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IMMANUEL KANT

*Critique of Pure Reason*

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IMMANUEL KANT  
*Critique of Pure Reason*

Translated, with an Introduction, by

NORMAN KEMP SMITH

University of Edinburgh

ABRIDGED EDITION



The Modern Library · New York

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 58-11473

This edition issued by arrangement with St. Martin's Press.

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BENNETT CERF • DONALD S. KLOPPER  
Manufactured in the United States of America by H. Wolff

# INTRODUCTION

BY NORMAN KEMP SMITH

Kant's genius matured slowly and late. Had he died, like Spinoza, in his forty-fifth year, he would be for us only the author of certain minor writings, now seldom read. We know, indeed, comparatively little about the younger Kant. Usually he is represented as an old man, so fixed in his ways that his fellow citizens were wont to set their clocks as he passed their houses in his never failing daily walk. But this is certainly not the Kant of his published writings. No sooner was the first *Critique* published in 1781, when he was fifty-seven years of age (born 1724; died 1804), than he set himself to revise and modify its teaching in a second edition, and in each of his other two *Critiques*, published in 1788 and 1790, we are met by continual new developments. We can indeed well understand that the regularity in his external of his life was required to relieve and sustain the stresses and strains involved in the ever forward-pressing excitements of his adventurous inner life. For, to the very last, he felt no final contentment with the results reached. Even in what has come to be called his *Opus Postumum*—a huge collection of detached short papers, first edited in full by Adickes in 1920—he shows in certain of its sections, written before he was seriously weakened by age, i.e., prior to 1797–8, a surprising openness of mind, and a readiness to revise yet further the teaching of his first *Critique*, even on so fundamental an issue as that of the relationship between physics and metaphysics.

*Kant's Crucial Problem, as Determined for Him by  
Hume and Leibniz*

Kant's manner of formulating his fundamental problem—Are synthetic *a priori* judgments possible?—may well seem to present-day readers a strange, and unduly rationalistic, method of approach. To understand his reasons for so doing, we have to recognize that they had been determined for him by the two greatest of his predecessors, Hume and Leibniz. (Kant had found himself baffled in his attempts, not very persistent, to master Spinoza's philosophy.)

In the *Treatise on Human Nature*, Hume had questioned our right to assume the principle that whatever begins to exist must have a cause determining it to exist, and he did so on the explicit ground that the principle insists on the necessity of connecting of two concepts between which no connection of any kind can be detected by the mind. The principle, that is to say, is not self-evident: it is synthetic; and those few philosophers who have attempted to justify it are merely reaffirming what they are professing to have proved. Thus when Hobbes argues that since all the points of time at which we can suppose an object to exist are in themselves equal, there must be some cause that determines the occurrence of an event to happen at one moment rather than at another, he is assuming the very principle he is professing to prove. There is no greater difficulty in supposing the time and place of an event to be fixed without a cause, than in supposing its existence to be determined. If the first demands a proof, so likewise must the second. Similarly with the arguments advanced by Locke and Clarke. Locke argues that if anything is produced without a cause, it is produced by nothing, which is inconceivable, since "nothing" cannot be a cause any more than it can be something, or equal to two right angles. Clarke's contention that if anything were without a cause, it would produce *itself*, i.e., exist before it existed, is of the same character. These arguments assume the only point which is in question.

The remaining argument, that every effect must have a cause,



since this is implied in the very idea of an effect, is "still more frivolous." "Every effect presupposes a cause: effect being a selective term, of which cause is the correlative. But this does not prove that every being must be preceded by a cause; no more than it follows, because every husband must have a wife, that therefore every man must be married."

This far-reaching conclusion, that the principle of causality has no possible rational basis, Hume extends and reinforces through his other doctrines, viz., that so-called "synthetic reason" is merely generalised belief, and that belief is in all cases due to the ultimate instincts and propensities which *de facto* constitute our human nature. "Reason," when thus understood, justifies itself by its practical uses, but can afford no standard to which objective reality must conform."

Hume attacks with equal vigour the empiricist type of approach to the problems of sense-experience. Our natural belief in the persisting identity of objects, as experienced through the principle of abiding substance and changing attributes, leads us to interpret the objects of sense-experience as independent realities. Our other natural belief in the dynamic interdependence of events, as expressed through the principle of causality, leads, however, to the opposite conclusion: that the known objects are merely mental, constraining us to interpret sensations not as objective qualities, but as merely subjective effects, expressive of the reactions of our psycho-physical organism. The Cartesian problems owe their origin, Hume maintains, to the mistaken attempt to harmonise, in *theoretical* fashion, these two conflicting principles. The conflict is, he argues, inevitable, and the antinomy insoluble, so long as the two principles are regarded as objectively valid. The only satisfactory solution is through the recognition that reason is unable to account, save in regard to practical ends, even for its own natural demands. The principle of substance and attribute and the principle of causality co-operate in rendering possible such organisation of our sense-experience as is required for practical purposes. But when we carry this organisation further than practical life itself demands, the two principles at once conflict.

Let us now turn our attention to the rationalist philosophy in which the young Kant had been educated. Hume's contention that experience cannot by itself justify any inductive inference forms the bridge over which we can best pass to the contrasting standpoint of Leibniz. In denouncing experience, Hume and Leibniz share common ground. They agree in regarding it as the mongrel offspring of conflicting principles. If rationalism cannot hold its own, the alternative is not the finding of firm foothold in concrete experience, but only such consolation as a sceptical philosophy may afford. The overthrow of rationalism will mean the destruction of metaphysics in every form. Even mathematics and the natural sciences will have to be viewed as fulfilling a natural end, not as satisfying a theoretical need.

But though Leibniz's criticism of empiricism is thus, in its main contention, identical with that of Hume, it is profoundly different both in its orientation and in the conclusions to which it leads. For while Hume maintains that induction must be regarded as a non-rational process of merely instinctive anticipation, Leibniz argues to the self-legislative character of pure thought. Sense-experience, he maintains, reveals reality only in proportion to which it embodies principles derived from the inherent character of thought itself. Experience conforms to *a priori* principles, and so can afford an adequate basis for scientific induction.

There is a passage in Hume's *Enquiry* which may serve to illustrate the boldly speculative character of Leibniz's interpretation of the nature and function of human thought.

"Nothing . . . seems more unbounded than the thought of man which not only escapes all human power and authority, but is not even restrained within the limits of nature and reality. . . . While the body is confined to one planet, along which it creeps with pain and difficulty, the thought can in an instant transport us into the most distant regions of the universe. . . . What never was seen, or heard of, may yet be conceived; nor is anything beyond the power of thought, except what implies an absolute contradiction."

This passage, in which Hume means to depict a false belief,

already sufficiently condemned by the absurdity of its claims, expresses for Leibniz the wonderful but literal truth. Thought is the revealer of an unchanging reality, the validity of which is in no way dependent upon its verification through sense. When Voltaire in his *Ignorant Philosopher* remarks "that it would be very singular that all nature, all the planets, should obey eternal laws, and that there should be a little animal, five feet high, who, in contempt of these laws, could act as he pleased, according to his caprice," he is forgetting that this same animal of five feet can contain the stellar universe in thought within himself, and has therefore a dignity which is not expressible in any such terms as his size may seem, for vulgar estimation, to imply. Man, though dependent upon the body and confined to one planet, has the sun and stars as the playthings of his mind. Though finite in his mortal conditions, he is divinely infinite in his powers.

Leibniz thus boldly challenges the sceptical view of the functions of reason. Instead of limiting thought to the translating of sense-data into conceptual forms, he claims for it a creative power which enables it, out of its own resources, to discover for itself not only the actual constitution of the material world, but also the immensely wider realm of possible entities. The real, he maintains, is only one of the many kingdoms which thought discovers in the universe of truth. It is the most comprehensive and the most perfect, but still only one out of the innumerable others which unfold themselves to the mind in pure thought. Truth is not the abstracting of the universal aspects in things, not a copy of reality, dependent upon it for meaning and significance. Truth is wider than reality, is logically prior to it, and instead of being dependent upon the actual, legislates for it. Leibniz thus starts from the possible, as discovered by pure thought, to determine in an *a priori* manner the nature of the real.

This Leibnizian view of thought may seem, at first sight, to be merely the re-emergence of the romantic, rationalistic ideal of Descartes and Malebranche. So to regard it would, however, be a serious injustice. It was held with full consciousness of its grounds and implications, and reality was metaphysically reinter-

preted so as to afford it a genuine basis. There is nothing merely mystical and nothing undefined in its main tenets. Leibniz differs from Malebranche in being himself an eminent mathematician, the co-discoverer with Newton of the differential calculus. He also differs from the Descartes in possessing an absorbing interest in the purely *logical* aspects of the problem of method, and was therefore equipped to a supreme degree for determining in genuinely scientific fashion the philosophical significance and value of the mathematical disciplines.

Hume and Leibniz are thus the two protagonists who dwarf all others.<sup>1</sup> They realised, as neither Malebranche, Locke, nor Berkeley, neither Reid, Lambert, Crusius nor Mendelssohn ever did, the really crucial issues which must ultimately decide between the competing possibilities. Each maintained, in the manner prescribed by his general philosophy, one of what then appeared to be the only two possible views of the function of thought. The alternatives were these: (a) Thought is merely an instrument for the convenient interpretation of our human experience. (b) Thought legislates universally; it reveals the wider universe of the eternally possible; and prior to all experiences, can determine the fundamental conditions to which that experience must conform. Or, to interpret the opposition in logical terms: (a) The fundamental principles of experience are synthetic judgments in which no relation is discoverable between subject and predicate, and which for this reason can be justified neither *a priori* nor by experience. (b) All principles without exception are analytic, and can therefore be justified by pure thought.

The problem of Kant's *Critique*, broadly stated, consists in the examination and critical estimate of these two opposed views. There is no problem—scientific, moral, or religious—which is not vitally affected by the decision as to which of these alternatives we are prepared to adopt, or what reconciliation of their conflict-

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller discussion of the issues involved, cf. my *Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, 2nd edition, revised and enlarged, 1923. S. Körner's recently published Pelican volume on Kant will be found very helpful.

ing claims we hope to achieve. Since Kant's day, largely owing to the establishment of the evolution theory, this problem has become only the more pressing. The naturalistic, instrumental view of thought seems to be immensely reinforced by biological authority. Thought would seem to be reduced to the level of sense-affection, and to be an instrument developed through natural processes for the practical purposes of adaptation. Yet the counter-view has been no less powerfully strengthened by the victorious march of the mathematical sciences. They have advanced beyond the limits of Euclidean space, defining possibilities such as no experience reveals to us. The Leibnizian view has also been reinforced by the successes of physical science in determining what would seem to be the actual, objective character of the independently real. Kant was a rationalist by education, temperament, and conviction. Consequently, his problem was to reconcile Leibniz's view of the function of thought with Hume's proof of the synthetic character of the causal principle. He strives to determine how much of Leibniz's belief in the legislative power of pure reason can be retained after full justice has been done to Hume's damaging criticisms. The fundamental principles upon which all experience and all knowledge ultimately rest are *synthetic* in nature; how is it possible that they should also be *a priori*? Such was the problem that was Kant's troublous inheritance from his philosophical progenitors, Hume and Leibniz.

Kant's first-hand knowledge of Leibniz's teaching was very limited. He was acquainted with it chiefly through the inadequate channel of Wolff's somewhat commonplace exposition of its principles. But even from such a source he could derive what was essential, namely, Leibniz's view of thought as absolute in its powers and unlimited in its claims. How closely Wolff holds to the main tenets of Leibniz's system appears from his definition of philosophy as "the science of possible things, so far as they are possible." He thus retains, though without the deeper suggestiveness of Leibniz's speculative insight, the view that thought precedes reality and legislates for it. By the possible is not meant the existentially or psychologically possible, but the conceptually neces-

sary, that which, prior to all existence, has objective validity, sharing in the universal and necessary character of thought itself.

Prior even to the period of Kant's earliest writings, Wolff's philosophy had been displaced in Germany by empirical, psychological enquiries and by eclectic, popular philosophy. Owing to the prevailing lack of thoroughness in philosophical thinking, *Problerlosigkeit* characterised the whole period. The two exclusively alternative views of the function of thought stood alongside one another within each of the competing systems, quite unreconciled and in their mutual conflict destructive of all real consistency and thoroughness of thought. It was Kant who restored rationalism to its rightful place. He reinvigorated the flaccid tone of his day by adopting in his writings, both early and late, the strict method of rational science, and by insisting that the really crucial issues be boldly faced. Philosophy, in order to exist, must be a system of *a priori* rational principles. Nothing empirical, or hypothetical, can find any place in it. Yet, what has no less to be insisted upon, it is the system of the *a priori* conditions only of experience, not of ultimate reality. Such is the twofold relation of agreement and difference in which Kant stands to his rationalist predecessors.

### *The Nature of the A Priori*

The fundamental presupposition upon which Kant's argument rests—a presupposition never itself investigated by him but always assumed—is that universality and necessity cannot be reached by any process which is empirical in character. By way of this initial assumption, Kant arrives at the conclusion that the *a priori*, the distinguishing characteristics of which are universality and necessity, is not given in sense but is imposed by the mind; or in other less ambiguous terms, is not part of the matter of experience but constitutes its form. The matter of experience is here taken as equivalent to sensation; while sensation, in its turn, is regarded as being the non-rational.

The explanation of Kant's failure either to investigate or to

prove this assumption has already been indicated. Leibniz proceeds upon the assumption of its truth no less confidently than Hume; and since Kant's main task consisted in reconciling what he regarded as being the elements of truth in their opposed philosophies, he very naturally felt secure in rearing his system upon the one fundamental presupposition on which they were able to agree. It lay outside the field of controversy and possessed for Kant, as it had possessed for Hume and for Leibniz, that authoritative and axiomatic character which an unchallenged preconception tends always to acquire.

The general thesis, that the universal and necessary elements in experience constitute its form, Kant specifies in the following determinate manner. The form is fixed for all experience, that is to say, it is one and the same in each and every experience, however simple or however complex. It is to be detected in consciousness of duration no less than in consciousness of objects or consciousness of self. For, as Kant argues, consciousness of duration involves the capacity to distinguish between subjective and objective succession, and likewise involves recognition, a necessary component of which is self-consciousness. Or to state the same point of view in another way, human experience is a temporal process and yet is always consciousness of meaning. As temporal, its states are ordered successively, that is, externally to one another, but the consciousness which they constitute is at each and every moment the awareness of some unitary meaning, in terms of which the contents of the successive experiences are organised. The problem of knowledge may therefore be described as being the analysis of the consciousness of duration, of objectivity, and of self-consciousness, or alternatively as the analysis of our awareness of meaning. Kant arrives at the conclusion that the conditions of all four are one and the same.

Kant thus teaches that experience in all its embodiments and in each of its momentary states can be analysed into an endlessly variable material and a fixed set of relational elements. And as no one of the relational factors can be absent without at once nullifying all the others, they together constitute what must be

regarded as the determining form and structure of every mental process that is cognitive in character. Awareness, that is to say, is identical with the act of judgment, and therefore involves everything that a judgment, in its distinction from any mere association of ideas, demands for its possibility. All such awareness, not excepting that of the knowing self, rests, however, upon noumenal conditions whose specific nature it does not itself reveal. Only on moral grounds, never through any purely theoretical analysis of cognitive experience, can it be proved that the self is an abiding personality, and that in conscious, personal form it belongs to the realm of noumenal reality.

*Kant's Threefold Distinction between Sensibility,  
Understanding, and Reason*

Even so summary a statement as I am attempting in this *Introduction* would be very incomplete without some reference to Kant's threefold distinction between the forms of sensibility, the categories of the understanding, and the ideas of reason.

On investigating space and time, Kant discovers that they cannot be classed either with the data of the bodily senses or with the concepts of the understanding. They are sensuous (i.e., not abstract but concrete, not ways of thinking but modes of existence) yet at the same time are *a priori*. They thus stand apart by themselves. Each is unique in its kind, is single, and is an infinite existent. To describe either of them is to combine predicates seemingly contradictory. Viewed as characterising things in themselves, they are, in Kant's own phrase, monstrosities (*Undinge*). To them primarily are due those problems which have been a standing challenge to philosophy since the time of Zeno the Eleatic, and which Kant has entitled "antinomies of Reason."

In contrast to sensibility Kant sets the intellectual faculties, understanding and reason. In the understanding originate certain pure concepts, or, as he more usually names them, categories. The chief of these are the categories of "relation"—substance, causality, and reciprocity. They combine with the forms of sensibility



and the manifold of sense to yield the consciousness of an empirical order, interpretable in accordance with universal laws.

To the faculty of reason Kant ascribes what he entitles "ideas." The ideas differ from space, time, and the categories in being not "constitutive" but "regulative." They demand an *unconditionedness* of existence and a *completeness* of explanation which can never be found by us in actual fact. Their function is threefold. In the first place, they render the mind dissatisfied with the haphazard collocations of ordinary experience, and define the goal for its scientific endeavours. And secondly, in so doing they likewise make possible for us the distinction between appearance and reality, revealing to us an irreconcilable conflict between the ultimate aims of science and the human conditions under which these aims have to be realised. The ideas of reason are the second main factor in the "antinomies."

The problem of the *Critique*, the analysis of our awareness of meaning, is a single problem; and each of the above elements involves all the others. The *Aesthetic* does no more than prepare the ground for the more adequate analysis of space and time given in the *Analytic* and *Dialectic*, while the problems of the *Analytic* are also incompletely stated until the more comprehensive argument of the *Dialectic* is taken into account. The meaning which consciousness discloses to us in each of our judgments is an essentially metaphysical one. It involves the thought, though not the knowledge, of something more than what the experienced can ever itself be found to be. The metaphysical is immanent in our knowledge; and the transcendent is merely a name for this immanent factor when falsely viewed as capable of isolation and separate treatment.

