In Futuro: A Sketch of the Task of Logic in Immanuel Kant and Charles Peirce

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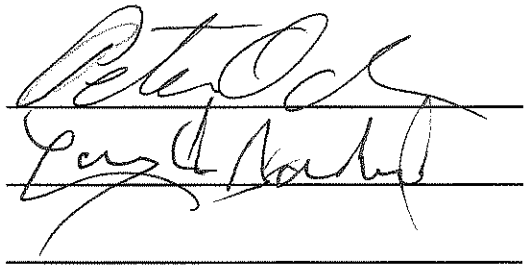

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Preface

Explicitly, this paper is almost entirely focused on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, and nearly all of my original critical arguments are centered on that work. As such, Peirce may seem in this paper to be little more than an awkward bookend to an otherwise complete analysis—and a bookend who hardly merits equal footing with Kant in the title.

A reader who, on reading the title, (appropriately) expects a parallel analysis of these two thinkers will unfortunately be disappointed. For it is overtly a paper about Kant. Yet Peirce maintains a subtle ubiquity behind the scenes. This does not mean, however, that this is a paper about Peirce's criticisms of Kant—at least not in any intentional sense. Peirce's criticisms will, however, crop up on occasion.

This paper is rather, most simply, an attempt to clarify the answer to a simple question: what is the task of logic? And it is this central question towards which all the technical criticisms of Kant are oriented.

In this sense, my paper is not chiefly an argument about what is true, but is rather an attempt to clarify a plan of action, and in doing so, clarify the meaning of difficult words involved in that task. Readers familiar with Peirce may detect an allusion to the "father of pragmatism" in this proposed project. In 1907 Peirce defined pragmatism as follows:

> "pragmatism is, in itself, no doctrine of metaphysics, no attempt to determine any truth of things. It is merely a method of ascertaining the meanings of hard words and of abstract concepts. All pragmatists of whatever stripe will cordially assent to that statement. As to the ulterior and indirect effects of practicing the pragmatistic method, that is quite another affair" (Peirce, *Pragmatism*, The Essential Peirce, Vol. 2, 400).[1]

As Peirce wryly suggests, each proponent of a "pragmatistic method" will, no doubt, have his own motivations. Overtly, my chief motive in this paper is to seek clarity—indeed Kant and Peirce are both "clarifiers" in a significant way. For that reason, it may seem ironic that one of the primary conclusions of the paper is that, in logic we *ought* to seek clarity. In a way, that encapsulates the whole task of the discipline.

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[1] All quotations from Peirce in this paper come from *The Essential Peirce*, Vol. 2. As such, in the future, I will only cite the specific essay and page number.

Perhaps, though, it is not so ironic that we, having climbed toward heaven, are brought back only to the humble truth that we suggested in the first place. But, hopefully, after much intellectual striving, we will come back with a greater sense of what we mean.

Introduction

My primary argument in this paper is to say that we do not possess a concept of non-arbitrary unity. Kant's argument in the *Analytic* and in particular the *Deduction* centers largely around the concept of unity. We see this manifest itself particularly in his discussion of the unity of apperception, the concept of 'an object in general', and the concept of 'possible experience'. I argue that, through affirming a genuine concept of untiy, Kant conceives of a primordial wholeness in a 'concept itself', which grounds and guarantees continuity among various subjective "partially complete concepts"—e.g. my concept of time may be, in fact, quite different from your concept of time. How can we say that we are speaking of the same thing? For Kant, I believe that answer is found in a primordial 'concept itself'. And that 'concept itself' is grounded in the concept of unity, which is closely tied to transcendental apperception, the concept of 'an object in general' and the concept of 'possible experience'.

I will argue, against Kant, that what he calls a concept of unity, is in fact only an idea of unity (idea being a central technical term, which Kant defines in the *Dialectic* as a "concept of reason…transcending the possibility of experience" (A320/B377). As such, logic may be defined as a discipline that attempts to move towards unity—that is, clarity of unified and distinct concepts—rather than a discipline that is grounded in a prior transcendental unity. This is to say that concepts are constituted and defined according to their sufficiency for future action, rather than being primordially grounded in a prior completeness.

In bringing this point to light, I will maintain the distinction of matter and form very much in the forefront. These are crucial terms in Kant's *Critique*, and it is by means of them that we will pose our initial questions as to what constitutes concept-hood.

In §I, Chapter I and II are merely introductory. The first is a discussion of Peirce's classification of philosophy, into three branches—Phenomenology, Normative Science and Metaphysics. Peirce locates the discipline of Logic as a subdivision of Normative Science. Chapter II introduces us to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, outlining his basic conception of logic. Chapter III focuses on the notion of possibility. I

first address possibility as it relates to Kant's transcendental method. Then I highlight his distinction between real and merely logical possibility, which relates to the overall question about the content in a concept. In the third section, I introduce the question as to the content of the concept of 'possible experience', which I explicitly address in §III. The final section of Chapter III defends the fact that, for Kant, concepts maintain content as well as form.

§II explicitly addresses questions regarding form and content, as they relate to space and time considered as intuitions and considered as concepts. In the first section, I introduce the judgments (which I associate with form) and the categories (which I associate with content). From there I raise the question as to how a formal term can acquire content when it is made into a concept. This issue is specifically illustrated in regard to space and time, which Kant refers to as "concepts" after having argued that they are merely formal. This raises several questions, which are central to the paper: how can there be continuity between subjective concepts, and how can that continuity be *a priori*? From here I move to a discussion of the unity and manifold-ness of time as pure intuition and as concept, and examine its role in grounding manifold-ness in intuition. Chapter III introduces the question of the concept of nothing, which is a recurrent theme in this paper. It also addresses the question as to the given-ness of time as a pure intuition.

§III engages explicitly with the *Deduction*. The first chapter is merely introductory and relates the table of categories to the table of judgments, as discussed in §II, Chapter I. Chapter II of this Division is primarily focused on outlining the Deduction. It first presents the conclusion that Kant aims at, and then sketches his argument. This chapter also includes a section on modality that introduces the question of Kant's "metaphysical" position in the *Critique*, which is related to his conception of unity. Chapter III focuses on Kant's conception of self-consciousness, embodied most basically in the transcendental unity of apperception. The final section of that chapter offers an argument to refute Kant's claim that the transcendental unity of apperception is a ground for all experience. Chapter IV consists of three arguments against Kant's primary embodiments of the concept of unity—first the concept of the unity of apperception; second the concept of the unity of an object in general; and third, the

concept of the unity of possible experience. As I note in that section, these three "concepts" are intimately related. Chapter V simply revisits the question of modality, tying in the arguments from the previous two chapters and affirming that the concept of unity is equal to the concept of nothing. The final section of Chapter V is merely a conclusion.

The paper also includes an appendix, which is not a part of the essential argument of the paper, but which makes a positive contribution towards constructing a concept of "self" in light of the paper's criticisms.

§I. Kant, Peirce, and Logic

Chapter I: The Task Logic

I. Logic as Normative Science: Peirce

Before diving into Kant's logic, we shall first grant Peirce some opening remarks on the subject. Peirce conceives of philosophy as divided into three major branches: "The first is Phenomenology, which simply contemplates the Universal Phenomenon, and discerns its ubiquitous elements, Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, together perhaps with other series of categories" (Peirce, *The Three Normative Sciences*, 196-197). Peirce names these three headings categories, or more specifically "Universal Categories" in the spirit of Aristotle, Kant and Hegel. Peirce is acutely conscious that, in defining his own categories he is, first, building upon the work of these three thinkers (among others of course), and second, that his categories involve an implicit critique of these thinkers. Peirce claims in his essay *Pragmatism* that he came to these categories through a criticism of Kant. While I will not address this criticism explicitly, we may note that Peirce aims at taking account not just of "judgments" or "propositions" but of "all elementary differences of form among signs of all sorts…above all…fundamental forms of reasonings" (Peirce, *Pragmatism*, 424). Peirce's own discernment of ubiquitous elements was, he claims, the product of "the hardest two years' mental work that I have ever done in my life" (424). His discovery was, "that there are but three elementary forms of predication or signification" (424). At present, we can give a rough quasi-definition of these forms as first, Quality (of feeling); second Reaction, Resistance or Struggle—"reaction with a sense of striving" (*Sundry Logical Conceptions*, 268), which is involved in perception; and third Representation, Relation, Rule and Habit

which "is found wherever one thing brings about a Secondness between two things" (269).[2]

Peirce—writing most of his work before the publication of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, and before its popularity or translation into English—conceives of phenomenology chiefly in a Hegelian sense. He says in *Sundry Logical Conceptions* that,

"*Phenomenology* is that branch of science which is treated in Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (a work far too inaccurate to be recommended to any but mature scholars, though perhaps the most profound ever written) in which the author seeks to make out what are the elements, or, if you please, the kinds of elements, that are invariably present in whatever is, in any sense, in mind" (Peirce, *Sundry Logical Conceptions*, 267).

It is clear (perhaps simply from their number) that Peirce's categories are of a different sort than Kant's or Hegel's. Kant identifies, following Aristotle, twelve categories. We will discuss these in much more detail in the coming pages, but for now suffice to say that they are specific *concepts*—e.g. Unity, Plurality, Limitation, etc. Peirce notes, similarly, that Hegel's "particular categories" are also much more numerous, "In Hegel his long list which gives the divisions of his *Encyclopedia* are his Particular Categories. His three stages of thought, although he does not apply the word *category* to them, are what I should call Hegel's Universal Categories" (Peirce, *On Phenomenology*, 148). As noted earlier, Peirce calls his own universal categories "kinds of elements" which are present in the mind as it reasons, and we see from this and from his implicit interpretation of Hegel, that Peirce's categories are closer to *forms* of thought than specific concepts.

Phenomenology, as Peirce defines it, demands three faculties. First the phenomenologist ought to strive for the artists observational power who, rather than simply seeing white or grey on a ground covered with snow, sees dull blue and rich yellow (ibid, 147). Second is the faculty of "resolute discrimination, which fastens itself…upon the particular feature that we are studying" (ibid, 147). Third is "the generalizing power of the mathematician who produces the abstract formula that

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[2] The references to these Universal Categories are too numerous to mention, but for further explanatory reference, see *Essential Peirce*, Vol. 2: pages: 4-5, 145, 150, 157, 160, 269.

comprehends the very essence of the feature under examination purified from all admixture of extraneous and irrelevant accompaniments" (ibid, 148). We see here that, despite Peirce's harsh criticisms of literary looseness, and his deep desire to make philosophy scientific, equipping it with a technical nomenclature (Peirce, *What Pragmatism Is*, 333), he does allow space for the artistic and the poetic. It is, no doubt, a limited space, which has potential to do great harm should it uncritically step outside of its department and misinterpret its vocation. But Peirce is not, in a broad sense, anti-literary/artistic/poetic.[3] As he says in his essay on *The Seven Systems of Metaphysics*, "nothing is truer than true poetry" (193). And yet, the space for artistic observation is quite limited to the first division of the first branch of philosophy.[4]

Philosophy's second grand division, and also its "central great department" (*On Phenomenology*, 147), Peirce calls Normative Science. This heading is further divided into three primary branches—Esthetics, Ethics and Logic. Peirce claims that Normative Science "investigates the universal and necessary laws of the relation of Phenomena to *Ends*, that is, perhaps, to Truth, Right, and Beauty" (*The Three Normative Sciences*, 197). Further on in our analysis, we will say much more about this notion of an 'end' and what it means for a phenomenon to be in relation with it. But at present, we shall leave this task aside. Peirce speaks of Normative Science similarly in another essay, claiming, "We may say roughly that a normative science is the research into the theory of the distinction between what is good and what is bad; in the realm of cognition, in the realm of action, and in the realm of feeling…" (*On Phenomenology*, 147). In the realm of feeling, we examine what is good and bad in relation to Beauty as an end—this is esthetics. In the realm of action, we examine what is good and bad in relation to the (morally) Right as an end—this is ethics. Finally in the realm of cognition, we examine

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[3] I use these words quite loosely. What they have in common—which is the point of relevance here—is their indeterminacy. Literature, art, poetry, etc. are differentiated from science and mathematics chiefly in the sense that they dwell in the 'indeterminate' while science and mathematics aim at eliminating indeterminacy.

[4] I should note here that Peirce's notion of 'the logic of abduction'—a "field of inquiry" that shades into logic—also deals with indeterminacy. It is the retroactive examination of reasoning and formulation of hypotheses for future reasoning. As such, it is implicitly related to my coming criticisms of Kant. But we shall not discuss abduction further here.

what is good and bad reasoning—i.e. what is good and bad in relation to Truth as an end. This is logic.

Peirce criticizes those (logicians in particular) who rank normative science too high, "by virtually treating it as on a par with pure mathematics" (*The Three Normative Sciences*, 198). Peirce offers several reasons for logic's differing status. Two in particular are the nature of its hypotheses and its procedure. The hypotheses of mathematics are purely intellectual in a way that hypotheses of the normative sciences are not. In addition, normative science is guided by facts of phenomenology, unlike mathematics, whose factual realm is purely ideal. And further, "the procedure of the normative sciences is *not purely deductive*, as that of mathematics is, nor even principally so" (*The Three Normative Sciences*, 198). This last claim will strike many readers as strange, but it is important for Peirce's conception of philosophy.

Let us recall Peirce's language of "evaluation" of good and bad. As we consider what this evaluation may entail, we might presume that it is evaluation according to some criteria of *quantity*, where we would measure degree of goodness and badness. This stance, however, will not hold for long. For "Logic classifies arguments, and in doing so recognizes different *kinds* of truth. In ethics, too, *qualities* of good are admitted by the great majority of moralists" (199). As for Esthetics, qualitative difference is hardly in need of defense.

In his *Sundry Logical Conceptions*, Peirce defines Logic, dividing it into three further subdivisions.

> "Logic, which began historically, and in each individual still begins, with the wish to distinguish good and bad reasonings, develops into a general theory of signs. Its three departments are the physiological, or *Speculative Grammar*; its classificatory part, judging particularly what reasoning is good and what bad, or *Logical Critic*; and finally, *Methodeutic*, or the principles of production of valuable courses of research and exposition" (272).

I will not explain any of these three subdivisions—they are mentioned merely for the sake of completeness of the division. The point of interest for us is Peirce's explicit definition of the task of the logic—namely, to distinguish good and bad reasonings.[5]

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[5] It is also of much interest that Peirce claims that logic begins this way *in each individual*.

Peirce remarks that in his own development, he had initially regarded ethics "as mere art…and not a normative science at all" (*The Seven Systems of Metaphysics*, 189). But upon reading the "great moralists" he claims, "I was forced to recognize the dependence of Logic upon Ethics" (189). For Logic, "as the science of controlled thought, which is but a species of controlled conduct, must rest upon the science of such conduct" (*Sundry Logical Conceptions*, 272). In his own development, Peirce notes that this conclusion led him initially to the view that esthetics must not be a normative science able to identify valid goodness or badness. However, he notes, he could not hold this position long, for, "Ethics must appeal to Esthetics in forming its conception of the *summum bonum*" (272).

Philosophy's third grand division—after Phenomenology and Normative Science—is Metaphysics. While Peirce identified himself chiefly with logic, he does have certain valuable insights into metaphysics, identifying himself with a position that he sometimes calls "scholastic realism" (*The Seven Systems of Metaphysics*, 183), which is shaded by his claims on the reality of secondness—"what really is ultimately consists in what shall be forced upon us in experience" (182)—and on his views of perception and its relation to abduction. In his essay entitled *The Seven Systems of Metaphysics*, he contrasts I. Nihilism (and Idealistic Sensualism); II. Strict Individualism; III. Hegelianism of all shades; II III. Cartesianism (also Liebnizianism and Spinozism); I III. Berkeleyianism; I II. Ordinary Nominalism; and I II III. the category with which he identifies himself (180). This is, he claims, "The metaphysics that recognizes all the categories may need at once to be subdivided…It embraces Kantianism, Reid's philosophy and the Platonic philosophy of which Aristotelianism is a special development" (180). Perhaps Aristotle's chief insight, notes Peirce, is his recognition (or at least glimpse) of two grades of being—being *in actu* and being *in potentia*.[6]

"Aristotle recognizes a germinal being, an *esse in potentia* or I like to call it an *esse in futuro*" (180). We shall say much more in the coming pages both on this notion of "grades of being" and on the modes of being.[7] All of Peirce's metaphysical, or

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[6] For example, *Metaphysics* book IX where Aristotle explicitly speaks of "habit".

[7] At present, however, it is quite important to note that these *two grades* of being should not simply be mapped onto the *three modes* of being—possibility, actuality and

perhaps we should say quasi-metaphysical claims (for he is quite furtive in any of his "metaphysical" assertions), have strong undertones pointing to the Universal Categories of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness, and from this it is clear that, as he sees it, Metaphysics leans strongly on Phenomenology as well as Normative Science. Despite his philosophical developments, Peirce consistently maintains his "instinctive attraction for living facts" (*On Phenomenology*, 158).

Maintaining the trichotomy of the Universal Categories, Peirce maps them onto each grand division of philosophy. "Phenomenology studies the Categories in their forms of Firstness" (*Sundry Logical Conceptions*, 272). This investigation "ought to be followed by a science which should study them in a general way as they present themselves throughout common experience" (272). This "in-between" investigation is tied closely to Phenomenology. Peirce entitles it, referencing Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, *Encyclopedeutics* (272). "Then and only then," he claims, "should succeed the *Normative Sciences*" (272). That name, and its reference to *ends*, suggests a mixture between Secondness and Thirdness, which while accurate, may be somewhat exaggerated in the actual operation of these sciences. Peirce tells us that their "true principal purpose…is the Classification of possible forms." He goes on, "But this must be founded on a study of the Physiology of those forms, their general elements, parts, and modes of action" (272). Thus there will involve a "Classificatory part" which should be followed by a "study of the principles that govern the production of such forms" (272). This emphasis on Classification most clearly illustrates Normative Science's study of the forms in their Secondness. In the essay from which these last few quotations come—*Sundry Logical Conceptions*—Peirce (in his Logical investigation of 'Speculative Grammar') deals chiefly with classification.

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necessity—which Kant discusses in detail. Firstly, *esse in futuro*—as Peirce and Aristotle both note—maintains qualities of Firstness as well as Thirdness, future possibility as well as habit and law, and it is for this reason that it is chiefly of interest. Secondly, Peirce's recognition of two grades of being is quite unusual; for the three modes are generally understood as determinations of being, that is, a *singular* grade of being. As Peirce notes, "Hegel's whole doctrine of *Wesen*, the most labored and the most unsuccessful part of his work, is an attempt to work out something similar. But the truth is that Hegel agrees with all other modern philosophers in recognizing no other mode of being than being *in actu*" (*The Seven Systems of Metaphysics*, 180).

Metaphysics will study the categories in their Thirdness. Peirce implicitly demonstrates this point through the fact that most of his quasi-metaphysical claims (and criticisms) maintain some (at least implicit) reference to his technical term *symbol*—the third among his important trichotomy *Icon, Index, Symbol*. Peirce defines *symbol* as "a representamen [a sign] which fulfills its function regardless of any similarity or analogy with its object and equally regardless of any *factual* connection therewith, but solely and simply because it will be interpreted to be a representamen" (*The Categories Defended* 163). We are careful to note what will be obvious to readers of Peirce, but perhaps not so to others, namely that studying the categories in their Thirdness is a far cry from studying the third category. For in thought, and in any phenomenon, all the categories are operative. But we can differentiate the mode in which we examine them and the mode in which they appear, and we can thus advance a particular discipline, without muddying it with the tasks of the others.

Peirce's idea of metaphysics as a science is also suggested in this passage, "Now the concept of a consequent is a logical concept. It is derived from the concept of the conclusion of an argument. But an argument is a sign of the truth of its conclusion; its conclusion is the rational *interpretation* of the sign" (*The Basis of Pragmaticism in the Normative Sciences*, 392-393).[8] This quotation is laden with reference to Peirce's main trichotomy—*Sign, Object, Interpretant*—but for now we shall simply note that examination of an argument will involve looking at (a) the *argument* itself as sign, (b) the truth of its *conclusion*, and (c) the conclusion of the argument as a rational *interpretation*—or rather, the connection of (a) and (b) in the act of interpretation. No element has meaning apart from the others. We see that the argument itself, (a), points towards a conclusion, (b), and only does so insofar as it is interpreted to have this relation, (c). Peirce's essay *New Elements*, which is perhaps his most "metaphysical", makes heavy reference to the *symbol* making claims like, "there can be no reality which has not the life of a symbol" (324). In his other essay directly devoted to Metaphysics—*The Seven Systems of Metaphysics*—he also uses language of the symbol, "the Universe is a vast representamen, a great symbol of God's purpose, working out its conclusions in living realities" (193). But we are not permitted in this paper to jump to such grand

[8] I will not here define Peirce's technical term *argument*.

claims and so place the cart before the horse. For this is a paper about logic, where metaphysical questions are only valid insofar as they are subordinated to logical questions.

In his description of argument, conclusion and interpretation from *The Basis of Pragmaticism in the Normative Sciences*, Peirce makes note of the "Kantian doctrine that metaphysical concepts are logical concepts applied somewhat differently from their logical application" (393). Peirce claims that Kant overemphasized this difference. But this notion of differing application of the same concepts is an important one, and leads us to Kant. It is not always clear when Kant is doing metaphysics and when he is doing logic. Indeed the vast majority of the *Critique* bears the title *Transcendental Logic*, but it is clear that he often leans into metaphysics. Kant notes early on that an "exposition is *metaphysical* when it contains that which exhibits the concept *as given a priori*" (Kant, CPR, A23/B38).[9] Since much of Kant's task in the *Critique* is to explain concepts that are given *a priori*, we might justifiably claim that his primary task is a metaphysical one.[10] We will say more on the subject of metaphysics v. logic in the next section when we begin to properly deal with the *Critique*.

We shall end this section, though, with an interesting observation to, perhaps, keep in mind. This discussion of metaphysics and logic is essentially an attempt to answer the question, "what are we, and what is Kant, *doing* in this work?" In (implicitly) answering the question, Kant uses the verb 'exhibit', and in so doing reveals an underlying fact that also underlies our question—namely, that *we* are in a relation (of some presently undefined sort) with Kant. He is exhibiting to *us*. And while he is, in one sense, simply presenting a "Transcendental Doctrine of Elements"—which will maintain its own internal cogency and unity—in another sense, he is presenting it *to us*, and in that sense, his argument aims at a conclusion that we shall interpret, or try to interpret. As such, (whether Kant explicitly recognizes it or not) the *Critique* always

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[9] All Citations from Kant are from the *Critique of Pure Reason* (edition translated by Norman Kemp Smith). I will cite pages according to the A and B versions.

[10] Further evidence for this is in the Introduction , where Kant defines "metaphysics proper" as "the extension of it's *a priori* synthetic knowledge" (B23). Since the general problem of Kant's *Critique* is, "how are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?" (B19), we are right to define his work as, on some level, a defense of the possibility of metaphysics as a science.

maintains two 'levels', and my analysis will attempt the same. This paper, as an analysis of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, is in the first sense about the *Critique* itself. This does not mean mere summary—for criticisms of the work will also be on this level, in that they challenge the internal cogency of the work and thus examine the work itself. As far as I can tell, most academic work dwells in this level. The second level is where my "analysis of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*"—a project (significantly) bearing the same name as the first level's project—is concerned with examining the work as an *argument* which points toward a *conclusion* as *interpreted* by me.

In my own reading of Kant, this distinction has caused innumerable difficulties, as I have found myself invariably mixing an analysis of the work itself with an analysis of *myself performing an analysis* of the work, or receiving the work. And my paper may be worse off due to this fact. But, for better or worse, this subtle distinction confronted me during my reading, and it is, I believe, a very important distinction.[11] Thus begins our analysis of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.

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[11] I have no doubt that this distinction confronted me thanks to Peirce. But by this, I mean not that it was a proposition or locution which I had previously misunderstood, and which, upon understanding, I (necessarily) regarded as (necessarily) true. I mean, rather, that it was a product of Peirce's ideas in my own reasoning. As such, it is not a "truth" in its own right, written on the pages of my edition of *The Essential Peirce* (or hovering above it), possessing its own logical necessity and cohesion regardless of what I may think. I recognized this distinction, or put another way, I recognized the truth of this proposition—the proposition that there are two levels…etc—because of Peirce's influence on my reasoning. I could say that Peirce's philosophy has been a lens through which I have observed the world, and by that I mean something like: Peirce's philosophy has influenced the kinds of questions I ask. Readers of Peirce may recognize these personal, subjective claims, as I do, as evidence of Peircian abduction. To other readers, this footnote will be entirely vague and unclear. (Fortunately this will not impair their understanding of the rest of the paper).

Another short point in regard to this example: I may seem here, to some, to be throwing out necessity, allowing for anything to be true, etc. But in fact, the matter is much more subtle than that. For upon looking back at this "proposition" (which is, to my knowledge never strictly stated, and thus not strictly a proposition, hence the quotes), I *do* see a logical coherence, a sort of necessity (which is *truly* there). And I am able to identify that "this was good reasoning". But by "this" I refer not to the proposition merely, but to the proposition as full sign—complete as sign with a corresponding object and interpretant. As such, my reception of this proposition does not *exhaust* its truth—to claim this would be to revert to a simple solipsism. This fallacy is perhaps not strictly solipsistic, and would likely get worked out with some careful

An editorial note

Early in the Dialectic (A320, B377), Kant defines the word 'notion' in a technical way, alongside his other technical terms such as 'intuition', 'concept', 'knowledge', and 'idea' (among others). In my analysis of Kant, I will try to consistently use his copious technical terms according to the definitions he gives. The sole exception, however, is the word 'notion'. This term—unlike 'idea' and 'concept'—is not central to any of Kant's technical arguments or his overall work, and he uses it quite infrequently in the *Critique*. For this reason I have chosen it as the term of choice whenever the others do not fit, or whenever I am not trying to be exactly precise. Hereafter, when I use the word 'notion' I mean it in the simple sense of ordinary conversation. While this may strike a careful, taxonomic thinker as a careless decision, I believe that it will ultimately benefit the clarity and precision of my argument, since it protects the other technical terms from extraneous admixture.

Also, because of how important Kant's technical terms and their definitions are, I will highlight each of them in bold font the first time I employ them with their definition.

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thinking, but, by exhausting "truth" in my reception of truth, the fallacy ignores the fact that becomes clear in my retroactive examination of the "proposition" itself (as mere sign). I see it as *really* possessing coherence or necessity—as *really* being true. The instance of my reception of the full proposition (as sign, object and interpretant) is therefore an instance of *type*. For there may have been others, in the past, and there may be others, in the future, who receive this truth in a similar way. And the whole truth of the proposition, in a strange and significant sense, waits for those others. In some way, thus, my own reception of this truth *participates in* but does not *exhaust* the truth of the "proposition". The implications of this point are significant, and much remains to be said. But I am not in a place to elaborate further here.

