” or equivalently, “the objective unity of consciousness” as contrary to “the subjective unity of consciousness” which we find in the Humean associations of ideas.

The issue can be understood as follows. Consider that I perceive a certain redness, roundness, hardness and come to believe what I perceive is an apple. Hume maintains that our idea of apple occurs in that way, which is to say, as a certain association of impressions. Therefore, Hume seems not so much different from Berkeley in the sense that both consider an object as a complex of sensations.⁴⁹

By contrast, Kant in §17 seems to think the criteria of objecthood are not satisfied by that account, in that according to him, “an object is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united” (*CPR* B137).⁵⁰ As I see it, the definition of object intends to convey the minimal requirement to be considered as object that is to be in the unity. That is to say, the mere association of sensations, or equivalently, the manifold of intuition, does not suffice to constitute the objecthood: the additional criterion is that the manifold must stand in unity.

In Kant, the unity of consciousness (as we have seen in the analytical unity of apperception) and the unity of the object due to synthesizing must be correlative. As Cassirer indicates, “The unity which is to be found in an object consists in its being brought before a unitary self. The unity of the self consists in its coming to recognize that unity which is manifested in every object of sense-experience” (Cassirer 1954, p. 75). This can be termed as “correlationism”⁵¹ which I see, along with Gardner, as the view that subject and object are interdependent (Gardner 1999, p. 97).

⁴⁹ Cf. Hume says that we can know only “a few superficial qualities of objects” while we are acquainted with none of powers or principles of them. “Our senses inform us of the colour, weight, and consistence of bread; but neither sense nor reason can ever inform us of those qualities which fit it for the nourishment and support of a human body” (Hume 2007, p. 24).

⁵⁰ Cf. “[In Kant] first-order talk about objects is replaced by second-order talk about the concept of an object and the conditions of the representations of an object” (Allison 2004, p. 173) (cf. Cassirer 1954, p. 76).

⁵¹ I borrow the term from Meillassoux, who defines it as “the idea according to which we only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other” (Meillassoux 2011, p. 5). Meillassoux considers Kant as the founder of correlationism.

Kant makes a crucial distinction between his own version of “correlationism” and Humean associativism. We have seen that Kant’s intention in the Deduction is not to discover putative psychological so-called laws in perception, but rather to reveal normative conditions of cognition. Hence, Kant says,

The synthetic unity of consciousness is [...] an objective condition of all cognition, not merely something I myself need in order to cognize an object but rather something under which every intuition must stand *in order to become an object for me* (CPR B138).

The gist of the wording is that the synthesis is not a psychological occurrence, in the sense that Kant does not make a psychological observation as to perception, but rather the synthesis is an epistemic requirement for representing objects at all (Allison 2004, pp. 174-5). So, the question is: what is the difference between a Humean psychological law and a Kantian normative condition with respect to synthesizing? The answer is that the former provides a mere associative flux of sensations and presents or assigns the referential objects only a derivative role, whereas the latter ascertains numerically identical and stable objects immediately. This means that for Kant, the referential and extra-mental objects as contrasted to the fleeting content of inner sense are immediately recognized.⁵²

In the A Deduction, Kant makes a clear statement as to what he intends to establish. He states that the possibility of a priori concepts embedded in our experience is justified in none of the three possibilities. The first possibility is that “the objects with which our cognition has to do were things in themselves” (CPR A129). If this is the case, then obviously the Deduction fails. The second possibility is to attempt to derive a priori concepts from the empirical object itself. This helps us neither, in that from this it follows that our concepts are merely empirical. It is obvious that the first corresponds to transcendental realism in general, and the second to particularly empiricism (in the Lockean version). We might say that the Deduction depends on the negation of the first and the refutation of the second. Kant says that there is also a third possibility.

⁵² Abela says, “the empirical idealism of Berkeley and Hume *derives* the existence of objects from what is given primitively in the content of perception”; in contrast, Kant’s empirical realism “*demand*s the immediate involvement of reference relations as a condition for determinate inner content” (Abela 2002, p. 46).

If we [attempt to] take [a priori concepts] from ourselves, then that which is merely in us cannot determine the constitution of an object distinct from our representations, i.e., be a ground why there should be a thing that corresponds to something we have in our thoughts, and why all this representation should not instead be empty (*CPR* A129).

It should be indicated from the outset that Kant distinguishes between two senses of “in us” in the Paralogisms (*CPR* A367-380). Accordingly, on the one hand, to say that “something is in us” can be understood empirically, in that this something is a nonspatial existent and a mere content of inner sense; on the other hand, “in us” can be understood transcendently, in that this something is presented by our epistemic conditions and amounting empirical objects, which is to say, we are not dealing with outer objects in the transcendental sense that are things in themselves.⁵³ The quotation above employs the “in us” in the empirical sense and means this: if our a priori concepts are derivative from mere inner sense (i.e., sensory impressions), in that case, we “cannot determine the constitution of an object distinct from our representations,” which further implies that we are open to skeptical attack on that “all this representation should not instead be empty.”

To paraphrase, the Humean account cannot give a strategy for the way in which fleeting impressions or pre-objective raw material might be distinguished from robust objects. Instead, this account just argues that the referential objects are derivative from merely fleeting impressions. Kant objects to that strategy, in my opinion, in two respects.

First, the Humean strategy renders objects too weak entities in the sense that it cannot give an account for stable and numerically identical ways of beings, which Kant calls the “constitution of an object.” Hence Kant says that Hume conceives objects only as rhapsodic entities, which is impotent to make intelligible our scientific or prescientific commonsensical knowledge about them (*CPR* A157/B196). Second, Hume makes an intolerable compromise to the skeptic, in that if all our knowledge derives from mere impressions, or equivalently, mental items of the mind, from this it follows that we cannot give an appropriate answer to the skeptic who

⁵³To more about this see (Allison 2004, p. 24) (Beiser 2008, p. 63).

denies or at least finds dubitable the spatial objects in the external world do exist.⁵⁴ Therefore, on the Humean account, the external objects seem fictitious because they are derived, or what might be worse, inferred from the mental content.⁵⁵

We must understand now Kant's strategy to acknowledge that objects are robust entities, contrary to what Hume suggests. We have seen that, on Kant's understanding, subject and object are correlative or interdependent. This means that if the subject does not engage with synthesis of the manifold, then its analytical unity remains barren and perhaps is canceled, and relatedly if the object is not in unity in the face of the subject then it becomes nothing to me. We shall see that Kant, in §19, suggests the locus or activity that correlates subject and object to each other is judgment. In other words, objective unity of apperception, contrary to subjective unity of inner sense, is actualized by virtue of the activity of judgment. Therefore, apperception and judgment, or equivalently, the synthesis activity of the subject and the activity of judging seem epistemically equivalent conducts.

Before delving into §19 in more detail, we must now pause to consider the multitude of tactics that Kant employs in the Deduction. As Guyer points out, Kant makes several attempts to write the Deduction and in so doing, produces several sketches some of which remain unpublished (Guyer 1987, ch. 4). Therefore, following Guyer, we might say that Kant produces several versions of the Deduction in which numerous strategies are apparent. For our current purpose, the two strategies amongst Guyer's mapping seem relatively more crucial: the deduction from the concept of object and the deduction from the concept of judgment.

It seems that Kant's essential maneuver in the A Deduction is to move from the concept of object, according to which the object is something that integrates putative

⁵⁴ This seems to be the chief reason that Kant uses the empiricist and the skeptic interchangeably, as we have seen in section 2.1.

⁵⁵ Cf. Abela states: "There are [...] two domains for Hume. The first are the inner experiences of sensations themselves. The second are (fictitious) object-involving representations built up from the former. The empirical idealist regards the first set as epistemically primitive, the latter as derivative and projective" (Abela 2002, p. 51). By contrast, as Abela correctly points out, Kant argues that there is one set of objects for which bare sensations, or equivalently, naked intuitions have no representative function in themselves and must be subsumed under concepts (Abela 2002, p. 52).

representations together not arbitrarily but necessarily, to the categories (*CPR* A104). The former step provides the element of necessity; moreover, it is contended that the necessity cannot be accounted for by a posteriori concepts but by a priori ones (Guyer 1987, pp. 106-107). To put it otherwise, if the object needs to be synthesized, synthesis must occur by necessity, or equivalently, according to some “rules” (*CPR* A105), which are too easily equated with the categories. The apparent problem of the argument is that it too directly posits these rules as nothing but categories, which is not obvious.⁵⁶ As Longuenesse points out, in the A Deduction Kant gives no justification for why the categories are rules for the synthesis (Longuenesse 2000, p. 52). He abruptly and without further argument states that the categories are the transcendental conditions just as pure forms of intuitions (*CPR* A111-112). Therefore, in the A Deduction and some other drafts,⁵⁷ the deduction from the concept of object faces a standoff.

In response to this impasse, Kant turns to another strategy: the deduction from the concept of judgment. Guyer considers the relevant portion of the *Prolegomena* as an attempt to do this (Guyer 1987, pp. 99-101).⁵⁸ In the *Prolegomena*, Kant’s strategy might be construed as follows. We can cognize only via judging. “The immediate

⁵⁶ Focusing on the A Deduction, Van Cleve argues what he calls “the category principle,” according to which synthesis requires the application of categories is implausible and thus the Deduction fails (Van Cleve 2003, p. 90). In the context of the A Deduction, Van Cleve’s criticism seems to me understandable. Besides, according to Van Cleve, even though Kant might use the Metaphysical Deduction to make the category principle acceptable, a bigger problem arises: while Kant aims to prove that the categories are objectively valid and not for my judgment, the argument “would yield no conclusion stronger than this: all my representations in judgments are connected that use [...] categories” (Van Cleve 2003, p. 89). Van Cleve’s objection seems to be countered by my triplet between psychological, normative, and ontological necessities. Van Cleve considers psychological and ontological necessities as the only alternatives, overlooking the normative necessity. Therefore, the case that Van Cleve presents is the following: the Deduction either defends psychological necessity or ontological necessity of categories and the former is what Kant can only do in the Metaphysical Deduction and the latter is what is required. However, judgment and categories might be normative conditions to conceive objecthood.

⁵⁷ As Guyer points out, it seems in the early 1780s and even earlier to it that Kant deals with the deduction from the concept of object. Guyer quotes extensively these drafts (see Guyer 1987, 102-106).

⁵⁸ Guyer indicates the overall pattern of the deduction from the concept of judgment is the following. The starting assumption is that “we do indeed experience empirical objects to be contrasted with our own states of mind” (Guyer 1987, p. 96). The additional assumption is that judgments about empirical objects assert “genuinely necessary connections” (Guyer 1987, *ibid*). Taking the two assumptions together, Kant says that such judgments presuppose a priori rules which are categories (Guyer, *ibid*). The argument in the *Prolegomena* follows that pattern.

cognition of the object [...] is impossible” (*Prol* 4:299). Judging is the “unification of representations in a consciousness” (*Prol* 4:305). This unification might be in two ways: it might be merely subjective as depicting a subjective report, or it might be objective and by necessity. Therefore, Kant makes a notorious distinction between “judgments of experience” and “judgments of perception” (*Prol* 4:298). The latter amounts to a subjective report and the former captures objective and necessary knowledge claims. Kant asserts at this point that in order to assert genuine knowledge claims, we need to employ judgments of experience. Now both types of judgments are commonly structured by the logical forms of the understanding; however, judgments of experience, in addition to them possess something extra-logical, which is the categories. The upshot is that Kant, in the *Prolegomena* and some other unpublished drafts,⁵⁹ seems to concentrate on the concept of judgment without considering the concept of object or the concept of apperception, hoping that depending on the judgment and specific distinctions around it suffice to validate the categories.

The problem in the argument of the *Prolegomena* or the deduction from the concept of judgment in general is evident. It violates the contention in the A Deduction that the categories are the necessary condition for *all* experience (*CPR* A111-112) and “shrinks” the argument at stake so much so that only *some* group of judgments about the external world, i.e., judgments of experience, need to employ them. In other words, Kant, both in the A and the B Deductions, strongly rejects the Humean skeptical empiricism, according to which we are acquainted with only sensible impressions and the external objects are derived from them; however, the strategy that moves from the concept of judgment in the *Prolegomena* implies no such rejection.⁶⁰ Yet, the virtue of the argument in *Prolegomena* seems to bring into play the Metaphysical Deduction whose genuine insight is that the categories are related to and derived from the logical form of judgment.

⁵⁹ Guyer argues and cites at length the sketches in 1783-4 that are motivated to find a plausible version of the argument from the concept of judgment (see Guyer 1987, pp. 94-97).

⁶⁰ It is pointed out in the secondary literature that the argument in the *Prolegomena* is insufficient and thus incompatible with the *Critique* in that respect (Guyer 1987, pp. 100-101) (Allison 2004, p. 193) (Abela 2002, pp. 88-89).

My view is that §19 amounts to a marriage between the two distinct strategies, that is, the deduction from the concept of object and the deduction from the concept of judgment. It seems to me that the key idea Kant entertains is that an object contains a necessity that the fleeting inner contents could not have, and the necessity can be captured by virtue of the logical form of judgment. In other words, no “objective unity of consciousness,” or equivalently, object-relating experience could not occur in the absence of judgment. Therefore, it will become obvious that the epistemic operation of judgment is precisely to constitute the objecthood, which is to say, to guarantee the intentional objects as contrasted to the mental content in the head. Kant thus says:

I find that a judgment is nothing other than the way to bring given cognitions to the objective unity of apperception. That is the aim of copula *is* in them: to distinguish the objective unity of given representations from the subjective (*CPR* B142).

To illustrate, Kant gives us two statements. “If I carry a body, I feel a pressure of weight.” It is obvious that this judgment is a paradigmatic example of the Humean associativism we have been considering. Kant now says that the activity of judging is more powerful than this. The judgment amounts to a relation between the subject and the predicate; the relation involves necessity and objectivity in which the proper function of the copula *is* to convey that modality. Therefore, we can assert that “It, the body, *is* heavy.” In this judgment, two representations, the subject (i.e., the body) and the predicate (i.e., to be heavy) are bound with necessity and objectivity. This means that the two representations are not occurring in my head and their conjunction cannot be accounted for by a Humean psychologist account that hinges on habit and custom. On the contrary, “the two representations are combined in the object, i.e., regardless of any difference in the condition of the subject” (*CPR* B143).

Following Allison, Kant’s claim at stake should be understood in this way. Objective validity, as contrasted to the subjective validity of Humean impressions, is “the constitutive feature of judgment” (Allison 2004, p. 87). Therefore, it is suggested that objective validity is “simply the capacity to be true or false” (Allison 2004, p. 88). To paraphrase, to say every judgment is objectively valid is to say every judgment makes a claim to truth and has a truth value. It follows from this that, as Abela points

out, Kant conceives judgment as “the basic epistemic unit” (Abela 2002, p. 81). This means that, according to Kant, “it is only by means of the role of the judgment that we have something to think about; *that* something is the case” (Abela 2002, p. 51).

We have seen that Kant rejects the idea that naked intuitions play an epistemic role and instead argues that our conceptual or rational capacity is operative in the very fabric of experience. We now see in more detail that Kant departs radically from the empiricist account in that sheer receptivity, or equivalently, being caught by nonconceptual (“naked”) intuition, is not epistemically basic. The activity of judging is coexistent with, or simply, equivalent to the activity of synthesizing the manifold of intuitions. Therefore, the judgment introduces the epistemic content or “*that* something is the case.” In a nutshell, we might say that judgments are “content-introducers,” without which no epistemic content can be grasped. What is more, the content that judgments introduce possesses objective validity, which is to say, judgment constitutes objecthood.

One might ask how the judgment is capable of such. In response, it should be underscored that the epistemic force of the judgment lies in its logical form. The logical form of judgment consists of the relation between the subject and the predicate. More importantly, as Longuenesse points out, this relation does not amount to “coordination” but “subordination” (Longuenesse 2000, p. 89).⁶¹ The gist here is that coordination could embody mere associations of intuitions, whereas subordination is more than this and ultimately gives way to the subsumption of the manifold under concepts.⁶² Thus, we might say, as Longuenesse rightly indicates, the

⁶¹ Subordination amounts to “lower (less general) concepts under higher (more general) concepts” (Longuenesse 2005, p. 93), or equivalently, “a relation of inclusion between the extensions of concepts” (Longuenesse 2000, p. 93).

⁶² Subsumption is used in two different but related senses in Kant’s lexicon. Firstly, it amounts to syllogistic subsumption and is particularly important to the reason’s mediately inferring, in that it is said that the minor premise is “subsumed under” the major premise, thereby which the latter provides the rule to the case described in the former. For instance, the minor premise would be: “Bodies are composite” and the major premise: “Everything composite is alterable.” Then we arrive at the conclusion via the subsumption of the minor premise under the major one, which says “All bodies are alterable.” Here the major premise denotes the universal rule, and the minor the condition or the particular in which the rule applies. Secondly, assumption means the application of categories (i.e., transcendental rules) to sensible intuition. To more about this, see (Allison 2004, pp. 212-213). Obviously, I use the subsumption in the second meaning here, which is the pivotal usage in the Transcendental Analytic and the Schematism in particular.

activity of judgment contains “a normative propensity” (Longuenesse 2000, p. 90) in that “the goal or [...] the immanent norm [of the judgment] is to express the relation of concepts by expressing also their relation to objects” (Longuenesse, *ibid.*). The upshot is that the judgment does not describe and amount to a mere psychological association. On the contrary, it has a truth value and objective validity based on its normative feature contained in its form.

In §20 Kant reaches a conclusion. We have seen throughout the Deduction that the manifold needs to be synthesized, and the activity of judgment is required for, or to put it more ambitiously, identical to, synthesizing. We have also seen that the objects are in unity, which is a result of synthesis. It follows from these that the unity of the object, by virtue of judgment/synthesis, must be incorporated according to some a priori rules, which are “determined” (*CPR* B144) in respect of the logical functions of the judgment (as we have seen in the Table of Judgments). The a priori rules for synthesis are but the categories (*CPR* B144).

4.5. Figurative Synthesis or Concept-Laden Intuitions

Admittedly, it is surprising that the Deduction has not been finished at this point, since Kant in §20 concludes that categories are necessary to synthesize the manifold and thus to attain objecthood. So, it has been suggested by the majority of the commentators that the argument of the B Deduction is divided into two parts: the first part (§15-§21) argues for the necessity of categories concerning objects of sensible intuition in general, and the second part (§22-§27) argues for their necessity concerning human sensibility and its objects in particular (Henrich 1969, p. 641-42) (Paton 1936, p. 501). This means that the remaining work Kant will undertake is to adapt the general conclusion to human sensibility in particular.

Thus, the second part, as Allison puts it, “may be viewed as an attempt to synthesize the results of [...] the Transcendental Deduction with those of the Transcendental Aesthetic” (Allison 2004, p. 185). To put it more dramatically, it might be argued that, as Longuenesse says, the B Deduction “leads to a rereading of the Transcendental Aesthetic” (Longuenesse 2000, p. 213).

The aim of the second part, in Kant's own wording, is to argue for the following: "from the way in which the empirical intuition is given sensibility can be none other than the one the category prescribes to the manifold of a given intuition" (*CPR* B145). To paraphrase, Kant maintains that all our intuitions are concept-laden, which is to say, without a priori concepts they play no epistemic role. Thus, Kant wants to defend "the a priori validity [of the categories] in regard to all objects of our senses" (*CPR* B145).⁶³

Just as all our intuitions are concept-laden, we might say that the "cognition-affording" power of the categories depends on "the possible application to empirical intuition," which means that the categories "serve only for the possibility of empirical cognition" (*CPR* B148). If the categories do not apply the empirical intuition, they regress to the logical forms of understanding, and therefore their knowledge claims must be dropped. This point is important. As we have seen, Kant holds that thinking and knowing are different, in that the latter requires intuition.

We might say that compatibly Kantian discursivity, concepts and intuitions curb the restrictions of employment to each other. The Transcendental Aesthetic limits the applicability of concepts insofar as they preserve the "cognition-yielding" function and turn into not merely logical and empty concepts (*CPR* B149). Relatedly, a priori concepts determine, or more exactly, "prescribe" intuitions to their unity; Kant famously says that intuitions without concepts are "blind" (*CPR* A52/B76).⁶⁴

⁶³ Contra my reading that focuses on epistemic normativity, some scholars argue that Kant defends the view that nonconceptualized intuitions play a self-sufficient role in cognition. For instance, Hanna argues this (Hanna 2008) (Hanna 2011a) but eventually admits that the B Deduction contradicts his own reading (Hanna 2011b). Strangely, according to Hanna, not his nonconceptualist interpretation of Kant but the B Deduction itself is what we refrain from endorsing. I think any comment that attempts to renounce the Deduction is hardly persuasive as an interpretation of Kant. The Deduction might seem the weightiest part of the *Critique* for reaching a consensus over hermeneutical debates.

⁶⁴ In my opinion, blindness amounts to naked intuitions providing us merely buzzing and confused impressions which "belong to no experience, and would consequently without an object, and would be nothing but a blind play of representations, i.e., less than a dream" (*CPR* A112). The phrase "less than a dream" is suggestive. I take it as saying that Kant considers that intuitions without (a priori) concepts could not provide a perceptual experience even in a minimal sense which involves at least awareness of self and distinct objects. Allais differs from that reading. As we have seen in 3.1, she offers a nonconceptualist reading of intuition. For her, singular intuitions present "perceptual particulars" in the sense that "a subject singles out [a thing] as a perceptual unit –a distinct, bounded thing to which the subject can pay perceptual attention" (Allais 2015, p. 147). However, it seems that Allais cannot give a plausible interpretation of the phrase "less than a dream." She attempts to do this (Allais 2015, p. 262). However, this seems hardly convincing.