In conclusion, we may note certain other consequences which follow from Kant's habitual method of treating his problems in isolation. Truth is a value of universal jurisdiction, and from its criteria the judgments of moral and other values can claim no exemption. Existences and values do not constitute independent orders. They interpenetrate, and neither order can be adequately dealt with apart from the considerations appropriate to the other.

In failing to co-ordinate his problems, Kant has overemphasized the negative aspects of his logical enquiries. These defects are, however, in some degree remedied in the last of his chief works, the *Critique of Judgment*. In certain respects it is the most interesting of all Kant's writings. The qualities of both the earlier *Critiques* here appear in happy combination, while in addition his concrete interests are more in evidence, to the great enrichment of his argument. Many of the doctrines of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, especially those that bear on the problems of teleology, are restated in a less negative manner, and in their connection with the kindred problems of natural beauty and of the fine arts. For though the final decision in all metaphysical questions is still reserved to moral considerations, Kant now takes a more catholic view of the field of philosophy. He allows, though with characteristic reservations, that the *empirical* evidence obtained through examination of the broader features of our total experience, is of genuinely philosophical value, and that it can safely be employed to amplify and confirm the independent convictions of our moral consciousness. The embargo which in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in matters metaphysical, is placed upon all tentative and probable reasoning is thus tacitly removed; and the term knowledge again acquires the wider range allowed to it in ordinary speech.

The sheer bulk of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* throws many difficulties in the way of its being read and grasped as a whole. This abridged edition is designed for the use of the general reader, and of students entering upon the study of the Critical Philosophy. It may also, I trust, prove helpful to those who are engaged in the study of the complete text. I have endeavoured to detach what is essential in Kant's teaching from the mass of minor detail in which it is embedded, and by which it is frequently obscured. The text which I have followed is that of the second edition. But I have also, in a few cases, given a translation of first edition passages which in the second edition have been either altered or omitted. Wherever possible, the original first edition text is given in the lower part of the page. In two very important sections,

however, which are completely recast in the second edition—*The Transcendental Deduction of the Categories* and the *Paralogisms of Pure Reason*—this cannot conveniently be done; and I have therefore given the two versions in immediate succession, in the main text. For this somewhat unusual procedure there is a two-fold justification; first, that the *Critique* is already, in itself, a composite work, the different parts of which record the successive steps in the development of Kant's views; and secondly, that the first edition versions are, as a matter of fact, indispensable for an adequate understanding of the versions which were substituted for them. The pagings of both the first and the second edition are shown throughout, on the margins—the first edition being referred to as A, the second edition as B.

Kant's German, even when judged by German standards, makes difficult reading. The difficulties are due not merely to the abstruseness of the doctrines which Kant is endeavoring to expound, or to his frequent alternation between conflicting points of view. Many of the difficulties are due simply to his manner of writing. He crowds so much into each sentence, that he is constrained to make undue use of parentheses, and what is still more troublesome to the reader, to rely upon particles, pronouns and genders to indicate the connection between the parts of the sentence. Sometimes when our main clue is a gender, we find more than one preceding substantive to which it may refer. Sometimes, also, Kant uses terms in a gender which is obsolete. Certain terms, indeed, he uses in more than one gender. Thus, even in regard to so important a philosophical term as *Verhältnis*, he alternates between the feminine and the neuter. But even when these and other difficulties, inherent in the original German, have been overcome, there remains for the translator the task, from which there is no escape, of restating the content of each of the more complex sentences in a number of separate sentences. To do this without distortion of meaning is probably possible in most cases; and indeed I have found that, by patient and careful handling, even the most cumbrous sentences can generally be satisfactorily resolved.

Certain sentences, however, occurring not infrequently, present

the translator with another type of problem: how far ought he to sacrifice part of what is said, or at least suggested, to gain smoothness in the translation? There are sentences which, to judge by their irregular structure and by the character of their constituents, must have owed their origin to the combination of passages independently written at various dates throughout the period 1769-1780, and he had, it would seem, in collating different statements of the same argument, inserted clauses into sentences which were by no means suited for their reception. In such cases I have not attempted to translate the sentences just as they stand. Were the irregularities retained, they would hinder, not aid, the reader in the understanding of Kant's argument. The reader would not, indeed, be able to distinguish between them and possible faultiness in the translator's English. Nor would it be practicable to retain them, with the addition of explanatory notes; the notes would have to be too numerous, and would be concerned with quite trivial points. The irregularities which are thus smoothed out may, it is true, be of considerable importance in the detailed study of the composite origins of the *Critique* and of the stages in the development of Kant's views. But even in this connection, they are valueless save when studied in the *ipsissima verba* of the original form. In the translation itself, nothing is being sacrificed that is materially worth retaining.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
TITLE PAGE OF FIRST EDITION . . . . .	I
MOTTO . . . . .	2
DEDICATION . . . . .	2
PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION . . . . .	5
PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION . . . . .	11
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	25
I. The Distinction between Pure and Empirical Knowledge . . . . .	25
II. We are in possession of certain Modes of <i>a priori</i> Knowledge, and even the Common Understanding is never without them . . . . .	26
III. Philosophy stands in need of a Science to determine the Possibility, the Principles, and the Extent of all <i>a priori</i> Knowledge . . . . .	28
IV. The Distinction between Analytic and Synthetic Judgments . . . . .	30
V. In all Theoretical Sciences of Reason Synthetic <i>a priori</i> Judgments are contained as Principles . . . . .	32
VI. The General Problem of Pure Reason . . . . .	35
VII. The Idea and Division of a Special Science, under the title "Critique of Pure Reason" . . . . .	37

## TRANSCENDENTAL DOCTRINE OF ELEMENTS

FIRST PART. TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETIC	
Introduction . . . . .	41
Section 1. Space . . . . .	43
Section 2. Time . . . . .	48
General Observations on the Transcendental Aesthetic . . . . .	54
SECOND PART. TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC	
Introduction. Idea of a Transcendental Logic . . . . .	61
I. Logic in General . . . . .	61
II. Transcendental Logic . . . . .	62
III. The Division of General Logic into Analytic and Dialectic . . . . .	64
IV. The Division of Transcendental Logic into Transcendental Analytic and Dialectic . . . . .	65

# KANT'S CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON

PAGE

## FIRST DIVISION. TRANSCENDENTAL ANALYTIC

Book I. Analytic of Concepts . . . . .	67
Chapter I. The Clue to the Discovery of all Pure Concepts of the Understanding . . . . .	67
Section 1. The Logical Employment of the Understanding in general . . . . .	67
Section 2. The Logical Function of the Understanding in Judgments . . . . .	69
Section 3. The Pure Concepts of the Understanding, or Categories . . . . .	71
Chapter II. The Deduction of the Pure Concepts of Understanding . . . . .	75
Section 1. The Principles of any Transcendental Deduction .	75
Transition to the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories	78
Section 2. Transcendental Deduction of the Pure Concepts of Understanding . . . . .	81
Deduction as in First Edition . . . . .	81
Deduction as in Second Edition . . . . .	91
Book II. Analytic of Principles . . . . .	106
Introduction. Transcendental Judgment in General . . .	106
Chapter I. The Schematism of the Pure Concepts of Understanding . . . . .	108
Chapter II. System of all Principles of Pure Understanding .	115
1. Axioms of Intuition . . . . .	116
2. Anticipations of Perception . . . . .	118
3. Analogies of Experience . . . . .	120
First Analogy. Principle of Permanence of Substance .	121
Second Analogy. Principle of Succession in Time, in accordance with the Law of Causality . . . . .	125
Third Analogy. Principle of Coexistence, in accordance with the Law of Reciprocity or Community .	131
4. The Postulates of Empirical Thought in general . . .	134
Refutation of Idealism . . . . .	137
General Note on the System of the Principles . . .	144
Chapter III. The Ground of the Distinction of all Objects in general into Phenomena and Noumena . . . . .	149
Appendix. The Amphiboly of Concepts of Reflection . . .	157

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>SECOND DIVISION. TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC</b>	
Introduction . . . . .	161
I. Transcendental Illusion . . . . .	161
II. Pure Reason as the Seat of Transcendental Illusion . . . . .	162
<b>Book I. The Concepts of Pure Reason . . . . .</b>	<b>166</b>
Section 1. The Ideas in General . . . . .	166
Section 2. The Transcendental Ideas . . . . .	171
Section 3. System of the Transcendental Ideas . . . . .	176
<b>Book II. The Dialectical Inferences of Pure Reason . . . . .</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>Chapter I. The Paralogisms of Pure Reason . . . . .</b>	<b>179</b>
The Paralogisms as in First Edition . . . . .	182
The Paralogisms as in Second Edition . . . . .	202
<b>Chapter II. The Antinomy of Pure Reason . . . . .</b>	<b>211</b>
Section 1. System of Cosmological Ideas . . . . .	212
Section 2. Antithetic of Pure Reason . . . . .	215
First Antinomy . . . . .	217
Second Antinomy . . . . .	219
Third Antinomy . . . . .	221
Fourth Antinomy . . . . .	224
Section 3. The Interest of Reason in these Conflicts . . . . .	226
Section 4. The Absolute Necessity of a Solution of the Transcendental Problems of Pure Reason . . . . .	234
Section 5. Sceptical Representation of the Cosmological Questions in the Four Transcendental Ideas . . . . .	236
Section 6. Transcendental Idealism as the Key to the Solution of the Cosmological Dialectic . . . . .	239
Section 7. Critical Solution of the Cosmological Conflict of Reason with itself . . . . .	242
Section 8. The Regulative Principle of Pure Reason in its application to the Cosmological Ideas . . . . .	246
Section 9. The Empirical Employment of the Regulative Principle of Reason, in respect of all Cosmological Ideas . . . . .	247
I. Solution of the Cosmological Idea of the Totality of the Composition of the Appearances of a Cosmic Whole . . . . .	248
II. Solution of the Cosmological Idea of the Totality of Division of a Whole given in Intuition . . . . .	250
Concluding Note and Preliminary Observation . . . . .	251

# KANT'S CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON

	PAGE
III. Solution of the Cosmological Idea of Totality in the Derivation of Cosmical Events from their Causes . . . . .	253
Possibility of Causality through Freedom . . . . .	255
Explanation of the Cosmological Idea of Freedom . . . . .	257
IV. Solution of the Cosmological Idea of the Totality of the Dependence of Appearances as regards their Existence in general . . . . .	264
Concluding Note on the whole Antinomy of Pure Reason . . . . .	267
Chapter III. The Ideal of Pure Reason . . . . .	269
Section 1. The Ideal in general . . . . .	269
Section 2. The Transcendental Ideal . . . . .	270
Section 3. The Arguments of Speculative Reason in Proof of the Existence of a Supreme Being . . . . .	273
Section 4. The Impossibility of an Ontological Proof of the Existence of God . . . . .	278
Section 5. The Impossibility of a Cosmological Proof of the Existence of God . . . . .	284
Discovery and Explanation of the Dialectical Illusion in all Transcendental Proofs of the Existence of a Necessary Being . . . . .	290
Section 6. The Impossibility of the Physico-theological Proof . . . . .	292
Section 7. Critique of all Theology based upon Speculative Principles of Reason . . . . .	298
Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic . . . . .	300
The Regulative Employment of the Ideas of Pure Reason . . . . .	300
The Final Purpose of the Natural Dialectic of Human Reason . . . . .	306

## II. TRANSCENDENTAL DOCTRINE OF METHOD

Introduction . . . . .	323
Section 1. The Discipline of Pure Reason in its Dogmatic Employment . . . . .	323
Section 2. The Discipline of Pure Reason in respect of its Polemical Employment . . . . .	329
Section 3. The Discipline of Pure Reason in regard to Hypotheses . . . . .	331



# Critik der reinen Vernunft

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von  
Immanuel Kant  
Professor in Königsberg.



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N i g a,  
verlegt Johann Friedrich Hartknoch  
1 7 8 1.

## BACO DE VERULAMIO

### INSTAURATIO MAGNA. PRAEFATIO.

DE nobis ipsis silemus: De re autem, quae agitur, petimus: ut homines eam non Opinionem, sed Opus esse cogitent; ac pro certo habeant, non Sectae nos alicujus, aut Placiti, sed utilitatis et amplitudinis humanae fundamenta moliri. Deinde ut suis commodis aequi . . . in commune consulant, . . . et ipsi in partem veniant. Praeterea ut bene sperent, neque Instaurationem nostram ut quiddam infinitum et ultra mortale fingant, et animo concipiant; quum revera sit infiniti erroris finis et terminus legitimus.

*To his Excellency  
The Royal Minister of State  
Baron von Zedlitz*

HONOURED SIR,

To further, so far as in us lies, the growth of the sciences is to work along the lines of your Excellency's own interests, which are closely bound up with the sciences, not only in virtue of your exalted position as a patron, but through your more intimate relation to them as lover and enlightened judge. I therefore avail myself of the only means that is in any degree in my power, of expressing my gratitude for the gracious confidence with which your Excellency honours me, if that I could perhaps be of assistance in this respect.

To<sup>1</sup> the same gracious attention with which your Excellency has honoured the first edition of this work I now dedicate this second edition, and therewith I crave the protection of all the other concerns of my literary mission, and remain with the most profound reverence,

Your Excellency's

Humble, most obedient servant,

IMMANUEL KANT

<sup>1</sup> [In A, in place of this closing paragraph, there are the two paragraphs:] Whoever limiting his worldly ambitions finds satisfaction in the speculative life, has in the approval of an enlightened and competent judge a powerful incentive to labours, the benefits of which are great but remote, and therefore such as the vulgar altogether fail to recognise.

To such a judge and to his gracious attention I now dedicate this work, and to his protection all the other . . .

## PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

A vii.

HUMAN reason has this peculiar fate that in one species of its knowledge it is burdened by questions which, as prescribed by the very nature of reason itself, it is not able to ignore, but which, as transcending all its powers, it is also not able to answer.

The perplexity into which it thus falls is not due to any fault of its own. It begins with principles which it has no option save to employ in the course of experience, and which this experience at the same time abundantly justifies it in using. Rising with their aid (since it is determined to this also by its own nature) to ever higher, ever more remote, conditions, it soon becomes aware that in this way—the questions A viii. never ceasing—its work must always remain incomplete; and it therefore finds itself compelled to resort to principles which overstep all possible empirical employment, and which yet seem so unobjectionable that even ordinary consciousness readily accepts them. But by this procedure human reason precipitates itself into darkness and contradictions; and while it may indeed conjecture that these must be in some way due to concealed errors, it is not in a position to be able to detect them. For since the principles of which it is making use transcend the limits of experience, they are no longer subject to any empirical test. The battle-field of these endless controversies is called metaphysics.

Time was when metaphysics was entitled the Queen of all the sciences; and if the will be taken for the deed, the pre-eminent importance of her accepted tasks gives her every right to this title of honour. Now, however, the changed fashion of the time brings her only scorn; a matron outcast and forsaken, she mourns like Hecuba: *Modo maxima rerum, tot generis natisque potens—nunc trahor exul, inops.*<sup>a</sup>

A ix.

<sup>a</sup> Ovid, *Metam.* [xiii. 508-510].

Her government, under the administration of the *dogmatists*, was at first *despotic*. But inasmuch as the legislation still bore traces of the ancient barbarism, her empire gradually through intestine wars gave way to complete anarchy; and the *sceptics*, a species of nomads, despising all settled modes of life, broke up from time to time all civil society. Happily they were few in number, and were unable to prevent its being established ever anew, although on no uniform and self-consistent plan. In more recent times, it has seemed as if an end might be put to all these controversies and the claims of metaphysics receive final judgment, through a certain *physiology* of the human understanding—that of the celebrated Locke. But it has turned out quite otherwise. For however the attempt be made to cast doubt upon the pretensions of the supposed Queen by tracing her lineage to vulgar origins in common experience, this genealogy has, as a matter of fact, been fictitiously invented, and she has still continued

A x. to uphold her claims. Metaphysics has accordingly lapsed back into the ancient time-worn dogmatism, and so again suffers that depreciation from which it was to have been rescued. And now, after all methods, so it is believed, have been tried and found wanting, the prevailing mood is that of weariness and complete *indifferentism*—the mother, in all sciences, of chaos and night, but happily in this case the source, or at least the prelude, of their approaching reform and restoration. For it at least puts an end to that ill-applied industry which has rendered them thus dark, confused, and unserviceable.

But it is idle to feign indifference to such enquiries, the object of which can never be indifferent to our human nature. Indeed these pretended *indifferentists*, however they may try to disguise themselves by substituting a popular tone for the language of the Schools, inevitably fall back, in so far as they think at all, into those very metaphysical assertions which they profess so greatly to despise. None the less this indifference, showing itself in the midst of flourishing sciences, and affecting precisely those sciences, the knowledge of which,

A xi. if attainable, we should least of all care to dispense with, is a phenomenon that calls for attention and reflection. It is obviously the effect not of levity but of the matured judg-

ment<sup>a</sup> of the age, which refuses to be any longer put off with illusory knowledge. It is a call to reason to undertake anew the most difficult of all its tasks, namely, that of self-knowledge, and to institute a tribunal which will assure to reason its lawful claims, and dismiss all groundless pretensions, not A xii. by despotic decrees, but in accordance with its own eternal and unalterable laws. This tribunal is no other than the *critique of pure reason*.

I do not mean by this a critique of books and systems, but of the faculty of reason in general, in respect of all knowledge after which it may strive *independently of all experience*. It will therefore decide as to the possibility or impossibility of metaphysics in general, and determine its sources, its extent, and its limits—all in accordance with principles.