Chapter II: Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*

This chapter is comprised of three sections: I. *Preface, Introduction, and Aesthetic*; II. *Opening Definitions for a Transcendental Logic*; and III. *Divisions of Logic*. All of these sections, particularly the first two, will involve heavy quotation, and are largely explanatory. The first is primarily a summary of the Preface, Introduction and the Aesthetic, which introduce us to the Transcendental Logic (our primary focus) as well as the *Critique* as a whole. (Readers familiar with Kant may wish to skip over this section). The second is simply an outline of Kant's definitions from the first two pages of the Transcendental Logic (which will be frequently referenced in my analysis). While there are occasional critical remarks in these two sections, the vast majority is merely explanatory.

I. Preface, Introduction, and Aesthetic

Kant's magnum opus is divided into two primary sections—the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements and the Transcendental Doctrine of Method. The Doctrine of Elements is then divided into two major divisions—Transcendental Aesthetic (a quite short section) and Transcendental Logic. As one can see simply by number of pages, the Transcendental Logic is the core of the work, and will naturally be our primary focus. It is divided into two major sections, Transcendental Analytic and Transcendental Dialectic, which are of comparable length and detail. However the Analytic—what Kant calls the "land of truth" (A235/B294) in contrast to the land of illusion—will be of more explicit focus.

"Time was," Kant tells us, "when metaphysics was entitled the Queen of all the sciences; and if the will be taken for the deed, the preeminent importance of her accepted tasks gives her every right to this title of honor. Now, however, the changed fashion of the time brings her only scorn" (Aviii). In his Preface to the second edition, Kant calls the current procedure of Metaphysics a "mere groping" (Bxiv), which either embarrassingly oversteps its employment or falls victim to skepticism—Kant has in mind primarily the Humean variety.

As such, he proposes a "Copernican revolution":

"Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge" (Bxvi).

This proposition is the central tenet of Kant's doctrine of **Transcendental Idealism**, which holds that objects of experience are "mere appearances" rather than "things-in-themselves". As such, they are empirically real, but transcendentally ideal. While here the claim is proposed as a mere hypothesis, Kant claims that in the *Critique* itself it will be proved apodeictically, not hypothetically (Bxxiii). Sebastian Gardner characterizes this doctrine, saying, "Transcendental idealism…[unlike 'material idealism' or 'empirical idealism'] is a 'critical idealism' or 'formal idealism'…because it affirms that, while the sensible and conceptual form of appearances derives from the subject, the matter…does not" (Gardner, *Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason*, 180).

In the spirit of making Reason scientific, Kant cites Galileo, Toricelli and Stahl, who, in their respective experiments, "learned that reason has insight only into that which it produces after a plan of its own" (Bxii). He goes on, "Reason…must approach nature in order to be taught by it" (Bxii). This notion—upon which Peirce greatly expands—is of prime importance for Kant. Put simply, we must ask the right questions of nature if we are to properly determine its truths. Peirce takes this up in his elaboration of Abduction as a form of argument accompanying Deduction and Induction. Abduction, however, is a notion that is thoroughly Peircian. And while Kant, later in the Transcendental Deduction, will speak of our motivation in conceiving of certain ideas (a technical term), these ideas are quite different from the concepts, which he outlines in the Analytic. Kant is firmly convinced that the latter can be arrived at only through a strict deduction. For "experience tells us, indeed, what is, but not that it must necessarily be so, and not otherwise" (A1). In this sense, Induction, for Kant, permits only **Assertoric** judgments, which express only contingent truths that can be true, at best, to a very high degree of probability. Deduction, however, permits **Apodeictic** judgments, which express necessary truth—those which cannot be otherwise.

In his investigation, Kant claims that, "the chief question is always simply this—what and how much can the understanding and reason know apart from all experience? not—how is the faculty of thought itself possible?" (Axvii). The latter question, in searching for a cause of an effect, presupposes the law of cause and effect, and would thereby only express opinion.[12] This former investigation involves a two-sided enquiry—"The one refers to the objects of pure understanding, and is intended to expound and render intelligible the objective validity of its *a priori* concepts" (Axvi). This investigation of the objects—i.e. *a priori* concepts—of the understanding takes place in the 'Analytic of Concepts', of which the 'Deduction' is the focal point.[13] "The other seeks to investigate the pure understanding itself, its possibility and the cognitive faculties upon which it rests; and so deals with it in its subjective aspect" (Axvi-xvii). Kant undertakes this investigation in the *Analytic of Principles*. These are the two primary divisions of the Analytic.

Kant contrasts pure and empirical knowledge. The latter is arrived at *a posteriori* through empirical experience (A2). The former, which is *a priori*, is Kant's focus in the *Critique*. He states,

"For if we eliminate from our experiences everything which belongs to the senses, there still remain certain original **concepts** and certain **judgments** derived from them, which must have arisen completely *a priori*, independently of experience, inasmuch as they enable us to say, or at least lead us to believe that we can say, in regard to the objects which appear to the senses, more than mere experience would teach—giving to assertions true universality and strict necessity, such as mere empirical knowledge cannot supply" (A2).

A priori knowledge is that which is "independent from all experience" (A2/B2), not just a given experience. As such, it is not definable through reference to any given experience. This poses a question—where can we look for knowledge other than in experience? It is clear that knowledge of a proposition such as A=A does not require any reference to experience. This, however, is an **analytic** *a priori* proposition, where

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[12] The distinction between these two questions will be elaborated in coming sections.
[13] Kant published two editions of the *Critique*, the first in 1781, which bears the name 'A', and the second in 1787, which bears the name 'B'. The latter edition involved substantial edits, to certain sections in particular. The Deduction is one such section. In my analysis I will refer both to the 'A Deduction' and the 'B Deduction' and I will draw substantially from each of them.

the concept of the predicate is already contained in and thought through the concept of the subject. Kant is concerned with **synthetic *a priori*** knowledge, where the concept of the predicate is not contained in the concept of the subject, and thus allows for an addition of knowledge.

He gives two clear examples of synthetic *a priori* judgments—those of pure mathematics and those of geometry. He argues, contra Leibniz that in the proposition 5+7=12, I do not think the concept of 12 in the concept of 5, the concept of 7 and the concept of addition (B15). Similarly for geometry, "That the straight line between two points is the shortest is a synthetic proposition. For my concept of *straight* contains nothing of quantity, but only of quality" (B16).[14]

Kant claims, "Upon such synthetic…principles, all our *a priori* speculative knowledge must ultimately rest" (B13/A9-10). These principles are of prime importance because they enable the addition of new knowledge. Gardner clarifies the term 'synthetic a priori' as it applies to judgments, "The term 'synthetic' as applied to judgments has, therefore, the double sense of connecting predicate with a concept in which it is not contained, and of presupposing a corresponding act of synthesis of putting together on the part of the subject" (Gardner, 55). Later on, in discussion of the Deduction, we will elaborate much more on this notion of 'synthesis'.

Prior to the Transcendental Logic, in the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant's primary purpose is to define space and time as 'forms of intuition'. His definition of intuition is lengthy, but important.

"In whatever manner and by whatever means a mode of knowledge may relate to objects, ***intuition*** is that through which it is in immediate relation to them, and to which all thought as a means is directed. But intuition takes place only in so far as the object is given to us. This again is only possible, to man at least, in so far as the mind is affected in a certain way. The capacity for receiving representations through the mode in which

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[14] Sebastian Gardner, in his commentary on the *Critique* makes brief mention of recent developments in mathematics and geometry. "Kant's claim that mathematics is synthetic is defensible, and it accords with some later schools of thought about mathematics. The claim that geometry is a priori, however, has been rendered hard to defend by subsequent developments in the subject" (Gardner, 58). However, he goes on to say that "there is, however, a clear statement in the *Critique of Practical Reason* (52-4) that Kant does not regard truths of geometry and mathematics as beyond skeptical doubt" (Gardner, 59).

we are affected by objects, is entitled ***sensibility***. Objects are *given* to us by means of sensibility, and it alone yields us *intuitions*…" (A19/B33)

The meaning of the term 'objects' is not entirely clear here, and indeed throughout much of the work, as new meanings of 'object' are introduced, the term maintains a certain opacity. But early on, we ought to think of 'object' in a very general sense. He goes on to say that, "the undetermined object of an empirical intuition is entitled ***appearance***" (A20/B34). As such, I would be correct to call a rainbow an object, for example. For, as appearance, it is an undetermined object that presents itself to my intuition.

Kant goes on to introduce the important distinction between matter and form, "That in the appearance which corresponds to sensation I term its ***matter***; but that which so determines the manifold of appearance that it allows of being ordered in certain relations, I term the ***form*** of appearance" (A20/B34). Kant argues in favor of the *a priority* of form of appearance, without which the manifold of matter would remain undetermined, and could not be represented as 'object' (the meaning of the term 'represent' may remain unclear until the *Deduction*). Kant identifies 'Transcendental Aesthetic' as "the science of all principles of *a priori* sensibility" (A21/B35). This science forms the first part of the 'Transcendental Doctrine of Elements'. The second part is Transcendental Logic—"that part which deals with the principles of pure thought" (A21/B36).

In the relatively short Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant claims that space and time are neither absolutely real in themselves, existing irrespective of objects contained in them (the Newtonian view), nor are they mere relations among objects (the Leibnizian view). Rather, "by means of **outer sense**, a property of our mind, we represent to ourselves objects as outside us, and all without exception in space" (A22/B37). Objects cannot appear as external to us except in space. Space is thus a necessary synthetic *a priori* intuition. Kant calls it the form of outer sense. He speaks of time as the form of **inner sense**—"there is nevertheless a determinate form [namely, time] in which alone the intuition of inner states is possible, and everything which belongs to inner determinations is therefore represented in relations of time" (A23-24/B37). Space and time are forms in which representations are **determined**, so as to become appearances. Each is "represented as an infinite *given* magnitude" (A25/B39), by which Kant does not

mean that they are intuited as infinite, but rather that they are given as a totality without limit prior to any empirical intuition which maintains them as a form for its determination. As such, space and time do not govern things in themselves. They are only forms of appearances—i.e. objects *for us*. This argument, Kant claims, is no mere "plausible hypothesis", but is certain and free from doubt (A46/B63).

While these two forms are often referred to together, it is important to keep in mind that space is a form of outer sense, and time of inner sense. Time, thus, has greater ubiquity in human consciousness—it is "the formal *a priori* condition of all appearances whatsoever" (A34/B50). For even in pure mathematical intuition, which is purely ideal, time is already presupposed. This seems strange, but Kant defends this point by arguing that even when we think a line, we think it as being drawn in the mind. While this inner concept does not require space as a form, it does already presuppose time, claims Kant. Later on, we will discuss this notion in more detail. Kant says towards the end of the Aesthetic that, "our mode of intuition is dependent upon the existence of the object, and is therefore possible only if the subject's faculty of representation is affected by that object" (B72). It is important to note that, despite the realist tone of this quotation, Kant claims that it is our mode of *intuition*, not our mode of *knowledge*, which depends on the existence of the object. He is indeed an empirical realist, but later on, we will see the important role of the Understanding in regard to the *existence* of objects, and his transcendental idealism will take clearer shape.

II. Opening Definitions for a Transcendental Logic

The Transcendental Logic opens with several important definitions (some of which have been mentioned earlier). These terms are used constantly throughout his work, and will be used similarly in our investigation. We must therefore note them before we begin.

Kant begins, "Our **knowledge** springs from two fundamental sources of the mind" (A50/B74). He entitles the first, **Intuition**, which is defined as "the capacity for receiving representations (receptivity for impressions)" (92). Through this fundamental source, objects are *given* (A50/B74). The second is entitled **Concepts**, defined as "the

power of knowing an object through these representations (spontaneity [in the production of] concepts)" (A50/B74). Through this fundamental source, objects are *thought*. He also, significantly, refers to the term **representation** as "a mere determination of the mind" (A50/B74). Later on, we shall have more to say on the terms 'representation', 'appearance' and 'object'—the concepts of which are not always readily distinguishable. We should also note here that knowledge, as a technical term for Kant, is sharply distinguished from *thought*. Thought does not require a corresponding intuition—"for if no intuition could be given corresponding to the concept, the concept would still indeed be a thought, so far as its form is concerned, but would be without any object" (B146). It is clear, though, that such a thought—undetermined, without object and "empty" (A51/B75)—cannot yield any knowledge (in the sense that Kant has defined it.[15] This point will be important to my project, as we shall see later on.

Each of the two above capacities—Intuition and Concepts—may either be empirical or pure. If **empirical**, they "contain sensation" (A50/B74)—what Kant will later refer to as the "*manifold* of sensation", which, in itself, is un*determined* (the term 'determined' is another significant one, upon which we will elaborate in the coming pages). Here Kant defines **sensation** as "the **material** of sensible knowledge" (A50/B74). If **pure**, they contain no sensation, but only **form**. "Pure intuition, therefore, contains only the form under which something is intuited; the pure concept only the form of the thought of an object in general" (A50-51/B75). Only pure intuitions and pure concepts are possible *a priori*; their empirical counterparts contain sensation and are therefore *a posteriori*.

The *faculty* of Intuition is entitled **Sensibility**—"the power of receiving representations in so far as it is in any wise affected" (A51/B75). The faculty of Concepts is entitled **Understanding**—"the minds power of producing representations from itself, the *spontaneity* of knowledge" (A50/B74). Kant occasionally uses the terms

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[15] This issue becomes relevant in regard to the categories. See B166, "*for thought* the categories are not limited by the conditions of our sensible intuition, but have an unlimited field. It is only the *knowledge* of that which we think, the determining of the object that requires intuition."

Intuition and Sensibility interchangeably, speaking of intuition as a faculty.[16] He is fairly consistent, however, in maintaining the distinction between concepts and the understanding. The understanding is always referred to as the faculty of the mind. And concepts—Kant staying close to the ordinary usage of the term—are always considered as a source of knowledge—i.e. concept *of* an object; for example the concept of the number 5, or the concept of a cause. However, although these concepts correspond to objects, this does not mean that they are all empirical. I can form a concept of a purely formal object such as a triangle without reference to any experience. And I can have knowledge of this object insofar as my pure concept corresponds to a pure intuition of it (which is exclusively formal).[17] This term 'concept', in its technical usage, also becomes significant when Kant, in the Dialectic, introduces the term '**idea**' which, unlike a 'concept', does not correspond to an object of possible experience.[18]

Kant is clear that knowledge (of an object) can *only* arise from the union of intuition (via the faculty of sensibility) and concept (via the faculty of understanding). "Without sensibility no object would be given to us, without understanding no object would be thought" (A51/B75). Neither is favorable over the other, but each has its

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[16] Two examples are, Bxvii, "…if the object (as object of the senses) must conform to our faculty of intuition…" and A494/B522, "the faculty of sensible intuition is strictly only a receptivity…"

[17] We shall see later that the notion of 'pure intuition' is, in fact, a bit more complex than this statement suggests. However, in this discussion, we may consider it simply as the correlate of a pure concept, in combination with which we have knowledge of a purely ideal object (such as a triangle).

[18] Kant claims to use the term 'idea' in accordance with Plato, for whom the term means, "something which not only can never be borrowed from the senses but far surpasses even the concepts of understanding (with which Aristotle occupied himself), inasmuch as in experience nothing is ever to be met with that is conincident with it" (A313/B370). Kant offers his own definition several pages later: "I understand by idea a necessary concept of reason to which no corresponding object can be given in sense-experience" (A327/B384).

Readers ought not stumble over the phrase "concept of reason". While we will not define 'reason', we must note that the term 'concept of reason' means something different from 'concept of the understanding'. When I use the term 'concept' throughout this paper, I will refer *exclusively* to a concept of the understanding. This is in keeping with Kant's use of the term. The important part of the above definition is the fact that an idea has no object in possible experience. The distinction between 'concept' and 'idea' will be absolutely central to my overall argument.

specific function. "The understanding can intuit nothing; the senses can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise" (A51/B75).

The science of "the rules of sensibility in general" (A52/B76) is called **Aesthetic**, and is distinguished from the "science of the rules of the understanding in general" (A52/B76), which is called **Logic**.

III. Divisions of Logic[19]

In his preface to the Second edition, Kant claims that, "The sphere of logic is quite precisely limited; its sole concern is to give an exhaustive exposition and a strict proof of the formal rules of all thought" (Bix). In his opening of the Transcendental Logic, he elaborates on this notion of form, and gives a more precise division of Logic as the science of the understanding in general.

Logic may be divided into (a) the **general** and (b) the **special** employment of the understanding. The latter, containing rules of correct thinking only in regard to certain objects, is really only an "organon of this or that science" (A52/B76). The former, however, treats the absolutely necessary rules of all objects in general.

General logic may be divided into (a) **pure** and (b) **applied**. The latter is logic that is "directed to the rules of the employment of understanding under the subjective empirical conditions dealt with by psychology" (A53/B77). It deals with employment *in concreto*, and has empirical principles (A54/B78). As such, it is not properly a science, and is not relevant to Kant's project.[20]

Pure general logic—which is what Kant has chiefly in mind when he refers simply to 'logic'—"has to do, therefore, only with principles *a priori*, and is a *canon of understanding* and of reason, but only in respect of what is formal in their employment" (A53/B77). Its two important (and related) rules are first, that it "abstracts from all content" and second, that it "deals with nothing but the mere form of thought"

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[19] This section will also involve some definitions and summation, however it engages questions relating to my critical argument.

[20] Applied general logic is distinguished from special logic in that it still applies to all objects, while special logic (the organon of a science) limits its range of objects to those of the specific science.

(A53/B77). Unlike applied general logic, it cares not for "subjective conditions that may hinder or help its application" (A54/B79).

This point is an important one for Peirce as well, who is firm in his stance that Normative Science is "purely theoretical" (Peirce, *The Three Normative Sciences*, 197). Whether or not the discipline actually yields effective application is a fact entirely irrelevant to the discipline itself. Peirce indeed affirms that there are "practical sciences of reasoning and investigation, of the conduct of life, and of the production of works of art" (*The Three Normative Sciences*, 198) which *correspond* to the three Normative Sciences. But we must staunchly recognize that "they are not integrant parts of these sciences" (198). And as Peirce claims, "the reason that they are not so, thank you, is no mere formalism, but is this, that it will be in general quite *different men*, and two knots of men not apt to consort the one with the other, who will conduct the two kinds of inquiry" (198). Peirce and Kant are both quick to affirm that mixing sciences or disciplines, under the pretext of making them more applicable, will serve only to undermine them.

We see from Kant's description that pure general logic is concerned exclusively with form. Here it may be easy to make an interpretive error. Having defined logic (generally) as the science of rules of the understanding, we may associate pure general logic with pure concepts and applied general logic with empirical concepts. However, this is not correct. Both applied and pure general logic consider all knowledge of the understanding (considered generally). They differ only in their application—the former (applied) being employed *in concreto* and the latter (pure) being employed *a priori*. We recall that, "as general logic, it [pure general logic], *abstracts* [my emphasis] from all content…" (A53/B77). In order to abstract from content, in the knowledge of understanding, there must have been content to begin with. Kant wants to claim that this content from which we abstract is empirical content. Thus we see that what we have been considering as knowledge of understanding in a general sense is really only empirical knowledge.

However, since Kant has already distinguished between pure and empirical intuitions as well as pure and empirical concepts, there is reason to consider another kind of logic. Logic, by definition as the science of the employment of the

understanding (without regard to intuition), considers only *form*, and never *matter* or *content* of knowledge. Pure general logic accomplishes this through abstraction. But in the case of pure thought of objects—which is already entirely formal, containing "only the form of the thought of an object in general" (A51/B75)—no abstraction is necessary. This is, then, a unique case.

> "In that case we should have a logic in which we do not abstract from the entire content of knowledge. This other logic, which should contain solely the rules of the pure thought of an object, would exclude only those modes of knowledge which have empirical content. It would also treat of the origin of the modes in which we know objects, in so far as that origin cannot be attributed to the objects" (A55/B80-81).

Kant goes on to name this "other logic" **transcendental logic**. Here our earlier question on the distinction between logic and metaphysics comes to light.

Aristotle calls metaphysics the "science that studies being qua being" unlike the other sciences that deal merely with a part of being (*Metaphysics*, book IV, 1). In his own investigation of this topic, Aristotle mixes linguistic, logical and ontological questions, but still maintains his orientation toward being as such. Simon Blackburn, in contrast, claims that metaphysics is not the science of being. That title, rather, is misleading, "for there may be nothing or little to be said about Being as such…and in fact the study of Being rapidly turns into the study of things in these categories…" (Blackburn, "Metaphysics", from *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, 65). What is true of both accounts of metaphysics, however, is that it concerns *content*, not just form. This seems to be the chief distinction between logic and metaphysics for the thinkers with whom we are concerned. Logic traditionally confines itself to propositions or judgments about things, in order to examine the forms of reasoning within those propositions, in order to discern their legitimacy. Metaphysics, however, deals with the content of propositions—things, as they exist (in some presently unspecified way).

Transcendental logic, as Kant has defined it, is still formal in the sense that it does not deal with the matter from sensation—and is thus rightly called logic. But it also claims to consider some sort of (presently unspecified) content—content which Kant will go on to call 'the categories', or rather "all original pure concepts of synthesis that the understanding contains within itself *a priori*" (A80/B106). In this regard, transcendental logic is a sort of metaphysics as well.

In light of this observation it may be significant that, in Kant's quotation above, he speaks of "the origin of the *modes* [my emphasis] in which we know objects" (A55/B80). It is not immediately clear how he intends the word "mode"—for it may refer either (a) to the mode of our knowledge of the object, or (b) to the mode of the existence of the object in which we know it. He is previously speaking of modes of knowledge in this passage, not modes of being, so there is evidence that he means (a). But we shall see that Kant's conception of modes of knowledge and modes of being is a very interesting and complex one, and since we have considered his task as, at least on some level, a metaphysical investigation of content and not form merely, we are not wholly unjustified in considering this claim in a metaphysical light.

If he is, here, speaking of the modes of being, then his claim suggests that these very modes—as predications of being—originate in our knowledge of objects. His argument in the Aesthetic has dismissed the notion that we can know things-in-themselves, and has thus proved that the origin of the modes—the origin of the *predication* of (or determination of) being—"cannot be attributed to objects" themselves (A56/B80)—at least not in any way that could possibly be knowable to us. But the notion that existence itself originates in knowledge of objects would go beyond the previous merely negative claim.[21] The ontological import of this interpretation remains to be said, and at present, may be quite opaque. We will not properly address the issue until later when Kant speaks of it explicitly. But if we regard this claim only as far as Kant's transcendental method is concerned, it should not strike us as so unusual. For in this light, it merely subordinates the *question* of existence to the *question* of knowledge.

[21] We shall see later that this is not exactly Kant's position.

Chapter III: Possibility, Truth and Method

This section focuses on 'possibility', a concept[22] that lies at the core of Kant's project. Here I aim to identify Kant's objective for the *Critique*, and his method for achieving this objective. In so doing, I will attempt to bring out 'possibility' as a key concept, and challenge the content of that concept.

Before we can address the issue of possibility, however, we must recall a distinction we have previously noted—the distinction between *thought* and *knowledge*. And we must add two other terms to be distinguished. These four distinct terms are (a) thought, (b) concept, (c) knowledge, and (d) truth. These terms will be important in our analysis for several related reasons: They are significant, first, because of how each is related to the **object**—another technical term for Kant.[23] This issue relates to another—the question as to the formality and/or materiality of each term. I find it necessary to introduce these terms here, although they will be clarified in more depth in the coming chapter.

A. Thought: We noted in the previous chapter (Chapter II.II. *Opening Definitions for a Transcendental Logic*) that thought does not require a corresponding intuition; it may still be thought even if it is "empty" (A51/B75). The only criterion that 'thought' must meet is that it does not contradict itself. As we will explain later in this chapter, I can think the concept of 'a centaur', while I cannot think the "concept" of 'a two-sided triangle', which is self-contradictory.

B. Concept: In the above sentence, we used the word 'concept' to describe the cognitive representation of both a centaur and a two-sided triangle. However, it is plain that the latter does not reach the status of being a concept. This is because a concept is always a concept *of something*. It is that through which an *object* is thought (A50/B74).

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[22] This term is meant in a technical sense. However, beginning in this section, I will attempt to press Kant on issues relating to the "concept-hood" of possibility, and other "concepts".

[23] While there are copious mentions of the term 'object', many of which seem to conflict with one another, we shall note this statement as a preliminary definition: "Everything, every representation even, in so far as we are conscious of it, may be entitled object" (219).

Thus, it is closely related to 'thought', but is importantly distinct, as we shall see in more detail.

C. Knowledge: Of any of these four terms, Kant most frequently contrasts knowledge and thought (e.g. B xxvii; B146). He (as far as I can tell) speaks of knowledge exclusively as knowledge *of an object*. As we have already noted, knowledge always involves intuition—through which an object is given—and concepts—through which an object is thought (A50/B74). The chief feature that distinguishes knowledge from thought is that knowledge contains both form and matter (or content)—"we have already entitled the content of knowledge its matter…" (A59/B83).

D. Truth: Kant assumes the "nominal definition of truth", namely "the agreement of knowledge with its object" (A58/B82). Here the meaning of 'object' becomes noticeably complex. Since knowledge, maintaining both form and content, will already be knowledge *of* an object, we seem to have two different notions of 'object' in play. However, we will leave aside this question at present, and note simply that 'truth' is a particular sort of *relation*—namely 'agreement'—with *its* object (i.e. the object that belongs to it).

Of these four terms, the one most central to our analysis is 'concept'. As we have noted above, Kant most often contrasts knowledge and thought. Yet concepts are situated (in terms of our taxonomy) in a peculiar place between these two. We will elaborate on this peculiarity later on. However, we are now prepared to engage with the notion of 'possibility', the central subject of this chapter.

I. Transcendental Method

Sebastian Gardner cites a letter that Kant wrote to Marcus Herz dated 21st February, 1772 as perhaps the earliest sign of a critical shift in his thinking (Gardner, 29).[24] Kant saw the publication of his *Inaugural Dissertation* two years prior to this letter—a dissertation which Gardner claims remained clearly within the bounds of the

[24] Gardner notes that Kant's now well-known "recollection" of Hume occurred shortly after this letter was written (Gardner, 19).

rationalist school (10). In the letter Kant frames an important question, which marks the turn from his previous position, "I asked myself: What is the ground of the relation of that in us which we call 'representation' to the object?" (28). In the letter Kant goes so far as to call this question the "key to the whole secret of hitherto obscure metaphysics" (28).[25] He elaborates later in the letter, "if that in us which we call 'representation' were active with regard to the object, that is if the object itself were created by the representation…the conformity of these representations to their objects could be understood" (28). We might interpret this statement as Kant's transcendental revolution in its germinal form (though in a limited sense).[26] This statement, however, still assumes the law of causality as a thing-in-itself.[27] As Kant goes on to say, "our understanding, through its representations, is not the cause of the object…nor is the object the cause of the intellectual representations" (28).