We have seen in §15 that the synthesis that manifold requires is an intellectual activity, and thus it is the business of the understanding. However, we now see that if the understanding does not relate to the sensibility, a priori concepts need to drop off their objective validity. Now, Kant in §24 reworks his approach to the synthesis. The important thought is that the activity of synthesis has two aspects: in one aspect, it is “purely intellectual” (*CPR* B151), and in another, it relates to sensibility. In a very concentrated form, Kant says,

Since in us a certain form of sensible intuition a priori is fundamental, which rests on the receptivity of the capacity for representation (sensibility), the understanding, as spontaneity, can determine the manifold of given representations in accord with the synthetic unity of apperception, and thus think of a priori synthetic unity of the apperception of the manifold of sensible intuition, as the condition under which all objects of our (human) intuition must necessarily stand, through which then the categories, as mere forms of thought, acquire objective reality, i.e., application to objects that can be given us in intuition, but only as appearances (*CPR* B151).

The passage is admittedly hard to interpret, and its extensive implications might be obscure. For our current purpose, it seems sufficient to detect that Kant here asserts that the understanding “determines inner sense” “in accordance with the synthetic unity of apperception,” which results in categories applying to objects of our possible intuitions. This determination of the understanding “can be called figurative synthesis (*synthesis speciosa*)” (*CPR* B151), which is distinguished from the synthesis of understanding (*synthesis intellectualis*).

Kant also calls the figurative synthesis as “the transcendental synthesis of imagination” (*CPR* B151). In the Metaphysical Deduction, Kant already points out the ineliminable function of imagination with respect to cognition (*CPR* A70/B104).⁶⁵ Now, he defines imagination as “the faculty for representing an object even without its presence in intuition” (*CPR* B152).⁶⁶

⁶⁵ In the Metaphysical Deduction, Kant views the imagination as responsible for the synthesis and apparently as a distinct faculty that mediates between sensibility and understanding (*CPR* A70/B104). However, we afterwards see him as saying that combination is the business of the understanding and now synthesis is divided into two, that of understanding and of imagination. Is there a contradiction, or worse, Kant differs in his views along the two editions of the *Critique* as Heidegger claims? (For a view of Heidegger’s account, see Longuenesse 2000, p. 60) It seems that the apparent contradiction evades if we keep in mind that Kant says that “the unity of apperception in relation to the synthesis of the imagination is the understanding” (*CPR* A119). Therefore, Kant in the A Deduction argues: that understanding has two components, i.e., apperception and the synthesis of the imagination. It seems

The key idea is that imagination has a “dual nature.” In one aspect, imagination “belongs to sensibility” (*CPR* B152) because, or more exactly, insofar as it deals with intuitions directly. Nevertheless, imagination is also “the subjective condition under which alone it can give a corresponding intuition to the concepts of understanding” (*CPR* B152), which suggests that it is linked with understanding. At this point, we are introduced to the second aspect of imagination, which is “an exercise of spontaneity, which is determining and not, like sense, merely determinable, and can thus determine the form of sense a priori in accordance with the unity of apperception” (*CPR* B152). Thus, imagination is viewed as a power “to determine the sensibility a priori” (*CPR* B152).

What I call the “dual nature of the imagination” seems responsible for the link between the faculties of understanding and sensibility, without which no cognition occurs. Therefore, it is obvious that imagination is open to processes by and to the two faculties. The crucial point is that the placement between apperception/understanding, imagination, and sensibility seems to be vertical and not horizontal. This means that apperception determines or raises figurative synthesis; figurative synthesis “is an effect of the understanding” (*CPR* B152). Thus, apperception seems to occupy the highest place.⁶⁷ Immediately under it, there is the figurative synthesis or transcendental imagination. And finally, the sensibility is placed immediately under the transcendental imagination. Therefore, the figurative synthesis seems to be above and regulate the sensibility proper because the imagination is an act of spontaneity and appears to be proto-intellectual.⁶⁸

the B Deduction has not much difference where the synthesis has two kinds: of apperception and of imagination. Also, we might say that even in the A edition Kant does not view imagination as distinct faculty. Therefore, the change between the A and the B Deduction concerns perhaps the presentation or the strategy of the argument but not its essentials.

⁶⁶ Baumgarten and Wolf similarly define the imagination. However, for them, the imagination is essentially reproductive, but Kant views that there is also a productive function of imagination (see Longuenesse 2000, p. 205).

⁶⁷ Cf. “[It is] the unity of apperception, which principle is the supreme one in the whole of human cognition” (*CPR* B135). In Kemp Smith’s translation the phrase “supreme principle” reads as “the highest principle” (*CPR* B135) which might be more meaningful to point out the “vertical” architecture of the mind.

⁶⁸ Allison maintains that imagination should be viewed as “proto-conceptual.” “The basic point is that the imagination has the task of unifying the sensible data in a way that *makes possible* its subsequent conceptualization, without itself *being* a mode of conceptualization” (Allison 2004, p. 188).

Kant very clearly makes a distinction between apperception and inner sense. Firstly, he says in a functional fashion that the former determines or orders the latter and not vice versa. Secondly, he asserts in a topographical fashion that the former belongs to (and eventually is identical to) the understanding, while the latter to the sensibility.⁶⁹ The important result is that apperception is intellectual and a priori; however, it is merely a formal identity of the logical subject, amounting to not self-knowledge, which is attainable only via inner sense that presents us only as we appear to us and not as we are in themselves.⁷⁰ Consequently, “apperception and its synthetic unity are so far from being the same with inner sense” (*CPR* B154). In Kant’s own wording, apperception “[is] the source of all combination [and] applies to all sensible intuition of objects in general [...] under the name of categories” (*CPR* B154). However, “inner sense [...] contains the mere form of intuition, but without combination of the manifold in it, and thus it does not yet contain any determinate intuition at all” (*CPR* B154).

Thus, it is obvious that the combination is the work of understanding/apperception, whereas inner sense is just the container of the manifold. Furthermore, Kant states that the manifold that the inner sense contains becomes determined “through the transcendental action of the imagination” (*CPR* B154), which is viewed as the “synthetic influence of the understanding on the inner sense” (*CPR* B154). Kant calls that synthetic influence of the understanding as the figurative synthesis. Moreover, he states that apperception/understanding, “under the name of a transcendental synthesis of the imagination” (*CPR* B154), determines the inner sense. And finally, he says, “It is one and the same spontaneity that, there under the name of imagination and here under the name of understanding, brings combination into the manifold of intuition” (*CPR* B162).

⁶⁹ Cf. “That which determines the inner sense is the understanding and its original faculty of combining the manifold of intuition, i.e., of bringing it under an apperception (as that on which its very possibility rests)” (*CPR* B153).

⁷⁰ Cf. “I do not cognize any object merely by the fact that I think, but rather I can cognize any object only by determining a given intuition with regard to the unity of consciousness, in which all thinking consists. Thus I cognize myself not by being conscious of myself as thinking, but only if I am conscious to myself of the intuition of myself as determined in regard to the function of thought” (*CPR* B407).

We are told that imagination belongs to sensibility and therefore directly gives intuitions. Now it is said that imagination is the disguised power of understanding that determines the inner sense. Is it a paradox? Again, it seems that the solution to the apparent paradox is the dual nature of imagination, in that, insofar as it presents intuitions, it belongs to sensibility, and insofar as it is the capacity to synthesize and has a productive function, it is an expression of spontaneity.

Finally, we see “a synthesis of apprehension” (*CPR* B160). It amounts to the sensible given apprehended in unity, or “empirical synthesis” (*CPR* B165), “through which perception, i.e., empirical consciousness of it (as appearance) becomes possible” (*CPR* B160). Obviously, the sensible given is intuited in the forms of space and time. It follows from this that “the synthesis of the apprehension of the manifold of appearance must always be in agreement with [the forms of space and time] since it can only occur in accordance with [these forms]” (*CPR* B161). Here, space and time are brought into the play, which implies what Longuenesse calls the “rereading” of the Transcendental Aesthetic. We have seen in the Transcendental Aesthetic that space and time are not merely forms of sensible intuitions but also pure intuitions that contain a manifold of their own. The former point is of importance in the context of the Transcendental Aesthetic, but the latter now gains more prominence. Space and time, as pure intuitions, are represented with “the determination of the unity of this manifold in them” (*CPR* B161). Now in a contentious footnote⁷¹ in §26 Kant says,

In the Aesthetic I ascribed this unity [of space and time] to merely sensibility, only in order to note that it precedes all concepts, though to be sure it presupposes a synthesis, which does not belong to the senses but through which all concepts of space and time first become possible” (*CPR* B161).

The synthesis that does not belong to the senses is nothing but figurative synthesis. That is to say, the forms of sensibility cannot provide their unity on their own, and for this, they need a synthesis of transcendental imagination. As Longuenesse puts it, space and time are “the products of *synthesis speciosa*” (Longuenesse 2000, p. 226).

⁷¹ Allais maintains that the footnote is too obscure and inconclusive concerning the debate over conceptualist and nonconceptualist interpretations (Allais 2016, pp. 10-11). However, it seems that she fails to develop a persuasive nonconceptualist interpretation of the passage. Thus, the nonconceptualist position on that passage appears unjustifiable.

To sum up, Kant's proposal seems to be the following. To perceive, the sensible given requires the synthesis of apprehension. The combination of the sensible given must be in accordance with a priori forms of space and time. The latter are also considered as pure intuitions which contain manifold as determined in the unity. This unity is the product of the figurative synthesis, and this must be in accordance with apperception and categories. Therefore, following Longuenesse, we might say that "the very fact that appearances are given in space and time is a sufficient ground for being in conformity with categories" (Longuenesse, *ibid*).

The result is that the normative force of categories is required "whatever may come before our senses" (*CPR* B160). In Kant's own wording, categories "prescribe[e] the law to nature and even mak[e] [it] possible" (*CPR* B160). This means that the regularity and unity in nature depend on categories.

In conclusion, we should say that human sensibility and its object with respect to perceptual cognition are determined by categories and their prescriptive (or normative) powers. Very clearly, Kant says,

Now since all possible perception depends on the synthesis of apprehension, but the latter itself, this empirical synthesis, depends on the transcendental one [i.e., figurative synthesis and synthesis of the understanding], thus on the categories, all possible perceptions, hence everything that can ever reach empirical consciousness, i.e., all appearance of nature, as far as their combination is concerned, stand under the categories, on which nature (considered merely as nature in general) depends, as the original ground of its necessary lawfulness (*CPR* B165).

So, we can say that the central Kantian idea is that cognition or experience requires a marriage between (a priori) concepts of understanding and intuitions of sensibility, which is due to figurative synthesis. In other words, according to Kant, concepts and intuitions are heterogenous, viz., arising from "two different stems," and for a priori cognition to occur, both need to be homogenized and thus require a third element which is in one aspect homogeneous to intuition and another aspect homogeneous to concept. This is nothing but transcendental schemata (*CPR* A138/B177). Now, Longuenesse points out that figurative synthesis is just a preparatory to the teaching of the Schematism and transcendental schemata is "nothing other than the specific results of the *synthesis speciosa*" (Longuenesse 2000, p. 245). By virtue of

transcendental schemata, understanding provides *rules for time-determinations*. Since transcendental schemata is universal and rely on a priori *rules*, they are homogenous with the categories. But since “time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold” (CPR A139/B178), schemata is homogenous with intuitions as well.

Kant indicates that schema is the product of imagination (CPR A140/B179). Schema can be empirical or transcendental and thus a priori. But in both cases, we must distinguish schema from image (CPR A141/B180). A schema is not an image but “a rule of synthesis of the imagination” (CPR A141/B180). Kant gives the example of “the concept of dog” for an empirical schema such that it “signifies a rule in accordance with which my imagination can specify the shape of a four-footed animal in general, without being restricted to any single particular shape that experience offers me” (CPR A141/B181). As I understand it, the schema of dog is not itself a particular dog but provides a universal rule that allows us to discriminate particular instantiations of dog via providing a rule for such an operation. Furthermore, a schema can be transcendental. It is, Kant says, “the pure synthesis, in accord with a rule of unity [...] which the category expresses” (CPR A142/B182).

To sum up, it is clear that the categories gain true significance with transcendental schemata and figurative synthesis by virtue of which they apply intuitions; conversely, intuitions can have representative power (so that they would not “blind”) only subsuming under (a priori) concepts.

CHAPTER 5

THE CARTESIAN SKEPTICAL EMPRICISIM AS THE SCANDAL OF PHILOSOPHY

Kant's relationship with skepticism is multi-layered. We can detect at least two levels of this relationship. On the one hand, he views skepticism as an antidote for the dogmatic pretensions of transcendent metaphysics and the very argument structure of the Antinomies seems to be influenced by Pyrrhonism, a school of ancient skepticism that wants to raise doubt by generating equally convincing arguments in favor of both conflicting sides about any knowledge claim (Guyer 2014, p. 14).

It is well known that Kant approaches positively to that kind of skepticism. For example, in the Discipline of Pure Reason, he views the skeptic as “the taskmaster of the dogmatic sophist for a healthy critique of the understanding and of reason itself” (*CPR* A769/B797).

On the other hand, Kant is dissident against the skepticism about the external world. He says,

It always remains a scandal of philosophy and universal human reason that the existence of things outside us (from which we after all get the whole matter for our cognitions, even for our inner sense) should have to be assumed merely on *faith*, and that if it occurs to anyone doubt it, we should be unable to answer him with a satisfactory proof (*CPR* Bxxxix).

Thus, Kant calls the unanswered skeptical challenge on the issue of the external world as “the scandal of philosophy.” In response to this scandal, Kant offers proof of the external world in his famous “Refutation of Idealism.” More importantly, Kant seems to maintain that only his transcendental idealism comes up with empirical realism recommending proof of the external world, and conversely that

transcendental realism implies empirical idealism that can only say the existence of the external world should be “assumed merely on faith.”⁷²

The present chapter wants to analyze Kant’s solution to “the problem of the external world” and therefore come to acknowledge his “empirical realism” that is compatible with transcendental idealism. It is divided into four sections. The first expounds briefly on the “problem of the external world” as Descartes formulates in the *Meditations*. The second analyzes the relationship between transcendental idealism and The Refutation of Idealism (hereafter the Refutation only) and thus placement of the Refutation in the *Critique*. The third elucidates the Refutation and comments on some controversial points in secondary literature. Finally, the fourth sheds light on Kant’s rupture from Cartesian epistemology and therefore makes sense the crucial motivations of the Refutation.

5.1. The External World Problem in the *Meditations*

Descartes’ project in the *Meditations* might be considered as an attempt to attain a demonstrably certain, or equivalently, indubitably edifice of knowledge. As Schacht puts it, Descartes’ desire is “knowledge —and not just what commonly and customarily passes for knowledge but ‘clear and certain knowledge’” (Schacht 1984, p. 5). This ambitious project is not an easy task. Therefore, Descartes realizes that there were some years ago “many false opinions I had accepted as true from childhood onwards, and that, whatever I had since built on such shaky foundations, could only be highly doubtful” (Descartes 2008, p. 13). In order to escape from such falsehoods, he says, all his beliefs must be “utterly demolished” and he needs to “begin again from the bottom up” (Descartes, *ibid*).

To this aim, we are introduced to his famous “methodological skepticism” according to which we should withdraw our assent as to “what is not fully certain and

⁷² Cf. “It is really this transcendental realist who afterwards plays the empirical idealist; and after he has falsely presupposed about objects of the senses that if they are to exist they must have their existence in themselves even apart from sense, he finds that from this point of view all our representations of space are insufficient to make their reality certain” (*CPR* A370).

indubitable” (Descartes, *ibid*). Here the stake for counting as true is extreme, in the sense that a belief cannot be true “if it involves or depends upon any assumptions which are not free from the possibility of doubt” (Schacht 1984, p. 5). In other words, if we conceive a dint of possibility that what we believe is not true, then we cannot accept it as true. On this benchmark, sensory knowledge fails because it “sometimes” deceives us, and “prudence dictates that we should never fully trust those who have deceived us even once” (Descartes 2008, p. 13). For instance, “sometimes towers that from a distance had seemed round appeared from close up as square and giant statues perched on the top of those towers did not look particularly large to one gazing up from the below” (Descartes 2008, p. 54).

Descartes goes from such cases to cases that seem to be indubitable: “that I am now here, sitting by the fire, wrapped in a warm winter gown, handling this paper” and even “these hands themselves and this whole body are mine” (Descartes 2008, pp. 13-14) However, we might be tricked in even these cases. “How often my sleep at night has convinced me of all these familiar things [...] when in fact I was lying naked under the bedclothes” (Descartes 2008, p. 14). Thus, we cannot distinguish dream from reality depending on sensible knowledge because we cannot find “any conclusive indications” (Descartes, *ibid*) for making such a distinction.

To sum up, Descartes moves from the fallibility of sensory knowledge, which is to say, it might be “sometimes” deceitful, to the possibility in which all our sensory experiences become dubious since we cannot know whether we might be dreaming. Hence Descartes generalizes the scope of doubt “by supposing that all our experience are like dreams” (Hatfield 2003, p. 77). As a result, the external world and all bodily objects including “even [we] have hands or the rest of a body” (Descartes 2008, p. 14) must not be counted as true.

Even in the fabricated possibility that we are all dreaming, some bodies of knowledge remain certain. For instance, mathematical knowledge is of this kind because they “care little whether [things] exist in nature or not” (Descartes 2008, p. 15). In other words, since the truth of mathematical knowledge is certainly not empirical and does not depend on any sensory experience, the possibility of the

dream brings no harm to the claims of mathematical knowledge. “Whether I am waking or sleeping, two plus three equals five” (Descartes, *ibid*).

Now the more radical possibility emerges, in which physical existence including my body, and furthermore all mathematical and alike knowledge might be false. An omnipotent and malicious demon might deceive us as to all of them. Considering this possibility,

how do I know that he has not brought it about that there is no earth at all, no heavens, no extended things, no shape, no magnitude, no place—and yet that all these things appear to me to exist just as they do now? Or even—just as I judge now and again that other people are mistaken about things they believe they know with the greatest certitude—that I too should be similarly deceived whenever I add two and three, or count the sides of a square, or make a judgement about something even simpler, if anything simpler can be imagined? (Descartes 2008, p. 15)

As a result of the malicious demon hypothesis, the existence of the external world and even mathematical knowledge becomes dubitable. However, Descartes says in the Second Meditation that even this radical hypothesis leaves something indubitable: “Beyond doubt [...] I also exist if he [i.e., the malicious demon] is deceiving me, but he will never bring it about that I should be nothing as long as I think I am something” (Descartes 2008, p. 18). We cannot know anything about that I except the fact that it is something that “thinks” (Descartes 2008, p. 20). To paraphrase, even in the case that the malicious demon hypothesis operates in that we are constantly deceived about the external world and mathematics, the unquestionable truth is that we are still thinking and have thoughts even though they might correspond to nothing. It follows from this that even though I might be deceived, still I am something that thinks.⁷³

In the third and fourth Meditations Descartes argues that there is (an omnipotent and benevolent) God who does not deceive us.⁷⁴ God creates us in a way that we are

⁷³ The cogito argument is heavily criticized, in that Descartes could validly say that there is a stream of thoughts in the evil demon hypothesis, but it does not logically follow from this that there is an agent that entertains these thoughts. The argument’s apparent cogency seems to stem from the structure of our grammar in which every predicate is assigned to a subject. For this, see (Schacht 1984, p. 11) (Hatfield 2003, p. 103).

⁷⁴ Descartes’s proof or, more exactly, proofs for God (there are three of them) are hardly convincing arguments, in the sense that they presuppose largely the scholastic metaphysics with respect to the so-

cognitively apt to hold true beliefs concerning the external world and mathematics (Descartes 2008, p. 38). Thus, we can no longer conceive of the malicious demon hypothesis as possible.

Therefore, it might be said that Descartes mediates the relationship between us and the world with God, in the sense that the realism about the external world is happily guaranteed with the existence of God. This proposal is widely followed by the philosophers in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth philosophers (except maybe notably Spinoza who rejects such a personified God). For instance, Locke and Leibniz depend on the honesty of God in arguing for the existence of the external world as we perceive it.⁷⁵ That is so because the default position of the early modern philosophers is indirect realism or representationalism, according to which the mind knows nothing but its own ideas. Therefore, the correspondence between the mental item and the extra-mental object successfully operates only by supposing the epistemic guarantor, such as an omnipotent and benevolent God.

We have seen in section 2.2 that Kant, in his Copernican turn, defends a conception of truth, according to which our knowledge claims are self-legitimizing and need no supersensuous guarantor like God. Furthermore, for Kant, rational theology produces no convincing arguments for the existence of God.⁷⁶ Thus, the representationalist position seems scandalous to Kant because it suggests the external world remains

called objective and formal reality of ideas and depend heavily on the “substance ontology” and “the principle of causality” which is vaguely operated. For this see (Schacht 1984, pp. 15-22).