I have entered upon this path—the only one that has remained unexplored—and flatter myself that in following it I have found a way of guarding against all those errors which have hitherto set reason, in its non-empirical employment, at variance with itself. I have not evaded its questions by pleading the insufficiency of human reason. On the contrary, I have specified these questions exhaustively, according to principles; and after locating the point at which, through misunderstanding, reason comes into conflict with itself, I have solved them to its complete satisfaction. The answer to these A xiii questions has not, indeed, been such as a dogmatic and vision-

<sup>a</sup> We often hear complaints of shallowness of thought in our age and of the consequent decline of sound science. But I do not see that the sciences which rest upon a secure foundation, such as mathematics, physics, etc., in the least deserve this reproach. On the contrary, they merit their old reputation for solidity, and, in the case of physics, even surpass it. The same spirit would have become active in other kinds of knowledge, if only attention had first been directed to the determination of their principles. Till this is done, indifference, doubt, and, in the final issue, severe criticism, are themselves proofs of a profound habit of thought. Our age is, in especial degree, the age of criticism, and to criticism everything must submit. Religion through its sanctity, and law-giving through its majesty, may seek to exempt themselves from it. But they then awaken just suspicion, and cannot claim the sincere respect which reason accords only to that which has been able to sustain the test of free and open examination.

any insistence upon knowledge might lead us to expect—that can be catered for only through magical devices, in which I am no adept. Such ways of answering them are, indeed, not within the intention of the natural constitution of our reason; and inasmuch as they have their source in misunderstanding, it is the duty of philosophy to counteract their deceptive influence, no matter what prized and cherished dreams may have to be disowned. In this enquiry I have made completeness my chief aim, and I venture to assert that there is not a single metaphysical problem which has not been solved, or for the solution of which the key at least has not been supplied. Pure reason is, indeed, so perfect a unity that if its principle were insufficient for the solution of even a single one of all the questions to which it itself gives birth we should have no alternative but to reject the principle, since we should then no longer be able to place implicit reliance upon it in dealing with any one of the other questions.

While I am saying this I can fancy that I detect in the face  
 A xiv. of the reader an expression of indignation, mingled with contempt, at pretensions seemingly so arrogant and vain-glorious. Yet they are incomparably more moderate than the claims of all those writers who on the lines of the usual programme profess to prove the simple nature of the soul or the necessity of a first beginning of the world. For while such writers pledge themselves to extend human knowledge beyond all limits of possible experience, I humbly confess that this is entirely beyond my power. I have to deal with nothing save reason itself and its pure thinking; and to obtain complete knowledge of these, there is no need to go far afield, since I come upon them in my own self. Common logic itself supplies an example, how all the simple acts of reason can be enumerated completely and systematically. The subject of the present enquiry is the [kindred] question, how much we can hope to achieve by reason, when all the material and assistance of experience are taken away.

I know no enquiries which are more important for exploring the faculty which we entitle understanding, and for determining the rules and limits of its employment, than those which I have instituted in the second chapter of the *Transcendental Analytic* under the title *Deduction of the Pure*

*Concepts of Understanding.* They are also those which have cost me the greatest labour—labour, as I hope, not unrewarded. This enquiry, which is somewhat deeply grounded, has two sides. 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. It is therefore essential to my purposes. 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. Although this latter exposition is of great importance for my chief purpose, it does not form an essential part of it. For 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? The latter is, as it were, the search for the cause of a given effect, and to that extent is somewhat hypothetical in character (though, as I shall show elsewhere, it is not really so); and I would appear to be taking the liberty simply of expressing an *opinion*, in which case the reader would be free to express a different *opinion*. For this reason I must forestall the reader's criticism by pointing out that the objective deduction with which I am here chiefly concerned retains its full force even if my subjective deduction should fail to produce that complete conviction for which I hope.

A xvii.





WHETHER the treatment of such knowledge as lies within the province of reason does or does not follow the secure path of a science, is easily to be determined from the outcome. For if after elaborate preparations, frequently renewed, it is brought to a stop immediately it nears its goal; if often it is compelled to retrace its steps and strike into some new line of approach; or again, if the various participants are unable to agree in any common plan of procedure, then we may rest assured that it is very far from having entered upon the secure path of a science, and is indeed a merely random groping. In these circumstances, we shall be rendering a service to reason should we succeed in discovering the path upon which it can securely travel, even if, as a result of so doing, much that is comprised in our original aims, adopted without reflection, may have to be abandoned as fruitless.

That logic has already, from the earliest times, proceeded B viii. upon this sure path is evidenced by the fact that since Aristotle it has not required to retrace a single step, unless, indeed, we care to count as improvements the removal of certain needless subtleties or the clearer exposition of its recognised teaching, features which concern the elegance rather than the certainty of the science. It is remarkable also that to the present day this logic has not been able to advance a single step, and is thus to all appearance a closed and completed body of doctrine. If some of the moderns have thought to enlarge it by introducing *psychological* chapters on the different faculties of knowledge (imagination, wit, etc.), *metaphysical* chapters on the origin of knowledge or on the different kinds of certainty according to difference in the objects (idealism, scepticism, etc.), or *anthropological* chapters on prejudices, their causes and remedies, this could only arise from their ignorance of the

peculiar nature of logical science. We do not enlarge but disfigure sciences, if we allow them to trespass upon one another's territory. The sphere of logic is quite precisely delimited; its sole concern is to give an exhaustive exposition and a strict proof of the formal rules of all thought, whether it be *a priori* or empirical, whatever be its origin or its object, and whatever hindrances, accidental or natural, it may encounter in our minds.

That logic should have been thus successful is an advantage which it owes entirely to its limitations, whereby it is justified in abstracting—indeed, it is under obligation to do so—from all objects of knowledge and their differences, leaving the understanding nothing to deal with save itself and its form. But for reason to enter on the sure path of science is, of course, much more difficult, since it has to deal not with itself alone but also with objects. Logic, therefore, as a propaedeutic, forms, as it were, only the vestibule of the sciences; and when we are concerned with specific modes of knowledge, while logic is indeed presupposed in any critical estimate of them, yet for the actual acquiring of them we have to look to the sciences properly and objectively so called.

Now if reason is to be a factor in these sciences, something in them must be known *a priori*, and this knowledge may be related to its object in one or other of two ways, either as merely *determining* it and its concept (which must be supplied from elsewhere) or as also *making it actual*. The former is *theoretical*, the latter *practical* knowledge of reason. In both, that part in which reason determines its object completely *a priori*, namely, the *pure* part—however much or little this part may contain—must be first and separately dealt with, in case it be confounded with what comes from other sources. For it is bad management if we blindly pay out what comes in, and are not able, when the income falls into arrears, to distinguish which part of it can justify expenditure, and in which line we must make reductions.

Mathematics and physics, the two sciences in which reason yields theoretical knowledge, have to determine their objects *a priori*, the former doing so quite purely, the latter having to reckon, at least partially, with sources of knowledge other than reason.

In the earliest times to which the history of human reason extends, *mathematics*, among that wonderful people, the Greeks, had already entered upon the sure path of science. But it must not be supposed that it was as easy for mathematics as it was for logic—in which reason has to deal with itself alone—to light upon, or rather to construct for itself, that royal road. On the contrary, I believe that it long remained, especially among the Egyptians, in the groping stage, and that the transformation must have been due to a *revolution* brought about by the happy thought of a single man, the experiment which he devised marking out the path upon which the science must enter, and by following which, secure progress throughout all time and in endless expansion is infallibly secured. The history of this intellectual revolution—far more important than the discovery of the passage round the celebrated Cape of Good Hope—and of its fortunate author, has not been preserved. But the fact that Diogenes Laertius, in handing down an account of these matters, names the reputed author of even the least important among the geometrical demonstrations, even of those which, for ordinary consciousness, stand in need of no such proof, does at least show that the memory of the revolution, brought about by the first glimpse of this new path, must have seemed to mathematicians of such outstanding importance as to cause it to survive the tide of oblivion. A new light flashed upon the mind of the first man (be he Thales or some other) who demonstrated the properties of the isosceles triangle. The true method, so he found, was not to inspect what he discerned either in the figure, or in the bare concept of it, and from this, as it were, to read off its properties; but to bring out what was necessarily implied in the concepts that he had himself formed *a priori*, and had put into the figure in the construction by which he presented it to himself. If he is to know anything with *a priori* certainty he must not ascribe to the figure anything save what necessarily follows from what he has himself set into it in accordance with his concept. B xi.

Natural science was very much longer in entering upon the highway of science. It is, indeed, only about a century and a half since Bacon, by his ingenious proposals, partly

initiated this discovery, partly inspired fresh vigour in those who were already on the way to it. In this case also the discovery can be explained as being the sudden outcome of an intellectual revolution. In my present remarks I am referring to natural science only in so far as it is founded on *empirical* principles.

- When Galileo caused balls, the weights of which he had himself previously determined, to roll down an inclined plane; when Torricelli made the air carry a weight which he had calculated beforehand to be equal to that of a definite column of water; or in more recent times, when Stahl changed metals
- B xiii.** into oxides, and oxides back into metal, by withdrawing something and then restoring it,<sup>a</sup> a light broke upon all students of nature. They learned that reason has insight only into that which it produces after a plan of its own, and that it must not allow itself to be kept, as it were, in nature's leading-strings, but must itself show the way with principles of judgment based upon fixed laws, constraining nature to give answer to questions of reason's own determining. Accidental observations, made in obedience to no previously thought-out plan, can never be made to yield a necessary law, which alone reason is concerned to discover. Reason, holding in one hand its principles, according to which alone concordant appearances can be admitted as equivalent to laws, and in the other hand the experiment which it has devised in conformity with these principles, must approach nature in order to be taught by it. It must not, however, do so in the character of a pupil who listens to everything that the teacher chooses to say, but of an appointed judge who compels the witnesses to answer questions which he has himself formulated. Even physics, therefore, owes the beneficent revolution in its point of view
- B xiv.** entirely to the happy thought, that while reason must seek in nature, not fictitiously ascribe to it, whatever as not being knowable through reason's own resources has to be learnt, if learnt at all, only from nature, it must adopt as its guide, in so seeking, that which it has itself put into nature. It is thus that the study of nature has entered on the secure path of a

<sup>a</sup> I am not, in my choice of examples, tracing the exact course of the history of the experimental method; we have indeed no very precise knowledge of its first beginnings.

science, after having for so many centuries been nothing but a process of merely random groping.

Metaphysics is a completely isolated speculative science of reason, which soars far above the teachings of experience, and in which reason is indeed meant to be its own pupil. Metaphysics rests on concepts alone—not, like mathematics, on their application to intuition. But though it is older than all other sciences, and would survive even if all the rest were swallowed up in the abyss of an all-destroying barbarism, it has not yet had the good fortune to enter upon the secure path of a science. For in it reason is perpetually being brought to a stand, even when the laws into which it is seeking to have, as it professes, an *a priori* insight are those that are confirmed by our most common experiences. Ever and again we have to retrace our steps, as not leading us in the direction in which we desire to go. So far, too, are the students of metaphysics from **B xv.** exhibiting any kind of unanimity in their contentions, that metaphysics has rather to be regarded as a battle-ground quite peculiarly suited for those who desire to exercise themselves in mock combats, and in which no participant has ever yet succeeded in gaining even so much as an inch of territory, not at least in such manner as to secure him in its permanent possession. This shows, beyond all questioning, that the procedure of metaphysics has hitherto been a merely random groping, and, what is worst of all, a groping among mere concepts.

What, then, is the reason why, in this field, the sure road to science has not hitherto been found? Is it, perhaps, impossible of discovery? Why, in that case, should nature have visited our reason with the restless endeavour whereby it is ever searching for such a path, as if this were one of its most important concerns? Nay, more, how little cause have we to place trust in our reason, if, in one of the most important domains of which we would fain have knowledge, it does not merely fail us, but lures us on by deceitful promises, and in the end betrays us! Or if it be only that we have thus far failed to find the true path, are there any indications to justify the hope that by renewed efforts we may have better fortune than has fallen to our predecessors?

The examples of mathematics and natural science, which by a single and sudden revolution have become what they **B xvi.**

now are, seem to me sufficiently remarkable to suggest our considering what may have been the essential features in the changed point of view by which they have so greatly benefited. Their success should incline us, at least by way of experiment, to imitate their procedure, so far as the analogy which, as species of rational knowledge, they bear to metaphysics may permit. 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. This would agree better with what is desired, namely, that it should be possible to have knowledge of objects *a priori*, determining something in regard to them prior to their being given. We should then be proceeding precisely on the lines of Copernicus' primary hypothesis. Failing of satisfactory progress in explaining the movements of the heavenly bodies on the supposition that they all revolved round the spectator, he tried whether he might not have better success if he made the spectator to

**B xvii.** revolve and the stars to remain at rest. A similar experiment can be tried in metaphysics, as regards the *intuition* of objects. If intuition must conform to the constitution of the objects, I do not see how we could know anything of the latter *a priori*; but if the object (as object of the senses) must conform to the constitution of our faculty of intuition, I have no difficulty in conceiving such a possibility. Since I cannot rest in these intuitions if they are to become known, but must relate them as representations to something as their object, and determine this latter through them, either I must assume that the *concepts*, by means of which I obtain this determination, conform to the object, or else I assume that the objects, or what is the same thing, that the *experience* in which alone, as given objects, they can be known, conform to the concepts. In the former case, I am again in the same perplexity as to how I can know anything *a priori* in regard to the objects. In the latter case the outlook is more hopeful. For experience is itself a species of knowledge which involves understanding; and understanding has rules which I must pre-

suppose as being in me prior to objects being given to me, and therefore as being *a priori*. They find expression in *a priori* concepts to which all objects of experience necessarily conform, and with which they must agree. As regards objects which are thought solely through reason, and indeed as necessary, but which can never—at least not in the manner in which reason thinks them—be given in experience, the attempts at thinking them (for they must admit of being thought) will furnish an excellent touchstone of what we are adopting as our new method of thought, namely, that we can know *a priori* of things only what we ourselves put into them. \* B xviii.

This experiment succeeds as well as could be desired, and promises to metaphysics, in its first part—the part that is occupied with those concepts *a priori* to which the corresponding objects, commensurate with them, can be given in experience—the secure path of a science. For the new point of view enables us to explain how there can be knowledge *a priori*; and, in addition, to furnish satisfactory proofs of the laws which form the *a priori* basis of nature, regarded as the sum of the objects of experience—neither achievement being possible on the procedure hitherto followed. But this deduction of our power of knowing *a priori*, in the first part of metaphysics, has a consequence which is startling, and which has the appearance of being highly prejudicial to the whole purpose of metaphysics, as dealt with in the second part. For we are B xix

\* This method, modelled on that of the student of nature, consists in looking for the elements of pure reason in *what admits of confirmation or refutation by experiment*. Now the propositions of pure reason, especially if they venture out beyond all limits of possible experience, cannot be brought to the test through any experiment with their *objects*, as in natural science. In dealing with those *concepts* and *principles* which we adopt *a priori*, all that we can do is to contrive that they be used for viewing objects from two different points of view—on the one hand, in connection with experience, as objects of the senses and of the understanding, and on the other hand, for the isolated reason that strives to transcend all limits of experience, as objects which are thought merely. If, when things are viewed from this twofold standpoint, we find that there is agreement with the principle of pure reason, but that when we regard them only from a single point of view reason is involved in unavoidable self-conflict, the experiment decides in favour of the correctness of this distinction. B xix.

brought to the conclusion that we can never transcend the limits of possible experience, though that is precisely what  
 B xx. this science is concerned, above all else, to achieve. This situation yields, however, just the very experiment by which, indirectly, we are enabled to prove the truth of this first estimate of our *a priori* knowledge of reason, namely, that such knowledge has to do only with appearances, and must leave the thing in itself as indeed real *per se*, but as not known by us. For what necessarily forces us to transcend the limits of experience and of all appearances is the *unconditioned*, which reason, by necessity and by right, demands in things in themselves, as required to complete the series of conditions. If, then, on the supposition that our empirical knowledge conforms to objects as things in themselves, we find that the *unconditioned cannot be thought without contradiction*, and that when, on the other hand, we suppose that our representation of things, as they are given to us, does not conform to these things as they are in themselves, but that these objects, as appearances, conform to our mode of representation, *the contradiction vanishes*; and if, therefore, we thus find that the *unconditioned* is not to be met with in things, so far as we know them, that is, so far as they are given to us, but only so far as we do not know them, that is, so far as they are things in themselves, we are justified in concluding that what we at first assumed for the purposes of experiment is now

B xxi. definitely confirmed. But when all progress in the field of the supersensible has thus been denied to speculative reason, it is still open to us to enquire whether, in the practical knowledge of reason, data may not be found sufficient to determine reason's transcendent concept of the *unconditioned*, and so to enable us, in accordance with the wish of metaphysics, and by means of knowledge that is possible *a priori*, though only from a practical point of view, to pass beyond the limits of all possible experience. Speculative reason has thus at least made room for such an extension; and if it must  
 B xxii. at the same time leave it empty, yet none the less we are at liberty, indeed we are summoned, to take occupation of it, if we can, by practical data of reason.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Similarly, the fundamental laws of the motions of the heavenly bodies gave established certainty to what Copernicus had at first