In the letter, Kant speaks of his dissertation where, he "silently passed over the further question of how a representation that refers to an object without being in any way affected by it can be possible…since the agreement [of intellectual representations and objects] has not been reached with the aid of experience?" (29). It is clear from this passage that Kant has not yet worked out the meaning of the term 'object'—a task that remains even in the *Critique*. But this central question marks a significant advance. Here, Kant has turned his attention to the possibility of a relation (between object and representation), which does not come through experience, and which does not assume the law of causality. Kant's central question in the letter is more or less the same one (though less precise) that he frames in the *Critique* under the heading "The General

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[25] It is strange and significant that Kant speaks of the key to the secret of metaphysics in terms of simply asking the right question. This notion will recur very late in our analysis.

[26] We must not overemphasize this similarity. Kant's apparent position here seems to lean closer to Idealism than his position in the *Critique*, especially the B version. However, this statement (in a limited sense) parallels Kant's claim in the *Deduction* that, "the representation alone must make the object possible" (A92/B124). Kant's development from his stance in the letter to his stance in the *Critique* is made evident, however, when he affirms in the *Deduction* that the representation is not the *cause* of the object's existence, but is nonetheless "*a priori* determinant of the object" (A92/B125).

[27] While Kant does affirm the law of causality as objective in the *Critique*, it is not a thing in itself, but has its source in the Understanding.

Problem of Pure Reason". There, he asks: "how are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?" (CPR, B19). The one significant difference between these two questions is subtle, but can be indicated by a passage in the Introduction to the *Critique*. There Kant notes that, "what here constitutes our subject-matter is not the nature of things, which is inexhaustible, but the understanding which passes judgment upon the nature of things; and this…only in respect of its *a priori* knowledge" (A12-13/B26). Kant is looking for the necessary grounds or structures not of things but of our understanding. With this shift of focus "inward", we can also see how Kant's project is explicitly a work of logic, rather than metaphysics.

To cite the letter to Herz raises an interesting subtlety in regard to Kant's method. In the letter, Kant is clear to present the problem as arising out of a contradiction—as we have noted, neither representations nor objects are the *cause* of the other (Gardner, 28). Kant's development of a new theory of causality in the *Critique* shows us that this apparent contradiction (formulated in the letter) rests on an incorrect assumption. But what arises first is not the new theory, but the contradiction.[28] As such, Kant's initial question (in the letter) is not, '*given that* x, how is x possible?' but seems to be merely, 'there is an apparent contradiction (based on what I have assumed) which precludes the possibility of x, so how could x be possible? Perhaps there is a claim underlying the latter question, namely, 'given that it seems obvious to my common sense that x'. But this demonstrates that the progression of reasoning first, begins with an assumption (Kant's previous metaphysical rationalism), then second, follows logical steps (which are *correctly reasoned* in themselves) from that assumption and arrives at a contradiction of two claims, namely (a) that a representation refers to an object, and (b) that it is in no way affected by it. In this case the contradiction can be logically solved one of three ways: (1) Claim (a) is false. But that would contradict common sense experience, and result in complete skepticism; (2) Claim (b) is false. But that would result in affirming a metaphysical position that Kant has already disproved (in the dissertation); (3) Claim the assumption is false.

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[28] We see here a process that resembles the procedure of the Antinomies, where two sides succeed in flawlessly arguing opposing positions, a result that indicates an incorrect assumption held by both parties.

Here, the assumption is that, in order for objects and representations to be related, one must be the cause of the other. This (deeply held) assumption, however, is not immediately identifiable in the mere contradiction between claim (a) and claim (b)—for there may be any number of possible assumptions. And since it is deeply held, it will be difficult to recognize. Significantly, this assumption only gets challenged insofar as Kant asks the question, 'how could both (a) and (b) be possible?' From here, Kant is able to identify that representations and objects are not necessarily *causally* connected, but are merely in some relation. And he is then able to form the question, 'what is the ground of that relation?'

In the *Critique* itself, Kant has already made the step of challenging this assumption, and has discovered a new starting premise, which he claims does not result in contradiction. Thus in his introduction, he first argues for the reality of synthetic *a priori* judgments—citing, as we have noted, pure mathematics and geometry. He only *then* goes on to pose the question as to how such judgments are possible. As he says in the introduction: "Since these sciences [mathematics and pure science of nature] actually exist, it is quite proper to ask *how* they are possible" (CPR, B20).[29] Here, we must be careful to recognize the difference between conditions for actuality and conditions for possibility. For Kant's question is not: 'given that x, what made x possible—that is, what made x happen?' That is to inquire into the conditions for the *actuality* of x, which is simply to ask for the cause of x, and therefore already assumes the law of causality. His procedure is rather: 'given that x, x must have been possible; as such, what necessary conditions must always be in place in order for x to be possible at all.' This is to enquire into the conditions for the *possibility* of x.

This method is dubbed **transcendental**.[30] In the Aesthetic Kant has defined space and time as forms that are always already present in our empirical intuitions. There he notes that, "the receptivity of the subject, its capacity to be affected by objects, must necessarily precede all intuitions of these objects" (A26/B42). It is clear that in order for a subject to be affected by objects, it must be possible that the subject can be

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[29] Kant continues, "for that they must be possible is proved by the fact that they exist" (B20-21). We will begin to press this line of argument in the following section.
[30] See CPR, A11/B25 or Gardner, 45-46.

affected—or stated more precisely, it is *necessary* that it be possible. What Kant is seeking is the 'ground' (a term whose meaning is presently unclear) of that possibility. The question thus becomes, what necessary conditions must be in place in order for x to be possible? Gardner further defines this mode of inquiry in his commentary on the Deduction,

"…transcendental enquiry cannot start with the application of a particular concept to an object…it must instead press behind the case in which any concept is applied, and begin by describing the conditions which need to obtain in order for the categories to be brought into play at all, the *pre-categorial* structure of a possible domain of cognition" (Gardner, 145).

After defining the difference between transcendental and general logic, Kant gives his readers a warning: "Not every kind of knowledge *a priori* should be called transcendental, but that only by which we know that—and how—certain representations (intuitions or concepts) can be employed or are possible purely *a priori*" (CPR, 96).[31] This knowledge belongs to the department of transcendental logic, and importantly, does not belong to general logic.

II. Possibility: Real v. Merely Logical

Our discussion above highlights the importance of 'the possible'. Kant says in the preface, "to *know* an object I must be able to prove its possibility, either from its actuality as attested by experience, or *a priori* by means of reason" (Bxxvii). This claim seems quite obvious—if an object is not possible, it can never be given in intuition and can never be known. That we can prove an object's possibility *a priori* is, however, a bit more complex. The possibility referenced here—that an object is possible, i.e. capable of being given, or of becoming an object of experience—is what Kant calls **real possibility**. He contrasts real possibility with **merely logical possibility**. "For I can *think* whatever I please, provided only that I do not contradict myself, that is, provided my concept is a possible thought" (Bxxvii). Here, it is clear that the concept or thought is possible—as evidenced by my thinking it. I can think the concept of a centaur, unlike

[31] Kant gives a similar definition on A11-12/B25.

the concept of a two-sided triangle, which is self-contradictory. But while I am capable of thinking a concept—e.g. the concept of a centaur—this does not, by any means, suggest that such an object is possible. I can make no ontological assertions based on mere logical possibility.[32]

This distinction is an important one for Kant, and it is raised later in the *Critique* in regard to analytic and synthetic judgments. We recall that an analytic judgment is one where the concept of the predicate is already thought through the concept of the subject[33]. As such, the predication adds no new information. Thus Kant will say in the *Principles* that the highest principle of analytic judgments is the 'principle of contradiction', namely that the subject and predicate of a judgment not be self-contradictory (A150/B189). This principle holds irrespective of content in a judgment, and is a "merely negative" condition of truth.[34] We might restate this principle as a requirement that the judgment be (merely) logically possible.[35]

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[32] However, as we noted in the introduction to this chapter, a concept will always be a concept *of an object*. Thus, the "object"—meant simply as the *content* of the concept—must "exist" in some way. For example, I am still thinking *something* when I think a centaur, which is not the case in regard to a two-sided triangle. I cannot think that at all. The question here arises, how are we to characterize this "something" that is *always* contained in a concept, insofar as it is a concept at all? We might ask similarly, what is the content of a merely logically possible concept? We shall address these questions later in this chapter.

[33] The term 'subject' here means grammatical subject of the judgment (contrasted with predicate). It is not to be confused with a 'thinking subject' (contrasted with object).

[34] Here we ought to remember the difference between a concept and a judgment. A judgment is that in which two (or more) concepts are brought into relation—"in any judgment we can call the given concepts logical matter (*i.e.* matter for the judgment), and their relation (by means of the copula) the form of the judgment" (A266/B322). However, in my previous example of the "concept of a two-sided triangle", what I have referred to as a "concept" is, in fact, an analytic judgment bearing the form 'x is y'. This is the judgment that "a triangle is two-sided". Thus we see that this "concept" involves a combination of two concepts—a triangle and a two-sided figure. And we can break the second concept down further into the concept of two sides and the concept of a figure in general. The "concept" of a two-sided figure is not logically possible either (and is therefore, like a "two-sided triangle", not a concept at all). This point is significant because it highlights a question we have already noted—what is the content of a concept? We will elaborate on the meaning of this question later in this chapter, and will attempt to answer it in the coming chapters.

[35] This seemingly redundant rephrasing will have relevance when we examine the modes of Judgments—problematic, assertoric and apodeictic.

Synthetic judgments, however, "add to the concept of the subject a predicate which has not been in any wise thought in it" (A7/B11). Synthetic judgments, as such, are the vehicle for additional knowledge, and their highest principle is more complex. In these judgments, "I have to advance beyond the given concept, viewing as in relation with the concept something altogether different from what was thought in it" (A154/B193-194). This requires a "third something…as that wherein alone the synthesis of two concepts can be achieved" (A155/B194). Kant identifies this medium, this "one whole" which contains all of our representations, as our "inner sense, and it's *a priori* form, time" (A155/B194).[36] We see here a parallel to the notion of 'real possibility' mentioned above. Put simply, the highest principle is that both the subject and predicate must be concepts whose objects are contained in possible experience—concepts whose objects possess 'real possibility'. Kant phrases the principle as follows, that "every object stands under the necessary conditions of synthetic unity of the manifold of intuition in a possible experience" (A158/B197).[37] As such, it is no surprise that Kant aims his investigation at the conditions for possible experience.

In the introductory pages to the Deduction, Kant notes the principle according to which his deduction of all *a priori* concepts will proceed—"namely, that they [the categories, or *a priori* concepts] must be recognized as *a priori* conditions of the possibility of experience" (A94/B126), whether this be in intuition or in thought. He is careful to distinguish that the argument rests on possible experience, and not actual experience—"the unfolding of the experience wherein they are encountered is not their deduction; it is only their illustration" (A94/B126). In order to prove the categories are necessary, and not merely accidental, Kant must deduce "their original relation to possible experience, in which all objects of knowledge are found" (A94/B127). If he can deduce the necessary conditions of this possible experience, then (as we see from

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[36] Kant goes on to speak of synthesis of representation involving also the imagination and the unity of apperception, but since my discussion of the *Deduction* will not come until later, I shall not make further mention of them here.

[37] This section of the *Critique* (*The Highest Principle*) ends up elucidating an important metaphysical claim that comes from the Deduction—namely that the understanding itself is "the lawgiver of nature" (A126), which contains all possible experiences *a priori* within itself (A127). However, we are not yet in a place to address this claim.

the paragraph above) he will have found the ground of synthetic *a priori* knowledge, and will be able to answer the question as to how such knowledge is possible.[38]

III. The Concept of 'Possible Experience', introduced

Above we have noted the significant distinction between actual experience and possible experience. If Kant's defense of the categories rests on actual experience, then his argument will be nothing more than an illustration. Since such an actual experience or event will be contingent rather than necessary, his argument will rest on a contingent fact. Therefore his conclusion will be only contingent and not necessary.

It is for this reason that Kant seeks to identify the *a priori* conditions not of this or that experience (which would be contingent), but of the possibility of experience in general. This argumentative move towards the notion of 'the possibility of experience in general' will enable Kant to make use of the (perhaps logically distinct) notion of 'all possible experience'. This claim must be clarified.

Gardner notes that "a transcendental proof has the peculiarity that it converts a possibility into a necessity: by saying under what conditions experience of objects is possible, transcendental proofs show those conditions to be necessary for us to the extent that we are to have experience of objects at all" (Gardner, 45). Above, I alluded to the potential distinction between two notions: (a) 'the possibility of experience in general', and (b) 'all possible experience'. We are not yet in a place to recognize the thrust of this distinction. For the distinction can only become clear after a more sophisticated analysis of modality and the content of concepts, which are still to come in this paper. Further, because my critique of the concept of possible experience so closely parallels my critique of the concept of unity, I must defer this discussion until after we address *The Deduction*. However, to prepare the reader, I shall introduce the central issue as follows.

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[38] Later on, I will challenge the implied starting premise of Kant's transcendental proofs, which employ the concept of 'possible experience'. I will argue that any judgment or claim in regard to 'possible experience' (as predicate) will either be an analytic apodeictic claim or a problematic synthetic one, but can never by assertoric synthetic. But the explanation of this criticism will not come until after these terms are clarified in later sections.

I am able to identify at least two different meanings of 'possible': (a) weaker sense—that if we cannot be apodeictically certain that a thing or event does *not* exist, then we must say that it is *possible*, and (b) stronger sense—that prior to a thing or event actually existing, it existed in a not-yet kind of way which, while not actual, still has 'ontological content'—i.e. is not nothing.[39] In (b), we are certain that the thing or event is not nothing; while in (a) the thing or event still may be nothing. On one level this is just the distinction between real and merely logical possibility. The object of a really possible concept can really be given in experience, and as such I can make an assertoric judgment about it. But an object of a merely logically possible concept may not exist at all. I can only make a problematic judgment about it.

However, Kant's discussion of real v. merely logical possibility centers around judgments in regard to an *object*. The question for him is about whether and how the *object* exists. Here my focus is on the concept of possibility itself—i.e. what is thought in that concept, or rather what the content of that concept is.[40]

My analysis aims to fasten upon the question of what is thought through a concept. When Kant speaks of the *concept* of 'possible experience', I propose that we examine the cognitive representation that arises in our minds, as a means of identifying the real content of that concept. This issue is so important because of Kant's argument later in *The Deduction*, which hinges on the notion that *a priori* concepts (the categories) are "*contained* [my emphasis] in the concept of possible experience…" (A95). To legitimate that claim, one must have a clear conception of the real content of the concept of possible experience. It is on this point that I will criticize Kant.

As we will note later, Kant holds that modal predicates, when *attached to* a concept, do not change the 'concept itself'. As such, the 'concept itself' has a primacy;

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[39] We must be careful here, though; for (b) seems to assume that time is a thing in itself—e.g. "prior to" actual existence, etc.

[40] In Chapter III.I. *Transcendental Method*, I noted that a transcendental proof (implicitly) begins with the claim: 'given that x, x must have been possible.' If that is an analytic judgment, then the concept of the predicate will be thought through the concept of the subject. What this means is that the concept of x as actual experience is identical to the concept of x as possible experience—i.e. the concept of 'possible experience' is thought *through* the concept of actual experience. In §III, after we discuss the *Deduction*, I shall fully expand on this argument, and bring out its full implications.

it "exists" in a way that is pre-modal. The meaning of this notion is complex, and will be, at present, quite opaque, since we have not yet introduced the technical terms that clarify the issue. However as Kant speaks of such difficult abstract notions as "possible experience in general", "an object in general" and "unity", I propose that we continually demand: what is thought through that concept? I will argue later that each of these, considered as independent concepts, are identical to the concept of nothing. And I will propose that they be considered, rather, as **ideas** (a technical term we have previously defined, which Kant introduces in the Dialectic).[41]

IV. Concepts: The Question of Content

In the introduction to this chapter, we noted the distinction between thought, concept, knowledge and truth. We noted that knowledge is most typically contrasted with thought, in that thought only requires a logically possible object, whereas knowledge entails both an intuition and a concept, whose correlate is an object of really possible experience. The object of a concept, however, does not necessarily possess real possibility. However, as we have noted, this object is still a "something", even if this is only by virtue of the fact that it is called an object.[42]

Above we gave an example of a concept whose corresponding object is not contained in possible experience—the concept of a centaur. However, while this object itself is not contained in possible experience, it is clear that what is thought in the concept—i.e. the *content* of the concept—is formed through two concepts from actual experience, namely a horse and a man. We see therefore that even a merely logically possible concept, which does not have a real object (that is, a really possible object), does nonetheless have content.

This claim, however, is not immediately clear and requires some defense. For, as Kant claims in the introduction to the Transcendental Logic, "the pure concept [contains] only the form of the thought of an object in general" (A51/B75). This seems

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[41] : "I understand by idea a necessary concept of reason to which no corresponding object can be given in sense-experience" (A327/B384).

[42] In §II. Chapter III we will discuss the concept of 'nothing' which makes this issue a bit more complex, but at present, we will leave that discussion aside.

to indicate that a concept may be strictly formal. But, as we will see in the *Deduction*, the issue is more complex. For Kant, the concept of 'an object in general' is closely tied to the concept of 'possible experience', which he claims "contains" a manifold of content within itself (A95). While we cannot address this argument here, it is clear from the passage above that, in a quite simple way, even pure thought of an object in general is still thought of *something*. In this sense, the content of the concept would simply be 'an object in general'.

That a concept (even a pure concept) possesses content (even if it is some sort of presently unspecified content), as well as form, is evidenced by several passages. One such passage comes from the same introduction as the quotation above. As Kant defines transcendental logic, he notes, "In that case we should have a logic in which we do not abstract from the entire content of knowledge" (A55/B79). Here Kant speaks of the content of knowledge, not concepts. But we will recall (from Chapter II.III. *Divisions of Logic*) that this knowledge is pure, meaning that it entails a pure intuition and a pure concept, which Kant has claimed are both exclusively formal. Kant aims to avoid this contradiction through his notion of 'an object in general'. But again we can see simply that just as knowledge must be knowledge *of* something, the same must be true of a concept.[43]

Kant also gives evidence that concepts possess content when he claims that empirical concepts "*contain* [my emphasis] sensation" (A50/B74). This means that the (sensory) matter from intuition is brought up into the concept itself. The matter is thought through the concept; it is a concept of matter, the matter constituting its content.

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[43] Here we must note a subtle distinction. We tend to think of the phrase 'knowledge of' as equated with 'knowledge about'. This notion suggests that we conceive of something intrinsic in the object that is made available to us. (Whether or not this line of thinking assumes objects as things-in-themselves is not a relevant question to the distinction here). However, I intend the phrase 'concept of' to mean something different. For the object, strictly speaking, is irrelevant to the concept. My focus is not on what the concept *refers* to—in the way that knowledge refers to an object—but about what the concept *is*. Thus I have noted that the question 'what is thought in a concept?' can help us to answer the related question, 'what is the content of a concept?' In our previous example of a two-sided triangle, nothing is thought through the concept, and it therefore has no content and is not a concept at all. (I believe that Kant does not sufficiently recognize this distinction between what a concept *refers to* and what a concept *is*).

Kant supports this notion again in the *Deduction* when he identifies the two dissimilar elements of experience, namely form and matter, "which, on occasion of the sense-impressions, are first brought into action and yield concepts" (A86/B118). This passage most clearly proves our point, which is this: that any concept, insofar as it is a concept at all, will be a concept *of* something; and whatever the status of the object (which is irrelevant to the concept as such), the concept itself will possess some kind of content.[44]

[44] Kant makes a similar point when he claims that, "the knowledge yielded by understanding, or at least by the human understanding, must therefore be by means of concepts" (A68/B93). Another passage that supports this is in the *Concepts of Reflection*, where, speaking of concepts in general, Kant notes "the logical form" as well as "the content of the concepts" (A262/B318). Another supporting passage is in the beginning of the *Analytic of Concepts* where Kant, by noting that his procedure is not "that of dissecting the content of such concepts" (A65/B90), implicitly suggests that these concepts do have content. It is important also that these are pure *a priori* concepts.

§II. The Judgments and the Categories: Form, Matter and the Question of Concept-hood

The Analytic deals, most basically, with (a) concepts, and (b) judgments/principles (the distinction not being clear initially). Kant first introduces the Table of Judgments—presented briefly without much explanation. He then introduces the Table of Categories in a similar way. But in his detailed analysis, he progresses the other direction—first arguing for the objective reality of the concepts (categories)—this performed in the *Analytic of Concepts*, the core of which is *The Deduction*—and second moving on to define the principles—performed in the *Analytic of Principles*. In my analysis, I will briefly discuss the judgments and categories, and then move to a detailed analysis of the *Deduction*.

In this section we will highlight the issue of form v. content. For Kant's table of judgments is associable with form, but his table of categories considers concepts—that is, content rather than mere form. Gardner makes this distinction as well: "Kant accordingly starts with what he considers to be the basic forms of judgment, and then claims that a specific concept corresponds to each of them. The attempted move is thus from formal logic to concepts with content" (Gardner, 131).

In the first chapter of this Division, we will discuss the table of judgments and the table of categories, and their relation to the form/matter distinction. This distinction will lead us to Chapter II, where we will discuss the question of concept-hood, in relation to space and time. This raises the question of the unity and manifold-ness of space and time qua pure intuitions and qua concepts. Having introduced the question of unity v. manifoldness as it relates to the content of a concept, we will move to §III, which explicitly deals with the *Deduction* and the question of the concept of unity, which is the central issue of this paper.

Chapter I. Judgments and Categories

I. Judgments: Form, Relation and Modality

Kant claims, "if we abstract from all content in judgment, and consider only the mere form of understanding, we find that the function of thought in judgment can be brought under four heads…" (CPR A70/B95). Kant has, in the previous paragraph, defined Understanding as a "faculty of judgment" (A69/B94), all *acts* of understanding being thus defined as judgments (A69/B94). He outlines four headings of judgments: (1) Quantity (2) Quality (3) Relation, and (4) Modality.

Modality—a "quite peculiar function" (A74/B99)—is of special interest to us. Modality is separated from the other functions by the characteristic that it "contributes nothing to the content of the judgment" (A74/B100). We recall from the previous paragraph, however, that we have already abstracted from the content in all judgment and are considering the form of understanding only. Quantity, Quality and Relation, as such, *are* forms; however, they are forms that concern the content of given judgments. The content of a judgment, however, is to be distinguished from the content of knowledge. For we have defined judgments as acts of understanding, and understanding is only one side of knowledge. It enables thought of objects, but it only does so in coordination with sensibility, without which no object would be given.

This is most clear in regard to empirical knowledge. At this stage, we can regard content of empirical *knowledge* as sensation.[45] The content of a *judgment* will be its constitutive concepts (or judgments which are again made up of concepts). As Kant claims, "In any judgment we can call the given concepts logical matter (*i.e.* matter for the judgment), and their relation (by means of the copula) the form of the judgment" (A266/B322). Hence, we might say that the content of knowledge and the content of a judgment *exist* in a different way from each other. Kant suggests this point when he says, "Judgment is therefore the mediate knowledge of an object, that is, the

[45] With the introduction of the categories, Kant attempts to argue that the Understanding contains pure *a priori* concepts—content—within itself. He calls these concepts the categories. However, at present, we are only considering ordinary content of empirical knowledge—namely sensation.

representation of a representation of it" (A68/B93). A concept is a representation of an object. And a judgment is a representation of concepts that get unified—brought together in *one* judgment; hence his phrase "a representation of a representation". This point can also be illustrated in terms of the distinction between real and merely logical possibility. Let us imagine a judgment is made up of merely logically possible concepts. In that case, Kant would claim, the matter of the *concept*—that is, its object[46]—is *not* really possible. But the matter of the judgment—that is, its concepts—*are* really possible.[47]

Kant suggests this distinction when he elaborates on the third and fourth headings of judgments, namely **relation** and **modality**. I believe that, for Kant, the term 'relation' means something like grammatical or textual correspondence. For although he speaks of "relations of thought in judgments" (A73/B98)—thought implying a thinker—he conceives of 'thought' in a way that is unrelated to any specific instance of being thought. The relations of which Kant speaks here are, we might say, within the judgment qua sentence, not the judgment qua act.[48] In a judgment qua sentence, the agent is only accidental to the relation. Kant reveals this in his description of each of the three subheadings of relation, "In the first kind of judgments we consider only two concepts, in the second two judgments, in the third several judgments in their relation to each other" (A73/B98). Here we see that the relation occurs within text; it does not have

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[46] As I noted earlier, I believe Kant does not give sufficient attention to the distinction between what a concept *refers to* and what a concept *is*. Thus, while Kant would equate matter/content of a concept with object of a concept, I believe this is not quite correct. But, my criticism will not be explained until later. As such, we will assume Kant's position for now.

[47] This raises an important question: How can matter arise from nowhere like this? I will argue later that the content of this concept is derived from actual experience. An example of this is in the logically possible concept of a centaur. In this example, we see that the critical issue is not whether or not an object exists that might correspond to the concept. The critical question is in regard to the content of the concept itself. And in this instance, it is clear that the concept is formed merely from an arbitrary combination of concepts from past experience—namely, the concept of a horse and a man.

[48] These terms "judgment qua sentence" and "judgment qua act" are my own additions, and are not used by Kant. However I believe they are helpful in illustrating this important distinction.

to do with a flesh-and-blood actor performing a judgment (a much more Peircian notion).

Let us take an example Kant gives of his second sub-category of relation—"the hypothetical proposition, 'If there is a perfect justice, the obstinately wicked are punished'" (A73/B98). This judgment has the form 'If x, then y' where x and y are each judgments. Kant claims that this proposition "really contains the relation of two propositions, namely, 'There is a perfect justice', and 'The obstinately wicked are punished'" (CPR, 109), though the *truth* of either of those claims is not a matter of concern here. What is of concern is that there is a "logical sequence" (A73/B98) and it is this sequence that 'relation of judgments' determines. In this example, the logical sequence is a particular kind of relation—namely that of the second subcategory: "(b) of the ground to its consequence" (A73/B98). The question of the *truth* of such a judgment brings us to Modality.[49]

The *textual* content of a judgment is exhausted by the first three headings—for Kant says, "besides quantity, quality, and relation, there is nothing that constitutes the content of a judgment" (A74/B100). I believe that modality of judgments, as here explained by Kant, is closer to Peirce's notion of 'relation'. Peirce's relations seem to encompass both text and flesh-and-blood action.[50] Modality, thus, "concerns only the *value* [my emphasis] of the copula in relation to thought in general" (A74/B100). This may seem peculiar—for modality is traditionally understood as concerning how things exist. We will see in Kant's second table—that of the categories—that modality is used in this sense—i.e. existence as possible, actual or necessary. In this way it is peculiar to speak of modality as a predicate of *value* rather than as a predicate of *being*. There is, no doubt, an architectural rationale behind the two tables and their divisions, and we will

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[49] We previously noted the definition of truth as a particular kind of relation between knowledge and object. Since knowledge entails an object being given and an object being thought, we are able to see that knowledge requires a thinker, that is, a specific instance of being thought. This yields two conclusions: first, that truth can only arise in being uttered, and as such does not primordially underlie knowledge or judgments. Secondly, it implies that there are two qualitatively different classes of relations—what we might call (a) textual relations, and (b) living relations.