⁷⁵ For Locke, cf. “Locke is telling us that the world is arranged in such a way that we can rely on God’s moral qualities –his honesty– not to mislead us about the relationships between our experiences and the way the world is. As much as Descartes Locke’s epistemic worries are saved by a non-deceitful Creator” (Rogers 2004, p. 251). And Leibniz’s “pre-established harmony” can be seen as a version of this thought, in the sense that the substantially different kinds of objects, the mental and the physical do not interact but are harmonious which is established by God. Even though Leibniz presents the thesis in ontological terms, it has surely epistemological implications that are like Locke’s. For this, see (Leibniz 1998, p. 279).

⁷⁶ More exactly, Kant maintains that rational theology is not capable of producing a valid proof for the existence of God. He says that there are three kinds of proofs only (*CPR* A591/B619). First, the ontological proof is not valid because the existence is not a real predicate (*CPR* A600/B628). Second, the cosmological proof is not valid either, because it says there is something that exists absolutely necessary, however, experience cannot inform us as to absolute necessity. Thus, the argument assumes the existence of the absolutely necessary being and depends on the ontological proof (*CPR* A608/B636). Third, the physico-theological proof is not valid either because it cannot give any determinate concept of the supreme cause of the world (*CPR* A629/B657).

unknown or dubious and all we are left is the inner sphere of our own consciousness, since the existence of God is not (and could not be) proven. If we continue to hold the representationalism, only one option seems to arise: we might scale down our benchmark of knowledge, saying that there might be other sorts of knowledge than the absolute or demonstrably certain one. However, to say this is to admit that the existence of the external world must depend on “faith,” which Kant finds unbearable.

5.2. Preliminary Remarks on the Refutation of Idealism

We have seen in §19 of the Deduction that the judgment is the constitutive of objective validity, or equivalently, objecthood. One of the implications of this is that, as Abela puts it, Kant rejects “the idea that anything can stand outside the activity of judgment and still be assigned an epistemological role” (Abela 2002, p. 85). We might say two things about this.

Firstly, as we have seen in sections 2.2 and 2.3, Kant’s target is not the objects *an sich* and nor does the metaphysics. On the contrary, Kant deals with epistemic conditions that objectivates the object and an epistemology that focuses on the judgments that involve assertion (“judging”) in addition to the judgeable content. Hence, Kant has a “judgment-oriented approach” that divorces from pre-Kantian rationalist metaphysics and empiricism. He says, “It is not at all metaphysics that the *Critique* is doing but a whole new science, never before attempted, namely the critique of *an a priori judging reason*” (*Corre* 10: 340). It is crucial to see this judgment-oriented approach gives a way to rejecting the skeptical idealism of Cartesianism. For in the absence of the activity of judging nothing is to be known, or to use again Abela’s apt phrase, nothing could be “that *something* is the case” (Abela 2002, p. 51). To put it in more contemporary terms, the cognitive subjects can appeal to no truthmakers in the absence of truthbearers. While searching out putative “noumenal truthmakers”⁷⁷ Cartesianism violates this insight.

Secondly, in my opinion, Kant conceives truth as an “immanent function” of the empirical system depicted in the Principles of Pure Understanding and we cannot

⁷⁷ I borrow the term from Baç (Baç 2006, p. 201).

make sense of truth as it is in “transcendent function” that is the locus of transcendental idea and transcendental illusion. Following Kemp Smith, we might say that “principles and facts mutually establish one another, the former proving themselves by their capacity to account for the relevant phenomena, and the latter distinguishing themselves from irrelevant accompaniments by their conformity to the principles which make insight possible” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 36). Furthermore, as Kemp Smith correctly puts it, “nothing can exist or be conceived save as fitted into a system which [...] decides as to its truth” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 37).⁷⁸

These considerations might explain the place of the Refutation of Idealism in the first *Critique*. Roughly, the section is placed at the end of the Principles of Pure Understanding. This suggests that the Cartesian viewing of truth, hinging on “noumenal truthmakers” or “transcendent function,” which makes no systematic effort towards the empirical world is presumably the chief reason for its falling into skepticism. We are now equipped with the view that truth is the immanent function of the empirical system, and therefore, rescind the skeptical idealism.⁷⁹ Furthermore, the Refutation explicitly depends on the Analogies. As Abela puts it, “The Refutation offers no arguments not already implicitly contained in the Analogies” (Abela 2002, p. 186). If so, the Analogies might be viewed as the evidence of Kant’s commitment to realism, simply because the Refutation intends to argue for an anti-skeptical and realist conclusion.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Kemp Smith maintains that Kant is a coherentist (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 36). I think that the fact that truth is an immanent function of the empirical world as a system depicted by the principles and that truth is mere coherence are distinguishable. For one thing, the former amounts to the “coherence theory of justification,” which means a test for truth (this is something Kant endorses), and the latter amounts to the “coherence theory of truth,” which says the meaning of truth is mere coherence (this is not something Kant says). However, Kemp Smith makes no such distinction and says harshly, “Kant is the real founder of the coherence theory of truth” (Kemp Smith, *ibid*). Kemp Smith is not alone in this view. For instance, see (Stevenson 1983, p. 141). I find valuable coherentist readings of Kant insofar as they underscore what I call “the immanent functioning of truth,” however I reject the ascription of the coherence theory of truth to Kant because it weakens the robust empirical realism contained in the Transcendental Analytic. As BonJour says, “the coherence theory of truth seems to require an idealist metaphysics in which only mental states (and the minds that have them) genuinely exist” (BonJour 2009, p. 33).

⁷⁹ Cf. Kant says, “If our cognition of outer objects had to be a cognition of them and of space as things in themselves, then we would never be able to prove their reality from our sensory representations of them outside us. For only representations are given to us, their cause can be (either) inside us or outside us, and sense can never decide anything about this” (*NF* 18:615).

⁸⁰ Allais correctly points out that the arguments of the Analogies (on their own) serve as evidence of Kant’s empirical realism (Allais 2015, p. 48). She says, “Kant does not present his principles as

To put it in more detail, the Refutation is placed immediately after the Second Postulate of Empirical Thought. This postulate says: “That which is connected with the material conditions of experience (of sensation) is actual” (*CPR* B266). Kant here maintains that “perception [...] yields [...] the sole characteristic of actuality” (*CPR* A226/B273). Thus, whatever is immediately perceived, it is contended, is actual. Furthermore, if something is not directly perceived but “is connected with some perceptions in accordance with the principles of their empirical connection (the analogies)” (*CPR* A226/B273), we still assert its actuality. Kant now says that “a powerful objection” (*CPR* B274) is raised and the Refutation of it is needed.

The objection against the Second Postulate is that of the skeptic. More exactly, as Caranti puts it, “what the skeptic calls into question is precisely whether [the] condition [of] being bound up with sensation is a reliable mark of actuality” (Caranti 2007, p. 130). The skeptic at stake is the meditator in the Second Meditation: she ascertains only that she exists and entertains thoughts while calling into doubt whether the external world exists, and her thoughts correspond to anything.

5.3. The Refutation of Idealism: Proof-In-Five-Steps

Against the skeptical idealism of the meditator, Kant now offers a theorem that states: “The mere but empirically determined, consciousness of my own existence // proves the existence of objects in space outside me” (*CPR* B275). I divide here the theorem with a double slash. The first half expresses the position we are left in the Second Meditation. The second half says we can prove the external world depending on the situation the first half indicates.

The proof consists of five steps compressed into a single paragraph (*CPR* B276) with three additional notes (*CPR* B277-79). We now survey each step respectively and consult the notes whenever necessary.

[Step 1.] I am conscious of my existence as determined in time.

principles that must be used for constructing an objective world out of sense data, but rather as principles that are true of empirically real objects” (Allais 2015, p. 50).

This is the starting point of the proof. As expected from what I have said, Kant intends to create the exact situation of the meditator in the Second Meditation: a malicious demon deceives the cognitive subject, and everything becomes suspicious except the fact I exist and I am thinking being. In other words, the external world is dubious, and only self-knowledge is certain. However, on a Kantian context, self-knowledge is an intricate issue. Recall that Kant clearly distinguishes transcendental apperception and inner sense, arguing that only the latter provides a cognitive claim, and the former is, in contrast, merely the logical subject and incorporates an analytical claim. To paraphrase, we have no (empirical) knowledge of the pure or formal subject of thought, i.e., the mere “I think” of the original unity of apperception. Therefore, on Kant’s formulation, the Cartesian cogito is taken as an empirical consciousness of inner sense, or equivalently, “the consciousness of my existence as determined in time.”⁸¹ This suggests that the cognitive subject possesses a stream of thought over time, i.e., temporally structured.

One interpretive problem concerning Step 1 is whether Kant’s reinterpretation of the cogito possessing a stream of thoughts structured temporally is the same as that of the meditator in the Second Meditation. Descartes seems to propose a thinner conception of cogito as devoid of any temporal structure. As Caranti points out, “the validity of the cogito does not go beyond each *instant* in which the cogito is performed” (Caranti 2007, p. 135).⁸²

In response, we might say three things. To begin with, we might interpret Kant as suggesting a relatively thin temporal structure for the cognitive subject, in the sense

⁸¹ Cf. “[The] Cartesian appeal[s] to the *cogito* inference to secure the existence of the “I” by focusing on the activity of thinking, abstracting completely from the content of thought. But, according to Kant, this yields only the empty thought of the “I” as logical subject of thought, not the cognition of a determinate thinking being. Like all cognition, the latter requires intuition, in this case, inner intuition, which supplies the necessary content” (Allison 2004, p. 288).

⁸² Cf. “I am, I exist, this is certain. But for how long? Certainly only for as long as I am thinking; for perhaps if I were to cease from all thinking it might also come to pass that I might immediately cease altogether to exist” (Descartes 2008, p. 19). On the other hand, one might argue that “something that thinks” or the cogito in the Second Meditation already implicitly stands for the thinking substance (see Hatfield 2003, p. 106). As the Third Meditation makes evident, on that conception of the cogito, the issue of temporal structure does not seem a problem for Descartes obviously appeals to it. Cf. “When I perceive that I exist now, and also remember that I existed at some time before now” (Descartes 2008, p. 32).

that the self-awareness or self-knowledge is about only one's current mental state, in contrast to a thicker conception of temporal structure that includes the mental history or empirical facts about the subject (Allison 2004, p. 290). Admittedly, this reduces the problem but not extinguishes it.

Furthermore, we might say that the skeptic has to concede at least that minimal conception of temporal structure, without which entertaining thoughts is not possible in the genuine sense. That is to say, the skeptic must commit to at least entertain the thought that, say, "chair," or more exactly, "I (seem to) perceive a chair," and for this, it is necessary to apprehend and combine the manifold of intuitions of the chair, which involves a minimal temporal span and unitary self-consciousness to hold the successive and punctiform intuitions. As a result, the skeptic needs to accept at least a minimal temporal structure, because that much is suggested by our own thinking process. Kant says, "The reality of the object of inner sense (of myself and my state) is immediately clear through consciousness" (*CPR* A38/B55).⁸³ The skeptic cannot deny this "reality of inner sense."

Moreover, if the cogito does not possess a time structure even in that minimal sense, it seems that the feature of the cogito of being a thing drops. This is so because the thoughts of I are discrete items that fully change instant by instant and do not persist over a temporal span, it follows from this that the "I" is not a thing, let alone the thinking substance. For, as Caranti points out, being a thing at least includes the reidentifiability over time (Caranti 2007, p. 136).

Therefore, it seems safe to say that Step 1 is valid. To sum up, we should consider Kant's phrase "as determined in time" minimally; and even if Descartes does not commit to that minimal temporal structure between inner representations, he must do so.

[Step 2.] All time-determination presupposes something persistent in perception.

⁸³ Caranti detects that this idea is not original to Kant and its source is Lambert (Caranti 2007, p. 132). Lambert in the 1770 letter to Kant says: "Even an idealist must grant at least that changes really exist and occur in his representations. Thus time cannot be regarded as something unreal" (*Corre* 10:107).

This refers to the First Analogy.⁸⁴ In it, Kant offers two views. First, appearances are changing and in order to perceive change, there must be something abiding and permanent as the underlying ground of all change (*CPR* A183/B226). To put it otherwise, to perceive change, we need a reference point that is not changed: this is the substance. Second, the changing appearances are in time “in which all change of appearances is to be thought” (*CPR* A182/B225). However, “time cannot be perceived by itself” (*CPR* A182/B225) and the substance is the surrogate of time. “Persistence gives general expression to time as the constant correlate of all existence of appearances, all change and all accompaniment” (*CPR* A183/B226). Combining these two views, Kant says that without this persistent thing, there is no perceivable change and, therefore, time determination. “Thus this persistent thing in the appearances is the substratum of all time-determination, consequently also the condition of the possibility of all synthetic unity of perceptions, i.e., of experience” (*CPR* A184/B227).

Step 2 reiterates the lesson of the First Analogy. That is to say, all representations are changing and subject to time; in order to account for these two features, we need to presuppose an enduring substratum or substance that is the reference point for discriminating changing events and objects; this substance is eventually the surrogate of time and, therefore, the condition of any time determination. It seems to me that the First Analogy is plausible. Therefore, Step 2 presents no problem.

[Step 3.] This persistent thing, however, cannot be something in me, since my own existence in time can first be determined only through this persistent thing.

Here Step 3 has been an object of the hermeneutical debate with respect to its claim is defensible. It states that the persistent thing, which is the condition of temporal structure pertinent to inner representations, “cannot be something in me” and therefore refers to at least some chunk of the external world. However, the assertion seems problematic, in the sense that Kant needs to eliminate some other candidates for this persistent thing. At first look, the proof appears to offer no explicit elimination.

⁸⁴ The general conviction in the secondary literature is that Step 2 borrows its truth from the First Analogy (Allison 2004, p. 291) (Caranti 2007, p. 138) (Edmundts 2010, p.171) (Abela 2002, p. 189).

It appears that Kant needs to eliminate two alternatives. The first alternative is that the self could be this persistent thing. Moreover, the second alternative is that the inner experience as such, which is to say, the mental contents entertained by the “I” might be this persistent thing.

For the first possibility, Guyer maintains that Kant leaves unanswered why “the enduring self” serves as the persistent thing (Guyer 1987, p. 284). I think that Guyer’s phrase “the enduring self” seems to amount to one thing: the noumenal self. Kant agrees with Hume that the empirical self is in constant flux and provides no (persisting) object. Therefore, that enduring self cannot be the empirical self. Furthermore, as we have seen, for epistemic reasons, the flux of empirical self must be somewhat bonded; the equipment that is responsible for binding is called as “apperception.” Here we should keep in mind that apperception is only a logical subject and cognitively empty. Therefore, we cannot equate apperception with the noumenal self. In Note 1, Kant reiterates that point (*CPR* B277). Although we cannot go into detail here, it should be pointed out that we have no epistemic access to a noumenal self. If we attempt such access, we then commit a “hypostatization” of apperception (*CPR* A402) which is the source of transcendental illusion with respect to the psychological idea of reason.⁸⁵ To sum up, any (theoretical) cognitive claim as to the self must be concerned with only empirical consciousness of the inner sense, which is not obviously enduring. Therefore, it is safe to say the first alternative is eliminated and Guyer’s criticism is misleading.

For the second possibility, it suffices to point out that Kant considers that the contents of the inner sense are constantly flowing. Therefore, they are not capable of playing the role of the persistent thing. As we have seen, the contents of inner sense, that is, manifolds of intuitions are too weak entities in that they cannot give an account for the robust objects that are stable and possess numerical identity.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Allison says, “Kant understands hypostatization [...] as taking what merely exists in thought to be a real object existing outside the thinking subject” (Allison 2004, p. 338).

⁸⁶ Allison points out that the persistent thing cannot be something intuited via inner sense; this is so because the objects of inner sense “is a fleeting occurrence [and] inner intuition does not provide anything capable of determining the existence of the subject in time” (Allison 2004, p. 292).

Given that the two threatening possibilities are eliminated, Step 3 works. It asserts the persistent thing is “something outside me.” Recall that Kant distinguishes between two senses of in us/outside us in the Paralogisms. The “something outside me” here is, as we shall see, not transcendently outside but empirically outside, which amounts to the external world.

[Step 4.] Thus the perception of this persistent thing is possible only through a *thing* outside me and not through the mere *representation* of a thing outside me. Consequently, the determination of my existence in time is possible only by means of the existence of actual things that I perceive outside myself.

The exact import of Step 4 again has been controversial. Guyer holds that “a *thing* outside me” cannot be an appearance as conceived in the first edition of the *Critique*. As Guyer sees it, the aim of the Refutation is “to prove that we must be acquainted with enduring objects in space” (Guyer 1987, p. 282). However, according to Guyer, in the first edition of the *Critique*, Kant reduces appearance to mere mental items and commits the view that “we are never directly acquainted with anything but our own representations” (Guyer 1987, p. 324), which suggests that we cannot know things in themselves. Thus, Guyer maintains that the Refutation means “[a] break with [Kant’s] reductionism of 1781” (Guyer 1987, p. 288). In other words, for Guyer, the first edition of the *Critique* argues for phenomenalism, whereas the Refutation defends an “ontological realism” (Guyer 1987, p. 324). We shall discuss Guyer’s phenomenalist reading of transcendental idealism in the next chapter. But now, it is necessary to deal with Guyer’s claims that “a *thing* outside me” cannot be an appearance and that Kant abandons his earlier teaching of 1781 in the Refutation.

First, we consider Guyer’s claim that “a *thing* outside me” cannot be an appearance. Again, recall that Kant distinguishes between two senses of in us/outside us: the former sense amounts to empirical in us/outside us and the latter to transcendental in us/outside us. There is no reason that an empirically outside thing cannot be counted as an appearance. Things in themselves are only transcendently outside things, which obviously are not appearances. We should underscore that Kant in 1781 makes this distinction. Therefore, Guyer’s contention seems implausible.

Second, we take into consideration Guyer’s claim that Kant disdains the phenomenalist transcendental realism of 1781 in favor of the “ontological realism”

of the Refutation in 1787. To paraphrase, Guyer asserts that transcendental idealism is incompatible with the argument of the Refutation, which suggests Kant rejects what he has earlier said in the name of transcendental idealism. As Edmundts says, “It is hard to believe that Kant broke with such deep convictions of his philosophy” (Edmundts 2010, p. 181). Furthermore, we should emphasize that Kant in 1781 already offers an argument for the existence of the external world (the notorious Fourth Paralogism) and the Refutation is the successor of this. The predecessor proof seems to be different with respect to the presentation or the argumentative structure, but the main contentment remains the same.⁸⁷ As Bencivenga points out, Kant certainly conceives no consistencies in his position between the 1781 and 1787 versions of the *Critique* and suggests the Refutation differs from its processor proof with respect to method only (Bencivenga 1987, pp. 71-72).

Hence, we now fully understand what is at stake in Step 4. The persistent thing in Step 3 is now ascribed to “a *thing* outside me” and the latter is an enduring empirical object, i.e., a substance. In the Analogies, it is said, substances “exist unperceived” (Allais 2015, p. 48) and remain to exist “when we are not looking at them, unlike our perception of things” (Allais *ibid*). The upshot is that substances are enduring objects, by virtue of which time determination in inner sense is possible.

Kant states that the Refutation aims to “establish that we have experience and not merely imagination of outer things” (*CPR* B275). It is now important to recognize that experience is a technical word in Kant’s lexicon and defined as: “an empirical cognition, that is, a cognition that determines an object through perception” (*CPR* B218). Therefore, it is obvious that “a *thing* outside me” is the object of experience, which is the object of outer sense, in the sense that what we cognize are not imaginary but empirically real things. In Note 2, Kant gives a clearer expression of this: if we do not have the experience of the external world, “we do not even have anything persistent on which we could base the concept of a substance” (*CPR* B278). The (empirically real) substances are the persistent things, thereby which time determinations and thus temporally ordered inner representations become possible.

⁸⁷ Cf. “While Kant speaks from the standpoint of the transcendental philosopher in the Fourth Paralogism, he writes from the standpoint of empirical consciousness in the Refutation” (Beiser 2008, p. 116).

There is one issue we have not yet considered. Some scholars, such as Allison and Caranti, raise the following worry: why is it not enough to imagine a persistent thing instead of cognizing it? Or, to put it otherwise, why can this persistent thing not be a product of imagination instead of an actual object outside me? (Allison 2004, p. 294) (Caranti 2007, p. 147) Eventually, it is conceivable that there is a hidden faculty, a “super-imagination” that causes all deceiving representations of the external world. For the skeptical idealist, mere conceivability gives a reason to doubt.