But, it will be asked, what sort of a treasure is this that B xxiv. we propose to bequeath to posterity? What is the value of the metaphysics that is alleged to be thus purified by criticism and established once for all? On a cursory view of the present work it may seem that its results are merely *negative*, warning us that we must never venture with speculative reason beyond the limits of experience. Such is in fact its primary use. But such teaching at once acquires a *positive* value when we recognise that the principles with which speculative reason ventures out beyond its proper limits do not in effect *extend* the employment of reason, but, as we find on closer scrutiny, inevitably *narrow* it. These principles properly belong [not to reason but] to sensibility, and when thus employed they threaten to make the bounds of sensibility coextensive with B xxv. the real, and so to supplant reason in its pure (practical) employment. So far, therefore, as our Critique limits speculative reason, it is indeed *negative*; but since it thereby removes an obstacle which stands in the way of the employment of practical reason, nay threatens to destroy it, it has in reality a *positive* and very important use. At least this is so, immediately we are convinced that there is an absolutely necessary *practical* employment of pure reason—the *moral*—in which it inevitably goes beyond the limits of sensibility. Though [practical] reason, in thus proceeding, requires no assistance from speculative reason, it must yet be assured against its opposition, that reason may not be brought into conflict with itself. To deny that the service which the Critique renders is *positive* in character, would thus be like saying that the

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assumed only as an hypothesis, and at the same time yielded proof of the invisible force (the Newtonian attraction) which holds the universe together. The latter would have remained for ever undiscovered if Copernicus had not dared, in a manner contradictory of the senses, but yet true, to seek the observed movements, not in the heavenly bodies, but in the spectator. The change in point of view, analogous to this hypothesis, which is expounded in the Critique, I put forward in this preface as an hypothesis only, in order to draw attention to the character of these first attempts at such a change, which are always hypotheticalal. But in the Critique itself it will be proved, apodeictically not hypothetically, from the nature of our representations of space and time and from the elementary concepts of the understanding.

police are of no positive benefit, inasmuch as their main business is merely to prevent the violence of which citizens stand in mutual fear, in order that each may pursue his vocation in peace and security. That space and time are only forms of sensible intuition, and so only conditions of the existence of things as appearances; that, moreover, we have no concepts of understanding, and consequently no elements for the knowledge of

B xxvi. things, save in so far as intuition can be given corresponding to these concepts; and that we can therefore have no knowledge of any object as thing in itself, but only in so far as it is an object of sensible intuition, that is, an appearance—all this is proved in the analytical part of the Critique. Thus it does indeed follow that all possible speculative knowledge of reason is limited to mere objects of *experience*. But our further contention must also be duly borne in mind, namely, that though we cannot *know* these objects as things in themselves, we must yet be in position at least to *think* them as things in themselves;<sup>a</sup> otherwise we should be landed in the absurd conclusion

B xxvii. that there can be appearance without anything that appears. Now let us suppose that the distinction, which our Critique has shown to be necessary, between things as objects of experience and those same things as things in themselves, had not been made. In that case all things in general, so far as they are efficient causes, would be determined by the principle of causality, and consequently by the mechanism of nature. I could not, therefore, without palpable contradiction, say of one and the same being, for instance the human soul, that its will is free and yet is subject to natural necessity, that is, is not free. For I have taken the soul in both propositions *in one and the same sense*, namely as a thing in general, that is, as a thing in itself;

<sup>a</sup> 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. But I can *think* whatever I please, provided only that I do not contradict myself, that is, provided my concept is a possible thought. This suffices for the possibility of the concept, even though I may not be able to answer for there being, in the sum of all possibilities, an object corresponding to it. But something more is required before I can ascribe to such a concept objective validity, that is, real possibility; the former possibility is merely logical. This something more need not, however, be sought in the theoretical sources of knowledge; it may lie in those that are practical.

and save by means of a preceding critique, could not have done otherwise. But if our Critique is not in error in teaching that the object is to be taken *in a twofold sense*, namely as appearance and as thing in itself; if the deduction of the concepts of understanding is valid, and the principle of causality therefore applies only to things taken in the former sense, namely, in so far as they are objects of experience—these same objects, taken in the other sense, not being subject to the principle—then there is no contradiction in supposing that one and the same will is, in the appearance, that is, in its visible acts, necessarily subject to the law of nature, and so far *not free*, while yet, as belonging to a thing in itself, it is not subject to that law, and is therefore *free*. My soul, viewed from the latter standpoint, cannot indeed be known by means of speculative reason (and still less through empirical observation); and freedom as a property of a being to which I attribute effects in the sensible world is therefore also not knowable in any such fashion. For I should then have to know such a being as determined in its existence, and yet as not determined in time—which is impossible, since I cannot support my concept by any intuition. But though I cannot *know*, I can yet *think* freedom; that is to say, the representation of it is at least not self-contradictory, provided due account be taken of our critical distinction between the two modes of representation, the sensible and the intellectual, and of the resulting limitation of the pure concepts of understanding and of the principles which flow from them.

If we grant that morality necessarily presupposes freedom (in the strictest sense) as a property of our will; if, that is to say, we grant that it yields practical principles—original principles, proper to our reason—as *a priori data* of reason, and that this would be absolutely impossible save on the assumption of freedom; and if at the same time we grant that speculative reason has proved that such freedom does not allow of being thought, then the former supposition—that made on behalf of morality—would have to give way to this other contention, the opposite of which involves a palpable contradiction. For since it is only on the assumption of freedom that the negation of morality contains any contradiction, freedom, and with it morality, would have to yield to the mechanism of nature.

Morality does not, indeed, require that freedom should be understood, but only that it should not contradict itself, and so should at least allow of being thought, and that as thus thought it should place no obstacle in the way of a free act (viewed in another relation) likewise conforming to the mechanism of nature. The doctrine of morality and the doctrine of nature may each, therefore, make good its position. This, however, is only possible in so far as criticism has previously established our unavoidable ignorance of things in themselves, and has limited all that we can theoretically *know* to mere appearances.

This discussion as to the positive advantage of critical principles of pure reason can be similarly developed in regard to the concept of *God* and of the *simple nature* of our *soul*; but for the sake of brevity such further discussion may be omitted. [From what has already been said, it is evident that] even the

- B xxx. *assumption*—as made on behalf of the necessary practical employment of my reason—of *God*, *freedom*, and *immortality* is not permissible unless at the same time speculative reason be deprived of its pretensions to transcendent insight. For in order to arrive at such insight it must make use of principles which, in fact, extend only to objects of possible experience, and which, if also applied to what cannot be an object of experience, always really change this into an appearance, thus rendering all *practical extension* of pure reason impossible. I have therefore found it necessary to deny *knowledge*, in order
- B xxxi. to make room for *faith*. All objections to morality and religion will be for ever silenced, and this in Socratic fashion, namely, by the clearest proof of the ignorance of the objectors. There has always existed in the world, and there will always continue to exist, some kind of metaphysics, and with it the dialectic that is natural to pure reason. It is therefore the first and most important task of philosophy to deprive metaphysics, once and for all, of its injurious influence, by attacking its errors at their very source.

- Notwithstanding this important change in the field of the sciences, and the *loss* of its fancied possessions which speculative reason must suffer, general human interests remain in the same privileged position as hitherto, and the advantages which the world has hitherto derived from the teachings of

pure reason are in no way diminished. The loss affects only the *monopoly of the schools*, in no respect the *interests of humanity*. I appeal to the most rigid dogmatist, whether the proof of the continued existence of our soul after death, derived from the simplicity of substance, or of the freedom of the will as opposed to a universal mechanism, arrived at through the subtle but ineffectual distinctions between subjective and objective practical necessity, or of the existence of God as deduced from the concept of an *ens realissimum* (of the contingency of the changeable and of the necessity of a prime mover), have ever, upon passing out from the schools, succeeded in reaching the public mind or in exercising the slightest influence on its convictions? That has never been found to occur, and in view of the unfitness of the common human understanding for such subtle speculation, ought never to have been expected. Such widely held convictions, so far as they rest on rational grounds, are due to quite other considerations. The hope of a *future life* has its source in that notable characteristic of our nature, never to be capable of being satisfied by what is temporal (as insufficient for the capacities of its whole destination); the consciousness of *freedom* rests exclusively on the clear ex- B xxxiii.  
hibition of duties, in opposition to all claims of the inclinations; the belief in a wise and great *Author of the world* is generated solely by the glorious order, beauty, and providential care everywhere displayed in nature. When the Schools have been brought to recognise that they can lay no claim to higher and fuller insight in a matter of universal human concern than that which is equally within the reach of the great mass of men (ever to be held by us in the highest esteem), and that, as Schools of philosophy, they should limit themselves to the study of those universally comprehensible, and, for moral purposes, sufficient grounds of proof, then not only do these latter possessions remain undisturbed, but through this very fact they acquire yet greater authority.

This critique is not opposed to the *dogmatic procedure* of B xixv.  
reason in its pure knowledge, as science, for that must always be dogmatic, that is, yield strict proof from sure principles *a priori*. It is opposed only to *dogmatism*, that is, to the presumption that it is possible to make progress with pure knowledge, according to principles, from concepts alone (those that

are philosophical), as reason has long been in the habit of doing; and that it is possible to do this without having first investigated in what way and by what right reason has come into possession of these concepts. Dogmatism is thus the dogmatic procedure of pure reason, *without previous criticism of its own powers*. In withstanding dogmatism we must not allow ourselves to give free rein to that loquacious shallowness,

- B xxxvi. which assumes for itself the name of popularity, nor yet to scepticism, which makes short work with all metaphysics. On the contrary, such criticism is the necessary preparation for a thoroughly grounded metaphysics, which, as science, must necessarily be developed dogmatically, according to the strictest demands of system, in such manner as to satisfy not the general public but the requirements of the Schools. In the execution of the plan prescribed by the critique, that is, in the future system of metaphysics, we have therefore to follow the strict method of the celebrated Wolff, the greatest of all the dogmatic philosophers. He was the first to show by example (and by his example he awakened that spirit of thoroughness which is not extinct in Germany) how the secure progress of a science is to be attained only through orderly establishment of principles, clear determination of concepts, insistence upon strictness of proof, and avoidance of venturesome, non-consecutive steps in our inferences. He was thus peculiarly well fitted to raise metaphysics to the dignity of a science, if only it had occurred to him to prepare the ground beforehand by a critique of the organ, that is, of
- xxxvii. pure reason itself. The blame for his having failed to do so lies not so much with himself as with the dogmatic way of thinking prevalent in his day, and with which the philosophers of his time, and of all previous times, have no right to reproach one another. Those who reject both the method of Wolff and the procedure of a critique of pure reason can have no other aim than to shake off the fetters of *science* altogether, and thus to change work into play, certainty into opinion, philosophy into philodoxy.

# INTRODUCTION

B 1

## I. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PURE AND EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE

THERE can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience. For how should our faculty of knowledge be awakened into action did not objects affecting our senses partly of themselves produce representations, partly arouse the activity of our understanding to compare these representations, and, by combining or separating them, work up the raw material of the sensible impressions into that knowledge of objects which is entitled experience? In the order of time, therefore, we have no knowledge antecedent to experience, and with experience all our knowledge begins.

But though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience. For it may well be that even our empirical knowledge is made up of what we receive through impressions and of what our own faculty of knowledge (sensible impressions serving merely as the occasion) supplies from itself. If our faculty of knowledge makes any such addition, it may be that we are not in a position to distinguish it from the raw material, until with long B 2 practice of attention we have become skilled in separating it.

This, then, is a question which at least calls for closer examination, and does not allow of any off-hand answer:—whether there is any knowledge that is thus independent of experience and even of all impressions of the senses. Such knowledge is entitled *a priori*, and distinguished from the *empirical*, which has its sources *a posteriori*, that is, in experience.

The expression '*a priori*' does not, however, indicate with sufficient precision the full meaning of our question. For it

has been customary to say, even of much knowledge that is derived from empirical sources, that we have it or are capable of having it *a priori*, meaning thereby that we do not derive it immediately from experience, but from a universal rule—a rule which is itself, however, borrowed by us from experience. Thus we would say of a man who undermined the foundations of his house, that he might have known *a priori* that it would fall, that is, that he need not have waited for the experience of its actual falling. But still he could not know this completely *a priori*. For he had first to learn through experience that bodies are heavy, and therefore fall when their supports are withdrawn.

In what follows, therefore, we shall understand by *a priori* knowledge, not knowledge independent of this or that experience, but knowledge absolutely independent of all experience. Opposed to it is empirical knowledge, which is knowledge possible only *a posteriori*, that is, through experience. *A priori* modes of knowledge are entitled pure when there is no admixture of anything empirical. Thus, for instance, the proposition, 'every alteration has its cause', while an *a priori* proposition, is not a pure proposition, because alteration is a concept which can be derived only from experience.

## II. WE ARE IN POSSESSION OF CERTAIN MODES OF *A PRIORI* KNOWLEDGE, AND EVEN THE COMMON UNDERSTANDING IS NEVER WITHOUT THEM

What we here require is a criterion by which to distinguish with certainty between pure and empirical knowledge. Experience teaches us that a thing is so and so, but not that it cannot be otherwise. First, then, if we have a proposition which in being thought is thought as *necessary*, it is an *a priori* judgment; and if, besides, it is not derived from any proposition except one which also has the validity of a *necessary* judgment, it is an absolutely *a priori* judgment. Secondly, experience never confers on its judgments true or strict, but only assumed and comparative *universality*, through induction. We can properly only say, therefore, that, so far as

B4 we have hitherto observed, there is no exception to this or that rule. When, on the other hand, strict universality is



essential to a judgment, this indicates a special source of knowledge, namely, a faculty of *a priori* knowledge. Necessity and strict universality are thus sure criteria of a *a priori* knowledge, and are inseparable from one another.

Now it is easy to show that there actually are in human knowledge judgments which are necessary and in the strictest sense universal, and which are therefore pure *a priori* judgments. If an example from the sciences be desired, we have only to look to any of the propositions of mathematics; if we seek an example from the understanding in its quite ordinary employment, the proposition, 'every alteration must have a B 5 cause', will serve our purpose. In the latter case, indeed, the very concept of a cause so manifestly contains the concept of a necessity of connection with an effect and of the strict universality of the rule, that the concept would be altogether lost if we attempted to derive it, as Hume has done, from a repeated association of that which happens with that which precedes, and from a custom of connecting representations, a custom originating in this repeated association, and constituting therefore a merely subjective necessity.

Such a *a priori* origin is manifest in certain concepts, no less than in judgments. If we remove from our empirical concept of a body, one by one, every feature in it which is [merely] empirical, the colour, the hardness or softness, the weight, even the impenetrability, there still remains the space which the body (now entirely vanished) occupied, and this cannot be removed. Again, if we remove from our em- B 6  
pirical concept of any object, corporeal or incorporeal, all properties which experience has taught us, we yet cannot take away that property through which the object is thought as substance or as inhering in a substance (although this concept of substance is more determinate than that of an object in general). Owing, therefore, to the necessity with which this concept of substance forces itself upon us, we have no option save to admit that it has its seat in our faculty of a *a priori* knowledge.

### III. PHILOSOPHY STANDS IN NEED OF A SCIENCE WHICH SHALL DETERMINE THE POSSIBILITY, THE PRINCIPLES, AND THE EXTENT OF ALL *A PRIORI* KNOWLEDGE

But what is still more extraordinary than all the preceding is this, that certain modes of knowledge leave the field of all  
 A 3 possible experiences and have the appearance of extending the scope of our judgments beyond all limits of experience, and this by means of concepts to which no corresponding object can ever be given in experience.

It is precisely by means of the latter modes of knowledge, in a realm beyond the world of the senses, where experience can yield neither guidance nor correction, that our reason carries on those enquiries which owing to their importance  
 B 7 we consider to be far more excellent, and in their purpose far more lofty, than all that the understanding can learn in the field of appearances. Indeed we prefer to run every risk of error rather than desist from such urgent enquiries, on the ground of their dubious character, or from disdain and indifference. These unavoidable problems set by pure reason itself are *God, freedom, and immortality*. The science which, with all its preparations, is in its final intention directed solely to their solution is metaphysics; and its procedure is at first dogmatic, that is, it confidently sets itself to this task without any previous examination of the capacity or incapacity of reason for so great an undertaking.

Now it does indeed seem natural that, as soon as we have left the ground of experience, we should, through careful enquiries, assure ourselves as to the foundations of any building that we propose to erect, not making use of any knowledge that we possess without first determining whence it has come, and not trusting to principles without knowing their origin. It is natural, that is to say, that the question should first be considered, how the understanding can arrive at all this knowledge *a priori*, and what extent, validity, and worth it may  
 A 4 have. Nothing, indeed, could be more natural, if by the term  
 B 8 'natural' we signify what fittingly and reasonably ought to happen. But if we mean by 'natural' what ordinarily happens, then on the contrary nothing is more natural and more in-

telligible than the fact that this enquiry has been so long neglected. For one part of this knowledge, the mathematical, has long been of established reliability, and so gives rise to a favourable presumption as regards the other part, which may yet be of quite different nature. Besides, once we are outside the circle of experience, we can be sure of not being contradicted by experience. The charm of extending our knowledge is so great that nothing short of encountering a direct contradiction can suffice to arrest us in our course; and this can be avoided, if we are careful in our fabrications—which none the less will still remain fabrications. Mathematics gives us a shining example of how far, independently of experience, we can progress in *a priori* knowledge. It does, indeed, occupy itself with objects and with knowledge solely in so far as they allow of being exhibited in intuition. But this circumstance is easily overlooked, since this intuition can itself be given *a priori*, and is therefore hardly to be distinguished from a bare and pure concept. Misled by such a proof of the power of reason, the demand for the extension of knowledge recognises no limits. The light dove, cleaving the air in her free flight, and feeling its resistance, might imagine that its flight would be still easier in empty space. It was thus that Plato left the world of the senses, as setting too narrow limits to the understanding, and ventured out beyond it on the wings of the ideas, in the empty space of the pure understanding. He did not observe that with all his efforts he made no advance—meeting no resistance that might, ~~thereby~~, serve as a support upon which he could take a stand, to which he could apply his powers, and so set his understanding in motion. It is, indeed, the common fate of human reason to complete its speculative structures as speedily as may be, and only afterwards to enquire whether the foundations are reliable. What keeps us, during the actual building, free from all apprehension and suspicion, and flatters us with a seeming thoroughness, is this other circumstance, namely, that a great, perhaps the greatest, part of the business of our reason consists in analysis of the concepts which we already have of objects. This analysis supplies us with a considerable body of knowledge, which, while nothing but explanation or elucidation of what has already been thought in our con-

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cepts, though in a confused manner, is yet prized as being, at least as regards its form, new insight. But so far as the matter or content is concerned, there has been no extension of our previously possessed concepts, but only an analysis of  
 B 10 them. Since this procedure yields real knowledge *a priori*, which progresses in an assured and useful fashion, reason is so far misled as surreptitiously to introduce, without itself being aware of so doing, assertions of an entirely different order, in which it attaches to given concepts others completely foreign to them, and moreover attaches them *a priori*. And yet it is not known how reason can be in position to do this. Such a question is never so much as thought of. I shall therefore at once proceed to deal with the difference between these two kinds of knowledge.