[50] We see this simply in his primary trichotomy of sign, object, interpretant.

see that the three divisions of modality of judgments relate to the three predicates of being—although the one cannot be directly mapped onto the other.

Modality of judgments is divided into three subheadings— (a) Problematic (b) Assertoric, and (c) Apodeictic. We might say, based on Kant's definition of these subcategories, that they are divided according to the way that affirmation and negation *exist* within the judgment qua sentence, or text. "Problematic judgments are those in which affirmation or negation is taken as merely possible (optional). In assertoric judgments, affirmation or negation is viewed as real (true), and in apodeictic judgments as necessary" (A75/B100). An apodeictic judgment claims that x is necessary—i.e. cannot be otherwise. An assertoric judgment claims that x is the case—in a factual, yet contingent way. A problematic judgment claims that x may or may not be the case—i.e. we cannot say that x is *impossible*; therefore we must say it is possible. This recalls our distinction between real and merely logical possibility.

However, as we have said, these modes of judgment do not directly map onto the modes of being. We must recall that judgment has been defined only as "mediate knowledge of an object" (A68/B93). As "representations of representations", judgments are one level further removed from objects than concepts are. As such, a judgment in the problematic mode will make a statement, the affirmation or negation of which is merely possible. This does not, however, mean that its object is possible—that is to make an important ontological claim, which a problematic judgment cannot affirm. To affirm that an object is possible—which is to grant the *object* a modal predication, and therefore to make an ontological claim—is to make an assertoric judgment. For the affirmation of this *judgment* is real, meaning that the object really is *possible* (not only logically so). This discussion of modality, as a predication given to concepts brings us to consideration of the categories.

II. Form v. Content

Kant calls the categories "all original pure concepts of synthesis that the understanding contains within itself *a priori*" (CPR, 113)—abbreviated as "pure concepts of the understanding". Unlike the headings in the table of judgments, these are

not merely formal but are actual unique concepts, and can therefore be associated with content of the understanding—though in a limited sense.[51] The formality of the headings of judgment is made somewhat clearer if we look at the specific 'moments' in each of the headings. In the table under Quantity of Judgments, the three sub-headings are Universal, Particular, and Singular. Although we might typically think of each of those as a concept (in a vague, non-technical sense), we must note that Kant is careful with his language. He refers to 'Universal'—i.e. *judgments* which *are* universal—rather than *Universality*, which is an independent (though abstract) concept. The previous sentence is intentionally awkward to point out the distinction. For we cannot (grammatically) refer to 'universal'; we must refer either to (a) *things* which are universal—the things being the content, sharing a similar form, or (b) universality, the concept. In (a), we have a clear distinction between matter and form. In (b), that is not the case. For it is clear in (a) that the *things*—that is, empirical things—share a quality, which is formal. But when we refer to universality itself—as a concept with content—the question arises as to whether its content lies merely in the empirical things that share its quality, or if it has some *a priori* content apart from these. We would say that, in (a), the form that the things share is their universality. But when we speak that way, calling the form 'universality' (and grammar demands that we must), we are effectively changing the slide under our microscope; rather than examining the specific 'things' from (a), we are now examining a new "thing", called universality.

At a basic level, this is merely the difference between an adjective and a noun. An adjective modifies a noun, while a noun may exist in a sentence without an adjective[52]. But Kant is not concerned with the existence of adjectives and nouns as such. He is only considering the form and content of our understanding. As such, it

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[51] We must note that while the categories are unique concepts—"these categories, which, properly taken as material…" (B114)—Kant also claims that, "they are concepts of an object in general, by means of which the intuition of an object is regarded as determined in respect of one of the logical functions of judgment" (B128). In this way the categories still lean on intuition in an important way. More will be said on this point in §III, but at present we are right to consider the twelve categories as concepts with (transcendental) content, in contrast to the twelve *forms* of judgment.

[52] Here the word 'exists' only means 'exists within the sentence' or 'exists within text'; it has nothing to do with the modes of being—possibility, actuality, necessity.

becomes clear that judgments—in employing concepts—are dependent on those concepts in some way. Thus the form of the understanding (A70/B95) is dependent on the content of the understanding (A76/B102).[53] As we will see below, object (which is what has real modal predicates) gets applied to a judgment via concepts. Without these, we cannot find anything that really exists in the judgment—e.g. 'if x, then y' refers to nothing that actually exists.[54]

That being the case, we must ask an important question, namely how are we able to change from a formal (adjectival) term to a material (nounal) one? As in the example above, there is an important change when we go from referring to the word 'universal'—an adjective which is dependent on the nouns to which it is attached, having meaning insofar as it modifies these—to the word 'universality', which seems to be a concept in its own right. What is involved in that change? Or rather, when a formal term (adjective) is changed grammatically into a material term (noun), where does the matter/content come from? As adjective, the word refers to a noun, wherein lies the matter/content, or rather, the *object*. When we take this merely formal term and speak of it as noun—i.e. as concept—what is its object?

We frame the question above in terms of adjectives and nouns, but the issue is perhaps more visible by looking at the form and content of a judgment. For the term 'universal' as a heading of judgments refers only to the structure of a judgment, i.e. only to form. The content of the judgment is its concepts (or other judgments, which then reduce further to concepts), wherein the content of the object (as a representation) is contained. We can clearly see in an example of the form of the judgment 'if x, then y'

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[53] On A77/B102, Kant speaks of "material" rather than content, but the meaning is the same—matter/material/content v. form

[54] The word "dependent" must be clarified. By saying that judgments are "dependent" on concepts, I mean, in one sense, that in order to have *meaning*, they must rely on concepts. For example, 'if x, then y' has no meaning except insofar as x and y are filled with concepts (or judgments). But this is equivalent to saying that in order to have *content*, judgments must rely on concepts. For if the concepts of a judgment *are* its content, then without them, the judgment is mere form. The judgmentally distinct terms x and y, then, do not have meaning or content except insofar as they are to be filled with the content of concepts. This point will become relevant in §III. Chapter IV when we discuss the concept of an object in general. There I will argue that the concept of an object in general (considered in itself) is identical to the concept of nothing.

that there is no object present. 'If x, then y' is therefore only the form of a judgment. The term 'universality', however, seems to be a concept in its own right. If so, what is its object, and wherein lies its matter/content?[55]

This issue is important because of how it relates to 'possibility'. As exemplified in the form of judgment, 'if x, then y', we might say that the form of the judgment is hypothetical. It is clear from the syntax of that sentence that 'judgment' is the grammatical subject (and noun); 'hypothetical' is an adjective that applies to the form *of the* judgment. As such, we can see that the 'judgment' *itself* is nothing more than a formal unity of (logically) possible terms. But the judgment, as such, does not "exist" (even in the mode of possibility) in its own right.

This issue of change from a formal term to a material term is raised, perhaps most clearly, in regard to Kant's discussion of space and time. And as we will see, the *content* of space and time qua concepts and qua intuitions will be important to Kant's argument.

[55] In this discussion, we must be careful with empirical/pure distinction: e.g. we tend to only think of 'object' as being empirical object (hence "third man" type arguments). For example, 'round' as an adjective could either be derived from empirical things that all share that quality, in which case it is reducible to mere relation, or it might be a form existing above them in a Platonic sense. This, however, is only with regard to empirical objects. However, as we have already noted, any concept (pure or empirical) must have form as well as content. Its content can be pure, and non-empirical, but it still must have content.

Chapter II. Space, Time, and Concept-hood

In the Aesthetic, Kant has defined space and time as forms of intuition—i.e. the formal element of an intuition, which, when combined with a material element—empirical sensation—yields full intuition. But his language in regard to space and time is frequently unclear, as he (in several places, which we will see below) refers to space and time as concepts. Part of the issue is, no doubt, simply a grammatical challenge—to refer to space and time, one must refer to them as nouns. But Kant's language reveals that the issue is more complex than this, for, as we already know, 'concept' is a central technical term. This change to 'concept-hood' reveals an important fact that is central to his argument and to mine. This fact is that, for Kant, all concepts are grounded in a primordial unity, wherein content is *already* existent and wholly contained in the transcendental unity of apperception. This point will not be clear at present, but will hopefully become so over the course of the coming analysis. Our primary question in the following section will be this: If space and time, as pure intuitions, contain only form, how can they become objects of thought, or concepts? How can content, which is implied in the term 'object' and required for all (non-empty) thought, arise from mere form?

I. Space and Time: Formal Intuition or Concept?

In the section entitled "The Clue to the Discovery of all Pure Concepts of the Understanding", commonly dubbed the *Metaphysical Deduction*, Kant presents his Table of Judgments and his Table of Categories, but does not attempt to defend them (with a deduction proper) until the following section—the Transcendental Deduction (A and B).[56] We shall begin our current investigation of the change to concept-hood, in regard to space and time, with a quotation from the beginning of Deduction A. There, Kant states,

[56] When I refer to 'the Deduction' I am always referring to the Transcendental Deduction.

"We are already in possession of concepts which are of two quite different kinds, and which yet agree in that they relate to objects in a completely *a priori* manner, namely, the concepts of space and time as forms of sensibility, and the categories as concepts of understanding" (A85/B118). The meaning of the phrase demands close analysis.[57]

In a non-technical way, it seems quite obvious that we possess "concepts" of space and time. But careless ordinary usage of this kind has no place in the *Critique*—the *Deduction* least of all. For Kant has already very clearly identified space and time as the necessary *a priori* forms that precede[58] and determine the empirical intuitions of all objects, intuitions through which objects are given. As such, time and space are merely formal. Kant is quite clear about this matter/form distinction in the Aesthetic—"That in the appearance which corresponds to sensation I term its *matter*; but that which so determines the manifold of appearance that it allows of being ordered in certain relations, I term the *form* of appearance" (A20/B34).

Thus, as we have seen, an empirical intuition will involve sensation (matter) as well as space and time (forms—outer and inner, respectively). But we recall that Kant identifies pure intuitions as well as empirical ones. Thus, the "pure form of sensibility may also itself be called *pure intuition*" (A20/B34-35). This intuition only has form, unlike an empirical intuition, which possesses both form and matter. In the Aesthetic, Kant defends this notion (of 'a pure intuition') by claming that something remains of a given representation even when we take away everything of sensation and everything that the understanding thinks in regard to the representation (A21/B35).[59] In his example

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[57] Although it is important here that Kant has spoken of *two types* of concepts—(a) concepts of space and time, and (b) the categories—our focus in this section is on space and time, so we will leave aside the question of whether or not we possess actual concepts of the categories. This will come in the following Division.

[58] See A33/B49: "Were [time] a determination or order inhering in things themselves, it could not precede the object as their condition…"

[59] Later on, we will address the implications of this notion of "taking away", highlighting the element of retrospection in this process. But the issue may be introduced as follows. Kant refers to the representation of a body, "Thus, if I take away from the representation of a body…substance, force, divisibility…" (A20/B35). My argument, however, is that Kant assumes that this "taking away" applies to the representation of a body as empirical intuition. He fails to realize that this act of "taking away" cannot occur in the instance of empirical intuition. The act applies, therefore, not to an empirical intuition of a body as such; it already applies to a *concept of* that

of a body, what remains is "extension and figure"—i.e. *that* the representation occupies space.[60] Therefore space—the pure intuition—is prior.[61] Kant's argument in regard to time is similar, and does not need to be re-stated. It is clear that these intuitions will "contain only the form under which something is intuited" (92).[62]

II. Continuity and Growth of a concept:

II.A. Do I possess the concept?

Having identified space and time as pure intuitions, which are strictly formal, we return to the quotation with which we began this chapter: "We are already in possession of…the concepts of space and time" (A85/B118). We should now see that this claim is immediately suspect. For a pure intuition is merely formal, whereas a concept, involving thought of an object (A50/B74), must maintain at least some kind of content. However, as we have noted, in a non-technical sense, I certainly have some "concept" or notion of time. In pointing out this obvious claim, we bring to light a fact that we alluded to in the first chapter of this paper—namely that, in order to properly understand

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empirical intuition. The body must be translated into a concept in order for it to be analyzed in this manner.

[60] Here we must make an important point that is relevant to the rest of our analysis. We ought to note that 'matter' is not only contained in sensation, per se. Yes, Kant has identified matter as sensation (A20/B34), but in this quote we see that it is not only sensation that is taken away, but also *thought of* matter. As he says later, empirical concepts *contain* sensation (A50/B74). This further supports my claim that concepts—pure and empirical alike—maintain some sort of content.

[61] We will elaborate in detail on what is precisely meant by this in section III of this chapter.

[62] It is also, perhaps, worth mentioning that Kant regards space and time as the *only* pure intuitions that are given. He is clear in the Aesthetic that these two are the only two forms *of sensibility*—"In the course of this investigation [the Aesthetic] it will be found that there are two pure forms of sensible intuition…namely space and time" (67). But he does not (to my knowledge) identify them as the only two *pure intuitions* that are given until the Transcendental Doctrine of Method—"The only intuition that is *given* [my emphasis] *a priori* is that of the mere form of appearance, space and time" (A720/B748). Kant does, however, make reference to "*a priori* intuitions, as in mathematics" (B147). There are indeed such things as mathematical pure intuitions, but as he goes on to say in the Doctrine of Method, these are not *given*, but are *constructed*.

Kant's argument as a whole, I must examine my own process of thinking, my own *reception* of the arguments.

That said, as I encounter this apparent contradiction, my first question would likely be, "am I in possession of these concepts?" In light of this question, we must also ask what Kant means by "already"—is it (a) already in general, as a thinking person, or (b) already, at this stage of the *Critique*? Since Kant does not refer merely to 'concepts of space and time', but rather to "concepts of space and time as forms of sensibility" (A85/B118) it seems clear that he means (b). This, however, presents us with another question. For, at this stage in our reading, we now *possess* something that we did not at the start. That something—a concept—is merely ideal, but is still new. Before beginning the *Critique*, I undoubtedly had some notion of 'time'. Kant has (rightly) pointed out that that view is incorrect, and with his Copernican turn, conceives of time in a very different sense. As a result, through reading the *Critique*, one of two things happens. Either (a) I acquire a wholly new concept, or (b) I modify my previous concept of 'time'. In the case of (a), we are then confronted with the question, how has this wholly new concept come into being? In the case of (b), we are confronted with the question, how can there be any sort of connection or continuity between these concepts?

As evidenced by the fact that Kant uses the same word—'time'—for both "concepts", we can assume that (b) is correct. Thus, we shall address that question—how can there be continuity between these quite different concepts? Presupposed in this discussion is a vague dichotomy between words and things.[63] We say that words refer to things. Obviously to give any kind of *definition* is to already use other words.[64] Yet we still use definitions—they still have meaning. We commonly say that a definition explains what something *is*. But even though the word 'table' might apply to the piece

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[63] In regard to something other than time—whether it is something like a chair or something like justice—we could speak of more specific divisions, such as (a) word, (b) concept, (c) empirical object, (d) thing-in-itself, etc. Since Kant does not think of time (the subject of our current discussion) as existing as either empirical object or thing-in-itself, this division is not helpful. Yet we can simply agree on the vague distinction between the word 'time' and the "something" that the word refers to, which exists in some (presently unclear) way.

[64] We will soon address Kant's "definition" of the word 'definition', which is quite strictly defined. But here I mean the word merely in the general sense of ordinary usage.

of furniture in my dining room, that *is* obviously not the definition of the word. To define 'table' we might rather speak of characteristics—it is elevated, has a flat top, often has legs, etc. and we might come up with a definition accordingly. In doing so we find that the word 'table' refers not to the thing in my dining room, but to a concept.

Thus the question arises—to what does the word 'time' refer? Prior to reading Kant's *Critique* we will have had a notion of time. In the Aesthetic, Kant points out certain assumptions that we may have had about time—e.g. that it exists independently of our intuition—and he points out how these assumptions are incorrect. We might therefore claim that our prior concept of time was an incorrect or inconsistent one, and that through Kant's proof, our concept became more correct. But to say that it is more correct is to say that it changes. And if the concept changes then we cannot quite say it is the same concept. As we asked above, how is there continuity between the earlier concept and the later one?

Now, without a doubt, my concepts of certain things are always changing as I go through new experiences. I have a concept of the pyramids in Egypt although I have never been there, and my concept will surely change in some degree once I do go. But those experiences are empirical, not *a priori*. It is fairly easy (even maintaining a pre-Kantian view of objects) to recognize that my concept of an empirical object is subject to change as I gather new information about that object. But in regard to an *a priori* concept, the question is a subtler one.

Kant will go on in the Doctrine of Method to speak more precisely about 'definition' and its relation to concepts. There, he claims that, "to define…really only means to present the complete, original concept of a thing within the limits of its concept" (A727/B755). Consequently, since a definition demands utter completeness and exactitude, "mathematics is the only science that has definitions" (A729/B757). Mathematics is able to *define* (in a strict sense) the concepts with which it deals because it has constructed them. Mathematical concepts are "arbitrarily invented concepts" (A729/B757). Thus we are able to define and thereby form a concept of a triangle. This definition is entirely complete and original. However, it is clear that when Pythagoras proved his theorem, he thereby added new information to the concept. And thus, Kant notes, "I must not restrict my attention to what I am actually thinking in my concept of a

triangle (this is nothing more than the mere definition); I must pass beyond it to properties which are not contained in this concept, but yet belong to it" (A718/B746). This extraordinary quote raises a very interesting question. For as we noted above, my changing concepts in regard to empirical objects, are simply a result of my incomplete empirical observation. Here, in regard to an *a priori* mathematical object, I can construct a concept, which will be nothing more than an arbitrary invention, and will be entirely complete, and yet this concept may have properties "belonging" to it that I do not yet know.

Peirce touches on a similar notion, however he extends this idea to an empirical object: "We think that a piece of iron has a quality in it that a piece of brass has not, which *consists* in the steadily continuing *possibility* of its being attracted by a magnet" (Peirce, 269).[65] This point is closely tied to the notion of Law, which is important for both Kant and Peirce. They both maintain that laws really do operate in nature. Of course laws of nature do not merely come into being upon being observed. Stars were, of course, still moving in elliptical orbit, in accordance with Newton's law of gravity, before he discovered that law. However, neither are laws things-in-themselves.[66] And the reason for this, according to Kant, is that their application is restricted to possible experience. In regard to Peirce's example, Kant would maintain that the quality of the piece of iron only applies to possible experience. Its mode of being (in Kant's terms) is real possibility, which is to say that it lies only within the realm of possible experience.[67]

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[65] The implications of Kant's statement are significant (indeed I believe they are more significant than he recognizes). Peirce takes this notion a step further. His statement is profound, but we are not yet in a place to address its full impact.

[66] We have already seen Kant's quite brilliant navigation between the Newtonian and Leibnizian views of space and time in regard to sensibility—Newton having considered space and time as things in themselves, and Leibniz having considered them as mere relations. In similar fashion, Kant conceives of laws as *necessary forms* of understanding rather than mere relations or things in themselves.

[67] Here we speak of Peirce's example in Kant's terms (of the modes of being). In reality, though, Peirce's example demonstrates an advance beyond Kant—it is evidence of two grades of being, which Kant does not recognize. While we cannot go into detail on the distinction here, we may note that this quality (attraction to a magnet) may be considered as an *event* that may happen in actual fact—as such, it is possible in its secondness. But it is also real *now* in its quality—that is, in its firstness. Kant's notion of real possibility is only able to recognize this "quality" in terms of secondness. He

What Kant's example of the concept of a triangle and Peirce's example of the concept of a piece of iron demonstrate for us is that a concept, while being determined to some degree, nonetheless possesses the possibility of growing.

II.B. Heuristic Use of the Wrong Concept

If we agree that our original concept of time is indeed different from the concept that we possess after reading the Aesthetic, another difficulty arises. What does it mean that Kant still uses the word 'time', thereby using our incorrect notion of the concept of time in order to explain his more correct one? For the reader who has not yet begun the *Critique*, the word 'time' does not have meaning except insofar as it refers to the incorrect definition. As such, the incorrect meaning seems ironically to be a condition for the reader's reception of the more correct definition. For one cannot conceive of a way to characterize time as a form of intuition without employing the word 'time'.[68]

There are two related issues here, which we have pointed out in the previous section. First, how can there be continuity between these two radically different notions of time? Second, if there is such continuity, how could the latter concept be *a priori*? These two issues are significant in that they point towards a larger question as to how a concept exists and how new knowledge may apply to it.

It would seem that their continuity lies only in my habitual everyday use. But for Kant, this would not be sufficient. For in this case, their continuity would be contingent, not necessary, and Kant's concept of time would not be *a priori*. As we noted earlier, Kant has claimed, "We are already in possession of concepts…which yet agree in that they relate to objects in a completely *a priori* manner, namely, the concepts of space and time as forms of sensibility, and the categories as concepts of understanding" (A85/B118). If the *concept* of 'time as a form of sensibility' only arises by virtue of the

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conceives of the event of "attraction to a magnet" as an event that *already* applies only to really possible experience, which is to say that it has already happened in a sense.

[68] Here I have employed the word "condition", which may seem to allude to Kant's phrase "conditions of possibility". However, the condition of which I speak here (an incorrect notion of 'time' in the mind of the reader), is a condition of something actual. Thus it is quite different from Kant's necessary conditions for the *possibility* of something. And my term here should not be confused with the latter.

concept of 'time in a pre-Kantian sense' then the former (more correct) concept is dependent on the latter. And if the latter (less correct) is informed by empirical habit, then we cannot say that the concept of 'time as a form of sensibility' is a wholly *a priori* concept. It would therefore not "relate to objects in a completely *a priori* manner" (A85/B118) as Kant claims. How does Kant aim to resolve this issue, if he is aware of it at all?

As we have noted, the issue of continuity, and its *a priority* points towards a larger question, which is central to this paper: How does a concept exist and how can new knowledge can apply to it? I believe that Kant implicitly maintains a notion of a "**concept itself**" as a primordial whole that grounds and guarantees continuity between particular subjective concepts.[69] This notion of a "concept itself" hinges on the 'concept of unity', which we will discuss in detail in §III. This is closely related to Kant's "concept of an object in general", which we will criticize in that Division. My criticism of this notion of a primordial 'concept itself' is my most central argument in this paper. This criticism will hopefully be borne out in the coming pages.

Late in the *Critique*, in the *Transcendental Doctrine of Method*, Kant speaks to this question of continuity. He uses an example: "Thus in the concept of *gold* one man may think, in addition to its weight, colour, malleability, also its property of resisting rust, while another will perhaps know nothing of this quality" (A728/B756). It would seem, thus, that the two men are thinking the same concept—namely 'gold'—although the concept in the mind of the one is more complete than the concept in the mind of the other.[70] However, since the object gold is not a thing-in-itself, we cannot resolve the question of continuity in the object. Before Kant, one would likely claim that each man's subjective concept is the "same" because these two concepts apply to the same *object*, namely gold, conceived as thing-in-itself. But if we agree with Kant in recognizing that the object is merely a play of appearances rather than a thing-in-itself,

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[69] This term 'concept itself' is my own. Since it is so fundamental to my argument, I have put it in bold.

[70] Readers of Peirce will be correct to note that Peircian language is helpful here: The 'concept produced in the mind' of these men is Peirce's *interpretant.* And it is logically distinct from the sign—the general concept 'gold'—as well as its object. However, while this language is helpful, it advances beyond Kant on this point. And since my focus (and my criticism) is presently on Kant, I will not speak of Peirce further here.

then we will see that we cannot resolve this question of continuity in this manner, that is, in the object.

Yet it is clear—since Kant calls each man's concept by the same name—that there is some (presently unspecified) connection that guarantees continuity and permits employment of the concept 'gold' in dialogue, research, etc. Similarly, Kant's heuristic use of a less-correct "concept" of time in the Aesthetic—as evidenced simply by his use of the word 'time'—reveals that he maintains that there is some kind of continuity between the two very different concepts of time. Kant goes on (much later in the *Critique*) to make an extremely important claim: "We make use of certain characteristics only so long as they are adequate for the purpose of making distinctions; new observations remove some properties and add others; and thus the limits of the concept are never assured" (A728/B756).

This passage, with its distinctly pragmatic tone, likely carries more meaning for us than Kant intended—(indeed I wish to argue that he does not fully realize the implications of this notion).[71] And my paper is, on some level, an attempt to press him on the meaning of this claim. This passage, coupled with my criticism of Kant's notion of a 'concept itself' yields important implications. These will likely not be intelligible until they are (hopefully) clarified by the coming arguments, but we shall introduce them here. The following list is not exhaustive, neither is each implication wholly distinct; they shade into one another a great deal. However, this list will hopefully be sufficient in introducing the enormously important consequences of this argument.

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[71] To use the word 'pragmatic', I must give at least a cursory definition. Peirce, in 1905 called pragmatism, "the theory that a *conception*, that is, the rational purport of a word or other expression, lies exclusively in its conceivable bearing upon the conduct of life; so that…if one can define accurately all the conceivable experimental phenomena which the affirmation or denial of a concept could imply, one will have therein a complete definition of the concept, and *there is nothing more in it*" (Peirce, *What Pragmatism Is*, The Essential Peirce, 332). My entire argument in relation to Kant's *Critique* is little more than an affirmation of this definition of a concept. For, simply stated, this "bearing upon the conduct of life" lies in a yet to be determined future, not in a primordial past.

1) The concept's determination[72] is only relative to determine it from others. We have no access to the 'concept itself'. As such, any given concept's unity as 'concept itself' is merely posited; and as posited, this 'unity' is a mere idea, rather than a concept as Kant argues. As idea, it is a *future goal* toward which our reasoning is oriented, rather than a primordial ground for it.

2) We cannot think 'an object in general' as concept; we can only think it as good enough "for the purpose of making distinctions" (A728/B756). These distinctions are made during *retrospective* analysis of past judgments and actions in *preparation* for future judgments and actions. It is in this retrospective, preparatory act that any concept becomes a (posited but sufficient) unity and acquires content.

3) Since the concept of 'an object in general' will only be thought as good enough, its "unity", which Kant claims is intrinsic and non-arbitrary, is never complete. Thus any concept (which will always be a concept of an object, that is, an object in general) will only possess arbitrary unity that is posited. **Non-arbitrary unity**[73] is not to be met with in possible experience.

4) I believe that Kant's belief in a 'concept itself' is the product of seeing only one "grade of being", to borrow the Peircian phrase. For Kant, any given concept *is* primordially, and as such, really possesses intrinsic non-arbitrary unity. By recognizing only one grade of being, he must affirm that the concept as full 'concept itself' exists in some way permanently, always, hovering above the world. We see this also in any concept's restriction to possible experience, which is to say all experience.[74] The chosen metaphor for expressing this notion will naturally be temporal (in keeping with the form of inner sense)—the concept *is* primordially. Perhaps the chosen metaphor will be "a-temporality" rather than primordiality, but I believe the cognitive content of each concept (Peircian interpretant) is the same, and comes back to a "primordial always".

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[72] We will discuss the notion of 'determination' later in this Division.

[73] Like the term "concept itself", 'non-arbitrary unity' is a new term of my own, which will recur throughout this analysis. By it I mean unity that is *given*; that is, unity that is prior to intuition and is not reducible to empirical habit. For Kant, this means unity that *is*.