In the *Critique*, Kant seems to have two responses to this worry. First, in Note 3, Kant maintains that imagination is essentially a reproductive faculty in the sense that if it is not supplied by the outer sense, it cannot work (*CPR* B279). In other words, the material of imagination comes from the outer sense. For Allison, this response imports the following maneuver: “The mere fact that we have outer representation is taken as proof that we have an outer sense, which, in turn, entails that the mind is affected by, and perceives, actually existing objects (*though not as they are in themselves*)” (emphasis mine) (Allison 2004, p. 294). Allison sees this reply as “inadequate” (Allison 2004, p. 293). However, in my opinion, Kant’s response is convincing on an intuitive basis in that it says we do not have a “super imagination” that generates deceiving representations. Of course, it is a logical possibility that we might have a “super imagination.” However, this possibility ultimately suggests that we are delusional and seems to not incorporate an “epistemological possibility.” It is an epistemological cul-de-sac. The meditator in the first Meditation considers this, i.e., whether she is a “one of those madmen” (Descartes 2008, p. 14), but immediately rejects it because it makes no sense to consider it.⁸⁸

As far as I can see, Allison’s pessimistic conviction about Kant’s reply to the super-imagination stems from the anxiety that if we come to accept that we perceive actually existing objects (this is what the Refutation intends to prove) then a direct realist ontology might override the Kantian epistemology. To see this, we pay attention to the quote I just gave the above paragraph from Allison. Here he reconstructs Kant’s counter. In the anxious note in the parentheses that I italicize, he

⁸⁸ Cf. “They are lunatics, and I should seem no less of a madman myself if I should follow their example in any way” (Descartes *ibid*).

says that the direct objects of perception are not things in themselves. It seems to me this indication is not just redundant but also puzzling. To be sure, we might distinguish two types of mind-dependency: being “mind-framed” and being “mind-controlled.”⁸⁹ Thus, we can say that if appearances in Kant’s lexicon amount to objects as conceived under epistemic conditions, or equivalently, as things appear to us, the mind-dependency of appearance is concerned solely with the first type that is epistemological and neutral about the ontological status of objects. In contrast, the second type commits us to an ontological dependency. To say we directly perceive actually existing, or equivalently, not mind-controlled objects, and to say we perceive objects presented by epistemic conditions, or equivalently as appear to us, does not contradict. The first claim defends epistemological dependency, and the second argues for ontological independence. I think that Allison here presumably conflates the two senses of mind-dependency and finds no room for epistemic reading in the realism of the Refutation. Considering the distinction between being “mind-framed” and being “mind-controlled,” we might rehabilitate Allison’s anxiety. Thus, Kant’s response against a “super-imagination” gains credibility.

Kant’s second response is contained in a very hectic sentence:

The representation of something *persisting* in existence is not the same as *persisting representation*; for that can be quite variable and changeable, as all our representations are, even the representations of matter, while still being related to something permanent, which must therefore be a thing distinct from all my representations and external, the existence of which is necessarily included in the *determination* of my own existence, which with it constitutes only a single experience, which could not take place even as inner if it were not simultaneously (in part) outer (*CPR* Bxii).

Admittedly, Kant’s wording is pedantic and agonizingly dull. Restricted to its essentials, the sentence asserts a somewhat phenomenological asymmetry between the “representation of something persisting in existence” and the “persisting representation.” The gist is that “persisting representation” is momentary and transient because it is just a representation, while the “representation of something persisting in existence” is not so in that it denotes an external thing as distinct from all my inner content.

⁸⁹ I borrow the distinction from Chang (Chang 2022, pp. 71-72).

After 1787, in the *Reflexionen*, Kant ponders this phenomenological asymmetry and gives rich material to argue for it.⁹⁰ In an interesting sketch, Kant says that “something that persists” (*NF* 18:614) is the condition to represent distinct perceptions as simultaneous because the inner sense provides only successive apprehension. This means that something that persists carries out a peculiar role that the inner sense cannot fulfill and therefore we should concede their asymmetry. At this point, one may ask: why is representing simultaneity needed? The answer is that it is required when the direction of succession is a matter of indifference, which is to say, distinct perceptions such as A and B can be apprehended not only from A to B but also from B to A. As a result, “something persisting in existence”, which is the object of outer sense, is required in order to capture the simultaneity of our representations. Kant says, “The representations of sense A and B must therefore have some ground other than that in inner sense, but yet in some sense, hence in outer sense; consequently there must be objects of outer sense” (*NF* 18:614).

These two responses, in my view, suffice to concede the validity of Step 4.

[Step 5.] Now consciousness in time is necessarily combined with the consciousness of the possibility of this time-determination: Therefore it is also necessarily combined with the existence of the things outside me, as the condition of time-determination; i.e., the consciousness of my own existence is at the same time an immediate consciousness of the existence of other things outside me.

Step 5 is the final step. Its precise duty is to piece the earlier steps together. The key contention is that, as Beiser puts it, “spatial order is the *transcendental* condition of inner awareness, and as such *constitutive* of our awareness of ourselves in time” (Beiser 2008, p. 118). In other words, Step 5 says that inner awareness, or more exactly, our temporally organized (in a minimal sense) mental contents depend on experience of the external world.

Finally, we now consider the problem of question-begging. Since the Refutation is in the form of *reductio ad absurdum*, it has been questioned whether Kant’s proof commits question-begging. It needs to be accepted that the scope of the argument is

⁹⁰ Scholars emphasize that Kant tries to rewrite and develop the Refutation even after 1787 in the *Reflexionen* (Guyer, part IV) (Caranti 2007, ch. 6) (Beiser 2008, ch. 6).

vast and ambitious, in that it starts from the exact situation of the meditator in the Second Meditation, and it is supposed to show that the skeptical idealism of the meditator does not hold and that we should commit to the robust empirical world. Given this, it is not obvious whether an argument employs “philosophical magic” (Marshall 2019, p. 82), which is to say, a fallacy. As Marshall points out, “It is hard to see how Kant’s proof can reach its ontologically robust conclusion from its ontologically modest premise without begging the question against its target” (Marshall, *ibid*).

Throughout my reconstruction of the proof, I cannot detect any question-begging. However, this does not mean that Kant does not have any additional premises that the skeptic might reject. Rather, this means that whatever Kant has additional premises, they do not presuppose (fallaciously) the conclusion. In my reconstruction, I track Kant’s three additional premises.

First, as we have seen in Step 1, that self-knowledge does not yield a noumenal but only an empirical self. Apperception refers to only cognitively empty and a logical subject, thus it cannot give us a noumenal self; so, self-knowledge can be attained only in the mode of empirical self-consciousness. The Cartesian presumably rejects this. However, Kant’s criticism of Cartesianism in the Paralogisms according to which the Cartesian takes apperception as the noumenal self via the committing of “hypostatization” seems convincing. Therefore, the first premise appears to be cogent.

Second, as we have seen in Step 2, that substance is the persistent entity within the spatiotemporal framework. The early modern philosophers, such as Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz refuse this because (according to them) substance is timeless and spaceless. In response, Kant insists that the substance as we see in the dogmatic metaphysics of the rationalists is “tautological” (*CPR* A184/B227) and somewhat useless for our empirical purposes. In order to get the cognitively apt concept of substance, we need to schematize it, i.e., apply it within the spatiotemporal framework. This excludes conceiving substances as timeless and spaceless entities. If we go the other way around, this invites the sophistries of transcendent ontology. Hence, the second premise appears to be credible.

Third, as we have seen in Step 3, that our inner awareness or mental contents are fleeting and indeterminate. Kant considers this, as we have seen, in the Deduction with respect to constitution of objecthood. The gist is that fleeting mental contents need to be apprehended and conceptualized. In so doing, we can arrive at the robust conception of object, which is to say, the object stands in unity as distinct from whatever our fleeting mental content occurs. For instance, Descartes and Hume would oppose this, considering that the external world is “derived” (for Hume) or “inferred” (for Descartes) from the mental content. On this account, the mental content is determinate, in the sense that it is “a self-authenticating internal experience” (Abela 2002, p. 113), and the external world is recognized only mediately by this inner content.

Kant now rejects this account. Part of the reason for this seems that this contradicts our robust conception of object as we have seen in §19 of the Deduction. This means that Kant contends that robust empirical objects are not second-hand constructions by our impressions. Thus, Kant now maintains that consciousness of the external world is “immediate” just like the “consciousness of my own existence.” This suggests that no mental intermediary occurs in our experience of the external world. I will go into detail about this in the next section but now it is important to recognize that if this premise does not hold neither the Refutation nor the Deduction works. For our current purposes, it suffices to say that Kant’s third premise is plausible. I have dealt already with this premise in reconstructing §19 of the Deduction.

Therefore, we should maintain that Kant’s three premises are valid from the standpoint of Kantian philosophy and do not directly (i.e., fallaciously) presuppose the existence of the external world. Rather, as taken together in an argument, they invite us to commit to the ontologically robust empirical world. Therefore, we should conclude that the Refutation does not commit a question-begging. As a result, the Refutation can convince “neutral, reasonable readers” (Marshall 2019, p. 78) that the skepticism is false. We do not need to scale the achievement of the argument via convincing the skeptic who obviously operates contradictory assumptions to Kant’s additional ones and is entrapped by empirical idealism. As Marshall points out, “The reason not to beg the question against the skeptic is not to win her over [...] but

rather to convince reasonable third parties that Cartesian skepticism is false” (Marshall *ibid.*).

5.4. Kant’s Rupture from Cartesian Epistemology

The Refutation concludes that the consciousness of the external world need not mental intermediary, or equivalently, we neither derive nor infer the external world via the mental content; but rather, as Kant puts it, “consciousness of the existence of other things outside me” is “immediate” just like “the consciousness of my own existence” (*CPR* B275). This is what I call the “immediacy thesis.” Moreover, the immediacy thesis does not occur alone in the B edition of the *Critique*. In the A edition, Kant also states:

External things exist as well as my self, and indeed both exist on the immediate testimony of my self-consciousness, only with this difference: the representation of my Self, as the thinking subject, is related merely to inner sense, but the representations that designate extended beings are also related to outer sense (*CPR* A371).

By contrast, Descartes and Hume among others commit the “mediacy thesis,” which argues that external objects are constructions via the mental content and the latter is an intermediary to represent the former. A variety of scholars point out Kant’s immediacy thesis in contrast to the “mediacy thesis” of Descartes and Hume (Allison 1973, p. 47) (Abela 2002, p. 207) (Caranti 2007, p. 96) (Allais 2007, pp. 468-9) (Allais 2015, p. 128) (Gomes 2017, p. 20).

In my view, Kant defends the immediacy thesis in both editions of the *Critique*. Moreover, the immediacy thesis is not only essential to the Refutation but the argument of the Deduction, especially §19, brings into play it. In a nutshell, Kant considers that objects of outer sense, i.e., empirical objects, or equivalently, appearances are not mental constructions.

Furthermore, Kant also argues for what I call the “publicity thesis,” which maintains that the empirical objects or events are public and not mere private items. Kant says, “There is only *one experience* [...] just as there is only one space and time, in which

all forms of appearance and all relation of being or non-being take place” (*CPR* A111). This means that all the percipients experience a numerically identical world. In the *Prolegomena*, the “judgments of experience” and in the B Deduction, the “objective unity of consciousness” intends to convey this publicity thesis: empirical objects or events are not just immediately recognized but also are public, such that all the cognitive subjects experience the one and the common empirical world. Again, numerous scholars point to Kant’s publicity thesis in contrast to the “privacy thesis” of Descartes and Hume (Allison 1973, p. 48) (Abela 2002, p. 109) (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 274) (Ameriks 2003, p. 5) (Allais 2015, p. 45) (Jauernig 2021, p. 361). To put it in more detail, the Cartesian account of perception insists that representations belong to the “I” or are situated originally in the first-person point of view as private mental items. Hume does not divorce from that account, in that he concedes that we can at best make “judgments of perceptions” that are subjective and private states, lacking “objective validity.” Kant now distances himself from that account.

We have seen that Descartes commits to indirect realism or representationalism, according to which the mind knows nothing but its own ideas and we access the external world via the mental content. We have also seen that this view is the default position among philosophers prior to Kant, including Hume. We see now representationalism consists of two theses: the mediacy thesis and the privacy thesis. In contrast, as we have seen, Kant rejects these theses and substitutes their opposites: the immediacy thesis and publicity thesis. Therefore, it needs to be said that Kant is not a representationalist or an indirect realist, in that he ruptures from Cartesian epistemology or account of perception.

Some might protest my reading of Kant in the following way: if Kant is not a representationalist, how can we account for the central terms in his philosophy, such as representation and appearance, that seem to suggest that the external reality (things in themselves) remain unknown, and our knowledge claims are about the mental contents in the head? To put it in more detail, Kant’s term of representation at first glance seems to be equivalent to the Cartesian idea,⁹¹ and the unknowability of

⁹¹ For instance, Beiser maintains that Kant, “to a certain extent,” “is an adherent of the theory of ideas” (Beiser 2008, p. 133); and that “Kant’s preference for the term ‘representation’ amounts to

things in themselves has the flavor that the external world as distinct from our heads remains unknowable or dubitable.⁹² However, I think that these apparent similarities are misleading. Following Allais, we should say that Kantian “representation” can be understood as “presentation,” which is a possible translation of the original German word, *Vorstellung*. As Allais puts it, “To say that the objects of our knowledge are *Vorstellungen* is to say that they are things that are presented to us; it need not follow that they are mental intermediaries” (Allais 2015, p. 25). Moreover, appearance does not amount to a second class of objects besides the thing in itself, nor does it imply a “veil of perception.” Instead, “appearance” could also be read in “a more metaphysically neutral way” in the sense that it refers “merely to what appears to us” (Allais, *ibid*). As we have seen, the epistemic two-aspect reading requires taking appearance in this adverbial way.

To put it otherwise, if we interpret Kant’s philosophy as if it were representationalist, I think, we could not make sense of Kant’s anti-skeptical stance. Moreover, as we have seen, Kant’s anti-skepticism is not an additional portion of his philosophy but is an integral part of it. This means that the Deduction and the Refutation are connected, in that both parts reject the (Cartesian or Humean) empirical idealism, that holds the mediacy and privacy theses, and substitute the immediacy and publicity theses. In so doing, both the Deduction and the Refutation argue for empirical realism depending on transcendental idealism.

According to Kant, Cartesian skeptical idealism or Humean skeptical empiricism incorporates a form of transcendental realism that results in empirical idealism. Recall, for Kant, that only transcendental idealism can recommend empirical realism. Therefore, if we genuinely acknowledge Kant’s empirical realism, then we should rescind the representationalist, or equivalently, empirical idealist interpretation of Kant’s transcendental idealism. We shall see in the next chapter that the misinterpretation of Kant, according to which he is an adherent of

merely verbal departure from the way of ideas [...] [in the sense that his usage of] this term [is] remarkably similar to the traditional ‘idea’ (Beiser 2008, p. 134).

⁹² We have seen Guyer seems to interpret the unknowability of things in this way (see Guyer 1987, p. 324) (also cf. Allison 2007, p. 33).

representationalism is responsible for the view that transcendental idealism incorporates a phenomenism or Berkeleyian mode of empirical idealism.

CHAPTER 6

KANT AND BERKELEY: THE PROBLEM OF THE PHENOMENALIST READING

Kant's theoretical philosophy, and particularly its core doctrine, i.e., transcendental idealism, has historically been viewed as a Berkeleyian kind of phenomenalist idealism. Admittedly, this reception of transcendental idealism seems to be at odds with the main arguments of the First *Critique*.

To sum up, I have argued in Chapter 3 that the Transcendental Aesthetic defends not an ontological or metaphysical thesis but an epistemological one. In Chapter 4, I have maintained that the Transcendental Deduction depends on what Kant calls in the A Deduction “constitution of an object” (*CPR* A129), according to which objects of sensibility cannot be accounted for via the Humean kind of associativism—that is, the view that objects are constructions out of sensible impressions. Instead, in Kant's view, objects are robust. This means that there must “be a ground why there should be a thing that corresponds to something we have in our thoughts” (*CPR* A129) or, to put it differently, there are what I call “robust objects,” which are unitary objects in themselves, irrespective of “any difference in the condition of the subject” (*CPR* B143). Finally, in Chapter 5, I have pointed out that Kant defends an ontological realism about the external world, committing to “a *thing* outside me and not through the mere *representation* of a thing outside me” (*CPR* B276). As a result, Kant seems to hold ontologically realist presuppositions or conclusions related to his meta-epistemological position, i.e., transcendental idealism.

Things are not that easy, however. The present chapter is intended to provide a historical overview of the phenomenalist exegesis of Kant and to attempt to overcome it. It is divided into four sections. The first provides an overview of the

phenomenalist reading of Kant by focusing on the so-called Göttingen Review. The second briefly expounds on Berkeley's immaterialism and his "master argument" in *Principles of Human Knowledge*. The third deals with Kant's anti-Berkeleyianism by analyzing certain aspects of his corpus. Finally, the fourth sheds light on some presuppositions that, in my view, seem unwarranted and defends the claim that Kant is not a phenomenalist.

6.1. Preliminary Remarks on the Phenomenalist Reading

After the publication of the *Critique* in 1781, the notorious so-called Göttingen Review in 1782 accuses Kant of Berkeleyian phenomenism. According to the Review, Kant's philosophy maintains that

[all] our cognitions arise from certain modifications of our self that we call sensations. What they exist in, whence they are aroused, that is at bottom completely unknown to us. If there might be an actual thing in which the representations inhere, or actual things independent of us that produce them, we do not know even the lowliest predicate from the one or the other (Feder-Garve 2004, p. 201).

The first thing to notice is the bizarre language of the Review. Although what it says is not completely wrong, or at least does not seem wrong in the first place, the wording that it uses seems incorrect. Take the first and second sentences. Kant says that cognition depends on sensible intuition, whereas the Review claims that Kant states that cognition arises from sensations. There is a slight difference between sensation and intuition. As Allais points out, intuitions are not sensations and are not to be assimilated into them (Allais 2010, pp. 60-61) (Allais 2015, ch. 7). On my understanding, sensations correspond to matter only and intuitions refer to matter with the contribution of the forms of sensibility, i.e., space and time. It should be kept in mind that my reading differs from Allais's in that I do not think sensibility introduces us to individuated and perceptually particular objects. In my view, individuation is completed only after the contribution of the understanding.⁹³

Some may ask: "So, what?" In my view, the difference is of importance. Sensations, i.e., modifications of ourselves, are nothing but mental. However, as we have seen in

⁹³ See also footnote 64.

section 3.1, this is not the case for intuitions. Intuitions result from “affection” and provide something extra-mental, pre-intentional existential loading. Hence, the Review unjustly substitutes intuitions or sensible intuitions with sensations, and the result is that Kant seems to say that cognition depends only on something mental, which is not something that Kant asserts. If this were the case, space and time would collapse into one another, as intuitions of outer sense cannot provide us with something other than intuitions of inner sense.

Furthermore, the last sentence of the quote pretends that the things in themselves are actually existing entities apart from appearances, and we cannot access them. The picture that the Review depicts is as follows: on the one side there are mental items, i.e., modifications of self, and on the other side there are actually existing things about which we cannot know anything. However, as we have seen in section 2.2, things in themselves refer to not ontologically real things but to cognitively empty *concepts* abstracted from the conditions of sensibility. If the former were the case, to reiterate Heidemann’s point, “we cannot rule out the skeptical possibility of being fundamentally deceived in our cognitive claims” (Heidemann 2022, p. 520). Fortunately, an alternative reading is available: the two-aspect view. By adopting this interpretation, Kant’s theoretical philosophy does not accommodate the picture depicted by the Review.

After this, the Review goes on to explain the transcendental ideality of space and time:

We regard the intuitions of the outer senses as things and events outside us because they all occur next to one another in a certain space and after one another in a certain time. That is real for us which we represent somewhere and at some time. Space and time themselves are nothing real outside us, are not relations either, nor concepts we’ve abstracted, but are subjective laws of our faculty of representation, forms of sensations, subjective conditions of sensory intuition. Upon these concepts of sensations as mere modifications of our self (upon which Berkeley also mainly built his idealism) of space, and of time, rests the one foundation pillar of the Kantian system (Feder-Garve 2004, p. 202).

The first sentence appears problematic as it positions the Kantian view on space and time too closely to Leibnizian relationalism. Recall that space and time, according to

Leibniz, are nothing but relations and relations are derivative and dependent entities on concrete empirical individuals. In contrast, Kant argues that the relation between space and spatial objects is such that space is primary, and spatial objects are somehow secondary or dependent. In short, Kant reverses the Leibnizian idea by saying that space is “a necessary representation, a priori, which is the ground of all outer intuitions” (*CPR* A24/B39). However, the Review portrays Kant as suggesting that space and time are mere constructions out of sense data, denoting only relations between our impressions or sensible things.

What is worse, the third sentence conflates or overlooks the distinction Kant draws between transcendental/empirical outside us, claiming that “space and time are nothing real outside us.” The claim is true in the transcendental sense, i.e., abstracted from our epistemological conditions but is inaccurate in the empirical sense. Space and time are not merely occurrences in our heads.

Due to these critical misunderstandings, the Review concludes that Kant’s position is very similar to Berkeley’s idealism. For one thing, according to the Review, Kant claims that we can know nothing but our modifications. To put it in Davidsonian terms, for the Review, Kant defends that we cannot know whether our mental items or beliefs correspond to the actual state of affairs, because correspondence in this kind requires somewhat of a confrontation between mental and non-mental but “no such confrontation makes sense, for of course we can’t get outside our skins to find out what is causing the internal happening of which we are aware” (Davidson 2006, p. 230). For another, the Review suggests that in Kant’s view, spatial and temporal relations only mean “subjective laws of our faculty of representations.” Therefore, whatever is spatial and/or temporal appears to be inflicted by our subjectivity and is not real in any genuine sense. *Voilà*: Kantian subjectivistic or phenomenalist idealism.

When it comes to evaluating the argument of the Deduction, the Review takes the argument at stake as defending the view that “the understanding *makes* objects” (Feder-Garve 2004, p. 202). The term making is used to attribute to Kant a form of associativism or constructivism. However, as we have seen in section 4.4, Kant

rejects associativism.⁹⁴ Furthermore, the Review extends this interpretation to the argument in the Analogies, viewing it as a contribution of the constructivist position. This reading, however, appears highly implausible.⁹⁵

Although the Review commits some fatal mistakes in interpreting Kant's position, it becomes influential and the reading that it endorses eventually gains widespread acceptance. Stang states,

The phenomenalist reading [...] became the default interpretation for generations after the publication of the *Critique*. In fact, many of the key figures in German philosophy in 1781 and after (e.g., Mendelssohn, Eberhard, Hamann, Jacobi, Fichte, Schelling) take the phenomenalist or 'subjectivist' reading of Kant for granted and think this is precisely why Kant must be 'overcome' (Stang 2016).