#### IV. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ANALYTIC AND SYNTHETIC JUDGMENTS

In all judgments in which the relation of a subject to the predicate is thought (I take into consideration affirmative judgments only, the subsequent application to negative judgments being easily made), this relation is possible in two different ways. Either the predicate B belongs to the subject, A, as something which is (covertly) contained in this concept A; or B lies outside the concept A, although it does indeed stand in connection with it. In the one case I entitle the judgment  
 A 7 ~~analytic~~ in the other synthetic. Analytic judgments (affirmative) are therefore those in which the connection of the predicate with the subject is thought through identity; those in which this connection is thought without identity should  
 B 11 be entitled synthetic. The former, as adding nothing through the predicate to the concept of the subject, but merely breaking it up into those constituent concepts that have all along been thought in it, although confusedly, can also be entitled explicative. The latter, on the other hand, add to the concept of the subject a predicate which has not been in any wise thought in it, and which no analysis could possibly extract from it; and they may therefore be entitled ampliative.  
Judgments of experience, as such, are one and all synthetic.  
For it would be absurd to found an analytic judgment on ex-

perience. Since, in framing the judgment, I must not go outside my concept, there is no need to appeal to the testimony of experience in its support. That a body is extended is a proposition that holds *a priori* and is not empirical. For, before B 12 appealing to experience, I have already in the concept of body all the conditions required for my judgment. I have only to extract from it, in accordance with the principle of contradiction, the required predicate, and in so doing can at the same time become conscious of the necessity of the judgment—and that is what experience could never have taught me. On the other hand, though I do not include in the concept of a body in general the predicate 'weight', none the less this concept indicates an object of experience through one of its parts, and I can add to that part other parts of this same experience, as in this way belonging together with the concept. From the start I can apprehend the concept of body analytically through the characters of extension, impenetrability, figure, etc., all of which are thought in the concept. Now, however, looking back on the experience from which I have derived this concept of body, and finding weight to be invariably connected with the above characters, I attach it as a predicate to the concept; and in doing so I attach it synthetically, and am therefore extending my knowledge. The possibility of the synthesis of the predicate 'weight' with the concept of 'body' thus rests upon experience. While the one concept is not contained in the other, they yet belong to one another, though only contingently, as parts of a whole, namely, of an experience which is itself a synthetic combination of intuitions.

But in *a priori* synthetic judgments this help is entirely A 9 lacking. [I do not here have the advantage of looking around B 13 in the field of experience.] Upon what, then, am I to rely, when I seek to go beyond the concept A, and to know that another concept B is connected with it? Through what is the synthesis made possible? Let us take the proposition, 'Everything which happens has its cause'. In the concept of 'something which happens', I do indeed think an existence which is preceded by a time, etc., and from this concept analytic judgments may be obtained. But the concept of a 'cause' lies entirely outside the other concept, and signifies something different from 'that which happens', and is not therefore in any way

contained in this latter representation. How come I then to predicate of that which happens something quite different, and to apprehend that the concept of cause, though not contained in it, yet belongs, and indeed necessarily belongs, to it? What is here the unknown = X which gives support to the understanding when it believes that it can discover outside the concept A a predicate B foreign to this concept, which it yet at the same time considers to be connected with it? It cannot be experience, because the suggested principle has connected the second representation with the first, not only with greater universality, but also with the character of necessity, and therefore completely *a priori* and on the basis of mere concepts. Upon such synthetic, that is, ampliative  
 A 10 principles, all our *a priori* speculative knowledge must ultimately rest; analytic judgments are very important, and in-  
 B 14 deed necessary, but only for obtaining that clearness in the concepts which is requisite for such a sure and wide synthesis as will lead to a genuinely new addition to all previous knowledge.

## V. IN ALL THEORETICAL SCIENCES OF REASON SYNTHETIC *A PRIORI* JUDGMENTS ARE CONTAINED AS PRINCIPLES

1. *All mathematical judgments, without exception, are synthetic.* This fact, though incontestably certain and in its consequences very important, has hitherto escaped the notice of those who are engaged in the analysis of human reason, and is, indeed, directly opposed to all their conjectures. For as it was found that all mathematical inferences proceed in accordance with the principle of contradiction (which the nature of all apodeictic certainty requires), it was supposed that the fundamental propositions of the science can themselves be known to be true through that principle. This is an erroneous view. For though a synthetic proposition can indeed be discerned in accordance with the principle of contradiction, this can only be if another synthetic proposition is presupposed, and if it can then be apprehended as following from this other proposition; it can never be so discerned in and by itself.

First of all, it has to be noted that mathematical proposi-

tions, strictly so called, are always judgments *a priori*, not empirical; because they carry with them necessity, which cannot be derived from experience. If this be demurred to, B 15 I am willing to limit my statement to *pure* mathematics, the very concept of which implies that it does not contain empirical, but only pure *a priori* knowledge.

We might, indeed, at first suppose that the proposition  $7 + 5 = 12$  is a merely analytic proposition, and follows by the principle of contradiction from the concept of a sum of 7 and 5. But if we look more closely we find that the concept of the sum of 7 and 5 contains nothing save the union of the two numbers into one, and in this no thought is being taken as to what that single number may be which combines both. The concept of 12 is by no means already thought in merely thinking this union of 7 and 5; and I may analyse my concept of such a possible sum as long as I please, still I shall never find the 12 in it. We have to go outside these concepts, and call in the aid of the intuition which corresponds to one of them, our five fingers, for instance, or, as Segner<sup>1</sup> does in his *Arithmetic*, five points, adding to the concept of 7, unit by unit, the five given in intuition. For starting with the number 7, and for the concept of 5 calling in the aid of the fingers of my hand as intuition, I now add one by one to the number 7 the units which I previously took together to form the number B 16 5, and with the aid of that figure [the hand] see the number 12 come into being. That 5 should be added to 7, I have indeed already thought in the concept of a sum  $= 7 + 5$ , but not that this sum is equivalent to the number 12. Arithmetical propositions are therefore always synthetic. This is still more evident if we take larger numbers. For it is then obvious that, however we might turn and twist our concepts, we could never, by the mere analysis of them, and without the aid of intuition, discover what [the number is that] is the sum.

Just as little is any fundamental proposition of pure geometry analytic. 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. The concept of the shortest is wholly an addition, and cannot be

<sup>1</sup> [*Anfangsgründe der Arithmetik*, translated from the Latin, second edition, Halle, 1773, pp. 27, 79.]

derived, through any process of analysis, from the concept of the straight line. Intuition, therefore, must here be called in; only by its aid is the synthesis possible.

Some few fundamental propositions, presupposed by the geometrician, are, indeed, really analytic, and rest on the principle of contradiction. But, as identical propositions, they B 17 serve only as links in the chain of method and not as principles; for instance,  $a = a$ ; the whole is equal to itself; or  $(a + b) > a$ , that is, the whole is greater than its part. And even these propositions, though they are valid according to pure concepts, are only admitted in mathematics because they can be exhibited in intuition.

2. *Natural science (physics) contains a priori synthetic judgments as principles.* I need cite only two such judgments: that in all changes of the material world the quantity of matter remains unchanged; and that in all communication of motion, action and reaction must always be equal. Both propositions, it is evident, are not only necessary, and therefore in their origin B 18 *a priori*, but also synthetic. For in the concept of matter I do not think its permanence, but only its presence in the space which it occupies. I go outside and beyond the concept of matter, joining to it *a priori* in thought something which I have not thought in it. The proposition is not, therefore, analytic, but synthetic, and yet is thought *a priori*; and so likewise are the other propositions of the pure part of natural science.

3. *Metaphysics*, even if we look upon it as having hitherto failed in all its endeavours, is yet, owing to the nature of human reason, a quite indispensable science, and ought to contain a priori synthetic knowledge. For its business is not merely to analyse concepts which we make for ourselves *a priori* of things, and thereby to clarify them analytically, but to extend our *a priori* knowledge. And for this purpose we must employ principles which add to the given concept something that was not contained in it, and through *a priori* synthetic judgments venture out so far that experience is quite unable to follow us, as, for instance, in the proposition, that the world must have a first beginning, and such like. Thus metaphysics consists, at least in intention, entirely of *a priori* synthetic propositions.



## VI. THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF PURE REASON

B 19

Much is already gained if we can bring a number of investigations under the formula of a single problem. For we not only lighten our own task, by defining it accurately, but make it easier for others, who would test our results, to judge whether or not we have succeeded in what we set out to do. Now the proper problem of pure reason is contained in the question: How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?

That metaphysics has hitherto remained in so vacillating a state of uncertainty and contradiction, is entirely due to the fact that this problem, and perhaps even the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments, has never previously been considered. Upon the solution of this problem, or upon a sufficient proof that the possibility which it desires to have explained does in fact not exist at all, depends the success or failure of metaphysics. Among philosophers, David Hume came nearest to envisaging this problem, but still was very far from conceiving it with sufficient definiteness and universality. He occupied himself exclusively with the synthetic proposition regarding the connection of an effect with its cause (*principium causalitatis*), and he believed himself to have B 20 shown that such an *a priori* proposition is entirely impossible. If we accept his conclusions, then all that we call metaphysics is a mere delusion whereby we fancy ourselves to have rational insight into what, in actual fact, is borrowed solely from experience, and under the influence of custom has taken the illusory semblance of necessity. If he had envisaged our problem in all its universality, he would never have been guilty of this statement, so destructive of all pure philosophy. For he would then have recognised that, according to his own argument, pure mathematics, as certainly containing *a priori* synthetic propositions, would also not be possible; and from such an assertion his good sense would have saved him.

In the solution of the above problem, we are at the same time deciding as to the possibility of the employment of pure reason in establishing and developing all those sciences which contain a theoretical *a priori* knowledge of objects, and have therefore to answer the questions:

How is pure mathematics possible?

How is pure science of nature possible?

Since these sciences actually exist, it is quite proper to ask *how* they are possible; for that they must be possible is proved B 21. by the fact that they exist. But the poor progress which has hitherto been made in metaphysics, and the fact that no system yet propounded can, in view of the essential purpose of metaphysics, be said really to exist, leaves everyone sufficient ground for doubting as to its possibility.

Yet, in a certain sense, this *kind of knowledge* is to be looked upon as given; that is to say, metaphysics actually exists, if not as a science, yet still as natural disposition (*metaphysica naturalis*). For human reason, without being moved merely by the idle desire for extent and variety of knowledge, proceeds impetuously, driven on by an inward need, to questions such as cannot be answered by any empirical employment of reason, or by principles thence derived. Thus in all men, as soon as their reason has become ripe for speculation, there has always existed and will always continue to exist some kind of metaphysics. And so we have the question:

B 22 *How is metaphysics, as natural disposition, possible?*  
that is, how from the nature of universal human reason do those questions arise which pure reason propounds to itself, and which it is impelled by its own need to answer as best it can?

But since all attempts which have hitherto been made to answer these natural questions—for instance, whether the world has a beginning or is from eternity—have always met with unavoidable contradictions, we cannot rest satisfied with the mere natural disposition to metaphysics, that is, with the pure faculty of reason itself, from which, indeed, some sort of metaphysics (be it what it may) always arises. It must be possible for reason to attain to certainty whether we know or do not know the objects of metaphysics, that is, to come to a decision either in regard to the objects of its enquiries or in regard to the capacity or incapacity of reason to pass any judgment upon them, so that we may either with confidence extend our pure reason or set to it sure and determinate limits. This last question, which arises out of the previous general problem, may, rightly stated, take the form:

*How is metaphysics, as science, possible?*

Thus the critique of reason, in the end, necessarily leads to scientific knowledge; while its dogmatic employment, on the other hand, lands us in dogmatic assertions to which other B 23 assertions, equally specious, can always be opposed—that is, in *scepticism*.

We may, then, and indeed we must, regard as abortive all attempts, hitherto made, to establish a metaphysic *dogmatically*. For the analytic part in any such attempted system, namely, the mere analysis of the concepts that inhere in our reason *a priori*, is by no means the aim of, but only a preparation for, metaphysics proper, that is, the extension of its *a priori* synthetic knowledge. For such a purpose, the analysis of concepts is useless, since it merely shows what is contained in these concepts, not how we arrive at them *a priori*. A solution of this latter problem is required, that we may be able to determine the valid employment of such concepts in regard to B 24 the objects of all knowledge in general. Nor is much self-denial needed to give up these claims, seeing that the undeniable, and in the dogmatic procedure of reason also unavoidable, contradictions of reason with itself have long since undermined the authority of every metaphysical system yet propounded. Greater firmness will be required if we are not to be deterred by inward difficulties and outward opposition from endeavouring, through application of a method entirely different from any hitherto employed, at last to bring to a prosperous and fruitful growth a science indispensable to human reason—a science whose every branch may be cut away but whose root cannot be destroyed.

## VII. THE IDEA AND DIVISION OF A SPECIAL SCIENCE, UNDER THE TITLE "CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON"

In view of all these considerations, we arrive at the idea of a special science which can be entitled the Critique of Pure Reason. For reason is the faculty which supplies the principles A 11 of a *a priori* knowledge. Pure reason is, therefore, that which contains the principles whereby we know anything absolutely *a priori*.

I entitle *transcendental* all knowledge which is occupied B 25 not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge

- A 12 of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible *a priori*. We have to carry the analysis so far only as is indispensably necessary in order to comprehend, in their whole extent, the principles of *a priori* synthesis, with which alone  
 B 26 we are called upon to deal. It is upon this enquiry, which should be entitled not a doctrine, but only a transcendental critique, that we are now engaged. Its purpose is not to extend knowledge, but only to correct it, and to supply a touchstone of the value, or lack of value, of all *a priori* knowledge.

What has chiefly to be kept in view in the division of such a science, is that no concepts be allowed to enter which contain in themselves anything empirical, or, in other words, that it consist in knowledge wholly *a priori*. Accordingly, although the highest principles and fundamental concepts of  
 A 15 morality are *a priori* knowledge, they have no place in tran-  
 B 29 scendental philosophy, because, although they do not lay at the foundation of their precepts the concepts of pleasure and pain, of the desires and inclinations, etc., all of which are of empirical origin, yet in the construction of a system of pure morality these empirical concepts must necessarily be brought into the concept of duty, as representing either a hindrance, which we have to overcome, or an allurement, which must not be made into a motive. Transcendental philosophy is therefore a philosophy of pure and merely speculative reason. All that is practical, so far as it contains motives, relates to feelings, and these belong to the empirical sources of knowledge.

By way of introduction or anticipation we need only say that there are two stems of human knowledge, namely, sensibility and understanding, which perhaps spring from a common, but to us unknown, root. Through the former, objects are given to us; through the latter, they are thought.

- B 30 Now in so far as sensibility may be found to contain *a priori* representations constituting the condition under which objects  
 A 16 are given to us, it will belong to transcendental philosophy. And since the conditions under which alone the objects of human knowledge are given must precede those under which they are thought, the transcendental doctrine of sensibility will constitute the first part of the science of the elements.

# TRANSCENDENTAL DOCTRINE OF ELEMENTS

## FIRST PART

### TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETIC

#### § I

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 (receptivity) for receiving representations through the mode in which we are affected by objects, is entitled *sensibility*. Objects are *given* to us by means of sensibility, and it alone yields us *intuitions*; they are *thought* through the understanding, and from the understanding arise *concepts*. But all thought must, directly or indirectly, by way of certain characters, relate ultimately to intuitions, and therefore, with us, to sensibility, because in no other way can an object be given to us.

The effect of an object upon the faculty of representation, B 34 so far as we are affected by it, is *sensation*. That intuition A 20 which is in relation to the object through sensation, is entitled *empirical*. The undetermined object of an empirical intuition is entitled *appearance*.

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. That in which alone the sensations can be posited and ordered in a certain form,

cannot itself be sensation; and therefore, while the matter of all appearance is given to us *a posteriori* only, its form must lie ready for the sensations *a priori* in the mind, and so must allow of being considered apart from all sensation.

I term all representations pure (in the transcendental sense) in which there is nothing that belongs to sensation. The pure form of sensible intuitions in general, in which all the manifold of intuition is intuited in certain relations, must be found in the mind *a priori*. This pure form of sensibility may also itself be called *pure intuition*. Thus, if I take away from the representation of a body that which the understanding thinks in regard to it, substance, force, divisibility, etc., and likewise what belongs to sensation, impenetrability, hardness, colour, etc., something still remains over from this empirical intuition, namely, extension and figure. These belong to pure intuition, which, even without any actual object of the senses or of sensation, exists in the mind *a priori* as a mere form of sensibility.