[74] I will support this notion later by arguing that Kant's 'concept of possible experience' is either reducible to the concept of actual experience, or to an arbitrary abstract unity, which must be called an idea rather than a concept.

This point is also evidenced by Kant's chosen metaphor of *ground*, which, I believe, aims to express the concept of this 'primordial always' without appeal to temporality. Such a view (rightly) realizes that without this notion of a concept that *is* primordially and always complete, there can be no *a priori* ground for affirming continuity among various partially complete concepts—e.g. between a Newtonian concept of time and a Kantian one, or between a more complete and a less complete concept of gold.

5) Kant's *concept of primordial completeness*—i.e. the concept of non-arbitrary unity, which then gets *attached to* bundles of characteristics, properties, functions, etc (e.g. malleability, color) (what we might call *qualities*), and thereby grants them concept-hood (and object-hood as we will see in our discussion of the *Deduction*)—is identical to the concept of nothing. Therefore the *whole* content of any concept—the very concept itself—will be constructed through acts of retrospective examination. It grows from nothing into its very self.

As we suggested, these implications will likely remain obscure at this stage in our analysis. For above, they are merely stated, not argued. My critical argument fastens primarily on the concept of unity in transcendental apperception, 'the concept of possible experience', and the 'concept of an object in general', all of which belong primarily to the *Deduction*. However at this stage, we are able to recognize the problem, and the conclusion toward which we will move.

In light of the implications above, we must distinguish two "domains". I will call these (a) **the domain of action**, and (b) **the domain of retrospective discourse**.[75] In (a), we act: we make judgments and we employ concepts. I argue that Kant believes that in (a), we have some sort of connection-to or awareness-of the primordially complete concept (even if it is in a limited sense). And that *prior*, complete concept grounds our action and judgments. Thus, for Kant, our partially-complete concepts participate in that primordially complete one. It is the *a priori* ground for continuity between subjective, partially-complete concepts. (This serves to answer the two questions that began this section).

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[75] These terms are also my own, and are not used by Kant. I believe that Kant only recognizes one "domain", but the meaning of this statement will not be clear at present.

I hold, to the contrary that this primordial concept is equal to nothing. In actual action/judgments—(a)—we find no primordial grounding (no concept of non-arbitrary unity that we can attach to qualities), which would inform our action. In fact, I hold that the hypothetical agent in the domain of action (a) is not even *capable of being aware* of a ground for action. He simply acts. His function is exclusively as actor. It is a logically distinct agent who, in the domain of retrospective discourse (b), reflects on this action.[76]

However, we must make a subtle, but extremely important distinction. The reflecting agent in domain (b) does not reflect on the action or event itself. He reflects on a translated or textualized rendering of it. Even if it is the same person reflecting on her past action, the agents are logically distinct. In retrospect I don't reflect on my original cognitive representation (Peircian interpretant)—i.e. the representation in my mind at the time of the event. I reflect on a *memory* of this representation. The original representation is fixed or textualized (even if this is in the mind through memory). Thus my cognitive representation (interpretant) now—as reflecting agent—is not necessarily the same as my cognitive representation then. We will elaborate on this point in the coming section.

III. How is a Pure Intuition Given?

We noted in section I of this chapter that the intuition of space and time is *prior* to any empirical intuition. That claim must now be clarified. For there is a difference between saying (a) the pure intuition of space and time is given prior to the empirical intuition, and saying (b) space and time are inseparable forms, given as coterminous with the matter of empirical intuition. In the case of (a), there are two separate intuitions. It is already quite clear that (b) is true, but now we ask, is (a) also true? Is a pure intuition of space and/or time (in its totality) given prior to all other empirical intuitions? And if so, how is it given?

In the Aesthetic, Kant has stated, "the representation of space must be presupposed" (A23/B38). And he goes on, "The representation of space cannot,

[76] This scheme is laid out in full in the Appendix to this paper, entitled *An Abstract Sketch of Self*.

therefore, be empirically obtained from the relations of outer appearance" (A23/B38).[77] He uses similar language in regard to time—"time is a necessary representation that underlies all intuitions…[it] is, therefore, given *a priori*" (A31/B46). He also refers to time as "the original representation" (A32/B48), and claims that it "precedes" objects (A33/B49), and is "represented prior" to them (A32/B48). In the final section of the *Analytic*, Kant says that, "space and time come before all appearances", and that they are "antecedently given" (A267/B323). Here we must tread carefully. For, this language ("original…preced[ing]…prior…before") seems to strongly indicate that Kant holds (a) to also be true—namely, that a pure intuition of space and/or[78] time is given prior to any empirical intuition. Yet, he is clear that these representations are not given empirically (A23/B38). How, then, will this prior pure intuition be given?

It would seem that, for a pure intuition of space and/or time to be given *prior* to any empirical intuition, it must be given one of two ways. It will either (1) be given in an instant, prior to the empirical intuition, or (2) be given always (meaning that we are constantly experiencing pure intuition insofar as we are conscious at all), in which case it would always be prior to the empirical intuition. After giving a brief response to both, I will present a third position, which is, perhaps, closest to Kant's own stance.

(1) The pure intuition could be given in an instant, prior to the empirical intuition. On this interpretation, I would receive a pure intuition of time and space in their totality immediately prior to every empirical intuition, where sensation is given, bearing the form of space and time. However this interpretation poses an obvious logical problem. To be given in an instant is already to be given in time. Hence, in

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[77] Here we see his objection to the Leibnizian view of space.

[78] While we have been speaking of space and time together, we must again recall that these have different statuses. Time—as inner sense—is fundamental to *all* experience, both inner and outer, whereas space—as outer sense—is only a necessary form of outer things. Our discussion in this section concerns pure intuition, which Kant has previously claimed, "contains only the form under which something is intuited" (A51/B75). Kant is clear here and elsewhere (A720/B748, for example) that space and time are both pure intuitions. Thus, in our discussion of pure intuition, we have grouped space and time together. However, pure intuition does not require both of these. And our concern here is simply whether *any* pure intuition (be it only time, or both space and time) is given prior to an empirical intuition.

order for time as totality to be given, time must already be presupposed, which is contradictory.

(2) A second alternative interpretation might hold that these pure intuitions, rather than being given once, are given *always*. While this latter interpretation is logically consistent, it too has problems. If the intuition is always given, it is never a complete intuition, and thus can never be represented as a totality, as Kant claims it is (A25/B39).

(3) There is one alternative interpretation to these, which is supported by some textual evidence. This is that pure intuition is merely a *ground* of empirical intuition. Kant frequently speaks of space and time as the forms of empirical intuition, but he also speaks of them as conditions that make empirical intuition possible—e.g. "time is, therefore, given *a priori*. In it alone is actuality of appearances possible at all" (A31/B46). On this interpretation, pure intuition is a ground insofar as it makes empirical intuition possible. Hence we ought to think of pure intuition as more of a logical principle than an event. Kant suggests this position in the *Deduction* when he claims, "all perceptions are grounded *a priori* in pure intuition" (A115).

Of these three interpretations (3) is perhaps the closest to Kant's position. However, I believe that Kant mixes (1) and (3) in his conception of pure intuition. We have already cited several instances where his language seems to imply (1), but two passages in particular make this point quite clear. In the *Concepts of Reflection* Kant claims, "space and time come before all appearances and before all data of experience, and are indeed what make the latter at all possible" (A267/B323). That space and time make experience possible indicates (3), but Kant couples this with the claim that they "come before" experience, which is indicative of (1). A similar passage is in the *Deduction* where Kant notes that empirical intuition is "subject to" a pure intuition (implying pure intuition as ground), but then he says that the pure intuition "takes place *a priori*" (B144), which quite clearly indicates that the intuition is an event and not only a logical principle (1).

I believe that this confusion is due to the fact that Kant is trying to maintain the given-ness of the pure intuition, but is trying to express this given-ness in a way that does not already assume time. He must affirm that the pure intuition is given in order to

establish that it is non-arbitrary. For his affirmation of the concept of unity hinges on the fact that time is given *a priori* as a combined manifold—i.e. that it is given as both unity and manifold.[79]

In both (1) and (2) above, we are implicitly attempting to chart the *real* or *true* progression of the pure intuition and the empirical intuition. Such a project implicitly assumes that the one must either be prior, coterminous, or posterior to the other (in a temporal sense); there is no other logical option. The problem, however, is that this reverts to a pre-Kantian (Newtonian) conception of time—that it is a thing in itself. It assumes that the intuitions are themselves conditioned by time.

Kant tries to get past this by describing pure intuition as a ground—that is, a logical principle, rather than an event. As ground, the pure intuition will always be prior to an empirical intuition, in the way that (2) suggests. However, (3) differs from (2) in that (3) permits completeness of the pure intuition. Yet, Kant is not able rid himself of language that implies (1). This is because pure intuition, considered only as ground, cannot be *given*.

My criticism of Kant on this issue rests on a subtle, but significant distinction—the distinction between an event and my concept of an event. Kant is right to affirm that time and space are the forms of empirical intuition. My criticism, however, is this: Time and space do not make experience possible; rather they make *the concept of* experience possible. This is an extremely important point, and may be defended with an example.

Kant holds that all knowledge and appearances are conditioned by time (e.g. A98-99). Even to represent objects in space, time is already assumed. Kant defends this with an example: "To know anything in space (for instance, a line), I must *draw* it…" (B137-8). He affirms that the line, as drawn, already bears the form of time and is only possible by means of time; time permits the progression that combines each (hypothetical) point into one line.

Kant, however, fails to recognize the fact that I can affirm that the line was indeed drawn in time *only* when I am thinking about the line *having been* drawn. I

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[79] In the following Division, we will elaborate on the complex relationship between 'time as pure intuition', 'the concept of possible experience' and the 'transcendental unity of apperception'.

cannot think the proposition 'the line is drawn in time' *while* I am drawing the line itself. The event—i.e. the drawing of the line—must be thought *about* in order for the proposition to arise. What this means is that the event must become a concept. As such, my affirmation that it was drawn in time is indeed a true conclusion, but this conclusion applies not to the event itself, but to my concept of the event. In retrospective examination I see that the event bore the form of time. But I cannot say that time qua pure intuition made the event possible; I can only say that it made my *concept of* the event possible.

This distinction is extremely subtle. But it is vital. This point is also supported by much of Kant's language in regard to pure intuition. We indicated in *Preface, Introduction, Aesthetic* and in *Space and Time: Formal Intuition or Concept?*, that Kant uses language of "removing"—for example, "…if we eliminate from our experiences…" (A2), and "…if I take away from the representation of a body…substance, force, divisibility…" (A20/B35). This notion of "taking away" is clearly a conceptual act, and it cannot be performed in intuition itself. We may thus conclude, that Kant is speaking of removing qualities from a *concept*, rather than from an empirical intuition.

This issue will arise again as we consider transcendental conditions in the *Deduction*.

Chapter III. Unity and Manifold

This chapter marks the beginning of the core of this paper. Unfortunately, it frequently brings in concepts from the *Deduction*, which will not be explicitly outlined until the following Division. This fact will, no doubt, make this chapter difficult to follow. However, I have found this arrangement necessary since this chapter elaborates on issues from the previous chapter, concerning pure intuition and the concept-hood of space and time. And while the *Deduction* is intimately related to these issues (as we shall see), it introduces new concepts, and my argument in regard to these will only be intelligible after discussion of this present chapter.

I. Empty Thought: The Concept of Nothing

As we have previously noted, there may still be 'thought', which is without an object. However it is thus incapable of being knowledge (according to the definition; it has no *content* and is "empty" (A51/B75).

This notion of thought without content, or empty thought, is an interesting one, and will arise later in our analysis as we consider the concept of unity in §III. The "concept of nothing" is one that Kant addresses at the very end of the Analytic, claiming that it is "of no special importance", though it may be needed for completeness of the system (A290/B346). I wish to argue that it is of great importance. He defines this concept in accordance with the categories: since they "are the only concepts which refer to objects in general, the distinguishing of an object, whether it is something or nothing, will proceed according to the order and under the guidance of the categories" (A290/B346). This statement reveals an interesting claim, namely that for Kant 'nothing' as concept falls within the domain of 'objects in general'. It is clear from his phrasing that an "object" may either be "something" or "nothing" (A290/B347). This claim—the assertion that 'object in general' is prior to the distinction between something and nothing—is one that will occupy much of our attention later in this paper. But at present, we are primarily concerned with this concept (the concept of nothing)

insofar as it aids in clarifying the transition from space and time as pure formal intuition to space and time qua concepts.

In this section, Kant speaks directly to our question. He gives four divisions (in accordance with the major headings of the table of categories) of the concept of nothing. First is *ens rationis*—an empty concept without an object, or rather the quantitative concept of 'none'; Second is *nihil privatum*—a concept of negation or privation of an object; Third is *ens imaginarium*—empty intuition without object; Fourth is *nihil negativum*—an empty object without concept because the concept contradicts itself and is thus nothing (A290-292/B346-348). We see from these definitions that the fourth is different from the other three. The first three are identified as 'nothing' because of the status of the object of the concept. In the case of the fourth, the concept itself is contradictory, and is thus not properly a concept at all. The fourth heading is thus the only one that does not meet the criterion of merely logical possibility.

Kant elaborates on the third as follows, "The mere form of intuition, without substance, is in itself no object, but the merely formal condition of an object (as appearance), as pure space and pure time…These are indeed something as forms of intuition, but are not themselves objects which are intuited" (A291/B347). This clearly states that space and time qua objects of thought, are nothing. Or put more precisely, the *concepts* of pure space and pure time have no content, and are thus identical to the concept of nothing.

This, quite clearly, seems to be in direct contradiction with the quotation with which we began—"we are already in possession of concepts…of space and time as forms of sensibility" (A87/B118). What are we to think of this apparent conflict?

We ought not dismiss Kant too easily. His position in regard to this contradiction is never (to my knowledge) stated explicitly (since he gives only cursory attention to the concept of nothing). But his position is developed piecemeal in several sections of the *Critique*, most notably the *Deduction* and the *Highest Principle of All Synthetic Judgments.* We will briefly note his response below, with reference to each of these sections.

We introduced the section entitled *The Highest Principle of All Synthetic Judgments* earlier in our discussion of real possibility versus merely logical possibility.

There, we highlighted the need of a "third something…wherein alone the synthesis of two concepts can be achieved" (A155/B194). Kant identifies this "medium", this "one whole in which all our representations are contained", as "inner sense and it's *a priori* form, time" (A155/B194). Since subject and predicate are altogether different concepts, they require something by virtue of which they can be in relation. Kant claims that they achieve possible relation through the unity of inner sense. This unity of "possible experience is, then, what gives objective reality to all our *a priori* modes of knowledge" (A156/B195).[80] In short, Kant wishes to maintain that the concepts of space and time are nothing when thought as pure—apart from any connection to empirical experience. However, he wants to claim that, because they ground possible experience[81] their content is not nothing, but is unity—i.e. the unity of possible experience. This is, perhaps most clearly evidenced in the *Analogies of Experience*, where Kant calls inner sense "the sum of all representations" (B220).

Kant begins section 2 of the A *Deduction* with a similar claim: "That a concept, although itself neither contained in the concept of possible experience nor consisting of elements of a possible experience, should be produced completely *a priori* and should relate to an object, is altogether contradictory and impossible" (A95). This claim seems

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[80] Kant's argument is, in fact, a bit more complex than this. For after he identifies inner sense as the medium of all synthetic judgments, he goes on to claim that "the synthesis of representations rests on imagination; and their synthetic unity, which is required for judgment, on the unity of apperception" (A155/B194). Here three distinct notions emerge: (a) unity, (b) synthesis, and (c) synthetic unity; and they rest on inner sense, imagination, and apperception, respectively. Thus, objective reality is not established *only* by virtue of the unity of inner sense (as implied above). As Kant claims later in the *Highest Principle*, "Synthetic *a priori* judgments are thus possible when we relate the formal conditions of *a priori* intuition [time as inner sense], the synthesis of imagination and the necessary unity of this synthesis in a transcendental apperception, to a possible empirical knowledge in general" (A158/B197). Hence, in the Deduction Kant emphasizes the *act* of bringing empirical knowledge *to* the transcendental unity of apperception.

I have made these remarks for the sake of completeness and full disclosure, but this argument cannot make sense without the *Deduction*, which we have not yet addressed. For that reason I restrict this elaboration to a footnote; for this section is sufficiently accurate and comprehensible if we simply equate the unity of inner sense with the unity of possible experience.

[81] As indicated in the previous section, Kant holds that time is both the necessary form of all experience, and makes this experience *possible*.

obvious at first glance, but I wish to press Kant on the meaning of the word "contained". What does it mean for a concept to be *contained* in the concept of possible experience? To answer that, we must look closely at the concept of 'possible experience'—i.e. at what is thought in that concept. We shall undertake that project directly in Chapter IV of §III. But here it is sufficient to note that Kant's argument in both the *Highest Principle* section and the *Deduction* is the same. Because all possible concepts will be contained in the concept of possible experience, and because that concept will possess unity, bearing the form of inner sense, time will be thought as 'that which contains all possible experience'. Thus, according to Kant, its content will not be *ens imaginarium*—nothing—but the unity of possible experience.

From this, we see that Kant's argument hinges on this notion of concepts being contained in *the concept of* possible experience. And as we alluded to above, this notion will be challenged in the coming pages.

II. How is an *a priori* Manifold Possible?

In the above section, we begin to see the primacy of time as inner sense, and in this section we will continue to focus specifically on time, rather than time and space together. We have spoken above of the unity of time[82]—it is the "one whole in which all our representations are contained" (A155/B194), and as such, contains the unity of (really) possible experience. However, Kant also claims that, "Time…contains an *a priori* manifold in pure intuition" (A138/B177). How can both of these be possible in one representation? This question is significant because it raises the issue of the given-ness of time as unity and manifold, and the question of its content as intuition and as

[82] Here, the language of time v. inner sense may begin to seem somewhat unclear. In the Aesthetic, Kant says that, "Time is nothing but the form of inner sense, that is of the intuition of ourselves and of our inner state" (A33/B50). Here and elsewhere, his language suggests that 'time' and 'inner sense' are separate (though quite similar) notions, which is largely correct. However, 'time' is spoken of in several different ways in the *Critique*—e.g. time as the form of inner sense; time as pure intuition; the concept of time; etc. In this section we are focusing on the question of the manifold-ness and the unity of time. And because this unity (of time) is so closely tied to the notion of inner sense, the meaning of these two terms—'time' and 'inner sense'—may be difficult to distinguish in this section.

concept. For Kant's argument hinges on the fact that time as a pure intuition is given *a priori* as both unity and manifold. This affirmation enables him to claim that concepts (of the understanding) are given *a priori*, which is the ultimate task of the Analytic.

Here we must look closely at the issue of *representation*. We are told in the *A Deduction* that all representations must belong to inner sense, where every intuition is *represented* as a manifold "only in so far as the mind distinguishes the time in the sequence of one impression upon another" (A99). To illustrate this point, we may cite an example that we have already discussed: the drawing of a line.

In order to know the line in space, which is to have a concept of the line, I must draw it (B137), *and* be conscious of its synthetic unity (B203). At present, we can conceive of this latter part—"consciousness of its synthetic unity"—as essentially consciousness of the line as *having been drawn*. But this consciousness of a progression presupposes some sort of established unit that permits us to think 'progression' at all. Kant calls this the concept of magnitude. "Consciousness of the synthetic unity of the manifold [and] homogeneous in intuition in general, in so far as the representation of an object first becomes possible by means of it, is, however, the concept of a magnitude (*quantum*)" (B203).

This permits Kant to claim that all intuitions are "extensive magnitudes" (B202) wherein "the representation of the parts makes possible, and therefore necessarily precedes the representation of the whole" (A162/B203). In empirical intuition, these parts will be the unorganized array of sensory impressions—colors, sounds, etc—which then become determined and unified in an object, according to the form of space and time.[83] But even in our example of the *a priori* representation of a line—which is known "in space" (B137)—the parts (that is, its hypothetical points) precede the whole. This representation is thus also made possible through the concept of magnitude. Kant states later in the Deduction, "Even time itself we cannot represent, save in so far as we attend, in the drawing of a straight line (which has to serve as the outer figurative representation of time)…to the succession of this determination in inner sense" (B154). In short (as we noted earlier), we cannot *represent* time—that is, form a representation

[83] This scheme will be clarified in our discussion of the *Deduction*.

of time—unless we are conscious of a line as *having been drawn*. Here things become very complex.

For this *representation* of time is different from the time that is presupposed in order for the line to be drawn at all. The *representation* of time is a determinate representation. And "the representations of a *determinate* [my emphasis] space or time are generated" in the act of apprehension (A162/B202).[84] As we have noted, this representation is possible by virtue of the concept of magnitude—e.g. awareness of the line as having been drawn. However, the concept of magnitude—in having determined units—is only made possible insofar as these units are set against a permanent backdrop—that is, time in its totality (pure intuition) as ground. The pure intuition of time as ground is special. As Kant says in the *Phenomena and Noumena*, "The concept of magnitude in general can never be explained except by saying that it is that determination of a thing whereby we are enabled to think how many times a unit is posited in it. But this how-many-times is based on successive repetition, and therefore on time and the synthesis of the homogenous in time" (A241/B300). This quote illustrates a significant claim, namely that the pure intuition of time as ground, in addition to its fundamental intrinsic unity, also maintains intrinsic manifoldness; in it, the homogenous is synthesized. This brings us to an important conclusion of Kant's: that time itself, as ground, *possesses* synthetic unity. How can the pure intuition of time as ground possess both unity and manifold? We have already suggested Kant's answer in previous sections. Time *contains* all possible experience.[85]

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[84] "Apprehension" is a concept that will not be clarified until the following Division, which explains the *Deduction*. This point may, therefore, not yet be intelligible.

[85] We will see in the following Division that the relationship between pure intuition—that is, time as ground—and apperception is a complex one. Ultimately Kant holds that the "synthetic unity of apperception is…that highest point, to which we must ascribe all employment of the understanding, even the whole of logic, and conformably therewith, transcendental philosophy" (B134). As such, it is more basic even than time as pure intuition. However, our point here still stands, namely that time as pure intuition is given as that unity which permits manifold to be recognized as manifold. Later in the Deduction, he goes on to draw a distinction between "*form of intuition*" and "*formal intuition*". The former—space and time considered as the form of empirical intuitions—"gives only a manifold" (B160). The latter, however, "gives unity" (B160). The fact that time is given as that which contains all possible experience "presupposes a synthesis which does not belong to the senses but through which all concepts of space and time

§III. Transcendental Conditions and The Concept of Unity

In this Division, we move to an explicit engagement with Kant's *Deduction*. At this point in our analysis, we have established the "question of concept-hood", which is central to our overall project. Thus far, we have framed this question in regard to space and time. And from this analysis, we have introduced questions on unity and manifold, as well as the concept of nothing. In the upcoming analysis, we will continue with these central themes, however we will apply them to three new "concepts": the concept of "the transcendental unity of apperception", the concept of "an object in general", and the concept of "possible experience".

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first become possible" (B161). It is in this synthesis that Kant locates transcendental apperception.

Chapter I: Categories and Judgments

I. Categories as Transcendental Content

We will recall that the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements was divided into a Transcendental Aesthetic and a Transcendental Logic. Kant's task in the Transcendental Logic is to discern whether there are *a priori* elements contained in the Understanding, in the same manner that the *a priori* elements of space and time (as forms of intuition) were contained in the faculty of Sensibility. In keeping with Kant's structural outline, we may identify elements of two kinds—concepts and principles.[86]

We saw in §II, Chapter I that the divisions of judgments—i.e. the twelve terms from Kant's table of judgments—are in themselves *formal*. We indicated, however, that the twelve terms in the table of categories (simply called 'the categories') are themselves concepts, and as such, possess content. As Kant states, "The same understanding, through the same operations by which in concepts, by means of analytical unity, it produced the logical form of a judgment, also introduces a *transcendental content* [my emphasis] into its representations" (A79/B105). The meaning of this term 'content' is a subtle one. For in regard to the form/matter distinction, Kant aims to navigate between two poles. They are not matter in a typical sense, and often end up sounding a lot like form—for example, "Pure understanding is thus in the categories the law of the synthetic unity of all appearances, and thereby first and originally makes experience, as regards its form, possible" (A128). But, neither are they merely formal. As Kant claims, "these categories…properly regarded, must be taken as *material* [my emphasis],

[86] Here, the word 'elements' may be misleading. For, of these two "elements", concepts (i.e. the categories) are the only one that possesses *content*. Bearing this in mind, it may seem strange to speak of a merely formal 'element'. Here, Gardner's language is helpful, "Kant identifies principles for the employment of the twelve categories, and defends them as necessary for experience, thereby vindicating the Table of Categories as necessary for experience" (Gardner, 165). As we see here, the principles, though they are not content as the categories are, are yet necessary for experience. In this sense, they are a necessary element of experience.

belonging to the possibility of the things themselves [empirical objects]" (B114).[87] In regard to their formality/materiality, Kant also uses obscure language—"Only *our* sensible and empirical intuition can give to them body and meaning" (B149). It is not immediately clear to what extent these categories are matter and to what extent they are form.

He claims that this content is introduced "by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general" (A79/B105). While this phrase may not be readily intelligible at the moment, it is significant that he speaks of intuition—the categories are introduced by means of synthetic unity in intuition. They are concepts only through which appearances can be *given*. We first introduced the term 'synthetic unity' in the previous chapter, in the discussion of unity and manifold as they relate to time as inner sense. In this Division, that notion will be a primary focal point.

[87] Here, when Kant says "things themselves" he is referring to empirical objects, not 'things-in-themselves.'

Chapter II: The Deduction[88]

The Deduction is perhaps the core of the *Critique*. It is also undoubtedly the most difficult section. In an almost humorous preliminary remark to the A version, Kant says that since "the deduction of the categories is a matter of such extreme difficulty, compelling us to penetrate so deeply into the first grounds of the possibility of our knowledge in general" (A98), he must first prepare the reader (before the deduction proper). I shall not give a comprehensive outline of his argument. For, as Gardner notes, this enigmatic section, in addition to its intricacy, "contains a number of argumentative routes" (Gardner, 141); in fact "it may reasonably be doubted that a single line of argument comprehending all its themes and theorems can be extracted from it" (135). The complexity is no doubt compounded by the fact that we have two versions of the Deduction, the latter of which "is far from being a mere clarification of its predecessor" (135). That said, however, I will attempt to provide a sketch of the argument which shall hopefully elucidate its most central themes.[89]

I. Sketch of the Deduction[90]

I.A. Conclusion and Goal of the Deduction

The objective of the Deduction may broadly be defined as an attempt to prove a necessary *a priori* ground for the connection of objects and representations. In that way, it is essentially an attempt to formulate an apodeictic theory of subject-object relation (Gardner, 143). Early in the Deduction, Kant tells us that there are only two ways that objects and (synthetic) representations could be in necessary relation—one must make

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[88] As noted early in this paper, when I refer to the *Deduction*, I am always referring to the *Transcendental Deduction*, not the section called *The Clue to the Discovery of All Pure Concepts of the Understanding*, which is commonly referred to as *The Metaphysical Deduction*.