Beiser notes that the overall reception of Kant's philosophy is that "it ends in a skeptical idealism" (Beiser 2008, p. 48), meaning that it casts doubt on "not only the existence of God and the soul, but also the existence of the external world and other minds" (Beiser, *ibid*). Almost all parties of Kant's contemporaries understand his philosophy in this way: the empiricist *Popularphilosophen*, the rationalist metaphysicians of the Leibnizian-Wolffian school, *Glaubensphilosophen*, and the German Idealists (Beiser, *ibid*). Until the beginning of the second half of the 20th century, the phenomenalist interpretation appears to have been dominant (Allais 2015, p. 8).

We should admit that the phenomenalist reading is not entirely without textual evidence. Although the Göttingen Review makes significant errors in interpreting Kant, it is at least fair to say that there are some passages in the first *Critique* that *seem* to endorse phenomenalism:

[N]ow external objects (bodies) are merely appearances, hence also nothing other than a species of my representations, whose objects are something only through these representations, but are nothing separated from them (*CPR* A371).

[E]verything intuited in space or in time, hence all objects of an experience possible for us, are nothing but appearances, i.e., mere representations, which as they are

⁹⁴ See footnote 39.

⁹⁵ See footnote 80.

represented, as extended beings or series of alterations, have outside our thoughts no existence grounded in itself (*CPR* A491/B519).

It is important to note that the first passage is removed from the B edition, which suggests that Kant is, at the very least, dissatisfied with the way in which it is formulated. But the second is left untouched in both editions. Overall, the problem with these passages is that they imply that Kant regresses into a kind of Berkeleyian subjective idealism, in that he seems to think that “there is nothing more to being an empirical object than being a certain sort of idea in the mind” (Gardner 1999, p. 119) (also see Kemp Smith 2003, p. 305). To put it otherwise, Kant here appears to reduce the *objects* of representations to the *representations* of objects, which implies that appearances are mentalized items of our consciousness.

There might be more than one tactic to resolve this trouble. First, it can be argued that Kant’s language in these passages is sloppy. This is supported by Kant’s decision to delete the first passage. It can be said for the second passage that Kant might forget to revise it because it is in the Antinomies, which, as Kemp Smith says, “must [...] be dated as among the earliest parts of the *Critique* [and] [the] teaching [in the Antinomies] is correspondingly immature” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 521). And yet, Kant repeatedly states in several other places that “appearances = mere representations” (*CPR* A31/B46; B165; A197/B242; A388; A391; A494/B522; A499/B527; A564/B592). Arguing that these passages were merely overlooked or forgotten altogether seems unconvincing.

Second, we should recall that Kant is a robust empirical realist, as we have seen in Chapters 3 and 4. This means that the reduction of empirical objects to our representations cannot be Kant’s genuine intention. Thus, instead of completely rejecting these passages, we may reconstruct them in a way that is compatible with robust empirical realism.

The best candidate for this reconstruction is Kant’s conceptual idealism or quasi-idealist epistemology. That is, Kant accepts “phenomenal truthmakers”⁹⁶ and that the

⁹⁶ I borrow and am indebted to Murat Baç for the concept of “phenomenal truthmakers” (Baç 2006, p. 187). Also see footnote 77.

empirical world genuinely exists as independent of the personal perceivers, but rejects “noumenal truthmakers” and that we can transcend the “human standpoint” to attain God’s point of view. In other words, our conceptual scheme, i.e., the categories, along with the special constitution of our sensibility provide a normative requirement and are constitutive of human experience.

This constitutiveness functions somewhat like Kuhnian theory-ladenness and appears to be primarily an epistemological thesis, not a form of old-fashioned subjective idealism or Berkeley’s phenomenalism. Since appearances amount to things that appear from the human standpoint, i.e., via epistemological conditions of our sensibility and understanding, when Kant says appearances have no independent existence from our thoughts, what he means is that appearances depend on our intellectual and sensible conditions, like a ‘proof’ or ‘experiment’ depends on the theory itself in terms of interpreting.

6.2. Berkeley’s Immaterialism

We now consider Berkeley’s phenomenalism. In this section, I highlight Berkeley’s project of immaterialism, showing its motivations and basic principles. After this, I present and briefly scrutinize his so-called “master argument” in the *Principles of Human Knowledge*.

Berkeley begins the *Principles* with an observation about the stark contrast between “philosophers” and “the illiterate bulk of mankind.” According to him, the latter “walk the high-road of plain, common sense and are [...] for the most part easy and undisturbed” (Berkeley 1999, p. 7) In contrast, philosophers are far from this serenity of mind and are at risk of falling into skepticism, or in Berkeley’s own words, “sit down in a forlorn scepticism” (Berkeley, *ibid*).

The cause of this situation, Berkeley says, cannot be attributed to the natural incapability of our faculties. Like all other early modern philosophers,⁹⁷ Berkeley holds that a benevolent God would not create us with such a defect. He states, “We

⁹⁷ See footnote 75.

should believe that God has dealt more bountifully with the sons of men, than to give them a strong desire for that knowledge, which He had placed quite out of their reach” (Berkeley 1999, p. 8). Therefore, the threat of skepticism and failure to achieve certain knowledge must stem from our own error.

According to Berkeley, the root cause for this error lies in the widespread belief that “abstract ideas” exist. As a stringent nominalist, Berkeley maintains that only concrete individual things exist and that speaking of “abstract ideas” is unwarranted. However, most philosophers take abstract ideas for granted. “He who is not a perfect stranger to the writings and disputes of philosophers, must needs acknowledge that no small part of them are spent about abstract ideas” (Berkeley 1999, p. 9).

What is an abstraction? We seem able to isolate in thought a quality or mode of things. For instance, consider a mug that I hold in my hand. This mug is a “complex idea” composed of simple ideas, such as extension and color. If we exclude all other ideas and take extension in isolation, it seems that we can frame an abstract idea of extension. Or, we seem able to abstract names that compose several coexistent qualities, such as human. For example, suppose that I observe Peter, James, and John. By gathering their resemblances in certain respects and leaving out some specific qualities that are pertinent to only specific individuals, it is generally believed that we can frame an abstract idea of human.

Berkeley objects that we can form abstract ideas at all. What is the abstract idea of extension? If such an idea exists, it must be “neither line, surface, nor solid, nor has any figure, or magnitude but is an idea entirely prescinded from all these” (Berkeley 1999, p. 10). Similarly, what is the abstract idea of human or humanness? This idea includes *some* color, but this cannot be a *particular* color “because there is no one particular colour wherein all men partake” (Berkeley 1999, p. 10). Likewise, it includes *some* stature, but this cannot be a *particular* stature, “it is neither tall stature nor low stature, nor yet middle stature” (Berkeley, *ibid*). However, any idea of human that we can form “must be either of a white, or a black, or a tawny, a straight, or a crooked, a tall, or a low, or a middle-sized man” (Berkeley 1999, p. 11). The same applies to extension, in that any extended thing must have a definite shape, magnitude, and the like.

Afterward, Berkeley employs his anti-abstractionist campaign to support his immaterialism. Recall that Berkeley's motivation is to align philosophy with common sense and therefore respond somehow to skepticism. To this end, he combines his stringent nominalism with empiricism. For Berkeley, human knowledge consists of "ideas of the senses," "ideas of the passions and operations of the mind," and "ideas of memory and imagination" (Berkeley 1999, p. 24). For instance, when I claim to know that something is an apple, the object of my knowledge—i.e., the apple—is composed of various sensory ideas combined together. With a notable exception, for Berkeley, there are nothing but collections of ideas. This exception is what Berkeley calls "mind, spirit, soul or myself" (Berkeley, *ibid*), which perceives these ideas. Ultimately, he argues that "sensations or ideas imprinted on the sense cannot exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving them" (Berkeley, *ibid*). To state somehow schematically:

- (1) Concrete individual things, e.g., an apple, are nothing more than bundles of sensations.
- (2) Sensations are mind-dependent, i.e., they are required to be conceived by a mind to exist.
- (3) Therefore, *esse est percipi*, i.e., to be is to be perceived.

The conclusion is, to say the least, strange and counterintuitive. According to Berkeley, we tend to believe otherwise because of "the doctrine of abstract ideas," in that we think that we successfully abstract "the existence of sensible objects from their being perceived" (Berkeley 1999, *ibid*). To put it in more detail, Berkeley attacks Lockean primary-secondary qualities distinction. According to this distinction, primary qualities, such as extension, motion, and shape, are mind-independent mathematical properties of objects, while secondary qualities, such as color, odor, and taste, are mind-dependent qualitative properties. For Berkeley, this distinction suggests that there is a material substance, in which only the primary qualities inhere. Given Berkeley's anti-abstractionism, he contends that we cannot abstract the primary qualities from the secondary ones. In other words, we cannot think of or imagine anything like something solely extended but lacks a particular

color and the like. So, we must reject the existence of anything material (Berkeley 1999, p. 27).

Berkeley offers not only a negative argument that challenges the distinction between primary and secondary qualities but also a positive argument, commonly referred to as Berkeley's "master argument" (Gallois 1974, p. 55). Berkeley states,

But say you, surely, there is nothing easier than to imagine trees, for instance, in a park, or books existing in a closet, and nobody by to perceive them. I answer, you may so, there is no difficulty in it: but what is all this, I beseech you, more than framing in your mind certain ideas which you call books and trees, and at the same time omitting to frame the idea of anyone that may perceive them? But do not you yourself perceive or think of them all the while. This therefore is nothing to the purpose: it only shows you have the power of imagining or forming ideas in your mind but it doth not shew that you can conceive it possible, the objects of your thought may exist without the mind: to make out this, it is necessary that you conceive them existing unconceived or unthought of, which is a manifest repugnancy (Berkeley 1999, pp. 33-34).

Restricted to its essentials, Berkeley here argues that because we cannot think of any unconceived objects, all objects we experience are mind-dependent. However, the cogency of the argument is, at best, problematic. In my view, as Pitcher points out, the argument fallaciously conflates the "representing," that with *which* we conceive, and the "represented," that *of* which we conceive (Pitcher 1977, p. 113, quoted in Downing 2021). Furthermore, it is important to note that Berkeley's attack on representative realism, or "materialist representationalism"⁹⁸ presupposes Cartesian-Lockean representationalism (Grayling 2005, p. 179) (Downing 2021).

So, to sum up, Berkeley's position is as follows. There is no mind-independent world or "senseless matter." Instead, the entire world consists solely of bundles of sense data.⁹⁹ Moreover, there is nothing like an indirect relation or "resemblance" between mental items and mind-independent state of affairs (Berkeley 1999, p. 27).

⁹⁸ I borrow the concept of "materialist representationalism" from Downing (Downing 2021) to mean the view that some existent objects are material and not the view that all existent things are material.

⁹⁹ If so, at least one problem about phenomenalism follows, in that the phenomenalist needs to specify "the conditions under which sense-data are experienced or obtainable must themselves [...] be specifiable in terms of other sense-data" (BonJour 2009, p. 129). For instance, when I see a brown table in a particular room of METU library, the phenomenalist must give an account of why I see this table in the particular room and not in other places. More importantly, her account can appeal to only non-physical conditions because she argues that there is nothing physical in the world. To this end, the

6.3. Kant's Anti-Berkeleyianism

We have seen that Berkeley is an immaterialist. In contrast, Kant states that the transcendental idealist is an empirical realist and “dualist” (*CPR* A367), in the sense that “it grants the existence of both material and thinking beings (as appearances)” (Kannisto 2021, p. 357). For Kant, the transcendental idealist “concede[s] the existence of matter” (*CPR* A370), or “grants to matter, as appearance” (*CPR* A371).

Furthermore, Kant contends that the objective validity of the categories requires “always outer intuitions” (*CPR* B291). For instance, all categories that fall within the head of relation require “something that persists,” viz., “the concept of substance,” for which “we need an intuition in space (of matter)” (*CPR* B291). Therefore, it is safe to say that Kant admits material things along with mental ones exist, in that whatever we perceive via outer sense is material and empirically outside us, and whatever we perceive via inner sense is mental and empirically in us. Finally, it should be noted that Kant contrasts his own “dualism” with what he calls “idealism,” which corresponds to Berkeleyian-type immaterialism (*NF* 18:310; 18:615). This suggests that Kant conceives his position as incompatible with Berkeley’s philosophy.

I will offer several reasons below to demonstrate why Kant is not a Berkeleyian phenomenalist.

6.3.1. “Formal Idealism”

After reading the Göttingen Review, Kant feels anger and disappointment, as he believes it misrepresents his position. In the Appendix of the *Prolegomena*, he presents an argument to counter this misinterpretation.

For Kant, Berkeley belongs to the camp of what he calls the “genuine idealists” like the “Eleatic School.” The motto of the camp is as follows: “All cognition through the

phenomenalist may employ the “idea of a sensory route” but this move appears unpromising (Bonjour 2009, pp. 130-131).

senses and experience is nothing but sheer illusion, and there is truth only in the ideas of pure understanding and reason” (*Prolog* 4:375). In contrast, Kant characterizes his own transcendental idealism with the following motto: “All cognition of things out of mere pure understanding or pure reason is nothing but sheer illusion, and there is truth only in experience” (*Prolog* 4:375). Therefore, Kant asserts that his idealism is not like “genuine idealists” but is “of a wholly peculiar kind” (*Prolog* 4:376). To emphasize the difference, he calls his idealism “critical” and “formal,” while labeling Berkeley’s idealism “dogmatic” and “material” (*Prolog* 4:376).

On the face of it, Kant’s characterization of Berkeley is problematic, as Berkeley appears to be more of a Platonic rationalist than an empiricist (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 159). As Kemp Smith notes, it seems that “[Kant] never himself actually read[s] any of Berkeley’s own writings” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 156). Kant’s English appears “imperfect” at best, and there is no evidence that he ever read a book in English (Kemp Smith, *ibid*). Consequently, some argue that Kant’s knowledge about Berkeley likely comes from indirect sources (Beiser 2008, p. 100). This is a problem, though not a fatal one.

Following Allison, Kant’s argument should be understood in this way: Kant’s idealism is formal because it aims to offer “a theory about the nature and the scope of the conditions under which objects can be cognized by the human mind” (Allison 2004, p. 35). In other words, transcendental idealism is not an ordinary or traditional idealism, which Kant calls “empirical idealism,” but rather operates at the second-order, concerned with specifying meta-conditions or a priori requirements of the first-order, that is, empirical knowledge or experience. Thus, Allison argues that Kant’s position is mainly metaepistemological (Allison 2004, p. 4). Moreover, Kant’s idealism is critical because “it is grounded in a reflection on the conditions and limits of discursive cognition, not on the contents of consciousness or the nature of *an sich* reality” (Allison 2004, pp. 35-36). By contrast, Berkeley’s idealism operates at the first-order and is concerned with *an sich* reality, constituting not an epistemological but a metaphysical position.

To put it differently, Kant’s argument can be captured in the following way: As we have seen, Kant’s idealism is “conceptual” or “quasi-idealist,” in that appearances are

perspectival and situated from the human standpoint. This means that they depend on the epistemological conditions of our sensibility and understanding. The important point is that the dependence is not ontological mind-dependence but rather epistemological one, rejecting only “noumenal truthmakers.” In Kant’s view, there are still some truthmakers, what we call “phenomenal truthmakers.” This is so because, as Alston puts it, “all we are aware of in [...] perception is [not] a judgment” (Alston 1996, p. 94). In other words, in perception, there is an element “that is different from any deployment of concepts or acts of judgment” (Alston 1996, p. 93). Kant calls these elements intuitions.

In a nutshell, because Kant thinks there are cognitive elements other than concepts or judgments—namely, intuitions—he contends that the existence of what we perceive is ontologically mind-independent. This implies that for Kant, truth is a non-epistemic concept.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, Kant has no difficulty accepting that the empirical world is ontologically mind-independent, on the basis that Kant’s idealism is only formal—i.e., epistemological—and specifically concerned with the formal contributions of our sensibility and understanding.

6.3.2. “Berkeley’s Visionary Idealism”

Kant labels Berkeley as a “visionary idealist” (*Prol* 4:294), in that according to Kant, Berkeley degrades bodies to “mere illusions” (*CPR* B71) or conceives them as “imaginary” (*CPR* B224). Kant’s point seems to be Berkeley’s view about truth and experience is impoverished and unacceptable. Following Jauernig, we can understand Kant’s point as suggesting that, in Berkeley’s theory, “empirical objects do not genuinely exist and cannot be meaningfully distinguished from the intentional objects of dreams, fictions, or hallucinations” (Jauernig 2021, p. 126).

Kant’s interpretation of Berkeley again appears questionable or, at the very least, does not fully do justice to Berkeley’s own position (Jauernig, *ibid*). For Berkeley, the so-called real things and imaginary ones can indeed be distinguished. But the key

¹⁰⁰ To say that truth is non-epistemic concept is to say that simply truth is not mere coherence or human-tethered property. Also see footnote 78.

point is that the difference at stake involves degrees and is not sharp. For Berkeley, we can distinguish real things from imaginary ones because they are “regular, vivid, and constant” (Berkeley 1999, p. 37), or more “orderly and coherent” (Berkeley, *ibid*) in their structure. If so, this supports my assessment that Kant’s view about the truth cannot be captured via coherentism, as noted above.

Therefore, what Kant finds unacceptable in Berkeley’s account is that it provides no “formal conditions of experience and objectivity” (Jauernig 2021, p. 128) and that his distinction between real and imaginary things is not meaningful. Kant states in an unpublished draft of the *Prolegomena*: “Berkeley [finds] nothing constant, and so could find nothing which the understanding conceives according to a priori principles” (quoted in Allison 1973, p. 61) In my view, the word constant means something strictly necessary and universal, rather than a contingent and particular inductive generalization, which could always admit of possible exceptions. Kant identifies the former and provides a transcendental explanation for it. However, Berkeley recognizes solely contingent regularities in nature, attributing all phenomenal regularities to God’s volition (Allison 1973, p. 54).

To put it dramatically, Kant defends the rule-governed necessity in nature based on a priori principles, by virtue of which we can distinguish real things from imaginary ones. In contrast, Berkeley offers no meaningful criterion for this sort because he admits no genuine necessity or principle-based patterns in nature. Kant’s criterion is that if something complies with the Principles of Understanding, i.e., the laws of nature, and is connected to an actual sensation, it is real (*CPR* A493/B521) (*Prologomena* 4:291). The Principles of Understanding are by necessity true, and actual sensation is truthful, capable of introducing something ontologically mind-independent (*CPR* B276).

For Berkeley, however, even though we can speak of the laws of nature, these are merely God’s arbitrary decrees that can be withdrawn at any time, as in the cases of putative miracles (Berkeley 1999, p. 48). Consequently, the laws of nature lack genuine necessity. Moreover, actual sensation, according to Berkeley, is not something capable of introducing mind-independent objects, as we have seen.

6.3.3. Unobservable Entities

Kant commits that some unobservable entities exist and are part of empirical reality even though we cannot perceive them. For instance, he admits the existence of magnetic force, despite the fact that we cannot perceive it due to the crudeness of our sense organs (*CPR* A226/B273). Likewise, he states that “it must indeed be admitted that there could be inhabitants on the moon, although no human being has ever perceived them” (*CPR* A493/B521). Or, he speaks of “starts that are a hundred times farther from me than the most distant ones I see [...] and are in world-space even if no human being has ever perceived them or ever will perceive them” (*CPR* A496/B525).

If Kant believed that appearances were Berkeleyian bundles, whose *esse est percipi*, all three objects in question, i.e., magnetism, inhabitants on the moon, and distant stars, could not count appearances or be said to exist. This supports the view that Kant is not a Berkeleyian phenomenalist (Jauernig 2021, p. 52) (Allais 2015, p. 47). In response, some might argue that these quotes do not rule out the possibility that Kant is a sophisticated phenomenalist, who employs counterfactuals to attribute existence to unobservable entities.

However, the case of magnetism is instructive here. Kant infers the existence of magnetism from observations, rather than relying on counterfactuals. As Allison points out, Kant’s reference to magnetism does not depend on “the possibility of sufficiently improving our sensory apparatus, so as to enable us to have experiences that we are not at present able to have [but depend on] the connectibility of this material with our present experience in accordance with empirical laws” (Allison 2004, p 41).

6.4. The Phenomenalist Reading Reconsidered

As I noted in section 6.1, the phenomenalist interpretation has historically been dominant for a significant period. This does not mean that the phenomenalist reading has become extinct today, but rather that it now represents a minority position among

scholars. Below, I will provide a detailed analysis of Guyer's and Van Cleve's interpretations, which argue that Kant's transcendental idealism is phenomenalist.