The science of all principles of *a priori* sensibility I call transcendental aesthetic. There must be such a science, forming the first part of the transcendental doctrine of elements, in distinction from that part which deals with the principles of pure thought, and which is called transcendental logic.

In the transcendental aesthetic we shall, therefore, first isolate sensibility, by taking away from it everything which the understanding thinks through its concepts, so that nothing may be left save empirical intuition. Secondly, we shall also separate off from it everything which belongs to sensation, so that nothing may remain save pure intuition and the mere form of appearances, which is all that sensibility can supply *a priori*. In the course of this investigation it will be found that there are two pure forms of sensible intuition, serving as principles of *a priori* knowledge, namely, space and time. To the consideration of these we shall now proceed.

## THE TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETIC

## SECTION I

## SPACE

## § 2

*Metaphysical Exposition of this Concept*

By means of outer sense, a property of our mind, we represent to ourselves objects as outside us, and all without exception in space. In space their shape, magnitude, and relation to one another are determined or determinable. Inner sense, by means of which the mind intuits itself or its inner state, yields indeed no intuition of the soul itself as an object; but there is nevertheless a determinate form [namely, time] in A 23 which alone the intuition of inner states is possible, and everything which belongs to inner determinations is therefore represented in relations of time. Time cannot be outwardly intuited, any more than space can be intuited as something in us. What, then, are space and time? Are they real existences? Are they only determinations or relations of things, yet such as would belong to things even if they were not intuited? Or are space and time such that they belong only to the form of intuition, and therefore to the subjective constitution of our B 38 mind, apart from which they could not be ascribed to anything whatsoever? In order to obtain light upon these questions, let us first give an exposition of the concept of space. By exposition (expositio) I mean the clear, though not necessarily exhaustive, representation of that which belongs to a concept: the exposition is *metaphysical* when it contains that which exhibits the concept *as given a priori*.

1. Space is not an empirical concept which has been derived from outer experiences. For in order that certain sensations be referred to something outside me (that is, to something in another region of space from that in which I find myself), and similarly in order that I may be able to represent them as outside and alongside one another, and accordingly as not only different but as in different places, the representation

of space must be presupposed. The representation of space cannot, therefore, be empirically obtained from the relations of outer appearance. On the contrary, this outer experience is itself possible at all only through that representation.

- A 24 2. Space is a necessary *a priori* representation, which underlies all outer intuitions. We can never represent to ourselves the absence of space, though we can quite well think it  
B 39 as empty of objects. It must therefore be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, and not as a determination dependent upon them. It is an *a priori* representation, which necessarily underlies outer appearances.\*

- A 25 3.<sup>1</sup> Space is not a discursive or, as we say, general concept of relations of things in general, but a pure intuition. For, in the first place, we can represent to ourselves only one space; and if we speak of diverse spaces, we mean thereby only parts of one and the same unique space. Secondly, these parts cannot precede the one all-embracing space, as being, as it were, constituents out of which it can be composed; on the contrary, they can be thought only as *in* it. Space is essentially one; the manifold in it, and therefore the general concept of spaces, depends solely on [the introduction of] limitations. Hence it follows that an *a priori*, and not an empirical, intuition underlies all concepts of space. For kindred reasons, geometrical

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\* [In A there is here inserted the following argument:]

3. The apodeictic certainty of all geometrical propositions, and the possibility of their *a priori* construction, is grounded in this *a priori* necessity of space. Were this representation of space a concept acquired *a posteriori*, and derived from outer experience in general, the first principles of mathematical determination would be nothing but perceptions. They would therefore all share in the contingent character of perception; that there should be only one straight line between two points would not be necessary, but only what experience always teaches. What is derived from experience has only comparative universality, namely, that which is obtained through induction. We should therefore only be able to say that, so far as hitherto observed, no space has been found which has more than three dimensions.

<sup>1</sup> [In A "4".]



propositions, that, for instance, in a triangle two sides together are greater than the third, can never be derived from the general concepts of line and triangle, but only from intuition, and this indeed *a priori*, with apodeictic certainty.

4. Space is represented as an infinite *given* magnitude. Now every concept must be thought as a representation B 40 which is contained in an infinite number of different possible representations (as their common character), and which therefore contains these *under* itself; but no concept, as such, can be thought as containing an infinite number of representations *within* itself. It is in this latter way, however, that space is thought; for all the parts of space coexist *ad infinitum*. Consequently, the original representation of space is an *a priori* intuition, not a concept.

### § 3

#### *The Transcendental Exposition of the Concept of Space*

I understand by a transcendental exposition the explanation of a concept, as a principle from which the possibility of other *a priori* synthetic knowledge can be understood. For this purpose it is required (1) that such knowledge does really flow from the given concept, (2) that this knowledge is possible only on the assumption of a given mode of explaining the concept.

Geometry is a science which determines the properties of space synthetically, and yet *a priori*. What, then, must be our representation of space, in order that such knowledge of it may be possible? It must in its origin be intuition; for from a mere concept no propositions can be obtained which B 41 go beyond the concept—as happens in geometry (Introduction, V).<sup>1</sup> Further, this intuition must be *a priori*, that is, it must be found in us prior to any perception of an object, and must therefore be pure, not empirical, intuition. For geometrical propositions are one and all apodeictic, that is, are bound up with the consciousness of their necessity; for instance, that space has only three dimensions. Such propositions cannot be empirical or, in other words, judgments

<sup>1</sup> [Above, p. 33.]

of experience, nor can they be derived from any such judgments (Introduction, II).<sup>1</sup>

How, then, can there exist in the mind an outer intuition which precedes the objects themselves, and in which the concept of these objects can be determined *a priori*? Manifestly, not otherwise than in so far as the intuition has its seat in the subject only, as the formal character of the subject, in virtue of which, 'in being affected by objects, it obtains *immediate representation*, that is, *intuition*, of them; and only in so far, therefore, as it is merely the form of outer *sense* in general.

Our explanation is thus the only explanation that makes intelligible the *possibility* of geometry, as a body of *a priori* synthetic knowledge. Any mode of explanation which fails to do this, although it may otherwise seem to be somewhat similar, can by this criterion be distinguished from it with the greatest certainty.

A 26 }  
B 42 }

*Conclusions from the above Concepts*

(a) Space does not represent any property of things in themselves, nor does it represent them in their relation to one another. That is to say, space does not represent any determination that attaches to the objects themselves, and which remains even when abstraction has been made of all the subjective conditions of intuition. For no determinations, whether absolute or relative, can be intuited prior to the existence of the things to which they belong, and none, therefore, can be intuited *a priori*.

(b) Space is nothing but the form of all appearances of outer sense. It is the subjective condition of sensibility, under which alone outer intuition is possible for us. Since, then, the receptivity of the subject, its capacity to be affected by objects, must necessarily precede all intuitions of these objects, it can readily be understood how the form of all appearances can be given prior to all actual perceptions, and so exist in the mind *a priori*, and how, as a pure intuition, in which all objects must be determined, it can contain, prior to all experience, principles which determine the relations of these objects.

<sup>1</sup> [Above, p. 26.]

It is, therefore, solely from the human standpoint that we can speak of space, of extended things, etc. If we depart from the subjective condition under which alone we can have outer intuition, namely, liability to be affected by objects, the representation of space stands for nothing whatsoever. This predi- B 43. cate can be ascribed to things only in so far as they appear A 27 to us, that is, only to objects of sensibility. The constant form of this receptivity, which we term sensibility, is a necessary condition of all the relations in which objects can be intuited as outside us; and if we abstract from these objects, it is a pure intuition, and bears the name of space. Since we cannot treat the special conditions of sensibility as conditions of the possibility of things, but only of their appearances, we can indeed say that space comprehends all things that appear to us as external, but not all things in themselves, by whatever subject they are intuited, or whether they be intuited or not. For we cannot judge in regard to the intuitions of other thinking beings, whether they are bound by the same conditions as those which limit our intuition and which for us are universally valid. If we add to the concept of the subject of a judgment the limitation under which the judgment is made, the judgment is then unconditionally valid. The proposition, that all things are side by side in space, is valid under the limitation that these things are viewed as objects of our sensible intuition. If, now, I add the condition to the concept, and say that all things, as outer appearances, are side by side in space, the rule is valid universally and without limitation. Our exposition B 44 therefore establishes the *reality*, that is, the objective validity, A 28 of space in respect of whatever can be presented to us outwardly as object, but also at the same time the *ideality* of space in respect of things when they are considered in themselves through reason, that is, without regard to the constitution of our sensibility. We assert, then, the *empirical reality* of space, as regards all possible outer experience; and yet at the same time we assert its *transcendental ideality*—in other words, that it is nothing at all, immediately we withdraw the above condition, namely, its limitation to possible experience, and so look upon it as something that underlies things in themselves.

## TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETIC

## SECTION II

## TIME

## § 4.

*Metaphysical Exposition of the Concept of Time*

1. Time is not an empirical concept that has been derived from any experience. For neither coexistence nor succession would ever come within our perception, if the representation of time were not presupposed as underlying them *a priori*. Only on the presupposition of time can we represent to ourselves a number of things as existing at one and the same time (simultaneously) or at different times (successively).

A 31 2. Time is a necessary representation that underlies all intuitions. We cannot, in respect of appearances in general, remove time itself, though we can quite well think time as void of appearances. Time is, therefore, given *a priori*. In it alone is actuality of appearances possible at all. Appearances may, one and all, vanish; but time (as the universal condition of their possibility) cannot itself be removed.

B 47 3. The possibility of apodeictic principles concerning the relations of time, or of axioms of time in general, is also grounded upon this *a priori* necessity. Time has only one dimension; different times are not simultaneous but successive (just as different spaces are not successive but simultaneous). These principles cannot be derived from experience, for experience would give neither strict universality nor apodeictic certainty. We should only be able to say that common experience teaches us that it is so; not that it must be so. These principles are valid as rules under which alone experiences are possible; and they instruct us in regard to the experiences, not by means of them.

4. Time is not a discursive, or what is called a general concept, but a pure form of sensible intuition. Different times are A 32 but parts of one and the same time; and the representation which can be given only through a single object is intuition. Moreover, the proposition that different times cannot be

simultaneous is not to be derived from a general concept. The proposition is synthetic, and cannot have its origin in concepts alone. It is immediately contained in the intuition and representation of time.

5. The infinitude of time signifies nothing more than that every determinate magnitude of time is possible only through B 48 limitations of one single time that underlies it. The original representation, *time*, must therefore be given as unlimited. But when an object is so given that its parts, and every quantity of it, can be determinately represented only through limitation, the whole representation cannot be given through concepts, since they contain only partial representations; on the contrary, such concepts must themselves rest on immediate intuition.

### § 5

#### *The Transcendental Exposition of the Concept of Time*

I may here refer to No. 3, where, for the sake of brevity, I have placed under the title of metaphysical exposition what is properly transcendental. Here I may add that the concept of alteration, and with it the concept of motion, as alteration of place, is possible only through and in the representation of time; and that if this representation were not an *a priori* (inner) intuition, no concept, no matter what it might be, could render comprehensible the possibility of an alteration, that is, of a combination of contradictorily opposed predicates in one and the same object, for instance, the being and the not-being of one and the same thing in one and the same place. Only in time can two contradictorily opposed predicates meet B 49 in one and the same object, namely, *one after the other*. Thus our concept of time explains the possibility of that body of *a priori* synthetic knowledge which is exhibited in the general doctrine of motion, and which is by no means unfruitful.

### § 6

#### *Conclusions from these Concepts*

(a) Time is not something which exists of itself, or which inheres in things as an objective determination, and it does not, therefore, remain when abstraction is made of all sub-

jective conditions of its intuition. Were it self-subsistent, it would be something which would be actual and yet not an actual object. Were it a determination or order inhering in things themselves, it could not precede the objects as their condition, and be known and intuited *a priori* by means of synthetic propositions. But this last is quite possible if time is nothing but the subjective condition under which alone intuition can take place in us. For that being so, this form of inner intuition can be represented prior to the objects, and therefore *a priori*.

(b) Time is nothing but the form of inner sense, that is, of the intuition of ourselves and of our inner state. It cannot be a determination of outer appearances; it has to do neither with shape nor position, but with the relation of representations in our inner state. And just because this inner intuition yields no shape, we endeavour to make up for this want by analogies. We represent the time-sequence by a line progressing to infinity, in which the manifold constitutes a series of one dimension only; and we reason from the properties of this line to all the properties of time, with this one exception, that while the parts of the line are simultaneous the parts of time are always successive. From this fact also, that all the relations of time allow of being expressed in an outer intuition, it is evident that the representation is itself an intuition.

(c) Time is the formal *a priori* condition of all appearances whatsoever. Space, as the pure form of all *outer* intuition, is so far limited; it serves as the *a priori* condition only of outer appearances. But since all representations, whether they have for their objects outer things or not, belong, in themselves, as determinations of the mind, to our inner state; and since this inner state stands under the formal condition of inner intuition, and so belongs to time, time is an *a priori* condition of all appearance whatsoever. It is the immediate condition of inner appearances (of our souls), and thereby the mediate condition of outer appearances. Just as I can say *a priori* that all outer appearances are in space, and are determined *a priori* in conformity with the relations of space, I can also say, from the principle of inner sense, that all appearances whatsoever, that is, all objects of the senses, are in time, and necessarily stand in time-relations.

If we abstract from our mode of inwardly intuiting ourselves—the mode of intuition in terms of which we likewise take up into our faculty of representation all outer intuitions—and so take objects as they may be in themselves, then time is nothing. It has objective validity only in respect of appearances, these being things which we take *as objects of our senses*. It is no longer objective, if we abstract from the sensi- A 35  
bility of our intuition, that is, from that mode of representation which is peculiar to us, and speak of *things in general*. Time is therefore a purely subjective condition of our (human) intuition (which is always sensible, that is, so far as we are affected by objects), and in itself, apart from the subject, is nothing. Nevertheless, in respect of all appearances, and therefore of all the things which can enter into our experience, it is necessarily objective. We cannot say that all things are in time, because in this concept of things in general we are abstracting from every mode of their intuition and therefore B 53  
from that condition under which alone objects can be represented as being in time. If, however, the condition be added to the concept, and we say that all things as appearances, that is, as objects of sensible intuition, are in time, then the proposition has legitimate objective validity and universality *a priori*.

What we are maintaining is, therefore, the *empirical reality* of time, that is, its objective validity in respect of all objects which allow of ever being given to our senses. And since our intuition is always sensible, no object can ever be given to us in experience which does not conform to the condition of time. On the other hand, we deny to time all claim to absolute reality; that is to say, we deny that it belongs to things absolutely, as their condition or property, independ- A 36  
ently of any reference to the form of our sensible intuition; properties that belong to things in themselves can never be given to us through the senses. This, then, is what constitutes the *transcendental ideality* of time. What we mean by this phrase is that if we abstract from the subjective conditions of sensible intuition, time is nothing, and cannot be ascribed to the objects in themselves (apart from their relation to our intuition) in the way either of subsistence or of inherence.

## § 7

*Elucidation*

- Against this theory, which admits the empirical reality of time, but denies its absolute and transcendental reality, I have heard men of intelligence so unanimously voicing an objection that I must suppose it to occur spontaneously to every reader to whom this way of thinking is unfamiliar. The objection is  
 A 37 this. Alterations are real, this being proved by change of our own representations—even if all outer appearances, together with their alterations, be denied. Now alterations are possible only in time, and time is therefore something real. There is no difficulty in meeting this objection. I grant the whole argument. Certainly time is something real, namely, the real form of inner intuition. It has therefore subjective reality in respect of inner  
 B 54 experience; that is, I really have the representation of time and of my determinations in it. Time is therefore to be regarded as real, not indeed as object but as the mode of representation of myself as object. If without this condition of sensibility I could intuit myself, or be intuited by another being, the very same determinations which we now represent to ourselves as alterations would yield knowledge into which the representation of time, and therefore also of alteration, would in no way enter. Thus empirical reality has to be allowed to time, as the condition of all our experiences; on our theory, it is only its absolute reality that has to be denied. It is nothing but the form of our inner intuition.<sup>a</sup> If we take away from our inner intuition the peculiar condition of our sensibility, the concept  
 A 38 of time likewise vanishes; it does not inhere in the objects, but merely in the subject which intuits them.

- But the reason why this objection is so unanimously urged,  
 B 55 and that too by those who have nothing very convincing to say against the doctrine of the ideality of space, is this. They have no expectation of being able to prove apodeictically the abso-

<sup>a</sup> I can indeed say that my representations follow one another; but this is only to say that we are conscious of them as in a time-sequence, that is, in conformity with the form of inner sense. Time is not, therefore, something in itself, nor is it an objective determination inherent in things.



lute reality of space; for they are confronted by idealism, which teaches that the reality of outer objects does not allow of strict proof. On the other hand, the reality of the object of our inner sense (the reality of myself and my state) is, [they argue,] immediately evident through consciousness. The former may be merely an illusion; the latter is, on their view, undeniably something real. What they have failed, however, to recognise is that both are in the same position; in neither case can their reality as representations be questioned, and in both cases they belong only to appearance, which always has two sides, the one by which the object is viewed in and by itself (without regard to the mode of intuiting it—its nature therefore remaining always problematic), the other by which the form of the intuition of this object is taken into account. This form is not to be looked for in the object in itself, but in the subject to which the object appears; nevertheless, it belongs really and necessarily to the appearance of this object.