[89] This basic outline will pull from both the A and B Deduction.

[90] This section involves summary of The Deduction, but also includes my own critical remarks

the other possible (A92/B124).[91] If objects made representations possible, the relation would only be empirical, and no synthetic *a priori* knowledge would be possible. It is clear that Kant holds the opposing position—as he says, "the representation is *a priori* determinant of the object" (A92/B125). Only through a representation can we know anything *as* an object—an object's object-hood depends on it becoming a representation.

To become a possible object *of knowledge*, the object must first, stand under the *a priori* conditions of intuition—namely, the forms of space and time. In accordance with these conditions, the object is represented in space and time. Kant has proved this in the Aesthetic. The question for the deduction (and indeed the Analytic as a whole) is whether there are similar conditions for the understanding *only through which* objects can be given. These conditions would thus be prior to the object's object-hood; they would make the object possible.

The conclusion toward which Kant aims is indicated by a statement towards the end of the A version: "The *a priori* conditions of a possible experience in general are at the same time conditions of the possibility of objects of experience" (A111). Thus Kant holds that the categories, as "fundamental concepts by which we think objects in general…have therefore *a priori* objective validity" (A111). This goes significantly further than claiming that they are merely subjective conditions of thought. Thus we see that Kant aims at a parallel deduction—defending *both* conditions for possible experience in general (subject-side) *and* conditions for the possibility of objects (object-side). His proof demonstrates that these conditions are one and the same.

I.B. The Argument

I.B.i. Subject Side[92]

First, let us briefly outline the subject side—the conditions for possible *experience* in general.

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[91] Kant makes more or less the same point late in the B *Deduction*, however he uses the terms "experience [and] the concepts of its objects" (B166)

[92] Here I must credit Gardner, who identifies a "subject-side" and "object-side" in Kant's argument. I find this division helpful for understanding Kant's argument.

Kant separates three *subjective* sources of knowledge: Sense, Imagination and Apperception. He tells us that each of these subjective sources can be viewed as empirical—i.e. applying to given appearances. But they are also *a priori* elements, which make empirical employment possible (A115).
We may outline them as follows (the following quoted directly from A115):

- **1. Sense** → represents appearances empirically in **Perception** → All perception is grounded in **Pure Intuition** (which is time—the form of inner sense).
- **2. Imagination** → represents appearances empirically in **Association (and Reproduction)**[93] → All reproduction is grounded in **Pure Synthesis of Imagination.**
- **3. Apperception** → represents appearances empirically in **Empirical consciousness** of the identity of the reproduced representations with the appearances whereby they were given (also called **Recognition**) → All empirical consciousness is grounded in **Pure Apperception**.

We must be careful to note the difference between the subjective faculty and its ground. For the former is merely subjective; it is found in empirical experience, which is contingent. The latter, however, is both *a priori*—being found without regard to empirical experience—and is transcendental—in making that experience possible. We will elaborate on these three subjective faculties and their grounds below.

In the B *Deduction*, Kant begins with apperception. He notes that there is a manifold present in all intuition and tells us that this **manifold** of representations can be given purely sensibly (B129). The **form** of a given intuition can also "lie *a priori* in our faculty of representation"—this form being nothing more than "the mode in which the subject is affected" (B129). However, "**combination** of a manifold *in general*" [my emphasis] cannot be contained in the pure form of the intuition (B129), and cannot be ascribed to the senses, that is, the faculty of sensibility. It is, rather, "an act of

[93] Both terms are used

spontaneity of the faculty of representation" (B129)—a faculty which, Kant says, must be entitled the understanding.[94]

We will go into detail later on the meaning of 'combination' and the related term 'synthesis'. As we noted above, he calls it an act of spontaneity. He then claims to give that act "the general title 'synthesis'" (B130). Kant later defines 'synthesis' as follows: "By synthesis, in its most general sense, I understand the act of putting different representations together and of grasping what is manifold in them in one [act of] knowledge" (A77/B103). This definition brings us to a second trichotomy that Kant introduces in the A version.

In his preliminary remarks to the A *Deduction*, Kant notes that "sense always contains a manifold in its intuition" (A97). This manifold is received through the faculty of sensibility, which is a faculty for **receptivity**. But knowledge requires both a receptivity and a **spontaneity** (the understanding). In order for the manifold (from the faculty for receptivity) to become an empirical intuition, which can then represent *an object* to the faculty of understanding in order that that object may be thought, and thus become knowledge, the manifold must be *synthesized*. As such, Kant identifies a "three-fold synthesis that must necessarily be found in all knowledge" (A97).[95]

(The following is taken from A98-100)

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[94] Before proceeding, I must highlight a central question for this paper, which already arises in the above quotation. Kant refers to "combination of a manifold in general". He has previously used the language of penetrating deeply to the first *grounds of possibility* of knowledge (131). The language here demonstrates that in the *Deduction* we are pressing behind knowledge to the *transcendental* conditions that must be in place in order for knowledge to even be possible. However the phrase "in general" begs a question, which will become more pronounced as we clarify his argument. To what extent am I, at any given time, talking about *transcendental conditions* as "things" (in a non-technical, undefined sense) in their own right, and to what extent am I talking about them as *concepts* (meant in a technical sense) now thought by me? (We will address this question, and its implications in more detail later)

[95] We must note that these two trichotomies, while related, do not directly map onto one another. The first trichotomy involves both the faculty of sensibility and the faculty of the understanding. The second involves only the understanding. Further, Kant affirms that synthesis is always an act of the understanding, never the sensibility.

- **1.** In order for unity of an intuition to arise out of the manifold, it must be "held together" through **Synthesis of Apprehension.** He also refers to this as "apprehension of representations as modifications of the mind in intuition" (A 97).[96]
- **2.** (He gives an example) If cinnabar were something red, something black, something heavy, then light, then my empirical imagination would never, when representing red, bring up cinnabar. We thus require **Synthesis of Reproduction**—that ground of necessary synthetic unity of appearances that makes their reproduction possible in imagination.
- **3.** If we were not conscious that what we think is the same as what we were thinking a moment before, all reproduction would be useless. Thus we require **Synthesis of Recognition** "in a concept" (A 97).

Kant claims that spontaneity is the *ground* (A97) of this three-fold synthesis. We have noted that this three-fold synthesis is "found in all knowledge"—i.e. *found* in empirical and subjective experience. It is however *performed* by the understanding *a priori*, and the understanding—that is, spontaneity—is its ground. Spontaneity is the transcendental ground that makes it possible.

Kant clarifies in the B Deduction that,

"synthesis of apprehension, which is empirical, must necessarily be in conformity with the synthesis of apperception, which is intellectual and is contained in the category completely *a priori*. It is one and the same spontaneity, which in the one case, under the title of imagination, and in the other case, under the title of understanding, brings combination into the manifold of intuition" (B162).

In regard to the trichotomies above, we must make two clarifying remarks. First, Kant reminds us that *all* representations must belong to inner sense, where every intuition is represented as a manifold "only in so far as the mind distinguishes the time

[96] By 'modifications of the mind' he does not mean 'recognized as modifications of the mind' in the sense that Apperception recognizes representations. It is meant, rather, simply to mean that perceptions (and indeed all representations) belong to inner sense, and are in that regard modifications of the mind (regardless of what their origin may be or what their constitution may be in themselves). They are always represented according to the form of inner sense, time.

in the sequence of one impression upon another" (A99). The mind, always bearing the form of inner sense, distinguishes a time-sequence of representations, but is only able to recognize manifold-ness of this time-sequence insofar as that manifold sequence is set against the "permanent" (B275) background representation of time in its totality (in pure intuition). We saw this point in our previous examples of drawing a line. In this way, pure intuition is the ground of all perception (as we noted in the first trichotomy). It makes manifold-ness possible. [97]

Second, Kant tells us that Synthesis of Apprehension and Synthesis of Reproduction are inseparably bound up with one another (A102). He goes on to say in the B *Deduction* that the imagination "belongs to sensibility" (B151).[98] This helps us to see the distinctness of Apperception—the most central element of Kant's argument.[99]

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[97] Kant will go on, in the *Axioms of Intuition*, to define all intuitions as "extensive magnitudes" (A162/B202) wherein "the representation of the parts makes possible, and therefore necessarily precedes the representation of the whole" (A162/B203). We can see this point in the scheme above: The manifold parts are given first in sensibility and then held together (empirically) through empirical synthesis, which permits the faculty of intuition to give an *object* to the understanding to be thought (and thereby become knowledge).

However, I will criticize Kant on the following point. The description above is indeed true of all intuitions except one—time as a pure intuition. In regard to time, the parts cannot be given prior to the whole. For if the parts were empirical determinations of time, this would mean that the representation of time as totality is an empirical intuition, rather than a pure intuition. As such, it could not *ground* empirical intuitions (making their manifold-ness possible) in the way that Kant claims. Therefore, as we noted in the previous section *How is a Pure Intuition Given?*, time as pure intuition must be given as both unity and manifold. And as we also noted in that section, Kant aims to establish this by conceiving of time as an *a priori* manifold of possible experiences within it. Time is thought as 'that which contains all possible experience' (A155/B194). Kant wants to maintain that it is represented (in intuition) similarly—as a totality that contains an *a priori* manifold (*a priori* since it contains *all possible* experience).

This argument hinges on the fact that all experiences are *contained in the concept* of 'possible experience'. In Chapter V, I will explicitly criticize this argument.

[98] Though we must be careful here to distinguish the imagination from the 'transcendental synthesis of imagination', which "determines the sensibility *a priori* " and as synthesis, is "an action of the understanding on the sensibility" (B152).

[99] In a final section of the Aesthetic, which only appears in the B version, Kant defines **apperception** as follows: "The consciousness of self (apperception) is the simple representation of the 'I'…" (B68).

Kant says of these three grounds—sense, imagination and apperception[100]—that, "if we follow to where they converge, in order that they "may therein for the first time acquire the unity of knowledge necessary for a possible experience" (A116), we come to Pure Apperception. In the B version of the Deduction, this point is made somewhat clearer. There, Kant claims, "by *synthesis of apprehension* I understand that combination of the manifold in an *empirical intuition* [my emphasis], whereby perception, that is, empirical consciousness of the intuition (as appearance), is possible" (B160). This passage is helpful and can be elucidated as follows.

The first significant distinction we must recognize in the *Deduction* is between empirical and pure/*a priori*. We recall that in this section we are clarifying the subject-side of Kant's argument. But we cannot simply map onto one another the distinctions of subject v. object and empirical v. pure—equating subject with empirical, and object with pure. This is because pure *a priori* elements are involved in the subject-side of Kant's argument. The reverse, however, is not true; and the fact that Kant speaks (in the passage cited above) of *empirical* intuition reminds us that he is defining the ground of subjective experience. Through synthesis of apprehension, the manifold is combined in an *empirical* intuition. And from here, *empirical consciousness of* that intuition—i.e. perception—becomes possible. As we have noted earlier, synthesis of reproduction (the second in the three-fold synthesis) is also necessary for making perception possible, and thus we see again the intimate relationship between synthesis of apprehension and synthesis of reproduction, and thereby, the distinctness of the third element in the three-fold synthesis and the ground that makes it possible—pure apperception. This point must be clarified.

The three subjective sources of knowledge (A115), from our first trichotomy, were *sense, imagination,* and *apperception*. But as we noted, these are also *a priori* elements that make empirical employment possible (A115). Kant tells us that the third element—*apperception*—"represents appearances empirically…in *empirical consciousness* of the identity of the reproduced representations with the appearances

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[100] We recall that these three can each "be viewed as empirical…but all of them are likewise *a priori* elements or foundations, which make the empirical employment itself possible" (A115).

whereby they were given, that is, in recognition" (A115). We have noted earlier that the "empirical consciousness of the intuition (as appearance)" (B160) is called perception. These two—empirical consciousness of the intuition, and empirical consciousness of the identity of the reproduced representation—must not be confused. Empirical consciousness *of the identity* of the representation is an element of the more general notion of empirical consciousness *of an* (empirical) *intuition*, which *is* perception.

The ground of that *perception* is pure intuition.[101] Empirical consciousness *of the identity* of the representation is, however, logically distinct from perception, in that it is an act or function of unity. Its ground is **pure apperception**, "that is…the thoroughgoing identity of the self in all possible representations" (A116). This pure apperception is necessary. And since "all necessity, without exception, is grounded in a transcendental condition" (A106), Kant goes on to claim that, "there must, therefore, be a *transcendental* [my emphasis] ground of the unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of all our intuitions, and consequently also of the concepts of objects in general, and so of all objects of experience" (A106). He names this "original and transcendental condition" (A106), **transcendental apperception**. As is evident from the quotation above, Kant aims to ground both subject and object in this transcendental condition.

Now that we have defined transcendental apperception, we can move to the object-side of Kant's argument—the conditions for the possibility of an *object* in general.

I.B.ii. Object Side

The central tenet of the object-side of Kant's proof (the *a priori* conditions for the possibility of objects of experience) is that the manifold of intuition, insofar as it allows of being combined in one consciousness (B136) is "subject to conditions of the original synthetic unity of apperception" (B136). We have already noted that he is

[101] We have already indicated the importance of 'pure intuition', and will elaborate on it later on.

aiming to prove that it is the same condition which makes possible both representations and objects. He finds this condition in the **transcendental unity of apperception**.[102]

He says early on that "it must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany all my representations" (B131). For if this were not possible, then I could never think them at all. We must keep in mind that this is a statement only about the representations themselves; he is not yet affirming that there is any kind of existent relation to the 'I think'. Therefore, first, the manifold of representations must maintain some sort of formal unity. All the manifold must conform to the condition where it can stand together. In A, Kant spoke of this 'standing together' as that "one single experience in which all perceptions are represented as in thoroughgoing and orderly connection" (A110). He identifies this as 'all possible experience'. However, things are more complicated than this. As we see from the quote above, it is essential not only that the representations *are* themselves in connection—that is, maintain a formal unity; they must also be *represented* as such, in a way that permits me to represent an 'I' in and throughout them. We will elaborate much more on this notion in Chapter IV. But we shall introduce it here.

Kant criticizes Descartes, Berkeley and other Idealists who claim (whether explicitly or implicitly) that self-consciousness is the only immediate experience. He maintains, to the contrary, that we do not know ourselves immediately; rather we only know ourselves through representation. As such, there must be something *in the representations themselves*—that is, an identity—that permits me to represent to myself a self in them. For this reason, it is not only pure intuition that grounds 'possible experience' (as its form, and therefore its formal unity). For there is nothing in the *representation* of 'time as the form of possible experience' which permits me to identify and represent a self throughout (all possible) representations. The unity of time of which we have spoken earlier, must therefore rest on a deeper 'synthetic unity'. Possible experience is not just unified by virtue of the fact that it bears time as its form. It is also unified in that it belongs to me; it is my experience. As such, Kant claims that the manifold of intuition has "a necessary relation to the 'I think' in the same subject in

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[102] The notion of the transcendental object is also an important part of his argument, and will be important to our analysis later on.

which this manifold is found" (B132). And that 'I think' is more than just a formal unity. This brings us to what Kant calls "**original apperception**" (A111).

This point is clarified shortly after the *Deduction* in the 'Highest Principle of all Synthetic Judgments'. There, Kant argues that, "if knowledge is to have objective reality…the object must be capable of being in some manner given" (A155/B194). But what this means is that "the representation through which the object is thought relates to actual or possible experience" (A156/B195).[103] Thus we see that the possibility of experience is what grants objective reality. But, as he has said in the Deduction, "experience…rests on the synthetic unity of appearances" (A156/B195), which is nothing other than transcendental apperception. Thus, we are able to claim that this condition has objective validity. "The transcendental unity of apperception is that unity through which all the manifold given in an intuition is united in the concept of an object. It is therefore entitled *objective*" (B139). Stated simply: for an object to be possible, it must be possible for its manifoldness (of intuition) to be unified in the concept of an object. There must be something that binds together (i.e. *combines*) the manifold sensory impressions into an object so that I am able to say, "this is an object".

And thus, Kant seems to have proved that, "The original and necessary consciousness of the identity of the self is thus at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances according to concepts" (A108). This will hopefully be a sufficient basic outline of Kant's argument in the *Deduction*. From here we move on to my criticism of Kant's argument. I will attempt to make this criticism intelligible over the course of the coming analysis.

II. Modality in the Deduction: The Copula 'is'

From the above discussion, we begin to see an ontological claim come to light. We have previously referenced the 'modes of being'—possibility, actuality and necessity—and we have described them as 'modal predicates', that is to say, predicates

[103] Here we begin to see a parallel between the concept of 'possible experience' and the concept of 'an object in general', or 'an object of possible experience'. We will speak to this issue later on.

of a way in which things exist. They are all predicates *of* being. But in the *Deduction*, Kant located self-consciousness (the unity of apperception) as the transcendental ground of both the subject side (representations) and object side (objects) of experience. As such, the relationship between modes of knowledge and modes of being becomes complex. He claims,

> "if I investigate more precisely the *relation* [my emphasis] of the given modes of knowledge in any judgment, and distinguish it, as belonging to the understanding, from the relation according to laws of the reproductive imagination…I find that a judgment is nothing but the manner in which given modes of knowledge are brought to the objective unity of apperception. This is what is intended by the copula 'is'. It is employed to distinguish the objective unity of given representations from the subjective" (B141).

The employment of the copula 'is,' as a form of the verb 'to be,' implicitly appeals to 'being'. Kant is effectively saying that the meaning or function of the word 'is' is to distinguish between that which is objective and that which is subjective. We see, then, that objective 'being' does not underlie objects of experience.

Rather, it seems that we posit 'is'—i.e. being—when we bring knowledge to the unity of apperception. When we make the synthetic empirical judgment 'x is y', we assert that the representations x and y belong *together* in a contingent way, but "that they belong to one another *in virtue of the necessary unity* of apperception in the synthesis of intuitions" (B142). We might say, therefore, that this 'togetherness' is established by virtue of the unity of apperception. And if we look at the syntax of the judgment 'x is y' we see that the 'togetherness' of x and y is nothing other than the verb 'to be'. Thus we might equivalently say that 'being' is established by virtue of the unity of apperception.

This line of thinking seems to tread close to a solipsistic idealism, but Kant's position is not so simple as that (as is clearly evident by his *Refutation of Idealism* later on). For while he speaks of representations making objects possible, he notes, "representation in itself does not produce its object in so far as *existence* is concerned, for we are not here speaking of its causality by means of the will" (A92/B125). As such, it is not correct to speak in terms of a *source* of being. In the first place, that assumes the law of causality, which, while objective for Kant, is not as high a principle as the transcendental unity of apperception (indeed the former is derived from the latter).

Secondly, we are still only speaking of an individual subject "establishing being" by use of the verb 'to be' in a judgment. This being would then seem to only 'exist' in the realm of judgments. In our previous discussion of judgments, we have distinguished text and act. While objective unity—that is, objective existence within judgment qua text—may hinge on representations being brought to the transcendental unity of apperception, those representations must first be given in intuition. And while the transcendental unity of apperception underlies and makes possible this given-ness, that is not to say that the *subject*, strictly speaking, does so. For to speak of a subject is to speak of *determined* self-consciousness, and Kant makes it clear that this determination can only happen empirically which thereby proves the existence of outer things. Thus he objects to Idealism. "In other words, the consciousness of my existence is at the same time an immediate consciousness of the existence of other things outside me" (B267).

Nonetheless Kant's underlying metaphysical claim is an important one.[104] It is perhaps most clearly stated in the A *Deduction*: "All appearances, as possible experiences, thus lie *a priori* in the understanding, and receive from it their formal possibility" (A127). The first part of this statement—that all possible experiences *lie in* or are contained in the understanding—seems quite profound. Yet he goes on to say that the understanding only gives these experiences *formal* possibility. Does the understanding only contain the form of these experiences? And if so, how can Kant also claim that *all possible experiences*—not just the form of those experiences—are contained in the understanding?

This is an essential question, but it can only be properly addressed after our discussion of Self-Consciousness (chapter III) and the concept of unity (chapter IV)

[104] Whether or not Kant's metaphysical position changes between 1781 and 1787 is not a question that I will address.

Chapter III. Self-Consciousness

In our sketch of the *Deduction*, 'self-consciousness' has emerged as a key element. Kant introduces the problem of self-consciousness at least as early as the Aesthetic. There he makes the point that in self-consciousness, the subject becomes object of sense (B68). He claims, "the whole difficulty is as to how a subject can inwardly intuit itself; and this is a difficulty common to every theory" (B68).

We have emphasized apperception and the 'I think'. We must examine more closely what this *a priori* consciousness is, and what it means for it to function as a transcendental condition.

I. Kant's Critique of Self-Consciousness

Kant demonstrates remarkable originality in his critique of self-consciousness, illuminating an assumption held by all previous thinkers.[105] He recognizes, with the Humean skeptic, that "no fixed and abiding self can present itself in [the] flux of inner appearances" (A107). But, as becomes clearer later on in his *Refutation of Idealism* and in the *Paralogisms*, he goes a step further than this. There, he notes that Idealism[106] assumes that self-consciousness is the only immediate experience; and it does so by dubiously inferring from effects to determinate causes, which already depends on the law of cause and effect (B276). The idealist thus argues that outer objects are sheer illusion. But Kant's critical move is to say that even to imagine something as outer is to present it to sense in intuition. And in order to do that, we must distinguish mere receptivity of an outer intuition from spontaneity, which is involved in every act of the imagination (B277). To be aware of the possibility that I could be imagining outer

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[105] I should, perhaps, qualify this as 'all previous thinkers, to my knowledge'. Kant, though, seems to suggest the same. Gardner also refers to Kant's "conception of the subject-object relation" as "completely original" (144).

[106] "Idealism—meaning thereby *material* idealism—is the theory which declares the existence of objects in space outside us either to be merely doubtful and indemonstrable or to be false and impossible" (B 274). Kant identifies (and opposes) two major brands of Idealism, the *problematic* idealism of Descartes and the *dogmatic* idealism of Berkeley (B274).

things is to already assume that I am aware of the distinction between 'I' (as subject) and things outside of me.

Kant speaks of immediate consciousness of the existence of outer things (246d), which he says is proved by his argument in this section. Here he argues that, "the existence of outer things is required for the possibility of a *determinate* [my emphasis] consciousness of the self…" (B278). This issue of determinate consciousness of the self v. bare consciousness of it—or stated similarly, "the consciousness of my own existence" v. "the determination of it in time" (B277)—is quite important in relating to the transcendental unity of apperception. For, in the *Refutation*, he claims that outward experience is required for *determination* of the self, though it is not required for mere "consciousness of my own *existence* [my emphasis]". In the *Deduction*, through the concept of transcendental unity of apperception, Kant is aiming to defend a necessary *a priori* consciousness of self that is yet undetermined. It becomes determined only in empirical intuition where my self as appearance comes to me via outer objects. Only through empirical intuition can I properly generate the representation 'I', which, while seeming to be an absolutely basic representation, in fact entails the four components that "1. *I think*, 2. *As subject*, 3. *As simple subject*, and 4. *As identical subject in every state of my thought*" (B419).[107]

In the *Deduction* he claims that, "*subjective* unity of consciousness…is a *determination of inner sense*—through which the manifold of intuition for such [objective] combination is empirically given" (B139). The *undetermined* consciousness of self, however, is an objective unity—it is the transcendental apperception. Kant's distinction in the *Refutation* between (a) "consciousness of my own existence" (B277) versus (b) the determination of that existence in time, is a bit confusing. For the existence of which I am conscious in the case of (a) cannot quite be called existence

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[107] However, Kant's whole argument in this section (The *Paralogisms*) aims to refute the pure doctrine of the soul—i.e. that the soul is a *simple substance* and is immortal. For this "pseuro-rational" (A339/B397) inference takes "the transcendental concept of the subject, which contains nothing manifold" and from it dubiously infers "the absolute unity of this subject itself, of which, however…I possess no concept whatsoever" (A340/B398). The error is to mistake the unity of consciousness for an intuition "of the subject as object" to which the "category of substance is then applied" (B421-2).

since it is prior to any modal predication. Yet it is most certainly not nothing, that is, non-existence.

Kant attempts to address this problem in the *Paralogisms* with an explicit discussion of Descartes. There he says that "the 'I think' is, as already stated, an empirical proposition and contains within itself the proposition 'I exist'" (B424). He criticizes Descartes' attempt to infer my existence through this proposition (that 'I think'). For such an inference involves an implicit syllogistic major premise, namely, "Everything which thinks exists" (B424). But we could never establish such a major premise prior to the 'I think'. For, as he claims, "the 'I think' precedes the experience which is required to determine the object of perception…" (B423). In this sense he is critical of Descartes. However his criticism is due to the fact that he does maintain the 'I think' as so basic.[108]

Thus arises the question, what *is* the 'I think'? And from this arises the related (though not identical) question, what is the transcendental unity of apperception? (Below, we will trace how that question arises, and attempt to give an answer to it). This 'I think' is, no doubt, difficult to talk about or point to. In the same section of the *Paralogisms*, Kant notes that, "An indeterminate perception here signifies only something real that is given" (B423), though it is given only to thought in general, and neither as appearance nor thing-in-itself (B423). The only thing knowable is the mere given-ness of the 'I think'. This mere given-ness, though, is not the same as the sensible given-ness of reaction—i.e. the undeniable fact that *something* has reacted against my senses, even if it is merely a figment of my imagination.[109] For the given-ness of the 'I think' is purely intellectual and is, as we have noted with reference to Peirce's

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[108] Gardner notes a very interesting passage from Kant's *Prolegomena* that has distinctly Peircian undertones, "self-consciousness gives us 'the *feeling* [my emphasis] of an existence without the slightest concept' (*Proleg* 334n)" (Gardner, 148). Feeling is the title that Peirce gives to his first universal category, and here one can begin to see how thin this category really is. For it is a profound insight even to identify reaction as prior to representation (which is then the interpretation of that reaction). Peirce's notion of reaction is, no doubt, borrowed from Berkeley, among others. But this notion of firstness as feeling, which is prior even to reaction, is quite extraordinary and (as far as I can tell) unique.

[109] To make the claim that something is, or even could be a figment of my imagination, however, is to already give an *interpretation* of the undeniable fact (reaction).

categories, thinner even than this sensible reaction (which falls under Peirce's second category).

II. Transcendental Apperception: Unity and Identity

Part of the difficulty of the *Deduction* (and the sections related to it) is due to the fact that important technical terms carry multiple meanings. We see this perhaps most clearly in regard to the term 'combination'. In the present section our primary task is to define the **transcendental apperception** and the related term, the '**transcendental unity of apperception'**.[110]

In a final section of the Aesthetic, which only appears in the B version, Kant defines **apperception** as follows: "The consciousness of self (apperception) is the simple representation of the 'I'…" (B68). This 'I', however, does not "begin with the concept of a thinking being in general, but with a reality, and we should infer from the manner in which this reality is thought, after everything empirical in it has been *removed* [my emphasis], what it is that belongs to a thinking being in general" (B418-419). In the section above we noted that the representation 'I' *contains*, in a limited but important way, the 'I think'. That is not to say that the *representation* 'I think' precedes the representation 'I'. For, as we illustrated above, the *representation* 'I think', as stated (whether literally or implicitly), would be an empirical proposition.