6.4.1. Guyer's Interpretation

To do justice to Guyer's rich and meticulous account, we should admit that Guyer's whole position is not that Kant is a phenomenalist. In his book *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, which provides a comprehensive survey of the historical development of Kant's theoretical philosophy, Guyer advocates for a patchwork theoretic approach. According to this view, the *Critique* includes irreconcilably conflicting tendencies. One major tendency is subjectivistic and phenomenalist transcendental idealism, which mainly appears in the Transcendental Aesthetic and the Transcendental Deduction. The other is ontological realism, which offers what Guyer calls "transcendental theory of experience," and is mainly founded in the Analogies of Experience and the Refutation of Idealism (Guyer 1987, p. 150, p. 335). Furthermore, Guyer argues that Kant's main position gradually evolves within the A and B editions, such that the prevalent tendency in the former is phenomenalist and in the latter is ontological realism (Guyer 1987, p. 288).

Guyer's patchwork theoretic approach, however, seems unconvincing. First of all, in my view, the A Deduction and the B Deduction are broadly consistent. In the B Deduction, Kant does not reject the A Deduction ("the deduction from the concept of object") but develops its tactic by some other strategy ("the deduction from the concept of judgment"). To reiterate, Kant does not withdraw the main ideas of the A Deduction in the B Deduction; instead, he somehow upgrades the argument. Moreover, the Deduction and the Refutation, as we have seen, are connected in that both reject empirical idealism and skepticism. Thus, separating Kant's theory by interpreting the Deduction as subjectivistic and the Refutation as realistic appears unpersuasive. Admittedly, my interpretation relies on the principle of charity, which assumes the core pieces of Kant's philosophy are interrelated and consistent. However, recognizing this coherence can sometimes be challenging.

If we focus on Guyer's analysis of transcendental idealism as articulated by Kant in 1781, we find that Guyer portrays Kant as a phenomenalist. According to Guyer,

Kant “degrades” (Guyer 1987, p. 335) empirical objects into mental entities.¹⁰¹ Recall that, for Guyer, Kant wants to defend *de re* necessity of geometry and thus of spatiality. Consequently, *de re* necessity is possible only if we reduce spatial objects to our spatial representations (Guyer 1987, p. 366).

Guyer reads Kant in terms of representative realism or representationalism. He argues that Kant, like “every philosopher in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries” (Guyer 2014, p. 78), holds that there are two kinds of objects: “ordinary objects and our mental representations of them” (Guyer, *ibid*). And transcendental idealism, or more precisely, transcendental ideality of space and time means “relocating spatial and temporal properties from [...] non-representations to [...] representations” (Guyer, *ibid*).

To paraphrase, Guyer maintains that Kant shares the common paradigm of representationalism with other thinkers in the early modern period, with his innovation that space and time are qualities pertinent to representations and not to things. If so, it seems Kant advocates that Lockean primary qualities are like secondary ones because they are likewise subjective or mind-dependent. This is very similar to Berkeley’s criticism of Lockean primary qualities.

In my view, Guyer’s phenomenalist reading stems from his assumption that Kant is a representationalist. However, as I have argued in section 5.4, Kant’s philosophy cannot be understood in terms of representationalism. If we do not read Kant as holding representationalism, the phenomenalist reading, in my opinion, does not hold.

Besides, Guyer read Kant as a foundationalist about the subject. Recall that Guyer understands apperception in the Deduction as a substantive thesis, i.e., defending something stronger than the formal or empty identity of the subject, arguing that it incorporates, or at least requires a synthetic proposition. Consequently, Guyer

¹⁰¹ Stang qualifies Guyer’s reading as “identity phenomenalist,” which is simply a Berkeleyian kind of phenomenism contending that “objects in space are identical to (unified collections of) our representations” (Stang 2016).

maintains that apperceptive I is Cartesian-like and foundational (Guyer 1987, p. 115, p. 369).

However, as I have argued in section 4.3, Guyer's account of apperception is misleading, in that the proposition specifying something like the principle of apperception is not and need not be a synthetic proposition, and thus the apperceptive I is not foundational. Instead, apperception amounts to an epistemological thesis and only suggests the formal or empty identity of the thinking subject. Furthermore, Guyer seems to think of the Kantian cognitive subject as detached from the phenomenal world when evaluating the Third Analogy, claiming that its scope encompasses the coexistent objects but makes no reference to the spatially located subject (Guyer 1987, p. 269).¹⁰² The only basis for this claim, it seems, is Guyer's assumption of foundationalism about the subject. However, as Abela points out, the Third Analogy applies also the (Kantian) empirical self, as it is part of the field of appearances (Abela 2002, p. 169). Foundationalism about the subject and the phenomenalist reading, in my view, go hand in hand. If the subject is understood as something supra-phenomenal, then the phenomenal world appears to be placed in the head of the subject, as though the subject were the container of the world.¹⁰³

6.4.2. Van Cleve's Interpretation

Van Cleve, like Guyer, argues that Kant is a Berkeleyian phenomenalist (Van Cleve 2003, p. 93). According to Van Cleve, Kantian appearances are "virtual objects" that serve as "shorthand" for saying that certain representation takes place (Van Cleve 2003, p. 8). In other words, appearances are logical constructions like shadows, in the sense that while we can say that a shadow exists, this does not commit us to an ontologically independent entity. A shadow's existence is derivative and merely a logical construction out of perceivers and their states; similarly, appearances lack independent existence and depend on the states of perceivers (Van Cleve 2003, 9).

¹⁰² I am indebted to Paul Abela for the discussion of Guyer's analysis of the Third Analogy (Abela 2002, p. 168).

¹⁰³ I borrow the conception of the "container model of subjectivity" from Sinan Okar (personal correspondence).

Furthermore, Van Cleve maintains that Kant uses the term object in two senses, somehow analogous to Descartes's distinction between formal reality and objective reality (Van Cleve 2003, p. 91). The first sense refers to an intra-mental object, or, as Van Cleve puts it, is "an item count[ing] as an object [...] simply in virtue of the fact that there is consciousness of it" (Van Cleve, *ibid.*). The second sense denotes an extra-mental object, such as a house and a ship, which is constructed out of the former type of objects.

It is clear that Van Cleve, like Guyer, presupposes that Kant is a representationalist, who adheres to the Cartesian way of ideas. Based on this assumption, he interprets Kant as a phenomenalist. However, as discussed earlier, attributing representationalism to Kant appears unwarranted.

Some may object that Van Cleve's phenomenalist reading by pointing out the First Analogy is inconsistent with his analysis because (empirically real) substance is "permanent and exists unperceived" (Allais 2015, p. 48; also see p. 50). In response, Van Cleve invokes the patchwork theory, arguing that this inconsistency merely reflects Kant's own inconsistency (Van Cleve 2003, p. 120). However, this explanation seems unconvincing. In my view, we should adopt a more holistic approach instead.

Finally, Van Cleve, like Guyer, presupposes foundationalism about the subject. The way in which he applies this to Kant is interesting. He says that appearances are virtual objects, meaning they "owe [their] existence being apprehended by a mind" (Van Cleve 2003, p. 137). As a result, minds cannot be in the same status as appearances. Otherwise "there would be either an absurd infinite regress [...] or else an impossible feat of existential boot-strapping, some items pulling themselves into existence by virtue of their own self-apprehension" (Van Cleve 2003, p. 137). To avoid this regress, Van Cleve offers to understand the Kantian subject as an ontological anchor, such that appearances take place on the grounds that the cognitive subject holds on to the *an sich* reality.

In the face of this, we can say that it is obvious that foundationalism about the subject is not a cogent assumption for interpreting Kant because it presupposes or

depends on the rendition of appearance as Cartesian intra-mental ideas. Furthermore, Van Cleve provides an alternative argument for his presupposition of foundationalism about the subject. According to Van Cleve, Kant posits not one but two numerically distinct selves: the empirical self and the transcendental/noumenal self. He says that the empirical self is a virtual object and the transcendental/noumenal self exists *an sich*, being obviously the foundational subject (Van Cleve 2003, p. 184). However, this opinion is unconvincing for two reasons.

First, Van Cleve's identification of the transcendental self with the noumenal self is implausible. In my view, the transcendental self is not an entity-like thing; rather its referent is empty, amounting to the logical and formal identity of the thinking subject, as an epistemological requirement. If not so, we have no reason to accept or any way to evaluate the lesson of the Paralogisms. In this section, Kant's main contention is that nominal or formal claims about the transcendental self-apperception must not be confused with real or metaphysical claims about the noumenal self. If the two were identical, as Van Cleve suggests, the entire purpose of the Paralogisms, i.e., to resist "the subreption of hypostatized consciousness" (*CPR* A402) would collapse disastrously.¹⁰⁴

Second, Van Cleve's doubling selves seems incompatible with the linguistic evidence.¹⁰⁵ Kant asserts that the achievement of his critical teaching is making compatible two incompatible things, i.e., freedom and determinism, by considering one and the same will from two different perspectives. In his own wording,

If the critique has not erred in teaching that the object should be taken in a twofold meaning, namely as appearance or as thing in itself; if its deduction of the pure concepts of the understanding is correct, and hence the principle of causality applies only to things taken in the first sense, namely insofar as they are objects of experience, while things in the second meaning are not subject to it; then *just the same will* is thought of in the appearance (in visible actions) as necessarily subject to the law of nature and to this extent not free, while yet on the other hand it is thought of as belonging to a thing in itself as not subject to that law, and hence free, without any contradiction hereby occurring (*CPR* Bxxviii) (emphasis mine).

¹⁰⁴ See footnotes 46 and 85.

¹⁰⁵ For a more detailed account about this, see (Marshall 2013).

Furthermore, in the Resolution to the Third Antinomy, he states:

The human being is one of the appearances in the world of sense, and to that extent also one of the natural causes whose causality must be under empirical laws. As such he must accordingly also have an empirical *character*, just like all other natural things. [...] [H]e obviously is one *part* phenomenon, but in another part, namely in regard to certain faculties, he is a merely intelligible object (*CPR* A547/B575) (emphasis mine).

In the last quote, we see that Kant uses the terms character and part to make a distinction between noumenal and empirical selves, suggesting that there are not two distinct selves but one self with two different characteristics or sides. Consequently, Van Cleve's foundationalism about the Kantian subject should be rejected.

To sum up, both Guyer and Van Cleve rely on common assumptions in their phenomenalist interpretations: that Kant's philosophy is incoherent or patchwork, that Kant is a representationalist, and that Kant is foundationalist about the subject. However, all three assumptions and thus the conclusion that Kant is a phenomenalist appear unpersuasive.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis, as stated in the Introduction, is to analyze and defend Kant's empirical realism as genuine or robust. In this study, I have argued that Kant suggests that the spatio-temporal world is (empirically) real, viz., cannot be reduced to a mere occurrence in the head. Thus, Kant's position should be distinguished from empirical idealism. I have advocated that Kant distances himself from these empirical idealist rivalries: Humean skeptical empiricism, Cartesian skeptical idealism, and Berkeleyian dogmatic idealism. In my view, these three "rivalries" correspond to ordinary or traditional forms of idealism, or phenomenalism as broadly considered; Kant's idealism, however, cannot be understood like this but appears conceptual or quasi-idealistic. In other words, these three "rivalries" are subjectivistic or psychological idealisms; in contrast, Kant's idealism seems more objectivistic than subjectivistic, in the sense that its idealism depends on the insight that reality is normatively structured or intelligible, complying with rational norms.¹⁰⁶

In my thesis, I finally claim that the Kantian epistemic conditions display the normative structure of experience. In this context, on my reading, Kant objects to the Humean account, according to which our objective experience can be reduced merely to the raw sensory impressions, and instead Kant argues that our experience requires normative conditions and therefore is "conceptually clothed," viz., situated from the human standpoint. We can capture this position as Heideggerian shibboleth

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Beiser's distinction between psychological and normative idealisms (Beiser 2008, p. 6). The first is a more phenomenalist or subjectivistic form of idealism, according to which, all reality depends on a self-conscious subject (e.g., Cartesian idealism). The second is more an objectivistic form of idealism, as it maintains that reality as a whole has a normative structure or intelligibility (e.g., Schelling's or Hegel's idealisms). Kant in a letter gives a reference to psychological idealism, when discussing the Refutation. Accordingly, Kant thinks he "prov[es] the objective reality of our representations of outer things (as against psychological idealism)" (*Corre* 11:110).

of “being in the world” in that, as far as I understand, Heidegger does not claim that the world is an illusion or dream-like entity but rather hermeneutically readable with human presence, such that the world is Dasein’s *locus* and Dasein is the *opening* of the world. Somehow similar to Heidegger, Kant defends that the empirical world is readable with human mind *as such*, but the world is not ontologically depended on humans’ minds but what is at stake is epistemological mind-dependency. The upshot is that Kant is a conceptualist in the sense that experience of objects requires the application of a priori concepts. On the reading I suggest, Kant can and does accommodate ontological mind-independence of appearances. Therefore, according to Kant, empirical objects are public and immediately recognized, which I have tried to capture as saying that the Kantian objects are robust. If so, we can make sense of the fact that Kant opposes the Cartesian skeptical idealism as well as the Berkeleian phenomenalism.

We have seen that Kant’s idealism should be understood in terms of the epistemological two-aspect view. In this way, we can understand Kant’s main arguments, such that they are concerned with normative claims of knowledge, the elements conveying what the cognitive subject *ought* to do. In this respect, this thesis contributes to the discussions of transcendental idealism, in that Kant’s robust empirical realism should be appreciated via the epistemological two-aspect view, and at least a branch of two-object view, which defends that Kant is a phenomenalist, as we have seen as Guyer’s and Van Cleve’s, is not cogent and should be set aside.

In Chapter 2, I have indicated that Kant provides an alternative framework for philosophy replacing the old framework, which has reached an impasse. This alternative framework is, as Kant calls it, “transcendental idealism.” Here, Kant offers a new kind of metaphysics: immanent or formal, in contrast to transcendent or material. To elaborate further, Kant’s theoretical philosophy is concerned with the formal conditions of knowledge, in that the forms of sensibility and the a priori concepts of understanding conceptualize and order experience.

In Chapter 3, I have dealt with the Transcendental Aesthetic. Kant’s main aim in this section is to analyze two components of sensible intuition: one is the matter, which

corresponds to sensation and is a posteriori, and the other is the form, which corresponds to something that the mind provides out of itself and is a priori. These a priori forms of sensibility are space and time. Since the expositions of space and time are roughly parallel, I have solely focused on the arguments related to space.

In the *Metaphysical Exposition*, Kant provides two arguments to show that space is a priori. The first argument says that this is because we cannot inductively attain the representation of space. If this were the case, it would mean that we experience in the first place spatial objects and then somehow abstract the idea of space. However, the condition for experiencing spatial objects is, Kant asserts, that any spatial object must have a unique region in space, located in a distinct place from those of the percipient subject and other things. If so, the representation of space is already presupposed (*CPR* A23/B38).

Some object to this argument, notably Maass (see Allison 2004, p. 103) and Guyer (Guyer 2014, p. 66), in that it is not clear here how Kant rules out a “simultaneous” and not a priori space, or in other words, why people cannot gradually acquire the representation of space as they cognize concrete and individual things. In response, I have suggested that both Maass and Guyer seem to mistakenly attribute a form of nativism to Kant. However, the Kantian conception of a priori should be understood not in terms of temporal priority but logical priority (Paton 1936, p. 177) (Bird 1962, p. 9). Thus, the objection should be set aside.

The second argument intends to reject the Leibnizian symmetry between space and spatial objects, arguing that the two have an “asymmetrical relation,” such that space is necessary representation and “the ground of all outer intuitions” (*CPR* A24/B39). To demonstrate this asymmetry, Kant states: “One can never represent that there is no space, although one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it” (*CPR* A24/B39).

Now there are two problems in this argument. First, Kant seems to defend the “psychological apriority” of space, such that, as Kemp Smith puts it, “the ground upon which the whole argument is made to rest is the merely brute fact [...] of our

incapacity to think except in terms of space” (Kemp Smith 2003, p. 103). Second, Kant states elsewhere that we cannot perceive empty space or time (*CPR* A169/B211; A521/B549), which seems to make Kant’s position incoherent.

I have responded to the problems in the following way. For the first problem, following Allison, we can reconstruct the argument, such that its claim is not psychological but epistemological, carrying normative import (Allison 2004, p. 105). For the second problem, following Sutherland, we can distinguish the targets of the Transcendental Aesthetic and the Transcendental Analytic. The former deals with non-discursive and pure intuitive space, while the latter concerns discursive and conceptualized space (Sutherland 2022, pp. 37-40). There is no inconsistency here.

Also, Kant thinks that space is an intuition and not a concept, because it is an element of sensibility, not understanding. He offers two arguments for its intuitive character. According to the first, space is singular, and not general like a concept (*CPR* A25/B40). In other words, its unity is not conceptual unity, i.e., *compositum*, but is *totum* (*CPR* A440/B468). According to the second, space is an immediate, not a mediate representation, such that its intension contains “an infinite set of representations within itself” (*CPR* A25/B40).

Furthermore, Kant provides an alternative argument for the claim that space is an a priori intuition in the Transcendental Exposition. Here, Kant says that space is a priori intuition because, if not so, then we cannot have an intelligible account for geometry as a synthetic a priori knowledge (*CPR* B41). Geometry is concerned with “the properties of space” (*CPR* B41). Moreover, to say that space is intuition makes it comprehensible that geometry is synthetic and not analytic, and to say that space is pure or a priori makes it intelligible that geometry is necessary and not contingent.

Whether the Transcendental Exposition contains a more advanced argument than the Metaphysical Exposition in terms of defending the “transcendental ideality of space” has been a subject of controversy. We have seen that Guyer argues that it is so. For him, the Metaphysical Exposition at best asserts that “space is an indispensable form of intuition,” but fails to demonstrate that “space is just a representation and not a

feature of things in themselves,” which Kant needs to establish (Guyer 1987, p. 345). Therefore, on Guyer’s account, Kant’s doctrine of “transcendental ideality” relies on “the argument from geometry,” or equivalently, the Transcendental Exposition, such that the Metaphysical Exposition is useless to import the desired conclusion (Guyer 1987, p. 367). In response, I have argued that Guyer’s rendition of the Transcendental Aesthetic does not seem cogent. Because, as I understand it, according to Guyer, Kant defends *de re* and not *de dicto* necessity of geometry and only in this way, concludes the “transcendental ideality of space” (Guyer 1987, p. 351). However, the textual evidence seems to support that Kant defends the necessity of geometry not in terms of objects but judgments about them (*CPR* A24/B39; A25/B40; A47/B65; A594/B622).

Finally, in Chapter 3, I was concerned about the “transcendental ideality of space.” Here, Kant rejects two philosophical alternatives about space. First, Newton’s absolutist view on space, according to which space enjoys an absolute reality (*CPR* A40/B57). Second, Leibniz’s relationalist view on space, according to which it is an abstraction derived from the relations between concrete things (*CPR* A40/B57). I have argued that the Metaphysical Exposition is sufficient to conclude that neither of these two options is correct. Therefore, Kant is well-justified in asserting that space is not a relation or a property of things in themselves but is instead transcendently ideal, i.e., a formal condition of human sensibility. As a result, I have indicated that the infamous “neglected alternative” objection is not compelling. Rather the objection arises from a misunderstanding of Kant’s theoretical philosophy.

In Chapter 4, I have aimed to reconstruct the argument of the Transcendental Deduction as combatting against the Humean skeptical empiricism. First of all, we have seen that Kant’s notion of deduction is not the same as what we most likely mean by the term. For us, the term means syllogistic proof, consisting of premises and a conclusion. But Kant makes clear that he borrows the notion of deduction from the juristic jargon, in that deduction refers to proof in terms of the *quid juris* and not *quid facti*. This means that the aim of the Deduction is to ensure *de jure* validity of a priori concepts, i.e., epistemic justification for our appealing to these concepts in the course of experience.

Some may ask: Why is this an issue? Hume problematizes how we come to apply the category of cause and effect. According to him, this is problematic because everything in matters of fact is contingent, but causation suggests somewhat of a necessity. So, Hume contends that the effect is not contained in the cause, that is, the relation at stake is not entailment, or does not give an analytic judgment. As a result, Hume concludes that causal relations enjoy at best subjective necessity, “a bastard of the imagination” (*Prolegomena* 4:258). Kant generalizes the problem about the category of cause and effect, saying that this category is not the only a priori concept, but “metaphysics consists wholly of such concepts” (*Prolegomena* 4:260). Therefore, Kant wants to resist the Humean conclusion that the categories and particularly causation enjoy only subjective necessity, accepting the problem that causation and the like does not involve analytic necessity.

In my view, Kant’s response to the “Humean problem” is to elevate a priori concepts to being necessary components in our experience. Thus, I have argued that Kant says that our object-relating experience cannot be analyzed via the Humean associativist account. Instead, Kant defends that cognition involves some normative elements, conveying what the cognitive subject *ought* to do. In a nutshell, the Deduction maintains that, in my opinion, experience, including not merely propositional or “scientific” knowledge about objects but also perceptual reception of objects, are conceptually governed. To paraphrase, I have contended that Kantian intuitions are concept-laden, meaning that our conceptual capacities are operative in the very fabric of experience. If Kant demonstrates this in the Deduction, we may hope his response to the Humean skeptical empiricism, or Humean problem, succeeds.

My reading of the Deduction is divided into three main parts.

First, I have dealt with apperception in §15 and §16. Kant states that cognition requires the combination of the manifold, which is possible through synthesis, i.e., an act of understanding (*Critical Path of Reason* B130). More importantly, synthesis requires the identity of the thinker, the formal and logical unity of apperception. As I understand it, Kant thinks that the apperceptive I is not an independent existent entity over the manifold of intuitions. Rather, the identity of apperception, as Cassirer points out, is

intellectual and stems from the understanding, which “is entirely barren so long as our intelligence is content simply to turn itself” (Cassirer 1954, p. 73). Thus, I have maintained that apperception is “performative,” in the sense that, apart from the performance of synthesis, the identity of I cannot be actualized.