Those who maintain the absolute reality of space and time, whether as subsistent or only as inherent, must come into conflict with the principles of experience itself. For if they decide for the former alternative (which is generally the view taken by mathematical students of nature), they have to admit two eternal and infinite self-subsistent non-entities (space and time), which are there (yet without there being anything real) only in order to contain in themselves all that is real. If they adopt the latter alternative (as advocated by certain metaphysical students of nature), and regard space and time as relations of appearances, alongside or in succession to one another—relations abstracted from experience, and in this isolation confusedly represented—they are obliged to deny that *a priori* mathematical doctrines have any validity in respect of real things (for instance, in space), or at least to deny their apodeictic certainty. For such certainty is not to be found in the *a posteriori*. On this view, indeed, the *a priori* concepts of space and time are merely creatures of the imagination, whose source must really be sought in experience, the imagination framing out of the relations abstracted from experience something that does indeed contain what is general in these relations, but which cannot exist without

the restrictions which nature has attached to them. The former thinkers obtain at least this advantage, that they keep the field of appearances open for mathematical propositions. On the other hand, they have greatly embarrassed themselves by those very conditions [space and time, eternal, infinite, and self-subsistent], when with the understanding they endeavour to go out beyond this field. The latter have indeed an advantage, in that the representations of space and time do not stand in their way if they seek to judge of objects, not as appearances but merely in their relation to the understanding. But since they are unable to appeal to a true and objectively valid *a priori* intuition, they can neither account for the possibility of *a priori* mathematical know-  
 A 41 ledge, nor bring the propositions of experience into necessary  
 B 58 agreement with it. On our theory of the true character of these two original forms of sensibility, both difficulties are removed.

## § 8

*General Observations on Transcendental Aesthetic*

I. To avoid all misapprehension, it is necessary to explain, as clearly as possible, what our view is regarding the  
 A 42 fundamental constitution of sensible knowledge in general.

What we have meant to say is that all our intuition is nothing but the representation of appearance; that the things which we intuit are not in themselves what we intuit them as being, nor their relations so constituted in themselves as they appear to us, and that if the subject, or even only the subjective constitution of the senses in general, be removed, the whole constitution and all the relations of objects in space and time, nay space and time themselves, would vanish. As appearances, they cannot exist in themselves, but only in us. What objects may be in themselves, and apart from all this receptivity of our sensibility, remains completely unknown to us. We know nothing but our mode of perceiving them—a mode which is peculiar to us, and not necessarily shared in by every being, though, certainly, by every human being. With this alone have we any concern. Space and time  
 B 60 are its pure forms, and sensation in general its matter. The former alone can we know *a priori*, that is, prior to all actual

perception; and such knowledge is therefore called pure intuition. The latter is that in our knowledge which leads to its being called *a posteriori* knowledge, that is, empirical intuition. The former inhere in our sensibility with absolute necessity, no matter of what kind our sensations may be; the latter can exist in varying modes. Even if we could bring our A 43 intuition to the highest degree of clearness, we should not thereby come any nearer to the constitution of objects in themselves. We should still know only our mode of intuition, that is, our sensibility. We should, indeed, know it completely, but always only under the conditions of space and time—conditions which are originally inherent in the subject. What the objects may be in themselves would never become known to us even through the most enlightened knowledge of that which is alone given us, namely, their appearance.

The concept of sensibility and of appearance would be falsified, and our whole teaching in regard to them would be rendered empty and useless, if we were to accept the view that our entire sensibility is nothing but a confused representation of things, containing only what belongs to them in themselves, but doing so under an aggregation of characters and partial representations that we do not consciously distinguish. For the difference between a confused and a clear representation B 61 is merely logical, and does not concern the content. No doubt the concept of 'right', in its common-sense usage, contains all that the subtlest speculation can develop out of it, though in its ordinary and practical use we are not conscious of the manifold representations comprised in this thought. But we cannot say that the common concept is therefore sensible, containing a mere appearance. For 'right' can never be an appear- A 44 ance; it is a concept in the understanding, and represents a property (the moral property) of actions, which belongs to them in themselves. The representation of a body in intuition, on the other hand, contains nothing that can belong to an object in itself, but merely the appearance of something, and the mode in which we are affected by that something; and this receptivity of our faculty of knowledge is termed sensibility. Even if that appearance could become completely transparent to us, such knowledge would remain *toto caelo* different from knowledge of the object in itself.

- The philosophy of Leibniz and Wolff, in thus treating the difference between the sensible and the intelligible as merely logical, has given a completely wrong direction to all investigations into the nature and origin of our knowledge. This difference is quite evidently transcendental. It does not merely
- B 62** concern their [logical] form, as being either clear or confused. It concerns their origin and content. It is not that by our sensibility we cannot know the nature of things in themselves in any save a confused fashion; we do not apprehend them in any fashion whatsoever. If our subjective constitution be removed, the represented object, with the qualities which sensible intuition bestows upon it, is nowhere to be found, and cannot possibly be found. For it is this subjective constitution which determines its form as appearance.
- A 45** We commonly distinguish in appearances that which is essentially inherent in their intuition and holds for sense in all human beings, from that which belongs to their intuition accidentally only, and is valid not in relation to sensibility in general but only in relation to a particular standpoint or to a peculiarity of structure in this or that sense. The former kind of knowledge is then declared to represent the object in itself, the latter its appearance only. But this distinction is merely empirical. If, as generally happens, we stop short at this point, and do not proceed, as we ought, to treat the empirical intuition as itself mere appearance, in which nothing that belongs to a thing in itself can be found, our transcendental distinction is lost. We then believe that we know things in themselves, and this in spite of the fact that in the world of sense, how-
- B 63** ever deeply we enquire into its objects, we have to do with nothing but appearances. The rainbow in a sunny shower may be called a mere appearance, and the rain the thing in itself. This is correct, if the latter concept be taken in a merely physical sense. Rain will then be viewed only as that which, in all experience and in all its various positions relative to the senses, is determined thus, and not otherwise, in our intuition. But if we take this empirical object in its general character,
- A 46** and ask, without considering whether or not it is the same for all human sense, whether it represents an object in itself (and by that we cannot mean the drops of rain, for these are already, as appearances, empirical objects). the question is

to the relation of the representation to the object at once becomes transcendental. We then realise that not only are the drops of rain mere appearances, but that even their round shape, nay even the space in which they fall, are nothing in themselves, but merely modifications or fundamental forms of our sensible intuition, and that the transcendental object remains unknown to us.

II. In confirmation of this theory of the ideality of both outer and inner sense, and therefore of all objects of the senses, as mere appearances, it is especially relevant to observe that everything in our knowledge which belongs to intuition—feeling of pleasure and pain, and the will, not being knowledge, are excluded—contains nothing but mere relations; namely, of locations in an intuition (extension), of change of location (motion), and of laws according to which this change is determined (moving forces). What it is that is present in this or that location, or what it is that is operative in the things themselves apart from change of location, is not given through intuition. Now a thing in itself cannot be known through mere relations; and we may therefore conclude that since outer sense gives us nothing but mere relations, this sense can contain in its representation only the relation of an object to the subject, and not the inner properties of the object in itself. This also holds true of inner sense, not only because the representations of the *outer senses* constitute the proper material with which we occupy our mind, but because the time in which we set these representations, which is itself antecedent to the consciousness of them in experience, and which underlies them as the formal condition of the mode in which we posit them in the mind, itself contains [only] relations of succession, co-existence, and of that which is coexistent with succession, the enduring. Now that which, as representation, can be antecedent to any and every act of thinking anything, is intuition; and if it contains nothing but relations, it is the form of intuition. Since this form does not represent anything save in so far as something is posited in the mind, it can be nothing but the mode in which the mind is affected through its own activity (namely, through this positing of its representation), B 68 and so is affected by itself; in other words, it is nothing but an inner sense in respect of the form of that sense. Everything

that is represented through a sense is so far always appearance, and consequently we must either refuse to admit that there is an inner sense, or we must recognise that the subject, which is the object of the sense, can be represented through it only as appearance, not as that subject would judge of itself if its intuition were self-activity only, that is, were intellectual. The whole difficulty is as to how a subject can inwardly intuit itself; and this is a difficulty common to every theory. The consciousness of self (apperception) is the simple representation of the 'I', and if all that is manifold in the subject were given by the *activity of the self*, the inner intuition would be intellectual. In man this consciousness demands inner perception of the manifold which is antecedently given in the subject, and the mode in which this manifold is given in the mind must, as non-spontaneous, be entitled sensibility. If the faculty of coming to consciousness of oneself is to seek out (to apprehend) that which lies in the mind, it must affect the mind, and only in this way can it give rise to an intuition of itself. But the form of this intuition, which exists antecedently in the mind, determines, in the representation of time, the mode in which the manifold is together in the mind, since it then intuits itself not as it would represent itself if immediately self-active, but as it is affected by itself, and therefore as it appears to itself, not as it is.

- B 69 III. When I say that the intuition of outer objects and the self-intuition of the mind alike represent the objects and the mind, in space and in time, as they affect our senses, that is, as they appear, I do not mean to say that these objects are a mere *illusion*. For in an appearance the objects, nay even the properties that we ascribe to them, are always regarded as something actually given. Since, however, in the relation of the given object to the subject, such properties depend upon the mode of intuition of the subject, this object as *appearance* is to be distinguished from itself as object *in itself*. Thus when I maintain that the quality of space and of time, in conformity with which, as a condition of their existence, I posit both bodies and my own soul, lies in my mode of intuition and not in those objects in themselves, I am not saying that bodies merely *seem* to be outside me, or that my soul only *seems* to be given in my self-consciousness. It would be my own fault, if

out of that which I ought to reckon as appearance, I made mere illusion. That does not follow as a consequence of our B 70 principle of the ideality of all our sensible intuitions—quite the contrary. It is only if we ascribe *objective reality* to these forms of representation, that it becomes impossible for us to prevent everything being thereby transformed into mere *illusion*. For if we regard space and time as properties which, if they are to be possible at all, must be found in things in themselves, and if we reflect on the absurdities in which we are then involved, in that two infinite things, which are not substances, nor anything actually inhering in substances, must yet have existence, nay, must be the necessary condition of the exist- B 71 ence of all things, and moreover must continue to exist, even although all existing things be removed,—we cannot blame the good Berkeley for degrading bodies to mere illusion. Nay, even our own existence, in being made thus dependent upon the self-subsistent reality of a non-entity, such as time, would necessarily be changed with it into sheer illusion—an absurdity of which no one has yet been guilty.

IV. In natural theology, in thinking an object [God], who not only can never be an object of intuition to us but cannot be an object of sensible intuition even to himself, we are careful to remove the conditions of time and space from his intuition—for all his knowledge must be intuition, and not *thought*, which always involves limitations. But with what right can we do this if we have previously made time and space forms of things in themselves, and such as would remain, as *a priori* conditions of the existence of things, even though the things themselves were removed? As conditions of all existence in general, they must also be conditions of the existence of God. If we do not thus treat them as objective forms of all things, B 72 the only alternative is to view them as subjective forms of our inner and outer intuition, which is termed sensible, for the very reason that it is *not original*, that is, is not such as can itself give us the existence of its object—a mode of intuition which, so far as we can judge, can belong only to the primordial being. 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.

This mode of intuiting in space and time need not be

limited to human sensibility. It may be that all finite, thinking beings necessarily agree with man in this respect, although we are not in a position to judge whether this is actually so. But however universal this mode of sensibility may be, it does not therefore cease to be sensibility. It is derivative (*intuitus derivativus*), not original (*intuitus originarius*), and therefore not an intellectual intuition. For the reason stated above, such intellectual intuition seems to belong solely to the primordial being, and can never be ascribed to a dependent being, dependent in its existence as well as in its intuition, and which through that intuition determines its existence solely in relation to given objects. This latter remark, however, must be taken only as an illustration of our aesthetic theory, not as forming part of the proof.

B 73

*Conclusion of the Transcendental Aesthetic*

Here, then, in pure *a priori* intuitions, space and time, we have one of the factors required for solution of the general problem of transcendental philosophy: *how are synthetic a priori judgments possible?* When in *a priori* judgment we seek to go out beyond the given concept, we come in the *a priori* intuitions upon that which cannot be discovered in the concept but which is certainly found *a priori* in the intuition corresponding to the concept, and can be connected with it synthetically. Such judgments, however, thus based on intuition, can never extend beyond objects of the senses; they are valid only for objects of possible experience.



# TRANSCENDENTAL DOCTRINE OF ELEMENTS

## SECOND PART

### TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC

#### INTRODUCTION

#### IDEA OF A TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC

##### I

##### LOGIC IN GENERAL

If the receptivity of our mind, its power of receiving representations in so far as it is in any wise affected, is to be entitled sensibility, then the mind's power of producing representations from itself, the spontaneity of knowledge, should be called the understanding. Our nature is so constituted that our intuition can never be other than sensible; that is, it contains only the mode in which we are affected by objects. The faculty, on the other hand, which enables us to *think* the object of sensible intuition is the understanding. To neither of these powers may a preference be given over the other. Without sensibility no object would be given to us, without understanding no object would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind. It is, therefore, just as necessary to make our concepts sensible, that is, to add the object to them in intuition, as to make our intuitions intelligible, that is, to bring them under concepts. These two powers or capacities cannot exchange their functions. The understanding can intuit nothing, the senses can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise.

{B 75  
A 51

B 76 But that is no reason for confounding the contribution of either with that of the other; rather is it a strong reason for  
 A 52 carefully separating and distinguishing the one from the other. We therefore distinguish the science of the rules of sensibility in general, that is, aesthetic, from the science of the rules of the understanding in general, that is, logic.

B 77 General logic is either pure or applied. In the former we  
 A 53 abstract from all empirical conditions under which our understanding is exercised, *i.e.* from the influence of the senses, the play of imagination, the laws of memory, the force of habit, inclination, etc., and so from all sources of prejudice, indeed from all causes from which this or that knowledge may arise or seem to arise. Pure general 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, be the content what it may, empirical or transcendental.

B 78 } There are therefore two rules which logicians must always  
 A 54 } bear in mind, in dealing with pure general logic:

1. As general logic, it abstracts from all content of the knowledge of understanding and from all differences in its objects, and deals with nothing but the mere form of thought.

2. As pure logic, it has nothing to do with empirical principles, and does not, as has sometimes been supposed, borrow anything from psychology, which therefore has no influence whatever on the canon of the understanding. Pure logic is a body of demonstrated doctrine, and everything in it must be certain entirely *a priori*.

## II

### TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC

General logic, as we have shown, abstracts from all content of knowledge, that is, from all relation of knowledge to the object, and considers only the logical form in the relation of any knowledge to other knowledge; that is, it treats of the form of thought in general. But since, as the Transcendental Aesthetic has shown, there are pure as well as empirical intuitions, a distinction might likewise be drawn between pure  
 B 80 and empirical thought of objects. 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 A 56 objects. General logic, on the other hand, has nothing to do with the origin of knowledge, but only considers representations, be they originally *a priori* in ourselves or only empirically given, according to the laws which the understanding employs when, in thinking, it relates them to one another. It deals therefore only with that form which the understanding is able to impart to the representations, from whatever source they may have arisen.

And here I make a remark which the reader must bear well in mind, as it extends its influence over all that follows. 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*. The term 'transcendental', that is to say, signifies such knowledge as concerns the *a priori* possibility of knowledge, or its *a priori* employment. B 81 Neither space nor any *a priori* geometrical determination of it is a transcendental representation; what can alone be entitled transcendental is the knowledge that these representations are not of empirical origin, and the possibility that they can yet relate *a priori* to objects of experience. The application of space to objects in general would likewise be transcendental, but, if restricted solely to objects of sense, it is empirical. The distinction between the transcendental and the empirical A 57 belongs therefore only to the critique of knowledge; it does not concern the relation of that knowledge to its objects.

In the expectation, therefore, that there may perhaps be concepts which relate *a priori* to objects, not as pure or sensible intuitions, but solely as acts of pure thought—that is, as concepts which are neither of empirical nor of aesthetic origin—we form for ourselves by anticipation the idea of a science of the knowledge which belongs to pure understanding and reason, whereby we think objects entirely *a priori*. Such a science, which should determine the origin, the scope, and

the objective validity of such knowledge, would have to be  
 B 82 called *transcendental logic*, because, unlike general logic,  
 which has to deal with both empirical and pure knowledge of  
 reason, it concerns itself with the laws of understanding and  
 of reason solely in so far as they relate *a priori* to objects.

## III

THE DIVISION OF GENERAL LOGIC INTO ANALYTIC  
AND DIALECTIC

B 84 } General logic resolves the whole formal procedure of the  
 A 60 } understanding and reason into its elements, and exhibits them  
 as principles of all logical criticism of our knowledge. This  
 part of logic, which may therefore be entitled *analytic*, yields  
 what is at least the negative touchstone of truth. Its rules  
 must be applied in the examination and appraising of the  
 B 85 form of all knowledge before we proceed to determine whether  
 their content contains positive truth in respect to their object.  
 But since the mere form of knowledge, however completely  
 it may be in agreement with logical laws, is far from being  
 sufficient to determine the material (objective) truth of know-  
 ledge, no one can venture with the help of logic alone to  
 judge regarding objects, or to make any assertion. We must  
 first, independently of logic, obtain reliable information; only  
 then are we in a position to enquire, in accordance with logical  
 laws, into the use of this information and its connection in a  
 coherent whole, or rather to test it by these laws. There is,  
 however, something so tempting in the possession of an art so  
 specious, through which we give to all our knowledge, how-  
 A 61 ever uninstructed we may be in regard to its content, the form  
 of understanding, that general logic, which is merely a *canon*  
 of judgment, has been employed as if it were an *organon* for  
 the actual production of at least the semblance of objective  
 assertions, and has thus been misapplied. General logic, when  
 thus treated as an organon, is called *dialectic*.