However, Kant claims that the 'I think', "expresses an indeterminate empirical intuition" (B422). Here Kant's term "the 'I think'" is meant in a different way—it is not the determined proposition, but only the mere "something real" given in *intuition*, which thereby suggests conceptual self-activity prior to that intuition. Kant attempts to resolve this point in the *Paralogisms* by conceiving of this undetermined 'I think' as a proposition in the problematic mode (rather than the assertoric mode, like the Cartesian proposition 'I think'). He claims that, "the proposition 'I think' (taken problematically) contains the form of each and every judgment of understanding and accompanies all

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[110] We must note that 'transcendental apperception' and 'transcendental unity of apperception' are distinct technical terms in Kant's argument, and are therefore not synonymous. Whether they are distinct concepts, however, is not presently clear.

categories as their vehicle" (B406). This serves to elucidate our discussion earlier of the copula 'is' in a judgment. As Kant says in the Deduction, when we make a judgment—for example, '"Bodies are heavy'" (B142)—we do not merely describe subjective impressions, which would only be to say, '"if I support a body, I feel an impression of weight'" (B142). Rather we assert that the two representations are "combined *in the object*, no matter what the state of the subject may be. How does this assertion bear the form of an 'I think', taken problematically?

We have already suggested the answer to this question in our sketch of the *Deduction*. For it is only by virtue of the transcendental unity of apperception that the concept of an object is possible.[111] The concept of an object involves a combination of sensory manifold from intuition, and Kant claims that this combination is performed *a priori* by the faculty of the understanding.

The element of Kant's argument that connects a problematic 'I think' to the 'transcendental unity of apperception' is the notion of '**pure apperception**'. Pure apperception is a complex notion. Kant claims, "All the manifold of intuition has, therefore, a necessary *relation* to the 'I think' in the same subject in which this manifold is found. But this representation is an act of *spontaneity* [and does not belong] to sensibility" (B132). This he calls 'pure apperception'. Thus we may say that 'pure apperception' is two things ('things' meant in a non-technical way): it is an act of the understanding and a representation *of a relation*.

The latter part is difficult to comprehend. It implies that the relation itself is existent and prior to the *re*-presentation, which itself *is* pure apperception. Immediately after defining pure apperception in this way, Kant claims that pure apperception generates the representation 'I think' (B132). Clearly Kant is operating with (at least) two different meanings of the term 'I think'. For the prior, existent *relation*—of which 'pure apperception' is a *re*-presentation—is between the manifold of intuition and the 'I think'. So pure apperception is both a representation of a (prior) relation to the 'I think',

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[111] I will argue that this presumes that an object is genuinely given in intuition, and therefore possesses non-arbitrary unity, which I believe is a dubious assertion. I will argue that what we call an object only acquires object-hood through habit. This is in contrast to Kant, who claims that each intuition involves the *concept* of an object as given.

and the source of generating the 'I think'.[112] How are we to conceive of this prior, deeper 'I think'? I believe it is associable with the transcendental unity of apperception, which brings us to our primary task.[113]

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[112] This relates to our discussion earlier from *The Copula Is*. That section raised the question of whether all possible (past, present and future) experience is *contained* in the understanding—form as well as content—or whether it is only form that it contains. Kant's language is confusing on this question, which I believe is no coincidence. For I believe he is attempting to resolve a conflict in his argument that results from an incorrect assumption. I will clarify in a later section what this assumption is, and where he is mistaken. But we can see from the explanation above how this tension arises. For he wants to affirm an absolutely basic "existent" relation between the 'I think' and the manifold of experience (i.e. the *content* of experience, not merely its form). But he also wants to maintain this relation as somehow incomplete, still in need of empirical intuition.

[113] Here I must make a (perhaps far too metaphysical) interruption, which is not intended as part of my argument, but which is nonetheless related to it. In Kant's letter to Herz, which we cited earlier, he claims (in a passage which we only partially cited), "if that in us which we call 'representation' were active with regard to the object, that is, if the object itself were created by the representation (as when divine cognitions are conceived as the archetypes of all things), the conformity of these representations to their objects could be understood" (Gardner, 28).

I believe that the prior, or deeper 'I think' that we mention above must be regarded (i.e. can only be conceived of) as something along the lines of divine cognition—that is, as an act of thinking which creates its objects and leaves its image upon them. In the *Critique*, Kant says nothing of this notion of "divine cognition" as an archetype; in fact he notes that appearances do not produces objects as far as their existence is concerned. Further, as we have noted, he goes to great lengths in the B version to emphasize his opposition to Idealism. However I maintain that this notion of primordial thinking that creates the world is present in Kant's work. It is a notion that is taken up and expanded by Hegel, and criticized vigorously by Peirce.

In his essay *What Pragmatism Is*, Peirce states that, "the third category—the category of thought, representation, triadic relation, mediation, genuine Thirdness, Thirdness as such,—is an essential ingredient of reality, yet does not by itself constitute reality, since this category (which in that cosmology appears as the element of habit) can have no concrete being without action, as a separate object on which to work its government, just as action cannot exist without the immediate being of feeling on which to act. The truth is that Pragmaticism is closely allied to the Hegelian absolute idealism, from which, however, it is sundered by its vigorous denial that the third category (which Hegel degrades to a mere stage of thinking) suffices to make the world" (Peirce, *What Pragmatism Is,* 345).

This is not a paper about Hegel, nor explicitly a paper about Peirce's categories. And for this reason, I restrict this observation to a footnote. But it is a criticism that I believe Kant is subject to, in that his 'transcendental unity of apperception' cannot be thought in any other way.

Above, we posed the question, what *is* the transcendental unity of apperception? The time has now come to endeavor an answer. Due to the depth of abstraction and subtlety involved in the subject matter, it is immensely difficult to extract a clear description of what the transcendental unity of apperception *is*. Gardner, in his commentary on the *Deduction*, also raises this question:

> "At one level", he claims, "Kant's answer is clear: transcendental apperception consists in a merely *formal* unity that does not amount to knowledge of any object. The formal unity in question is just that unity of representations, whatever it may be, which makes it possible for me to reflectively attach the 'I think' to each of them" (Gardner, 147).

However, Gardner goes on to note that, "matters are not quite so simple. In discussing apperception, Kant employs not only the concept of unity but also that of identity (e.g. A113: 'numerical identity is inseparable from it [self-consciousness]…)" (Gardner, 147).

First, we must clarify these two distinct elements that characterize self-consciousness—unity and identity.[114] This will enable us to identify two transcendental conditions in transcendental apperception—(a) synthesis and (b) consciousness of synthesis. The subsequent section in this chapter will attempt to identify the significance of these two conditions.

In the A *Deduction*, Kant refers to transcendental apperception as, "pure original unchangeable consciousness" (A107). He goes on to speak of the "unity of consciousness" (A108) that is the transcendental unity of apperception, calling it again, "the original and necessary consciousness of the identity of the self…" (A108). Here we already see the words 'unity' and 'identity' used in relation to the transcendental unity of apperception. But these terms must be clarified.

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[114] Since this paper consistently maintains the word "concept" as a technical term, I choose intentionally to refer to 'unity' and 'identity' as "elements" or "characteristics", unlike Gardner who (I believe, imprecisely) refers to them here as "concepts". I do this to maintain the distinction between two notions: (a) an intrinsic element of something, and (b) a conceptual element of *my concept of* something. This distinction is absolutely essential to my argument, particularly in relation to the transcendental unity of apperception as transcendental condition. (This point will be made explicit in Section III below).

We recall from the definition in the Aesthetic that apperception is consciousness of self (B68). In the passage above, Kant suggests something very similar—"consciousness of the identity of the self" (A108). He claims in the B Deduction that, "Only insofar, therefore, as I can unite a manifold of given representations in *one consciousness*, is it possible for me to represent to myself the *identity of the consciousness in* [*i.e. throughout*] *these representations*" (B133). These representations—the manifold given in intuition—will possess synthetic unity. They will possess, so to speak, the imprint of having been combined or synthesized, so that when they are represented there will be something throughout them that indicates a synthesizer. This "something throughout them" indicates the 'identity' of this consciousness, which will be represented to me *through* the manifold of intuition.

But, Kant tells us, "this thoroughgoing identity of the apperception of a manifold which is given in intuition contains a synthesis of representations, and is possible only through the consciousness of this synthesis" (B133). This identity is given in intuition, and makes it possible for me to then represent an 'I' to myself. This identity is only possible through (a) synthesis and (b) consciousness of synthesis; both of which are its transcendental conditions. Gardner makes the same point, "the relation of representations to the identity of the subject comes about 'only in so far as I *conjoin* one representation with another, and am conscious of the synthesis of them…' (B133)" (Gardner, 158). In an earlier section Gardner calls transcendental apperception, "consciousness *of thinking*" (Gardner, 148). These terms—'thinking' and 'synthesis'—illustrate the same point; they are both conceptual activity of the understanding. For "identity of the self" (A108) is identity of the self as thinking. Thus we see that at the base of self-consciousness, as its transcendental condition, we have (a) synthesis and (b) consciousness of that synthesis. This "consciousness of" is different from *knowledge*, which can only arise when thought is coupled with intuition. Kant maintains that in knowledge, thought becomes determinate as thought *of an object*. However, as we shall see below, this "consciousness of" is significant.

III. Logico-Temporality and The Issue of Identity

We have demonstrated above that the identity of apperception is grounded in two inseparable transcendental conditions—(a) synthesis and (b) consciousness of that synthesis. We are careful to note that as transcendental conditions, these are not causes that make something happen, but are conditions *only* through which something is possible. In that regard, the question is, how is it possible for me to represent to myself an identity of consciousness throughout a manifold of given representations? The answer, as demonstrated above, is that within and throughout them, there must be (a) a synthesis and (b) a consciousness of that synthesis.

Now it is clear that (b) must logically follow from (a). But what is meant by this claim?

Obviously to speak of progression or succession is to employ temporal language. But if time is merely the form of my inner sense rather than a thing-in-itself, then progression in the sense of "first x, then y" is merely subjective. To use language of progression or succession in regard to x and y *themselves* would then be to employ a temporal metaphor. For, if time is only a subjective form for a perceiving person, then there is nothing intrinsic to x and y (considered as 'things') that necessitates progression in a strictly temporal sense.

However, 'progression' in a general way is quite obviously fundamental to logic. And we would certainly claim that a strictly logical progression is not reducible to a mere subjective ordering, in accordance with the thinking subject's form of inner sense. We think of a logical progression as necessary, meaning that the progression exists not merely by virtue of my subjective experience. This may be illustrated by the form of a proposition in an argument "if x, then y". In this form, x and y are not thought in strictly temporal terms. To say "if x, then y" is simply to say that, "if x is the case, then y will, by way of necessity, also be the case". For x and y are propositions, not events; one does not occur "after" the other according to some time interval, because, as propositions, they are not conditioned by time. And though we might conceive of a "real progression" from x to y—i.e. y really follows from x, and does not merely follow for

me—what we mean by this progression is only that y will follow from x (i.e. "come after" x) in the mind of anyone who thinks this proposition.

But how are we to think of the progression between (a) synthesis and (b) consciousness of that synthesis? This progression is different from the progression in the form of a proposition "if x, then y". In the latter case, temporal progression is not a question for x and y themselves. But in the former case, (b) is not possible unless (a) has occurred *first*. We recall however that (a) and (b) are necessary transcendental conditions. What does it mean to speak of transcendental conditions in a logico-temporal sense?[115]

I wish to argue that in order to ascribe logico-temporality to these transcendental conditions, one must claim one of two things. Either (1), one must ascribe time as inner sense to the subject of transcendent apperception. In this case (a) and (b) occur in order because of the subject's form of inner sense. But this is a tautology. For Kant has grounded time as the form of inner sense on the transcendental unity of apperception. Further, we cannot speak of a 'subject' here. As we have pointed out in earlier sections, that would mean a determined subject. We would thus be assuming a determined

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[115] I have no idea whether anyone has ever previously coined or used the clunky term 'logico-temporal' or 'logico-temporality'. By the noun form, I mean a characteristic, the description of which employs temporal metaphors, in order to signify some sort of *real* priority (or posteriority) that is intrinsic to a thing in its relation to other things. I believe the term logico-temporality is useful (despite its clunky-ness) because it brings to light the fact that a thinking subject, who makes logical judgments about things, thinks according to a form of inner sense—namely time. As he makes these logical judgments about *things*, he ascribes characteristics to them. As in the case above, he might say that y presupposes x. His claim about this presupposition applies not to his current *thoughts* about x and y—which would be merely subjective,—but to x and y as *things* (all metaphysical theses aside). Phrases like "proceeding in logical fashion", "logical steps", and "logical progression" suffice to show that the discipline of logic entails (at least) the notion of 'order', which has overtones of temporality. But any logician would hold that there is a difference between temporal priority and logical priority. When our thinker says (as in the case above) "(a) must come before (b)" he may be aware that he is employing merely temporal metaphors, but he still wishes to hold that (a) has some *intrinsic priority* in its relation to (b). Since I use the term 'priority' in my very definition of logico-temporality above (and thus render it somewhat suspect), I reveal that it is impossible to describe the characteristic itself without a temporal concept. Even the terms "beneath" or "behind" make implicit use of temporality—one thinks the word 'beneath' through envisioning construction (or deconstruction) in *succession*, and one thinks the word 'behind' through envisioning a *succession* of things in front.

subject in order to prove the ground for a determined subject, which is clearly circular reasoning.

Therefore we must claim (2) that the fact that these "transcendental conditions" possess logico-temporality means that they only *exist*, qua transcendental conditions, by virtue of the fact that they are *now* being observed by me as a *now-thinking* subject. This reveals that what I have been referring to as transcendental conditions of experience *itself* are in fact conditions of *my concept of* experience. This is perhaps the most critical claim in my overall argument.[116]

And my concept of my experience has not arisen for no reason at all. It has arisen because I am doing philosophy and trying to define a proper subject-object relation (or ground for affirming my subjecthood). In short, my reflection on this, wherein arises the *concept of* experience, is only brought about in order to make future judgments.[117]

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[116] This point may also be proved by the following argument: How does a transcendental condition exist? Its mode of being is necessary. Now if something is necessary, it is impossible for it to not be. If one objects and says that temporal existence is not a question for the necessary, he will be proving my claim anyway. But even so, while the opponent would not agree to a claim like 'there is no *time* when the necessary is not', he must still agree with my above claim, namely that 'if something is necessary, it is impossible for it to not be'. But if we grant that (a) synthesis, is a transcendental condition, and then add that (b) consciousness of that synthesis, is also a transcendental condition, then we imply that there was a time (even if it is a tiny moment; or even if it is not even a moment, but a logical sequencing) when (b) was not. This implies that these are not in fact necessary transcendental conditions of experience itself.

[117] This scheme of action (or judgment), preparation for action, and retrospective examination of past action will closely parallel the scheme I outline in the appendix to this paper entitled *An Abstract Sketch of Self*. In reference to that essay, I will note here that, to not make the future judgment is to undermine the very reason that my concept of experience arose in the first place. This concept arose in a reflective act, which was a part of preparation for making a (future) judgment. (However, as I will note in the appendix, the reflective agent is still capable of not making the future judgment).

At present (largely for the sake of clarity) I mainly speak of action in terms of judgments, which is in keeping with Kant, for whom judgment is the archetypical embodiment of all action. Peirce criticizes Kant's logic on this point: "I came to see that Kant ought not to have confined himself to divisions of propositions of 'judgments,' as the Germans confuse the subject by calling them, but ought to have taken account of all elementary and significant differences of form among signs of all sorts, and that, above all, he ought not to have left out of account fundamental forms of reasonings" (Peirce,

My argument in this section—that these conditions apply to my concept of experience rather than to that experience itself—still maintains Kant's criticism of Descartes, Berkeley and Hume in regard to the self; i.e. it still recognizes that an identity of the subject is not an immediate intellectual intuition, but rather comes only through representations. But my argument holds that the identity of self is not found in a primordial 'I think' which leaves its imprint upon those representations. It holds rather, that my *concept of* that 'I think'—which is the only place it can have meaning (it can't have meaning apart from that, because apart from that it cannot have logico-temporal ordering, which grants it identity in addition to unity)—only arises in an act of reflection on past actions/judgments, which is oriented towards making future judgments. That act of reflection—which makes the transcendental conditions concepts and gives them meaning—determines a logico-temporal ordering that does not exist in them as transcendental conditions themselves.

Pragmatism, 424). Peirce also criticizes Kant's logic of relations in his essay *The Nature of Meaning*, where he claims that, "Kant imagined that all necessary reasoning was of the type of a syllogism in Barbara" (Peirce, *The Nature of Meaning*, 219). On this matter, the editor notes that, "Peirce's first major logical discovery was that every such reduction takes the logical form of an argument in the figure from which the reduction is made. See his 1866 *Memoranda Concerning the Aristotelian Syllogism*" (Peirce, 529; footnote 15).

Chapter IV: The Concept of Unity

In this chapter I will offer three arguments against the concept of unity. These will be in regard to three (related) concepts of unity in Kant's *Critique*. These are first, the concept of the transcendental unity of apperception; second, the concept of the unity of an object in general; and third, the concept of the unity of all possible experience. I believe that, for Kant, in a way these are all essentially the same concept, and come back to the transcendental unity of apperception.[118] And according to him they ground and guarantee the unity of all concepts.

The three following sections all aim to affirm my central conclusion, which I have noted throughout this analysis, namely that the concept of unity—which for Kant means, non-arbitrary unity—is not a concept that can be met with in possible experience. The "concept" of unity must rather be called an idea. Without this concept of non-arbitrary unity, we are not able to conceive of a 'concept itself', which might ground various subjective partially complete concepts and guarantee their continuity. The *idea* of unity, however, as a merely posited (and arbitrary) idea, permits us to use concepts when they are sufficient for making distinctions, and thereby permits us to fill those concepts with determinate content in particular empirical instances.

I. Unity that is not Unity: *Nihil Privatum*

We have already discussed the transcendental unity of apperception in much detail, and I have already stated my central argument in regard to it. This short section merely aims to give an additional argument to illustrate that the concept of non-arbitrary unity is equal to the concept of nothing.

Early in the B *Deduction*, Kant describes the *act* of combination that must be present in all consciousness. He then moves to consideration of the *concept* of

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[118] This point relates to our discussion from the previous section *The Copula 'is'*. There we introduced the metaphysical question whether the understanding contains only the form of all experience or all experience itself. We will endeavor an answer to that question in the chapter that follows. That answer, however, is deeply bound up with these three "concepts". As such, we must discuss these "concepts" first.

combination, which he claims includes three concepts—the concept of a manifold, the concept of its synthesis, and the concept of "*synthetic unity* of the manifold" (B130-131).[119] This synthetic unity, Kant claims, does not arise out of combination, but rather first makes it possible (B131).

He then makes the following claim, "This unity, which precedes *a priori* all concepts of combination, is not the category of unity (§10); for all categories are grounded in logical functions of judgment, and in these functions combination, and therefore unity of given concepts, is already thought" (B131). My objection here is quite simple. Kant has previously identified a list of concepts (categories) which are fundamental to all thought. The first of these he entitles 'unity'. He now claims that there is a unity, which is not this unity. However, in doing so he forgets that he is presenting an argument to a reader. If he is correct about the category of unity, then what he has just done (in the quote above) is produced the concept of unity (in the mind of the reader) and then negated its content. The resulting concept (of this "prior unity" that is not unity) is thus *nihil privatum*—the concept of nothing as privation (A292/B348).

One might object: does this argument prove that there *is* such a concept as unity that comes by way of the category? My response is this: I believe that Kant's category of unity has been derived from actual experience (where concepts have already been

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[119] While his language is immensely unclear and confusing on this point, I believe that Kant intends us to think of combination qua concept as a verb. This is different from the *act* of combination, which would be a specific instance—i.e. an action itself—which could be conceptualized by a verb. In contrast, I believe he intends us to think of 'synthetic unity' as something like an image, which makes possible the concept of a verb. I have used the language of an "imprint" earlier—that is an image that bears a mark of having been combined or synthesized. Kant does seem to indicate in a footnote that the representation of combination may be identical to the representation of 'synthetic unity'—"whether the representations are in themselves identical, and whether, therefore, one can be analytically thought through the other, is not a question that here arises" (B131). What is important, he claims, is that consciousness of the one can be distinguished from consciousness of the other (B131). For this reason, I maintain that it is best to consider (prior) 'synthetic unity' as an image, from which arises the concept of the verb 'combination', which includes the three concepts of manifold, synthesis and synthetic unity (now considered as concept).

(partially but sufficiently) filled with (empirical) content.[120] I believe that what Kant here describes as prior (transcendental) unity is an attempt to describe the *idea of unity* that I have indicated.[121] I propose that we conceive of this *idea* as something like a hope for unity that is in us (not unlike Kant's transcendental ideas of God, freedom and immortality that spring from reason). However, like these, it must be critiqued. For I cannot account for it; neither can I really identify what it is. I can only point to it by way of mere feeling. This is important because it indicates that this idea of unity is not a concept, which could have an object in possible experience. Thus it is different from a problematic concept. The object of a problematic concept may or may not be encountered in possible experience. However, the object of the idea of unity (like Kant's other transcendental ideas) is impossible to encounter in possible experience.

Thus, (initially) we grant an arbitrarily combined set of qualities unity. But we do so *in order* to form judgments—for a judgment could not be made without a concept that contains some content. As such, the concept itself grows, as it is employed in judgments. But since its initially posited content was strictly speaking 'Nothing', the entire content of the concept—i.e. its entire meaning—will exist in the specific instances in which it is employed.[122]

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[120] This argument will become clearer after we consider the concept of 'possible experience' in section III.

[121] This maintains my criticism of transcendental conditions above, because this idea of unity still makes empirical concepts (wherein Kant discovers the category of unity) possible. It makes these concepts possible because it permits action, through which the once empty concept becomes filled with empirical content.

[122] We can also illustrate this point in Peirce's semiotic terms. The posited idea of unity is the object of a sign (which is merely hypothetical, since it cannot be encountered in possible experience). The sign (representamen) is the first category called 'unity'. Thus when we employ the word 'unity', we make use only of the sign (representamen). 'Unity' as thought is always already the first category. When Kant refers to a prior 'unity' which is not the unity of the category, the content of this concept is strictly speaking 'Nothing'—i.e. *nihil privatum*. The semiotic model, however, while not permitting thought of 'unity that is not the unity of the first category' per se, does permit this other unity, as hypothetical object, to be recognized as different from nothing—even if it is a mere hypothetical place-holder (as object of a Sign). The interpretant of the sign is the representation in the mind of those who employ the sign. And therefore, as the sign is employed, as people use the concept in forming judgments, the concept (as full Sign) grows and becomes more and more determined. (This determination, however, comes only through empirical employment of the concept). In this process,

II. The Concept of an Object in General: *Ens Rationis*

In the Deduction Kant makes a seemingly obvious assertion, "Now all experience does indeed contain, in addition to the intuition of the senses through which something is given, a *concept* of an object as being thereby given, that is to say, as appearing" (A93/B126). This claim seems obvious in large part because we have been, after all, attempting to establish a theory of subject-object relation. In that sense, our *very question* already assumes that there are objects about which we could have concepts. (I will elaborate on this point at the end of this paper). However, what Kant's statement above is claiming is that an appearance possesses intrinsic object-hood. He already assumes that an *object* is given in intuition.[123]

I believe Kant's assertion is a dubious one. Let us take a simple example. I perceive an aspen tree. According to Kant, this appearance has intrinsic object-hood. He would indeed affirm that the matter of this intuition is a manifold—an array of colors, etc. But he wants to claim that the intuition possesses a formal unity, which is *given* in the intuition. As he says in the quote above, this experience *contains* "a concept

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the unity that was merely a posited idea hardens into actuality (the concept really does possess a characteristic of unity, though this is only meant in a limited sense—i.e. it is only a concept that is sufficient, not a primordial "concept itself"). The concept grows into a more full existence, although the full concept is *never* complete in possible experience. This is an important point, for it permits the growing concept to never strictly be regarded as only partial concept; if the concept could be completed in possible experience, then we could never actually affirm its sufficiency. If the complete unity of a concept could be met with in possible experience, then our representation of non-arbitrary unity (as end goal) would be a problematic *concept* rather than an idea. We can therefore say that the concept is continuously being created through its employment.

[123] According to my argument, however, object-hood—that is, unity in the content of a concept—is established in an arbitrary way. I argue, contra Kant, that there is no primordial "concept itself" which could ground and affirm non-arbitrary unity in an intuition, which then gives rise to a concept. According to my argument, therefore, object-hood comes only in the domain of retrospective discourse (domain 2). On this argument, what we mean by 'object' is the content of a concept, and that concept only has unity insofar as it has been filled with empirical content, which we can then combine into an arbitrary but sufficient concept. This arbitrary combination takes place in retrospective examination of past action, examination which comes about only in preparation for future action.

of an object as being thereby given…" (A93/B126). However, by what means do I affirm that a tree is given rather than a branch or a leaf? One might argue that, while I could focus on a branch or leaf—isolating *that* manifold content, or *fencing it in*, so to speak—that branch or leaf will still be given in intuition as a part of the tree. But, when we realize that the roots in an aspen grove are connected, we see that there is no intrinsic unity in the tree as object. Its object-hood—which is to say, its unity—as an intuition is merely an arbitrary "fencing in". I isolate this or that content and call it an object. But I do so by way of habit; nothing in the intuition gives itself as object.

In one sense, Kant recognizes this arbitrariness. He would respond that this "fencing in" is an act of synthesis of the imagination. But while this is an act of spontaneity (that is, the understanding), for Kant it is prior to a given intuition and is part of what makes perception possible. Kant does not consider the possibility that an intuition could acquire object-hood merely by virtue of habit.

For him the critical issue is not the unity of the object, as such. What is most important is rather the unity of a concept. As he notes in the Deduction, "an *object* is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is *united*" (B137). Gardner uses this passage to draw a distinction between what an object *is* and what function it has (Gardner, 156), and claims that we can only speak of the latter. In a sense, this is correct; but to define an object only according to its function means that we must also only define its concept according to that same function. And this means defining the concept only according to the specific instances in which it will be employed. Gardner, however, like Kant, conceives of the function of 'the concept of an object in general' or a 'transcendental object' as *grounding* a subject-object relation in the primordial sense.[124]

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[124] Gardner maintains that the transcendental object and the transcendental unity of apperception make each other possible (157). Gardner, citing Kant, attempts to skirt the question of what the transcendental object is (Gardner, 155). They both mistake this question as one that pertains to the transcendental object's constitution (rather than its *meaning*. Kant claims in the *Antinomies*, "Although to the question, what is the constitution of a transcendental object, no answer can be given stating *what it is*, we can yet reply that the *question* itself is *nothing*, because there is no given object [corresponding] to it" (A479/B507). But while Kant may not be able to speak of the constitution of the transcendental object, he has at least referred to the term, which is to

The meaning of Kant's term 'transcendental object' can be difficult to pin down—it is frequently associated with noumena, but also seems to be little more than the 'concept of an object in general'. In the A Deduction, Kant attempts to clarify what he means by 'an object of our representations': "What, then, is to be understood when we speak of an object corresponding to, and consequently also distinct from, our knowledge? It is easily seen that this object must be thought only as something in general=x…" (A104).