We have seen that there is a debate about whether the proposition of apperception is analytic or synthetic, even though Kant clearly states the proposition at stake is analytic (*CPR* B135; B407/B408). Guyer argues that the proposition is synthetic, and that Kant cannot claim for analyticity if the argument of the Deduction is to succeed. According to Guyer, if apperception is analytic, then only “conditional necessity” would follow, which Guyer finds inadequate for the purpose of the Deduction (Guyer 1987, p. 132). However, what is required is the “absolute necessity” (Guyer 1987, p. 140). In response, I have maintained that Guyer’s rendition is unpersuasive because it seems to rely once again on the nativist characterization of apriority. Furthermore, Guyer claims that apperception must be strongly independent of and isolated from experience, if it is to be considered a priori. However, in my opinion, this interpretation undercuts the “performativity” of the apperception, which means that the intellectual identity of I in apperception is actualized only when the manifold of intuition is supplied.

Second, I have examined the Deduction from §17 to §20, where Kant concerns about the constitution of objecthood, criticizing the Humean associativist account. On my understanding, Kant differs from Hume in this aspect in the following way. According to Hume, we can have only associative flux of sensations, from which we derive the referential objects. In contrast, Kant ascertains numerically identical and stable objects immediately, which is to say, the referential and extra-mental objects as contrasted to the fleeting content of inner sense are immediately recognized. If not so, the contrast between “objective unity of apperception” and “subjective unity of apperception” (this is just a fancy name for Humean associations) cannot be held.

Moreover, as I understand it, the argument in the B Deduction relies on the marriage between what Guyer calls “the deduction from the concept of object” and “the deduction from the concept of judgment.” The first type of deduction is attempted in

the A version, according to which the object is something that integrates representations together necessarily and not arbitrarily, and the necessity must be grounded in transcendental rules, for empirical or a posteriori rules provide no genuine necessity. Then the transcendental rules are the categories (*CPR* 105-112). But the evident problem in this account is that it does not explain why the categories and not something else must be these rules. To overcome this difficulty, Kant in the B Deduction, appeals to “the deduction from the concept of judgment,” in addition to the tactic in the A Deduction. The upshot is that Kant defends that the necessity that an object has can be captured by virtue of the logical form of judgment. In other words, the epistemic operation of judgment is to constitute objecthood, making accessible the intentional objects as contrasted to the mental content in the head. As a result, Kant states, “I find that a judgment is nothing other than the way to bring given cognitions to the objective unity of apperception” (*CPR* B142).

Third, I have analyzed the Deduction from §22 to §27, where Kant attempts to adapt the general conclusion to human sensibility in particular. In Kant’s own words, the target here is to defend “the a priori validity [of the categories] in regard to all objects of our senses” (*CPR* B145). The explanation revolves around “figurative synthesis” (*synthesis speciosa*), which possesses somehow a dual and proto-conceptual nature. On the one hand, it “belongs to sensibility” (*CPR* B152) because it directly involves intuitions; on the other hand, it expresses “an exercise of spontaneity” (*CPR* B152) because it is productive rather than reproductive. This dual nature of the imagination serves to bridge understanding and sensibility. However, one important point is that, in my view, the relationship between the three is hierarchical. Apperception/understanding occupies the highest place; immediately under it, the figurative synthesis, as “an effect of the understanding” (*CPR* B152) works; finally, the sensibility is placed at the lowest level. Kant says, apperception/understanding, “under the name of a transcendental synthesis of the imagination” (*CPR* B154), determines the inner sense. Moreover, he states, “It is one and the same spontaneity that, there under the name of imagination and here under the name of understanding, brings combination into the manifold of intuition” (*CPR* B162). As a result, the categories are operative not just for propositional or “scientific” knowledge but also for perceptual receptions of objects, or in Kant’s own words, “whatever may come

before our senses” (*CPR* B160). The upshot is that the objects of the human sensibility depend on the categories and therefore, the threat of the Humean skeptical empiricism is avoided.

In Chapter 5, I have construed the Refutation of Idealism. In the *Meditations*, Descartes fabricates a possibility that an omnipotent and malicious demon deceives us about all things, except the fact that I am something that thinks. For Descartes, the possibility is conceivable and therefore renders dubious whether the external world exists. I have suggested that Kant responds to the Cartesian skeptical idealist in the Refutation through a five-step argument.

The initial step is that “I am conscious of my existence as determined in time” (*CPR* B276). This corresponds to the exact situation of the mediator in the Second Meditation, in that all we can know is the inner realm of consciousness. For Kant, this inner realm possesses a relatively thin temporal structure. Bluntly put, no one thinks something all at once but rather any stream of thought unfolds across a temporal span.

The second step is that “All time-determination presupposes something persistent in perception” (*CPR* B276). This refers to the First Analogy. According to the First Analogy, appearances are subject to change, and for change to be conceivable, there must be something permanent as the underlying ground of all change (*CPR* A183/B226). This something permanent is judged to be substance. Thus, an enduring substratum is a requirement for any time-determination, including the skeptical mediator's temporally structured stream of thoughts.

The third step is that “This persistent thing, however, cannot be something in me, since my own existence in time can first be determined only through this persistent thing” (*CPR* B276). This step says that the persistent thing required for time-determinations cannot be the noumenal self or the mental contents of inner sense, i.e., empirical self. It cannot be the noumenal self because we cannot have access to it; apperception provides only the formal unity of the subject, which we should not confuse with the noumenal self. In the theoretical domain, the self as an entity can

only be empirical, which is in constant flux and thus cannot fulfill the role of something enduring. And it cannot be any mental contents because the contents of inner sense are always fleeting.

The fourth step states that “the perception of this persistent thing is possible only through a *thing* outside me and not through the mere *representation* of a thing outside me” (*CPR* B276). This follows from the step third; the only possibility of something persistent is grounded in something outside me in the empirical sense.

The final and fifth step gathers what we have seen so far together, contending that temporally organized mental contents depend on experience of the external world (*CPR* B276). I have maintained that this response made by Kant to the Cartesian skeptic is persuasive and does not represent any break or shift in Kant’s position, contrary to what Guyer suggests. Moreover, on my reading, Kant introduces a rupture from Cartesian epistemology. This means that Kant defends what I call the “immediacy” and “publicity” theses, while the Cartesian epistemology maintains the “mediacy” and “privacy” theses. According to Kant’s account, we are conscious of external objects without the intermediary of the mental content, and objects of experience are public, i.e., different perceivers perceive same and the numerically identical things. In contrast, according to the Cartesian account, the mind perceives nothing but ideas, and external objects are derived from these ideas. Moreover, Cartesian representations are private mental items, which means that they are subjective and lack “objective validity.”

Finally, in Chapter 6, I have scrutinized the relationship between Kant and Berkeley. Historically, Kant’s idealism has been considered as something very like Berkeleyian phenomenalism. Berkeley argues for immaterialism, asserting that what we perceive is ontologically mind-dependent. However, I have argued that Kant’s philosophy cannot be understood in this way. Here, I have provided three reasons.

First, I have maintained that Kant’s idealism is “formal,” unlike Berkeley’s “material” idealism (*Prolegomena* 4:376). I have reconstructed the label of “formal idealism,” such that Kant defends some sort of conceptual idealism or quasi-idealist

epistemology, according to which “phenomenal truthmakers” are accepted. Second, I have indicated that, as Kant puts it, Berkeley’s idealism is “visionary” (*CPR* B71), as it degrades material things into sheer illusion (*CPR* B224), but Kant, by contrast, accepts the ontologically mind-independent world. Third, I have defended that Kant commits to several unobservable entities (*CPR* A226/B273; A493/B521; A496/B521), which implies that Kant does not think “to be is to be perceived.”

Finally, I have detected three presuppositions of the phenomenalist reading: that Kant is representationalist, i.e., a champion of the Cartesian way of ideas; that Kant is foundationalist about the subject; and that Kant’s philosophy is patch-work. I have contended that none of these presuppositions, and therefore nor the phenomenalist reading itself, are plausible.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tezde Kant'ın empirik realizmini sağlam veya hakiki olarak analiz etmeye ve savunmaya çalıştım. Buna göre Kant uzaysal-zamansal dünyanın empirik olarak gerçek olduğunu, yani kafamızdaki zihinsel bir içeriğe indirgenemezliğini savlar. Bu nedenle Kant'ın konumu “empirik idealizm”den ayrı tutulmalıdır. Bu çalışmada Kant'ın kendisini empirik idealist “rakipler”inden, yani Humecu şüpheci empirizm, Kartezyen şüpheci idealizm ve Berkeleyci dogmatik idealizmden ayırttığını savundum. Bu tezde öne sürdüğüm yoruma göre, bu üç “rakip” sıradan veya geleneksel idealizm veya fenomenalizm türlerine karşılık gelir. Kant'ın idealizmi ise bu şekilde anlaşılabilir; onun idealizmini kavramsal veya yarı-idealist olarak anlamak daha uygun görünmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, bu üç “rakip” öznelci veya psikolojik idealizmlerdir. Buna karşın Kant'ın idealizmi öznelci olmaktan ziyade nesnelcidir. Çünkü Kant'ın idealizmi gerçekliğin normatif olarak yapılandırılmış ve rasyonel normlara uyduğu anlayışına dayanmaktadır.

Bu tezin vardığı bir sonuç da Kantçı epistemik koşulların deneyimin normatif yapısını ortaya serdikleridir. Bu bağlamda Kant yönelimsel veya nesne içeren deneyimimizin ham duysal izlenimlere indirgenebileceğine dair Humecu açıklamaya itiraz eder ve bunun yerine deneyimimizin birtakım normatif koşulları gerektirdiğini ve bu nedenle “kavramsal olarak giydirildiğini,” yani insan bakış açısından konumlandırıldığını savunur. Bu pozisyonu Heideggerci “dünyada olmaklık” ile tefsir etmemiz uygun görünmektedir. Zira Heidegger dünyanın bir yanılısma veya rüya benzeri bir varlık olduğunu iddia etmez; bunun yerine, dünyanın insan varlığıyla hermönitik olarak okunabilir kılındığını ve böylece dünyanın Dasein'in *yeri* ve Dasein'in dünyanın *açılışı* olduğunu iddia eder. Bir şekilde Heidegger'e benzer olarak, Kant empirik dünyanın insan zihniyle okunabilir

kılındığını savunur. Ancak dünya Kant'a göre, ontolojik olarak insanların zihinlerine bağlı değildir. Söz konusu bağımlılık epistemolojik bakımdan zihne bağılıktır. Sonuç olarak, empirik nesnelerin deneyimi için a priori kavramların uygulanması gerektiğini düşünmesi nedeniyle Kant bir kavramsalcıdır. Önerdiğim okumada, Kant görüşlerinin ontolojik olarak zihinden bağımsızlığını savunabilir ve savunur. Dolayısıyla Kant'a göre empirik nesnelere kamusal ve dolaysızca bilinir. Bu yüzden bu çalışmada Kantçı nesnelere sağlam olduğunu iddia ettim. Eğer öyleyse, Kant'ın Kartezyen şüpheci idealizme ve Berkeleyci fenomenalizme karşı çıkmasını da anlayabiliriz.

2. Bölümde Kant'ın transandantal realizm yerine felsefe için alternatif bir çerçeve sunduğunu belirttim. Bu alternatif çerçeve "transandantal idealizm"dir. Burada Kant yeni bir tür metafizik sunar: aşkın veya maddi olanın aksine, içkin veya biçimsel bir metafizik. Daha ayrıntılı olarak belirtirsek, Kant'ın teorik felsefesi bilginin biçimsel koşullarıyla ilgilidir; söz konusu koşullar olan duyarlılığın biçimleri (yani uzay ve zaman) ve anlama yetisinin a priori kavramları (yani kategoriler) deneyimi kuran ve düzenleyen biçimlerdir.

3. Bölümde *Saf Aklın Eleştirisi*'nin "Transandantal Estetik" bölümünü inceledim. Bu bölümde Kant'ın temel amacı duyuşal görünümün iki bileşenini analiz etmektir. Biri duyuma karşılık gelen ve a posteriori olan içerik veya maddedir; diğeri ise zihnin kendisinden sağladığı ve a priori olan bir şeye karşılık gelen biçimdir. Duyarlılığın a priori biçimleri uzay ve zamandır. Kant'ın uzay ve zaman açıklamaları kabaca paralel olduğu için, bu bölümde yalnızca uzayla ilgili argümanlara odaklandım.

"Metafizik Açıklama"da Kant, uzayın a priori olduğunu göstermek için iki argüman sunar. İlk argüman, uzayın temsilini uzamsal nesnelere tecrübesinden empirik olarak türetemeyeceğimizi söyler. Çünkü uzayın temsili herhangi bir uzamsal deneyimin olanaklılığı için en başından itibaren varsayılmak zorundadır (*CPR* A23/B38).

Maass (bkz. Allison 2004, s. 103) ve Guyer (Guyer 2014, s. 66) bu argümana karşı çıkmıştır. Onlara göre, Kant burada ancak uzayın uzamsal nesnenin tecrübesinden "sonra" gelemeyeceğini kanıtlamıştır. Ancak Maass ve Guyer'a göre bunun zorunlu

sonucu, uzayın nesnenin tecrübesinden “önce” gelmesi gerekliliği olamaz; zira uzay nesne ile “eş zamanlı” olarak da görüye gelebilir. Bu noktada hem Maass’ın hem de Guyer’in Kant’a hatalı bir şekilde bir tür doğuştancılık (insanların zihinlerinde doğumdan önce yerleşik bulunan ve deneyimden kazanılmamış fikirler olduğunu savunan Descartes ve birtakım kıta rasyonalistlerine ait bir görüş) atfettiklerini öne sürdüm. Öyle görünmektedir ki Maass ve Guyer’in itirazı Kant’ın a priori anlayışını zamansal bir öncelik olarak yorumlamalarına dayanmaktadır; oysa ikinci literatürde Kant’ın a priori anlayışında söz konusu olanın zamansal değil mantıksal öncelik olduğu vurgulanmıştır (Paton 1936, s. 177).

İkinci argüman, uzay ve uzamsal cisimler arasında “asimetrik bir ilişki” olduğunu savunur. Kant’a göre uzay “zorunlu ve a priori bir temsildir ki bütün uzamsal nesnelere zeminidir” (CPR A24/B39). Dolayısıyla, Kant için uzay dışsal nesnelere bağımlı olamaz, bilakis onların olanağının zorunlu ve a priori koşulu olarak karşımıza çıkar. Bu asimetrik ilişkiyi göstermek için Kant uzayın yokluğunu temsil edemeyeceğimizi, ancak içinde nesnelere olmadığı boş bir uzayı düşünebileceğimizi söyler (CPR A24/B39). Böylelikle, Leibniz’in uzay görüşü reddedilmiş olur. Leibniz’e göre, uzay dışsal nesnelere arasındaki bir ilişki veya bağıntıdır ve uzayın varlığı bu nesnelere varlığına bağımlıdır. Bir kez daha vurgulamak gerekirse, Kant’a göre ise uzamsal nesnelere, uzaya (uzay temsiline) bağımlıdır.

“Metafizik Açıklama”da Kant uzayın bir görü olduğunu ve bir kavram olmadığını göstermek için de iki argüman sunar. Birincisine göre uzay tekildir ve bir kavram gibi genel değildir (CPR A25/B40). İkincisine göre, uzay dolaylı değil, dolaysız bir temsildir (CPR A25/B40).

Ayrıca, Kant “Transandantal Açıklama”da uzayın a priori bir görü olduğu iddiası için alternatif bir argüman sunar. Buna göre, uzay a priori bir görüdür, zira öyle değilse, o zaman sentetik ve a priori bilgi olan geometrinin imkânı da açıklanamaz (CPR B41). Uzayın bir görü olduğunu söylemek, geometrinin analitik değil sentetik olduğunu açık kılar; uzayın saf veya a priori olduğunu söylemek ise geometrinin zorunlu olduğunu, yani olumsal olmadığını açık kılar.

İkinci literatürde “Transandantal Açıklama”nın “uzayın transandantal idealliği”ni savunmak için “Metafizik Açıklama”dan daha gelişmiş bir argüman içerip içermediği tartışma konusu olmuştur. Örneğin Guyer, Transandantal Açıklamanın “uzayın transandantal idealliği” öğretisini savunmak için hayati, Metafizik Açıklamanın ise ihmal edilebilir ve başarısız olduğunu öne sürmüştür.

Guyer’a göre, Metafizik Açıklama en iyi ihtimalle “uzayın görünümün vazgeçilmez bir biçimi” olduğunu ileri sürebilir, ancak “uzayın sadece bir temsil olduğunu ve kendinde şeylerin bir özelliği olmadığı”nı göstermeyi başaramaz; ancak Kant’ın tam da bunu ortaya koyması gerekir (Guyer 1987, s. 345). Bu nedenle, Guyer’a göre, Kant’ın “transandantal ideallik” öğretisi “geometriden yola çıkan argümana” veya eşdeğer olarak, Transandantal Açıklamaya dayanır, zira Metafizik Açıklama istenen sonucu üretmek bakımından işe yaramaz (Guyer 1987, s. 367). Bu noktada Guyer’ın yorumunun ikna edici olmadığını savundum. Guyer’a göre Kant, geometrinin *de re* zorunluluğunu savunarak “uzayın transandantal idealliği”ni öne sürmektedir (Guyer 1987, s. 351).

Kısaca belirtmek gerekirse, çağdaş metafizikte *de re/de dicto* ayrımı şuna karşılık gelmektedir. Şöyle bir durum düşünelim: Âdem isimli biri kırmızı rengini düşünüyor olsun. Şimdi “Âdem’in düşündüğü şey bir renktir” gibi bir önerme formalize edelim. Bu durumu iki farklı zorunluluk modalitesinde yorumlayabiliriz:

(1) *De re* zorunluluk: Adem’in düşündüğü şey *zorunlu olarak* bir renktir.

(2) *De dicto* zorunluluk: *Zorunlu olarak*, Adem’in düşündüğü şey bir renktir.

Birinci durumda zorunluluk şeye, ikincisinde ise önermeye bağlanmıştır. Açıkça, birinci önerme doğru olacaktır, yani kırmızı zorunlu olarak bir renktir, zira bu analitik bir doğrudur. Ancak ikinci önerme yanlıştır, zira Adem’in düşündüğü şey zorunlu olarak bir renk değildir; Âdem pekâlâ farklı bir şey, sözgelimi, bir sayı düşünebilirdi—bu da demek oluyor ki Adem’in düşündüğü şeyin bir renk olması sadece olumsal olarak doğrudur.

Guyer’a göre, Kant geometrinin *de re* zorunluluğunu savunur. Yani geometrik nesnelere sahip oldukları özelliklere, biz onları öyle yargıladığımız için değil, mutlak

olarak veya kendi tabiatları gereği sahiptir. Kısmen formal bir dilde ifade edersek, Guyer'in yorumunda Kant'a göre, söz gelimi, “zorunlu olarak, üçgenin iç açılarının toplamı 180 derecedir.” Önemli olan husus şudur ki Guyer için Kant'ın geometrinin *de re* zorunluluğunu savunması, “geometriden yola çıkan argüman”ın başarıya ulaşması için bir gerekliliktir. Eğer geometri *de dicto* olarak zorunlu olursa, yani söz gelimi Kant'a göre, “Üçgenin iç açılarının toplamının 180 derece olduğunu *zorunlu olarak* görüye getiriyor/biliyor”sak (burada zorunluluk bizim temsil kapasitemize ilişkindir), doğal olarak, buradan Guyer'in anladığı şekliyle, kendinde şeylerin uzamsal olmadığı sonucu çıkmaz—ulaşabileceğimiz sonuç en iyi ihtimalle gene kendi temsil olanaklarımıza ilişkin olacaktır.

Burada sorun şudur ki metinsel kanıtlar, Kant'ın geometrinin zorunluluğunu nesnel açılarından değil, onlar hakkında yargılar açısından savunduğunu destekler gibi görünmektedir (*CPR* A24/B39; A25/B40; A47/B65; A596/B624). Yani Kant'a göre, “üçgenin iç açıları toplamının 180 derece” olduğunu *zorunlu olarak* biliriz. Bunun ötesinde “*zorunlu olarak*, üçgenin iç açılarının toplamı 180 derecedir” önermesini savlamak ise insan bilgisinin sınırlılığı düşünüldüğünde imkansızdır. Diğer bir deyişle, geometriye atfedilen zorunluluk bizim bilişimize ilişkindir ve *de re* değil *de dicto*'dur. Bu da Guyer'in “geometriden yola çıkan argümanının” çalışmadığı ve metinsel kanıtlarla uyumsuz olduğu anlamına gelir.