By using the variable x, Kant implicitly appeals to the object's formal judgmental distinctness (what I, perhaps with reference to Peirce, would call diagrammatic distinctness). But this, then, begs the question as to the judgment's existence. We have noted earlier that a judgment qua text will be exclusively formal, its constituent concepts being its content (A266/B322). We spoke at the beginning of this section of "fencing in" where I isolate empirical content and grant it formal unity. To speak of pure unity—form without content—is to speak of fencing in nothing. The concept of this formal unity, without regard to any empirical content—an object in general=x—is thus *ens rationis*, the qualitative concept of none, or empty concept without object (A292/B348).

In the *Postulates* Kant claims, "So long as intuition is lacking, we do not know whether through the categories we are thinking an object, and whether indeed there can anywhere be an object suited to them" (A235/B288). This relates to our discussion of the Concept of Nothing where we noted that, for Kant 'an object in general' is prior to the distinction between something and nothing. The concept of an object that lacks all determination, when thought, is equal to the concept of nothing.

Kant's implicit solution to avoid this problem is to speak of a primordial relation between the transcendental unity of apperception and all possible experience—hence his claim that we noted in *The Copula 'is'* that the understanding contains all possible experience within itself. In this way, he wants to argue that x as a diagrammatic concept already contains all experience (though it may be in the possible mode). We will elaborate on this claim in the following section as we consider the concept of possible

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make it into a sign. And if we cannot point to a purpose, function or object for it, then the concept itself is meaningless.

experience. However, we can note here that he does not ask the simple question, how does the diagram arise in a concrete sense? What is the purpose of, or reason for, forming a judgment.

On one level, the diagrammatic form of a judgment is only *thought* in the act of reflection—e.g. Aristotle's logical forms of judgment only arise in the act of doing philosophy. But obviously these forms can also be thought (perhaps without us realizing we have thought them) in the simple act of forming a judgment. But what Kant fails to recognize is that in this act, I will always *already* be looking to fill the space with a concept. And apart from that act of aiming to fill it, it (x or __) is nothing.[125]

III. The Concept of 'Possible Experience': Ghostly Actuality

We have noted above Kant's statement that, "the receptivity of the subject, its capacity to be affected by objects, must necessarily precede all intuitions of these objects" (71). This demonstrates his method, which aims to define the conditions which "must be fulfilled before the subject can be epistemically related to an object", and as such, has the peculiar feature of "convert[ing] a possibility into a necessity" (Gardner, 45). In this regard, the claim on which any transcendental proof rests may roughly be identified as this—that any actual knowledge or experience must be possible, or must have been possible.

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[125] The act of arbitrary combination can be evidenced with another short example. We spoke in an earlier section of two merely logically possible concepts: a centaur and a two sided triangle. We noted that 'the concept of a two-sided triangle' is, in fact, an analytic judgment that combines two concepts (x is y): a triangle and a two-sided figure. The latter "concept" can be broken into an analytic judgment in the same fashion. It divides into the concept of two sides and the concept of a figure. Since the meaning/definition of a figure involves more than two sides, this "concept" is not logically possible.

We can examine the other example—the concept of a centaur—in a similar fashion. We stated that this concept is logically possible, although there may not be any object that corresponds to it in possible experience. The real issue, though, is not about the *object* of this concept, but about the *content* of the concept itself. When we examine the content of that concept we see that it is nothing more than an arbitrary combination (in the form of a judgment) of two concepts from *actual* experience—namely a horse and a man.

I wish to argue, however, that any universal judgment or claim in regard to 'possible experience' will either be an analytic apodeictic claim or a problematic synthetic one. A claim in regard to 'possible experience' however can never be assertoric synthetic, as Kant (implicitly) assumes his starting claim to be.

The implicit starting premise of a transcendental proof—that any actual knowledge or experience must be possible (knowledge or experience)—can be taken as an example of the former—analytic apodeictic. That it is a necessary affirmation, and thus apodeictic, should be evident. I wish to argue, however, that it is analytic in that the concept of the predicate—possible knowledge/experience—is already thought in the subject—actual knowledge/experience. In regard to this claim, the only concept we have—or, rather, the only concept that we think—in regard to possible knowledge/experience is an inversely-hyperbolized or a 'ghostly' version of actual knowledge/experience. In this sense, we see that the knowledge/experience referred to (for *both* subject and predicate) is *past* knowledge/experience. Or put similarly, the content of the concept for both subject and predicate is the same, namely *past* knowledge/experience.

If a judgment involving 'possible experience' as a predicate is synthetic, then by definition the predicate will not be thought through the subject. In such a synthetic judgment, the concept of 'possible experience' will thus be thought, not in terms of past experience, but will be thought *as* future experience. As future experience, it may or may not be possible. Any knowledge or information attached to this concept of 'possible experience' (in a judgment) can only be stated problematically, never assertorically.

Let us take another example—the claim that 'all possible experience is possible'. Either it is thought as A=A, in which case it is apodeictic analytic; or else 'possible experience' is conceived as future, and we cannot say whether or not it is possible, because we do not know what 'it' is. By this I mean that the concept in my mind (the interpretant) to which the words refer is thought entirely without reference to past actual experience, and only with regard to future experience (which would not be in the actual mode); but in this case that empty concept does not have content that can be actually met with in possible experience.

One might object—we do not know it as determined, but we know it is *possible*. But to say that is just to move back to an apodeictic analytic claim. So, the opponent argues, are you saying that an object of possible experience cannot be met with in possible experience? My response is this: I aim to make a distinction according to what is thought in a concept. In the above objection, 'an object of possible experience' will be thought in one of two ways. Either (a) it will be thought as a ghostly object of actual experience, in which case the claim will be apodeictic, but will not add any new concept to the judgment. (it may also be thought merely as translated into the grammatical form A=A, but these are essentially the same). Or (b) it will be thought without regard to actual experience, in which case the concept is empty and may or may not be met with in experience.

What *is* the concept of possible experience? Or rather, what is the content of the concept of possible experience? Indeed in the case of an analytic apodeictic claim, 'possible experience' may be thought as unrelated to a particular past experience, but Kant has been very clear in his definition of *a priori*—it is "not knowledge independent of this or that experience, but knowledge absolutely independent of all experience" (B3). As such, an analytic apodeictic claim about 'possible experience' will not be thought *a priori*. And on the converse, a problematic synthetic judgment, while clearly *a priori*, cannot make any affirmative claim to possess real possibility.

We noted in '*The Concept of Possible Experience, introduced*' that there may be a logical distinction between two "concepts"—'the possibility of experience in general' and 'all possible experience'. In regard to the first concept, if 'experience in general' is only thought as actual experience, then the content of that concept will be logically distinct from a concept that speaks of all *possible* experience, that is past present and future. When we inquire, however, into the content of the concept of (only) future experience, we see that it cannot be thought. The concept will either be formed by thinking actual past experience and then negating it—in which case it will be *nihil privatum*, or it will be thought without regard to past experience, in which case we do not even know what 'it' is—*ens rationis*.

This issue is important because, as we have noted, much of Kant's argument hinges on the notion that the concepts (of objects) are "contained in the concept of

possible experience" (A95). Indeed, as Kant claims, "this transcendental unity of apperception forms out of all possible appearances, which can stand alongside one another in one experience, a connection of all these representations according to laws" (A108).[126]

[126] Further evidence of this is demonstrated in the following passages:
"In our mind, all appearances, since they are contained in a possible experience, must stand in community (*communio*) of apperception, and…constitute a whole" (A214/B261).
"There is one single experience in which all perceptions are represented as in thoroughgoing and orderly connection, just as there is only one space and one time in which all modes of appearance and all relation of being or not being occur. When we speak of different experiences, we can refer only the various perceptions, all of which, as such, belong to one and the same general experience" (A110).
"All possible appearances, as representations, belong to the totality of a possible self-consciousness" (A113).

Chapter V: Unity, Truth and the Task of Logic

I. Modality revisited: Concept, Content, Relation

We ended the chapter *Modality in the Deduction: The Copula 'is'* with a question. Does the understanding *contain* all possible experiences—form as well as content—or does it only contain the form of all experiences? We have now discussed three "concepts"—the "concept" of the unity of apperception, the "concept" of an object in general, and the "concept" of possible experience—which I have claimed are, in a way, for Kant, the same concept and come back to the unity of transcendental apperception. For Kant, transcendental apperception is that one primordial ground, which defines the unity of all experience and makes possible objects in general. So to what extent does the understanding, in the transcendental unity of apperception, contain all possible experience? Kant states in the A Deduction,

> "Now to assert in this manner, that all these appearances, and consequently all objects with which we can occupy ourselves, are one and all in me, that is, are determinations of my identical self, is only another way of saying that there must be a complete unity of them in one and the same apperception. But this unity of possible consciousness also constitutes the form of all knowledge of objects; through it the manifold is thought as belonging to a single object" (A129).

We see that, while these experience are *in me*—their form as well as their content—something is still lacking, namely knowledge. Kant wants to claim that intuition is still needed for these experiences (these primordially complete concepts) to become *objects*, and thereby become knowledge.

He claims later in the Principles that a concept itself is not changed according to what modal predicate it is given. "For the predicates of possibility, actuality, and necessity do not in the least enlarge the concept in which they are affirmed, adding something to the representation of the object" (A233/B286). This allows him to affirm that, "the principles of modality thus predicate of a concept nothing but the *action* [my emphasis] of the faculty of knowledge through which it is generated" (A234/B287). We can see from this language that there is a distinction between content and relation. As he says later in the Dialectic, "a hundred real thalers do not contain the least coin more than

a hundred possible thalers" (A599/B627). As we see here, the *content* of a concept in the possible mode is no different from the content of that concept in the actual mode. But he says later in that section, "For though, in my concept, nothing may be lacking of the possible real content of a thing in general, something is still lacking in its relation to my whole state of thought" (A600/B628).

Kant aims to affirm that this *action* is bringing concepts to the transcendental unity of apperception—i.e. relating concepts to my whole state of thought—so that they can become objects and thereby become objective knowledge. As he states in the B Deduction, the understanding's "whole power consists in…the *act* [my emphasis] whereby it brings the synthesis of a manifold, given to it from elsewhere in intuition, to the unity of apperception…" (B145). But this fails to ask an important question: Why would the transcendental unity of apperception need object-hood in the first place? Why would it need knowledge? Why would it need to externalize anything? How could it recognize a lack within itself if it contains all concepts in their fullness?

Kant conceives of all experience in terms of what I have called 'domain 1'. As such, he seeks to find a *prior ground* for the employment of the understanding upon which all its employment can be based. He does not consider the possibility, however, that that action could be carried out by virtue of mere feeling or idea, which could *then* be examined retrospectively as precedent. Kant claims that, "the first pure knowledge of understanding, then, upon which all the rest of its employment is based, and which also at the same time is completely independent of all conditions of sensible intuition, is the principle of the original synthetic unity of apperception" (B137). For Kant, my knowledge in any instance always comes back to myself as conscious of myself thinking.

We have noted in the sections *Kant's Critique of Self-Consciousness* and *Transcendental Apperception: Unity and Identity* that Kant aims to defend consciousness of a wholly undetermined 'I think'. In the *Paralogisms* he conceives of this as a proposition in the problematic mode, which then "contains the form of each and every judgment of understanding" (B406). He aims to affirm the "existence" of this prior 'I think' as a something, but a something that is yet wholly undetermined, prior to all representation, and indeed prior to all sensible reaction. However, as we have shown,

any attempt to refer to this "prior unity" turns out to be identical to the concept of nothing. Concrete action and employment of concepts is therefore ungrounded.

How is the scheme I suggest any different? According to the scheme I propose, experiences are not contained in any way in the understanding. First—absolutely first—we simply act. Surely something must motivate an act, but this 'something' is nothing more than mere feeling or vague hope, which when thought is identical to nothing. *But*, once action is carried out, there is empirical precedent that has been textualized in some way (memory, etc), and the concept of that *does* have content that we can point to. Kant is correct when he says in the Deduction that, "the analytical unity of apperception [and therefore of all concepts] is possible only under the presupposition of a certain *synthetic* unity" (B133). His error, however, is where he concludes, "consequently [a representation] must *previously* [my emphasis] be thought in synthetic unity…" (B134). That is to only conceive of one domain. It presumes that time only moves forward, and forgets that there is such a thing as retrospective examination. When I, in retrospect, look back at an action—that is, at a concept—synthetic unity is indeed presupposed. But it is the synthetic unity of my very act in looking back. In that act, I am *performing* synthesis; in that act I am uniting myself as subject with a manifold of past empirical intuition (that is content) and making it into a concept. And that act only arises in preparation for future action, which is not reducible to a solipsistic primordial thinking 'I'.

II. Truth and the Task of Logic: Concluding Remarks

The main implication of this argument is simply this, that a "concept itself" as totality/unity is not something that can *ever* be met with in possible experience. A full concept (possessing the form of complete non-arbitrary *unity* of an 'object in general') can only be met with in experience that is impossible. I can only speak of relative unity, which is merely my combination of empirical content into a merely sufficient concept. And this act of (arbitrary) combination can only occur in the act of retrospect, which is

but a step in the process of preparation for future action and the making of future judgments.

In this we see that mathematical construction is the archetype of all thought (insofar as thought necessarily involves concepts). For we have already noted that an "arbitrarily invented concept" (A729/B757) such as a triangle, possessing its own completeness insofar as its definition is concerned, can yet possess properties belonging to it that I do not yet know. It can grow.

So in logic, we set our sights on the hope for unity, which is nothing other than the hope for clarity, where concepts are precisely distinct, and their full meaning is known. But in concrete action, in view of this goal, we must settle for sufficiency. "We make use of certain characteristics only so long as they are adequate for the purpose of making distinctions" (A728/B756).

We must finally defend Kant. If we have come to him seeking an answer to his question as phrased in the letter to Herz—what is the ground of a relation between representations and objects?—then he has presented a flawless answer. For we have already assumed in our question that we have a concept of an object in general. But, as I have argued, this assumption is incorrect. The solution, though, is not to find a deeper question, but to find a more precise one. For the deeper question is the one that Kant notes in the opening of the Transcendental Logic, and then proceeds to put aside; it is none other than Pilate's great question before a silent Christ—what is truth? While we are right to hope for "truth" as a goal toward which our discipline aims, this question cannot guide research or dialogue in a meaningful sense. For we do not know what we mean when we say 'truth'.

So as we hope for clarity, we also hope for truth. But concretely, we must settle for what Kant calls pragmatic belief—"such contingent belief, which yet forms the ground for the actual employment of means to certain actions" (A824/B852).

The task of logic is therefore to determine the goodness and badness of reasonings, in view of both truth as a goal, and clarity as a goal. It is to construct concepts, defining them more precisely in retrospective examination of the instances in which they have already been employed. And it is to do so in preparation for the future actions in which they shall be employed. To perform logic is to exhibit self-control in

thought. And as Peirce tells us, “logical self-control is a perfect mirror of ethical self-control,—unless it be rather a species under that genus” (Peirce, *What Pragmatism Is*, 337).

Appendix

An Abstract Sketch of 'Self'

One of the most significant implications of my argument in this paper has to do with the concept of 'self'. In large part, my argument is a criticism of transcendental apperception—i.e. that primordial apperception provides the unity upon which concepts rest. I have argued against this conception, but I believe there is still need for a positive contribution, outlining at least a rough model of how we can conceive of a self in light of my critique. I believe the paper is incomplete without this model, and I believe that this model is, perhaps, my most valuable contribution.

It comes partially out of a passage from Peirce's essay *What Pragmatism Is*. There, Peirce claims that the rational person, holding beliefs as habits, also holds,

> "[that he] can exert a measure of self-control over his future actions, which means, however, *not* that he can impart to them any arbitrarily assignable character, but, on the contrary, that a process of *self-preparation* [my emphasis] will tend to impart to action (when the occasion for it shall arise) one *fixed character* [my emphasis], which is indicated and perhaps roughly measured by the absence (or slightness) of the *feeling* [my emphasis] of self-reproach, which subsequent reflection will induce" (*What Pragmatism Is*, 337).

I use this passage as a starting point to construct an abstract scheme of a "self" composed of three essential 'I's. Earlier in this paper I have spoken of "logically distinct agents". The meaning of 'I' in this essay is intended to mean only that—a logically distinct agent. What I mean by a "self" is that which is formed out of the interrelations among these agents.

As I have stated, there are three essential 'I's. A fourth will be introduced later in the analysis, but it is essentially a variation of the third, and is named accordingly. My interpretation is not intended as an exegesis of Peirce's passage above; that passage is merely a starting point. The notion that there may be multiple agents within one "self" is one that is not foreign to Kant, as we have seen in discussion of apperception. Neither is it a notion that is foreign to Peirce. As he notes later in his essay, "…a person is not absolutely an individual. His thoughts are what he is 'saying to himself'…" (*What Pragmatism Is*, 338).

In my interpretation, I use the term 'I's—1st 'I', 2nd 'I' and 3rd 'I'—to distinguish individual "agents" within one "self." My interpretation is as follows.

Concrete action is performed by a hypothetical 'I' as agent. We shall call this 1st 'I'. This action is possible by means of self-preparation (performed by another 'I', which prepares the first 'I', the hypothetical agent). We shall call this self-preparing 'I' the 2nd 'I'. Occasion presents itself as necessary corresponding condition, and action is carried out, allowable by absence of self-reproach in regard to this particular action (reproach of the 2nd I to the 1st). If "reproach" never terminated, action would never take place; 2nd 'I' would never sufficiently finish the process of self-preparation (i.e. preparation of the 1st 'I' for carrying out action).

Upon subsequent reflection (which is retroactive) a 3rd 'I' reflects on this process; it recognizes 1st 'I' and 2nd 'I' as itself—"that was an action that I carried out". In this recognition, it sees that the "absence of self-reproach" was not total absence, but only slightness of self-reproach. As such, "self-reproach" re-enters as having belonged explicitly to the 2nd 'I' in relation to the 1st 'I'. But the 3rd 'I' has already recognized the first two as a unity of itself. Thus self-reproach belongs to 3rd 'I', which is identifiable with the more complex "fixed character"[127]. We shall call this newly introduced (slight) self-reproach, which belongs to the fixed character 'guilt'.

Peirce goes on, "Now, this subsequent reflection is part of the self-preparation for action on the next occasion" (337b). The condition for the possibility of self-reflection (3rd) is self-preparation (2nd). There would be no reason for self-reflection (as a step in the process above), except insofar as it is needed for self-preparation for a subsequent action. Here we must recall that this scheme always has to be coupled with an external occasion for action. As such, solipsism is not a real possibility. "Consequently," Peirce claims, "there is a tendency, as action is repeated again and again, for the action to approximate indefinitely toward the perfection of that fixed character" (337).

However, we have not yet given sufficient attention to the notion of guilt. A possibility remains: what if 3rd 'I' sees a wide discrepancy between "slight self-

[127] However, it is important to keep in mind that "fixed character" is not only 3rd I, but is the composite "self" which entails 1st 'I', 2nd 'I', and 3rd 'I'.

reproach" and "absence of self-reproach"? I.e. it sees that the 2nd 'I' was far too quick to initiate action and thus far too sloppy in its self-preparation, prematurely claiming absence of self-reproach. The 3rd 'I' sees the discrepancy; it sees that the 2nd 'I' should not have carried out the action, should not have terminated the process of self-preparation so soon. And since it has already identified 1st 'I' and 2nd 'I' as itself, it recognizes itself as responsible for the error of discrepancy). The large discrepancy is the large burden of guilt; and insofar as this 3rd 'I'—the reflecting self—is simultaneously functioning as a 2nd 'I' in preparing a hypothetical 'I' for the next action, it (this formerly 3rd 'I', now a 2nd 'I') will spend such a significant amount of time preparing the 1st 'I,' that the process of self-preparation may never become complete and culminate in concrete action. We shall call this indefinite time delay in self-preparation 'resentment.' Thus resentment, through guilt, has inhibited concrete action. Without termination of self-preparation (which only terminates when the 2nd 'I' recognizes an absence of self-reproach), action never takes place, and a new 3rd 'I' never arises. The process of fixed character formation stops.

Interestingly, if this happens, the current 2nd 'I' is still functioning as a 3rd 'I' in some sense. It retains some of its 3rd-'I'-ness insofar as it remembers itself as 3rd 'I' reflecting on the relation between 2nd 'I' and 1st 'I', which it had recognized as itself. If it didn't retain this residual 3rd-'I'-ness, it would forget the discrepancy—i.e. the guilt—from the previous action, and simply function as an oblivious (in the sense of being unreflective) 2nd 'I'. We might think that this is a sensible solution to the problem of inaction through guilt—that resentment would never arise so long as the newly formed 2nd 'I' (formerly a 3rd 'I') loses all of its 3rd-'I'-ness when it becomes a 2nd 'I' and thus loses its memory of guilt. However, the problem here is that the error of large discrepancy would then never be corrected. And as such, the fixed character would not "approximate indefinitely toward perfection" but would rather devolve such that there would be no connection between self-reflection and subsequent self-preparation. For the reflection would be forgotten as soon as preparation begins. Hence, the newly formed 2nd 'I' must retain awareness of a discrepancy that it corrects in preparation for the next action. And it therefore must maintain some semblance of its former 3rd-'I'-ness. As such, the problem of resentment remains.

The solution is as follows. We recall from the beginning of the previous section that the condition for the possibility of self-reflection is self-preparation (for the next action). Self-reflection only comes about in order to prepare for the next action; it cannot arise independently. As stated in the previous section, there would be no reason for self-reflection (as a step in the process), except insofar as it is needed for self-preparation for a subsequent action. Thus, the 3rd 'I' recalls that it only came about (as self-reflection) through the need for self-preparation for the next action. Put in another way, it exists as a 3rd 'I' with the express vocation of functioning as a 2nd 'I' for this new action. We shall call this realization 'responsibility.'[128]

Here, a new function has arisen for this 'I' as it performs a reflection that is one level higher than the previous reflection. As such, it would not be incorrect to identify a 4th 'I', but insofar as the function of the 3rd 'I' has already been identified as 'reflection,' and since this 3rd 'I' has already performed the recognition of the 1st 'I' and the 2nd 'I' as itself, its function here is really just a variation of its prior identity (though we are correct to say that this function is one level higher than its previous function). Since this newly formed 'I' is a variation of identity coupled with a higher function, we will call it '3rd I-B' (though it would make sense to rename our previous '3rd I', we will leave its name as-is for the sake of simplicity).

Similarly, it would not be wholly incorrect to speak of 'responsibility' as arising earlier when the 3rd 'I' first identifies the 1st 'I' and 2nd 'I' as itself *and then* moves to reflection, which is also preparation for the next action. (Although, mere identification of 1st 'I' and 2nd 'I' as itself, without the subsequent move to reflection does not constitute responsibility. For entailed within our definition of responsibility above is a reflective identification of self, which is coupled by some sort of forward-leaning move, tending towards subsequent action.) However, this earlier form of responsibility—which we will call 'responsibility A' is still distinct from the latter—which we will call 'responsibility B'. This distinction will be made clearer below. But it is chiefly identifiable by the fact that in Responsibility-B, while 3rd I-B still maintains recognition

[128] We must note, however, that the "realization" is not solely a realization; it also entails a move towards future action. 3rd I, in realizing its vocation, functions as 2nd I, and in so doing, functions in order to bring about future action. Thus the realization and move towards action are unified in 'responsibility.'

of itself in 2nd 'I' and 1st 'I'—as it did earlier in Responsibility-A when it became 3rd 'I'—it now *also* recognizes itself as distinct in terms of its vocation, and as distinct, possesses the possibility to stop fixed character formation—i.e. to rebel against itself as full self.

As such we can identify a logical progression of the terms we have defined: Responsibility A → Guilt → Resentment → Responsibility B. Each of these terms is a condition for the coming-about of the term that follows it.

3rd 'I' is identifiable with 'Responsibility A'. Guilt closely follows 'responsibility A,' although 'responsibility A' still underlies it, for without 3rd I's forward-leaning move towards action, it would never discover a need to reflect, and would thus never properly become a 3rd 'I', the only form in which it is capable of first, recognizing 1st I and 2nd I as itself and second, recognizing the discrepancy between absence of self-reproach and slightness of self-reproach. Recognition of 1st 'I' and 2nd 'I' as itself must come first because it is only through this move that 3rd 'I' is able to identify the discrepancy with *itself*. Hence Guilt—as discrepancy—follows from 'Responsibility A'. (In this description, we clearly see the perpetual dual functioning of 3rd 'I' as 3rd in regard to the previous action and 2nd in regard to the next action).

It should be clear from the explanation above that Resentment—as indefinite time-delay of self-preparation—is only possible given that Guilt has been established.

And lastly, Responsibility B only comes about through 3rd 'I's reflection on its own particular vocation as a part of the unity of the triadic self, which is in service of action (and action in service to that which is outside the triadic self)[129]. 3rd 'I' is only able to come to awareness of its particular vocation—itself as distinct from 2nd 'I' and 1st 'I', (a distinction which simultaneously maintains its recognition of 1st 'I' and 2nd 'I' as itself)—through its realization of the possibility that it is capable of halting the process

[129] One inclined towards 'Practical sciences' as Peirce defines them, may quickly make a leap of associating 'that which is outside of the triadic self' to a term such as 'other', i.e. another person. However, while an 'other person' certainly fits this definition, the phrase has broader import than that—'that which is outside of the triadic self' could very well include such things as 'the discipline of chemistry' or 'the University of Virginia'. It refers to anything that is not an 'I' that we have mentioned. As such, to make the jump to the concept of an 'other' (whatever that concept might entail) is thus to restrict the import of the concept to which I have referred.

of fixed character formation. It, as a composite of 3rd 'I' (self-reflection on previous action) and 2nd 'I' (self-preparation for next action), realizes that if it were to delay self-preparation indefinitely (which is only possible given that Resentment has taken place), it would be undermining its own possibility as 3rd 'I'. In this recognition—both of itself as distinct as 3rd 'I', *and also* as united with 1st 'I' and 2nd 'I', which are simultaneously itself—coupled with the forward-leaning decision towards action (in its vocation as 2nd 'I'), its identity as 3rd 'I'-B arises. Thus the decision of 3rd 'I'-B, wherein arises Responsibility-B, is both for itself and for that which is outside of itself (in action). This decision to be profoundly responsible for self and for other, arising from a prior responsibility, weighted by guilt and crippled by resentment, can also be understood as an interpretation of the Biblical maxim, "Thou shalt love thy Neighbor as thyself". And lest we become overly confident in the self, we ought not forget that this higher form of responsibility (as well as its lower correlate) is impossible without an accompanying "occasion" for action, which will be external to itself. More remains to be said on the topic of this occasion, but we will not address it further here.

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