Kant “uzayın transandantal idealliği” savı ile uzay hakkındaki iki alternatif görüşü reddetmektedir. Birincisi Newton'un mutlakçı görüşü; ikincisi Leibniz'in ilişkişelci görüşüdür. Newton'a göre, uzay “mutlak” bir gerçekliktir; ebedi, sonsuz, kendiliğinden var olan bir “şey-olmayan”dır (*CPR* A40/B57). Ancak bu görüş, bizim uzay temsilimizin empirik olarak, bir tür tümevarım ile türetilmesini gerektireceğinden (ki bunun olanaksızlığını Metafizik Açıklamanın birinci argümanında gösterdik) reddedilmelidir. Leibniz'e göre ise, uzay kendinde şeyler arasındaki ilişkilerden türettiğimiz bir soyutlamadır (*CPR* A40/B57). Bu ise Metafizik Açıklamanın ikinci argümanı ile çelişmektedir. Dolayısıyla, Kant uzayın kendinde şeyler arasında bir ilişki veya onların bir özelliği olmadığını savunur. Bunun yerine uzayın transandantal anlamda ideal, yani insan duyarlılığının biçimsel

bir koşulu olduğunu iddia eder. Bu çalışmada Kant'ın ulaştığı sonucun ikna edici olduğunu savundum.

Bu noktada literatürde “ihmal edilmiş alternatif” adıyla bilinen itiraza işaret etmek gerekir. Bu itiraza göre Kant uzay ve zamanın statüsünü ancak *ya/ya da* yapısıyla düşünmektedir; uzay ve zaman *ya* öznel (yani özneye ait) formlardır *ya da* kendinde şeylerin formlarıdır. Kant uzay ve zamanın öznel formlar olduğunu göstererek, uzay ve zamanın kendinde şeylerin formları olamayacağı neticesine ulaşmıştır. Ancak uzay ve zaman, bu itiraza göre *hem* öznel formlar *hem de* kendinde şeylerin formları olabilir. Dolayısıyla, Kant bu olasılığı “ihmal etmiştir.” Bu tezde ortaya konulan “Transandantal Estetik” okumasına göre Kant'a yöneltilen bu itiraz ikna edici değildir. Zira uzay ve zamanın aynı zamanda kendinde şeylerin formları olabileceği ihtimali, Kant'a göre ya Newton'un ya da Leibniz'in transandantal realist tezlerinden birini vücuda getirecektir ki Kant “Metafizik Açıklama”da bu iki tezin de savunulamayacağını göstermiştir.

4. Bölümde “Transandantal Dedüksiyon”un argümanını Hume'cu şüpheci empirizme karşı mücadele eden bir argüman olarak yeniden yapılandırmaya çalıştım. Buna göre Dedüksiyonun amacı a priori kavramların *de jure* geçerliliğini, yani deneyim sırasında bu kavramlara başvurmamızın epistemik meşruiyetini sağlamaktır.

Bu neden önemlidir? Bunun sebebi şu şekilde açık kılınabilir. Hume neden ve sonuç kategorisini nasıl uyguladığımızı sorunsallaştırır. Ona göre, olgusal konulardaki her şey olumsaldır, ancak ne var ki nedensellik bir zorunluluğu ima etmektedir. Yani Hume, etkinin nedende bulunmadığını veya analitik bir yargı vermediğini ileri sürer. Sonuç olarak, Hume'a göre, nedensel ilişkiler en iyi ihtimalle öznel olarak zorunludur. Kant neden ve sonuç kategorisiyle ilgili sorunu genelleştirir ve bu kategorinin tek a priori kavram olmadığını ancak “metafizik'in tamamen bu tür kavramlardan oluştuğunu” söyler (*Prolog* 4:260). Dolayısıyla Kant kategorilerin ve özellikle nedenselliğin yalnızca öznel zorunluluğa sahip olduğu yönündeki Hume'cu görüşe karşı direnmek ister.

Kant'ın Hume'cu probleme verdiği yanıt ile a priori kavramlar deneyimimizin gerekli bileşenleri haline gelmektedir. Kant yönelimsel veya nesne içeren deneyimimizin

Humecu çağrışımsal açıklama yoluyla analiz edilemeyeceğini öne sürmektedir. Kant'a göre bilgi veya deneyim birtakım normatif unsurlar içermektedir. Bu unsurlar deneyimin nesneliliğinin kurucu koşullarını belirtir. Özetle, "Transandantal Dedüksiyon" deneyimin kavramsal olarak belirlendiğini, yani anlama yetisinin kural koyucu işleviyle mümkün olduğunu savunur.

Bu çalışmada "Transandantal Dedüksiyon"a ilişkin okumam üç ana bölüme ayrılmıştır.

Öncelikle, "Dedüksiyon"un §15 ve §16'ncı kısımlarında incelenen appersepsiyonu ele aldım. Kant bilginin görü çokluğunun birleştirilmesini gerektirdiğini, bunun da ancak sentez yoluyla mümkün olduğunu belirtir. Bu birleşim ise anlama yetisinin faaliyetidir (*CPR* B130). Dahası, sentez faaliyeti düşünenin özdeşliğini, yani appersepsiyonun biçimsel ve mantıksal birliğini gerektirir. Kant apperseptiv Ben'in görülerin çokluğu üzerinde bağımsız olarak duran bir var olan olmadığını düşünür. Aksine, appersepsiyon sentez faaliyeti ile bağlıdır.

Bu çalışmada apperseptiv Ben'in analitik birliği ile görü çokluğunun sentezinin karşılıklı olduğunu ve birbirlerine bağlı olduklarını savundum. Diğer bir deyişle, eğer sentez için materyal oluşturacak herhangi bir görü çokluğu yoksa, apperseptiv Ben'in birliği mümkün değildir. Diğer bir yandan, eğer sentez olacaksa, appersepsiyon zorunludur. Kısacası, sentez ve appersepsiyon birbirlerini karşılıklı olarak gerektirir. Bu nedenle, appersepsiyonun "performatif" olduğunu savundum. Bu şu anlama gelmektedir ki apperseptiv Benin varlığı sentez faaliyetine ve dahası görü çokluğuna bağlıdır. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışmada sentez performansından bağımsız olarak apperseptiv Ben'in özdeşliğinin gerçekleştirilemeyeceğini savundum.

İkinci literatürde appersepsiyon prensibinin analitik mi yoksa sentetik bir önerme mi olduğu hususunda bir tartışma bulunmaktadır. Kant açıkça söz konusu prensibin analitik bir önerme olduğunu dile getirmiştir (*CPR* B135; B407-408). Buna karşılık, Guyer prensibin sentetik olduğunu ve "Dedüksiyon" eğer başarılı bir argüman ortaya koyacaksa, Kant'ın analitiklik iddiasında bulunamayacağını savunur. Guyer'e göre eğer appersepsiyon prensibi analitik ise, o zaman "Dedüksiyon"un argümanı ancak

“koşullu bir zorunluluk” ifade eder ki bu Dedüksiyonun amacı bakımından yetersizdir (Guyer 1987, s. 132). Gerekli olan “mutlak zorunluluktur” (Guyer 1987, s. 140).

Bu noktada Guyer’in yorumunun ikna edici olmadığını savundum. Çünkü Guyer burada bir kez daha Kant’ın a priori anlayışını doğuştancı bir şekilde yorumlamaktadır. Dahası Guyer, appersepsiyon eğer a priori olarak kabul edilecekse, appersepsiyonun deneyimden bağımsız ve izole olması gerektiğini iddia eder; bu da benim appersepsiyonun “performativite”si dediğim şey ile çelişmektedir.

İkinci olarak, Kant’ın nesneliliğin oluşumuyla ilgilendiği “Dedüksiyon”un §17’den §20’ye kadar olan kısmını inceledim. Kant burada Hume’dan şöyle farklılaşır. Hume’a göre gönderimsel nesnelere ancak duyu verisinin bir aradılığundan türetilir. Buna karşılık Kant, sayısal olarak özdeş ve sabit nesnelere dolaysız olarak bildiğimizi savunur. Aksi takdirde “appersepsiyonun nesnel birliği” ile “appersepsiyonun öznel birliği” arasında Kant’ın çizdiği karşıtlık anlamsız hale gelecektir.

Ayrıca bu tezde öne sürdüğüm üzere, B Dedüksiyonundaki argüman Guyer’in “nesne kavramından dedüksiyon” ile “yargı kavramından dedüksiyon” dediği şey arasındaki bir evliliğe dayanmaktadır. İlk tür dedüksiyon A versiyonunda denir. Buna göre nesne, temsilleri zorunlu olarak bir araya getiren bir şeydir. Zorunluluk ise transandantal kurallara dayanmalıdır, çünkü empirik veya a posteriori kurallar gerçek bir zorunluluğu sağlayamaz. Öyleyse, transandantal kurallar kategorilerdir (CPR A105-112). Bu açıklamanın bariz sorunu, söz konusu kuralların neden başka bir şey değil de kategoriler olduğu konusunda ikna edici bir cevap verememesidir. Bu zorluğun üstesinden gelmek için Kant B Dedüksiyonunda A Dedüksiyonundaki taktiğe ek olarak “yargı kavramından dedüksiyona” başvurur. Sonuç olarak, Kant bir nesnenin sahip olduğu zorunluluğun mantıksal yargı biçimi sayesinde yakalanabileceğini savunur. Başka bir deyişle, yargının epistemik işlemi yönelimsel nesnelere erişilebilir kılmaktır. Kant şöyle der: “Bir yargı verili bilgileri appersepsiyonun nesnel birliğine getirmenin yolundan başka bir şey değildir” (CPR B142).

Üçüncüsü, Kant'ın Dedüksiyonun genel sonucunu insan duyarlılığına uyarlamaya çalıştığı kısım olan §22'den §27'ye kadar olan Dedüksiyonu analiz ettim. Kant burada ikili ve ön-kavramsal bir yapıya sahip olan “figüratif sentez”i veya transandantal imgelemi mercek altına alır. Transandantal imgelem bir yandan doğrudan görüleri içerdiği için “duyarlılığa aittir” (CPR B152); diğer yandan üretken olduğu için “bir kendiliğindenlik ifadesi”dir (CPR B152). İmgelemin bu ikili yapısı, anlama yetisi ve duyarlılığı birleştirmeye yarar. Sonuç olarak, figüratif sentez “anlama yetisinin bir etkisi” (CPR B152) olarak duyarlılığı belirler. İnsan duyarlılığının nesnelere kategorilere bağlıdır ve böylece Humecu şüpheli empirizm tehdidi önlenir.

5. Bölümde *Saf Aklın Eleştirisi*'nin “İdealizmin Çürütülmesi” başlıklı kısmını yorumladım. *Meditasyonlar*'da Descartes her şeye gücü yeten ve kötü niyetli bir cinin, düşünen bir şey olduğum hakikati dışında, beni her şey hakkında aldatma ihtimalini göz önünde bulundurur. Descartes için bu ihtimal düşünülebilirdir ve bu nedenle dünyanın gerçekten var olup olmadığını şüpheli hale gelmektedir (Descartes 2008, s. 15). Bu bölümde Kant'ın “Çürütme”de Kartezyen şüpheli idealiste beş adımlı bir argümanla başarılı bir yanıt verdiğini öne sürdüm.

İlk adım, “Zaman içinde belirlenmiş varlığımın bilincindeyim” (CPR B276) şeklindedir. Bu İkinci Meditasyondaki öznenin durumuna karşılık düşer. Çünkü burada bilebileceğimiz tek şey bilincin iç alanıdır. Kant'a göre bu iç alan zamansal bir yapıya sahiptir.

İkinci adım, “Tüm zaman belirlemeleri algıda kalıcı bir şeyi varsayar” (CPR B276) şeklindedir. Bu, “Birinci Analoji”ye atıfta bulunur; buna göre, görünüşler değişime tabidir ve bu değişimin kavranabilmesi için tüm değişimin altında yatan kalıcı bir şey olmalıdır (CPR A183/B226). Bu kalıcı şey töz kategorisi altında düşünülmelidir. Dolayısıyla, töz, şüphelinin varlığını kabul ettiği bilincin iç alanının zamansal olarak yapılanmışlığı için bir gerekliliktir.

Üçüncü adım, “Ancak bu kalıcı şey, içimdeki bir şey olamaz, çünkü zaman içindeki kendi varoluşum ilk önce yalnızca bu kalıcı şey aracılığıyla belirlenebilir” (CPR B276) şeklindedir. Bu adım, söz konusu kalıcı şeyin numenal benlik veya içsel

duyumun zihinsel içerikleri olamayacağını söyler. Numenal benlik söz konusu kalıcı şey olamaz, çünkü ona erişemeyiz. Appersepsiyon yalnızca öznenin biçimsel ve mantıksal birliğini sağlar. Kant büyük bir ısrarla vurgulamıştır ki, appersepsiyon ile numenal benliği birbirine karıştırmamalıyız. Teorik bilgi alanında, bir var olan olarak benlik sadece empirik olarak bilinebilir, ki bu benlik sürekli bir akış halindedir. Bu nedenle o da kalıcı bir şey rolünü oynayamaz. Ayrıca içsel duyumun temsilleri de bu söz konusu kalıcı şey olamaz zira bunlar her zaman geçicidir.

Dördüncü adım, “bu kalıcı şeyin algılanmasının yalnızca benim dışındaki bir şey aracılığıyla mümkün olduğunu ve benim dışındaki bir şeyin salt temsiliyle mümkün olmadığını” belirtir (*CPR B276*). Özlü bir şekilde ifade edersek, kalıcı şey sadece empirik anlamda benim dışımda olan bir şey olabilir. Bu da uzayda bulunan kalıcı cisimlerdir, ki bunlar ancak töz kategorisi altında düşünülebilir.

Son ve beşinci adım, şimdiye kadar gördüğümüz adımları bir araya getirerek, zamansal olarak yapılandırılmış zihinsel içeriklerin dış dünyanın deneyimine bağlı olduğunu ileri sürer (*CPR B276*). Böylelikle Kant’ın Kartezyen şüpheciye verdiği bu cevabın ikna edici olduğunu ve Guyer’in önerdiğinin aksine Kant’ın pozisyonunda herhangi bir kopuş veya değişimi temsil etmediğini savundum.

Ayrıca, bu çalışmada Kant’ın Kartezyen epistemolojiden bir kopuş sergilediğini savundum. Buna göre, Kant “dolaysızlık” ve “kamusallık” tezlerini savunurken, Kartezyen epistemoloji ise “dolaylı” ve “zihne özel” temsiller tezlerini benimser. Başka bir deyişle, Kant’a göre, deneyimin nesnelere zihinsel içerikler aracılığıyla temsilsel ve kamusal olarak, yani farklı algılayanların aynı şeyleri algılaması anlamında bilinir. Buna karşılık, Kartezyen açıklamaya göre, zihin sadece fikirleri algılar ve dışsal nesnelere bu fikirlerden türetilir. Dahası, Kartezyen temsiller, mahrem, yani zihnin (kişiye) özel öğeleridir; bu da öznel oldukları ve “nesnel gerçeklikten” yoksun oldukları anlamına gelir.

Son olarak, 6. Bölümde Kant ve Berkeley arasındaki ilişkiyi inceledim. Tarihsel olarak, 1782’deki *Göttingen İncelemesi*’nden başlayarak, Kant’ın idealizmi Berkeley’in fenomenalizmine çok benzeyen bir şey olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Berkeley algıladığımız şeyin ontolojik olarak zihne bağımlı olduğunu ve dolayısıyla bizim zihnimizden bağımsız herhangi bir maddi var olandan bahsetmemizin olanaksız olduğunu savunur. Kant ise bunun karşısında “empirik olarak düalist”tir (CPR A367). Kannisto’nun işaret ettiği gibi, Kant “(görünüm olarak) maddi ve düşünen şeylerin var olduğunu kabul eder” (Kannisto 2021, s. 357). Kant’a göre, transandantal idealist, “maddenin varlığını kabul edecektir” (CPR A370), veya “görünüm olarak maddenin var olduğunu teslim edecektir” (CPR A371). Dolayısıyla, *Göttingen İncelemesi* ile başlayan geleneksel yorumun aksine, Kant felsefesi Berkeleyci fenomenalizm olarak anlaşılmalıdır. Burada bu görüşü desteklemek adına üç neden sundum.

Birincisi, Kant’ın idealizmi, Berkeley’in maddi idealizminin aksine “biçimsel”dir (Prol 4:376). “Biçimsel idealizm” etiketi şöyle anlaşılabilir. Kant, Baç’ın terminolojisine başvurursak, “fenomenal hakikat yapıcıların” kabul edildiği bir tür kavramsal veya yarı-idealist bir epistemolojiyi savunur. Buna göre, Kant “numenal hakikat yapıcıları” ve bir tür Tanrısal perspektiften dünyaya bakabileceğimizi reddedecektir. Ancak bu Kant’ın “fenomenal hakikat yapıcıları” ve empirik dünyanın bireysel algılayanlardan bağımsız olduğunu reddettiği anlamına gelmeyecektir.

İkincisi, Kant’a göre, Berkeley idealizmi, “hayalci” (CPR B71), çünkü maddi şeyleri salt bir yanılsamaya indirger (CPR B224). Kant ise bunun aksine, ontolojik açıdan zihinden bağımsız bir empirik dünyayı kabul eder.

Üçüncüsü, Kant bazı gözlemlenemeyen var olanların varlığını kabul etmiştir (CPR A226/B273; A493/B521; A496/B521). Bu da Kant’ın “var olmanın algılanmak olduğu”nu düşünmediğini ima etmektedir.

Son olarak, fenomenalist okumanın üç varsayımını tespit ettim: (1) Kant’ın temsilci veya temsili realist olduğu, (2) Kant’ın özne konusunda temelci olduğu, (3) Kant felsefesinin tutarsız veya yamalı bohça olduğu.

Guyer’in yorumuna göre Kant erken modern felsefenin temsilci paradigması ile ortaklaşmaktadır; dahası Kant’ın transandantal idealizm adı altında öne sürdüğü

felsefi yenilik ise sadece şundan ibarettir: uzaysal ve zamansal yüklemeler şimdi “sıradan cisimler”in değil, “temsiller”in bir özelliği haline gelmiştir (Guyer 2014, s. 78). Guyer’e göre Kant’ın transandantal idealizmi empirik cisimleri zihinsel içeriklere “indirger” (Guyer 1987, s. 335).

Van Cleve de tıpkı Guyer gibi Kantçı görünüşü, sadece temsil edilmekle varlık kazanan bir şey olarak anlar. Van Cleve’e göre, Kant gemi ve ev gibi empirik cisimlerin kafanın içindeki zihinsel temsillerden inşa edildiğini savunur (Van Cleve 2003, s. 91).

Ayrıca, Guyer appersepsiyonu bir tür epistemik Kartezyenizm olarak okur (Guyer 1987, s. 115, s. 369). Diğer bir deyişle, appersepsiyon, Guyer için, empirik dış dünyanın içinde bulunmayan, bilakis bir şekilde ona zemin olan bir tür yarı-numenal bir öznelliktir. Gördük ki, Guyer, semptomatik bir şekilde “Üçüncü Analoji”nin kapsamının bir arada var olan nesnelere olduğunu ve mekânsal olarak konumlanmış özneye hiçbir referans yapmadığını iddia eder (Guyer 1987, s. 269). Guyer’in böyle düşünmesinin sebebi Kant’ın özne konusunda temelci olduğunu söyleyen varsayımdır. Ancak Abela’nın işaret ettiği gibi, “Üçüncü Analoji”, doğal olarak Kantçı empirik benliğe de tatbik edilir, zira empirik benlik de görünüm alanının bir parçasıdır (Abela 2022, s. 169).

Van Cleve ise Kant’ın numenal ve transandantal özne ile aynı şeyi ifade ettiğini ve numenal/transandantal öznenin empirik öznenin numerik olarak farklı olduğunu savunur. Empirik özne görünüşler alanındadır ve sadece temsil edilmekle varlık kazanan bir şeydir. Numenal/transandantal özne ise empirik dünyanın dışında bir zemin veya temel teşkil etmektedir (Van Cleve 2003, s. 184).

Son olarak, Guyer Kant felsefesinin tutarsız olduğunu ve bir yamalı bohça vücuda getirdiğini iddia eder. Buna göre, Birinci *Eleştiri*’nin A Edisyonunda öznelci ve fenomenalist eğilim ağırlıktayken, B Edisyonunda nesnelci ve realist eğilim ağırlık kazanmıştır (Guyer 1987, s. 288). Guyer ayrıca, “Transandantal Estetik” gibi bölümlerin ana öğretisinin fenomenalist olduğunu savunurken, “Analojiler” ve “İdealizmin Çürütülmesi” gibi bölümlerin realist olduğunu ve birbirleriyle

çeliřtiklerini iddia etmektedir (Guyer 1987, s. 150, s. 335). Van Cleve de “Birinci Analoji” ve Kant’ın ancak deneyim alanında geerli olan töz kavrayışı karşısında, kendi fenomenalist okumasını kurtarmak adına yamalı boha yaklaşımına başvurur (Van Cleve 2003, s. 120).

Bu tezde bu varsayımların ve dolayısıyla fenomenalist okumanın kendisinin makul olmadığını savundum. Ayrıca, bu alıřma boyunca Kant’ın idealizmini epistemolojik iki yön görüşü doğrultusunda açıklamaya alıřtım. Bu yolla Kant’ın temel argümanlarının bilginin normatif unsurlarına dair olduğunu öne sürdüm. Burada bir diğeri önemli husus da hem Guyer’in hem Van Cleve’in “iki yön görüşü”nün aleyhinde ve “iki nesne görüşü”nün lehinde yorumculardan olmasıdır. Dolayısıyla, bu alıřmada “iki nesne görüşü”nün en azından fenomenalist okumayı savlayan versiyonunun ikna edici olmadığı sonucuna varılmıştır.

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