However various were the significations in which the  
 ancients used 'dialectic' as the title for a science or art, we can  
 safely conclude from their actual employment of it that with  
 B 86 them it was never anything else than the *logic of illusion*. It

was a sophistical art of giving to ignorance, and indeed to intentional sophistries, the appearance of truth, by the device of imitating the methodical thoroughness which logic prescribes, and of using its 'topic' to conceal the emptiness of its pretensions. Now it may be noted as a sure and useful warning, that general logic, if viewed as an organon, is always a logic of illusion, that is, dialectical. For logic teaches us nothing whatsoever regarding the content of knowledge, but lays down only the formal conditions of agreement with the understanding; and since these conditions can tell us nothing at all as to the objects concerned, any attempt to use this logic as an instrument (organon) that professes to extend and enlarge our knowledge can end in nothing but mere talk.

Such instruction is quite unbecoming the dignity of philosophy. The title 'dialectic' has therefore come to be otherwise employed, and has been assigned to logic, as a *critique of dialectical illusion*. This is the sense in which it is to be understood in this work. A 62

## IV

THE DIVISION OF TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC INTO  
TRANSCENDENTAL ANALYTIC AND DIALECTIC

In a transcendental logic we isolate the understanding—as above, in the Transcendental Aesthetic, the sensibility—separating out from our knowledge that part of thought which has its origin solely in the understanding. The employment of this pure knowledge depends upon the condition that objects to which it can be applied be given to us in intuition. In the absence of intuition all our knowledge is without objects, and therefore remains entirely empty. That part of transcendental logic which deals with the elements of the pure knowledge yielded by understanding, and the principles without which no object can be thought, is transcendental analytic. It is a logic of truth. For no knowledge can contradict it without at once losing all content, that is, all relation to any object, and A 63 therefore all truth. But since it is very tempting to use these pure modes of knowledge of the understanding and these principles by themselves, and even beyond the limits of experience, which alone can yield the matter (objects) to which those pure B 88

concepts of understanding can be applied, the understanding is led to incur the risk of making, with a mere show of rationality, a material use of its pure and merely formal principles, and of passing judgments upon objects without distinction—upon objects which are not given to us, nay, perhaps cannot in any way be given. The employment of the pure understanding then becomes dialectical. The second part of transcendental logic must therefore form a critique of this dialectical illusion, and is called transcendental dialectic.

# TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC

## FIRST DIVISION

### TRANSCENDENTAL ANALYTIC

#### BOOK I

#### ANALYTIC OF CONCEPTS

#### CHAPTER I

#### THE TRANSCENDENTAL CLUE TO THE DISCOVERY OF ALL PURE CONCEPTS OF THE UNDERSTANDING

TRANSCENDENTAL philosophy, in seeking for its concepts, has the advantage and also the duty of proceeding according to a single principle. For these concepts spring, pure and unmixed, out of the understanding which is an absolute unity; and must therefore be connected with each other according to one concept or idea. Such a connection supplies us with a rule, by which we are enabled to assign its proper place to each pure concept of the understanding, and by which we can determine in an *a priori* manner their systematic completeness. Otherwise we should be dependent in these matters on our own discretionary judgment or merely on chance.

{A 67  
B 92

#### Section I

#### THE LOGICAL EMPLOYMENT OF THE UNDERSTANDING

The understanding has thus far been explained merely negatively, as a non-sensible faculty of knowledge. Now since without sensibility we cannot have any intuition, understand-

- ing cannot be a faculty of intuition. But besides intuition there
- B 93** is no other mode of knowledge except by means of concepts. The knowledge yielded by understanding, or at least by the human understanding, must therefore be by means of concepts, and so is not intuitive, but discursive. Whereas all intuitions, as sensible, rest on affections, concepts rest on functions. By 'function' I mean the unity of the act of bringing various representations under one common representation. Concepts are based on the spontaneity of thought, sensible intuitions on the receptivity of impressions. Now the only use which the understanding can make of these concepts is to judge by means of them. Since no representation, save when it is an intuition, is in immediate relation to an object, no concept is ever related to an object immediately, but to some other representation of it, be that other representation an intuition, or itself a concept. Judgment is therefore the mediate knowledge of an object, that is, the representation of a representation of it. In every judgment there is a concept which holds of many representations, and among them of a given representation that is immediately related to an object. Thus in the judgment, 'all bodies are divisible', the concept of the divisible applies to various other concepts, but is here applied in particular to
- A 69** the concept of body, and this concept again to certain appearances that present themselves to us. These objects, therefore, are mediately represented through the concept of divisibility. Accordingly, all judgments are functions of unity among our
- B 94** representations; instead of an immediate representation, a *higher* representation, which comprises the immediate representation and various others, is used in knowing the object, and thereby much possible knowledge is collected into one. Now we can reduce all acts of the understanding to judgments, and the *understanding* may therefore be represented as a *faculty of judgment*. The functions of the understanding can, therefore, be discovered if we can give an exhaustive statement of the functions of unity in judgments. That this can quite easily be done will be shown in the next section.



## Section 2

## § 9

THE LOGICAL FUNCTION OF THE UNDERSTANDING IN  
JUDGMENTS

If we abstract from all content of a judgment, and consider only the mere form of understanding, we find that the function of thought in judgment can be brought under four heads, each of which contains three moments. They may be conveniently represented in the following table:

I		
<i>Quantity of Judgments</i>		
Universal		
Particular		
Singular		
II		III
<i>Quality</i>		<i>Relation</i>
Affirmative		Categorical
Negative		Hypothetical
Infinite		Disjunctive
IV		
<i>Modality</i>		
Problematic		
Assertoric		
Apodeictic		

As this division appears to depart in some, though not in B 96 any essential respects, from the technical distinctions ordinarily recognised by logicians, the following observations may A 71 serve to guard against any possible misunderstanding.

1. Logicians are justified in saying that, in the employment of judgments in syllogisms, singular judgments can be treated like those that are universal. For, since they have no extension at all, the predicate cannot relate to part only of that which is contained in the concept of the subject, and be excluded from the rest. The predicate is valid of that concept, without any such exception, just as if it were a general concept

and had an extension to the whole of which the predicate applied. If, on the other hand, we compare a singular with a universal judgment, merely as knowledge, in respect of quantity, the singular stands to the universal as unity to infinity, and is therefore in itself essentially different from the universal.

B 97 2. In like manner *infinite judgments* must, in transcendental logic, be distinguished from those that are *affirm-*

A 72 *ative*, although in general logic they are rightly classed with them, and do not constitute a separate member of the division. By the proposition, 'The soul is non-mortal', I have, so far as the logical form is concerned, really made an affirmation. I locate the soul in the unlimited sphere of non-mortal beings.

B 98 } But these judgments, though infinite in respect of their logical  
A 73 } extension, are, in respect of the content of their knowledge, limitative only, and cannot therefore be passed over in a transcendental table of all moments of thought in judgments, since the function of the understanding thereby expressed may perhaps be of importance in the field of its pure *a priori* knowledge.

3. All relations of thought in judgments are (a) of the predicate to the subject, (b) of the ground to its consequence, (c) of the divided knowledge and of the members of the division, taken together, to each other. In this last kind of judgment, the disjunctive, there is a certain community of the known constituents, such that they mutually exclude each other, and yet thereby determine *in their totality* the true knowledge. For, when taken together, they constitute the whole content of one given knowledge. This is all that need here be considered, so far as concerns what follows.

4. The *modality* of judgments is a quite peculiar function. B 100 Its distinguishing characteristic is that it contributes nothing to the content of the judgment (for, besides quantity, quality, and relation, there is nothing that constitutes the content of a judgment), but concerns only the value of the copula in relation to thought in general. Problematic judgments are those in which affirmation or negation is taken as merely A 75 possible (optional). In assertoric judgments affirmation or negation is viewed as real (true), and in apodeictic judgments as necessary.

## Section 3

B 102

## § 10

THE PURE CONCEPTS OF THE UNDERSTANDING, OR  
CATEGORIES

General logic, as has been repeatedly said, abstracts from all content of knowledge, and looks to some other source, whatever that may be, for the representations which it is to transform into concepts by process of analysis. Transcendental logic, on the other hand, has lying before it a manifold of *a priori* sensibility, presented by transcendental aesthetic, as material for the concepts of pure understanding. In the absence of this material those concepts would be without any content, therefore entirely empty. Space and time contain a manifold of pure *a priori* intuition, but at the same time are conditions of the receptivity of our mind—conditions under which alone it can receive representations of objects, and which therefore must also always affect the concept of these objects. But if this manifold is to be known, the spontaneity of our thought requires that it be gone through in a certain way, taken up, and connected. This act I name *synthesis*. A 77

Synthesis in general, as we shall hereafter see, is the mere result of the power of imagination, a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge whatsoever, but of which we are scarcely ever conscious. To bring this synthesis to concepts is a function which belongs to the understanding, and it is through this function of the understanding that we first obtain knowledge properly so called. 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 into its representations, by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general. On this account we are entitled to call these representations pure concepts of the understanding, and to regard them as applying *a priori* to objects—a conclusion which general logic is not in a position to establish. { B 103  
A 78

In this manner there arise precisely the same number of { A 79  
B 105

pure concepts of the understanding which apply *a priori* to objects of intuition in general, as, in the preceding table, there have been found to be logical functions in all possible judgments. For these functions specify the understanding completely, and yield an exhaustive inventory of its powers. These  
**A 80** concepts we shall, with Aristotle, call *categories*, for our primary purpose is the same as his, although widely diverging from it in manner of execution.

**B 106**

## TABLE OF CATEGORIES

## I

*Of Quantity*

Unity  
 Plurality  
 Totality

## II

*Of Quality*

Reality  
 Negation  
 Limitation

## III

*Of Relation*

Of Inherence and Subsistence  
 (*substantia et accidens*)  
 Of Causality and Dependence  
 (*cause and effect*)  
 Of Community (reciprocity  
 between agent and patient)

## IV

*Of Modality*

Possibility—Impossibility  
 Existence—Non-existence  
 Necessity—Contingency

This then is the list of all original pure concepts of synthesis that the understanding contains within itself *a priori*. Indeed, it is because it contains these concepts that it is called pure understanding; for by them alone can it *understand* anything in the manifold of intuition, that is, think an object of intuition. This division is developed systematically from  
**A 81** a common principle, namely, the faculty of judgment (which is the same as the faculty of thought). It has not arisen rhaps-

sodically, as the result of a haphazard search after pure concepts, the complete enumeration of which, as based on induction only, could never be guaranteed. Nor could we, if this B 107 were our procedure, discover why just these concepts, and no others, have their seat in the pure understanding. It was an enterprise worthy of an acute thinker like Aristotle to make search for these fundamental concepts. But as he did so on no principle, he merely picked them up as they came his way, and at first procured ten of them, which he called *categories* (predicaments). Afterwards he believed that he had discovered five others, which he added under the name of post-predicaments. But his table still remained defective. Besides, there are to be found in it some modes of pure sensibility (*quando, ubi, situs*, also *prius, simul*), and an empirical concept (*motus*), none of which have any place in a table of the concepts that trace their origin to the understanding. Aristotle's list also enumerates among the original concepts some derivative concepts (*actio, passio*); and of the original concepts some are entirely lacking.

In this connection, it is to be remarked that the categories, as the true primary concepts of the pure understanding, have also their pure derivative concepts. These could not be passed over in a complete system of transcendental philosophy, but in a merely critical essay the simple mention of the fact may A 82 suffice.

## § 11

B 109

This table of categories suggests some nice points, which may perhaps have important consequences in regard to the scientific form of all modes of knowledge obtainable by reason.

(1) While the table contains four classes of the concepts of understanding, it may, in the first instance, be divided into two groups; those in the first group being concerned with objects of intuition, pure as well as empirical, those in the second group with the existence of these objects, in their relation either to each other or to the understanding. The categories in the first group I would entitle the *mathematical*, those in the second group the *dynamical*. The former have no correlates; these are to be met with only in the second

group. This distinction must have some ground in the nature of the understanding.

- (2) In view of the fact that all *a priori* division of concepts must be by dichotomy, it is significant that in each class the number of the categories is always the same, namely, three. Further, it may be observed that the third category in each class always arises from the combination of the second category with the first. Thus *allness* or *totality* is just plurality considered as unity; *limitation* is simply reality combined with negation; *community* is the causality of substances reciprocally determining one another; lastly, *necessity* is just the existence which is given through possibility itself. It must not be supposed, however, that the third category is therefore merely a derivative, and not a primary, concept of the pure understanding. For the combination of the first and second concepts, in order that the third may be produced, requires a special act of the understanding, which is not identical with that which is exercised in the case of the first and the second.

## ANALYTIC OF CONCEPTS

### CHAPTER II

#### THE DEDUCTION OF THE PURE CONCEPTS OF UNDERSTANDING

##### Section I

##### § 13

##### THE PRINCIPLES OF ANY TRANSCENDENTAL DEDUCTION

JURISTS, when speaking of rights and claims, distinguish in a legal action the question of right (*quid juris*) from the question of fact (*quid facti*); and they demand that both be proved. Proof of the former, which has to state the right or the legal claim, they entitle the *deduction*. Many empirical concepts are employed without question from anyone. Since experience is always available for the proof of their objective reality, we believe ourselves, even without a deduction, to be justified in appropriating to them a meaning, an ascribed significance. B 117 But there are also usurpatory concepts, such as *fortune, fate*, which, though allowed to circulate by almost universal indulgence, are yet from time to time challenged by the question: *quid juris*. This demand for a deduction involves us in considerable perplexity, no clear legal title, sufficient to justify A 85 their employment, being obtainable either from experience or from reason.

Now among the manifold concepts which form the highly complicated web of human knowledge, there are some which are marked out for pure *a priori* employment, in complete independence of all experience; and their right to be so employed always demands a deduction. For since empirical

proofs do not suffice to justify this kind of employment, we are faced by the problem how these concepts can relate to objects which they yet do not obtain from any experience. The explanation of the manner in which concepts can thus relate *a priori* to objects I entitle their transcendental deduction; and from it I distinguish empirical deduction, which shows the manner in which a concept is acquired through experience and through reflection upon experience, and which therefore concerns, not its legitimacy, but only its *de facto* mode of origination.

- B 118** 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. To seek an empirical deduction of either of these types of concept would be labour entirely lost. For their distinguishing feature consists just in  
**A 86** this, that they relate to their objects without having borrowed from experience anything that can serve in the representation of these objects. If, therefore, a deduction of such concepts is indispensable, it must in any case be transcendental.

We can, however, with regard to these concepts, as with regard to all knowledge, seek to discover in experience, if not the principle of their possibility, at least the occasioning causes of their production. The impressions of the senses supplying the first stimulus, the whole faculty of knowledge opens out to them, and experience is brought into existence. That experience contains two very dissimilar elements, namely, the *matter* of knowledge [obtained] from the senses, and a certain *form* for the ordering of this matter, [obtained] from the inner source of the pure intuition and thought which, on occasion of the sense-impressions, are first brought into action and yield concepts. Such an investigation of the first strivings of our faculty of knowledge, whereby it advances  
**B 119** from particular perceptions to universal concepts, is undoubtedly of great service. We are indebted to the celebrated Locke for opening out this new line of enquiry. But a *deduction* of the pure *a priori* concepts can never be obtained in this manner; it is not to be looked for in any such direction. For in view of their subsequent employment, which has to be



entirely independent of experience, they must be in a position to show a certificate of birth quite other than that of descent from experiences. Since this attempted physiological derivation concerns a *quaestio facti*, it cannot strictly be called deduction; and I shall therefore entitle it the explanation of the *possession* of pure knowledge. Plainly the only deduction that can be given of this knowledge is one that is transcendental, not empirical. In respect to pure *a priori* concepts the latter type of deduction is an utterly useless enterprise which can be engaged in only by those who have failed to grasp the quite peculiar nature of these modes of knowledge.

We have already been able with but little difficulty to explain how the concepts of space and time, although *a priori* modes of knowledge, must necessarily relate to objects, and how independently of all experience they make possible a synthetic knowledge of objects. For since only by means of such pure forms of sensibility can an object appear to us, and so be an object of empirical intuition, space and time are pure intuitions which contain *a priori* the condition of the possibility of objects as appearances, and the synthesis which takes place in them has objective validity. {B 121  
A 89

The categories of understanding, on the other hand, do not represent the conditions under which objects are given in intuition. Objects may, therefore, appear to us without their being under the necessity of being related to the functions of understanding; and understanding need not, therefore, contain their *a priori* conditions. Thus a difficulty such as we did not meet with in the field of sensibility is here presented, namely, how *subjective conditions of thought* can have *objective validity*, that is, can furnish conditions of the possibility of all knowledge of objects.

If we thought to escape these toilsome enquiries by saying that experience continually presents examples of such regularity among appearances and so affords abundant opportunity of abstracting the concept of cause, and at the same time of verifying the objective validity of such a concept, we should be overlooking the fact that the concept of cause can never arise in this manner. It must either be grounded completely *a priori* in the understanding, or must be entirely given up as a mere phantom of the brain. For this concept makes {B 123  
A 91

strict demand that something, A, should be such that something else, B, follows from it *necessarily and in accordance with an absolutely universal rule*. Appearances do indeed present cases from which a rule can be obtained according to which something usually happens, but they never prove the sequence to be *necessary*. To the synthesis of cause and effect there belongs a dignity which cannot be empirically expressed, namely, that the effect not only succeeds upon the cause, but that it is posited *through* it and arises *out of* it. This strict universality of the rule is never a characteristic of empirical rules; they can acquire through induction only comparative  
 A 92 universality, that is, extensive applicability. If we were to treat pure concepts of understanding as merely empirical products, we should be making a complete change in [the manner of] their employment.

## § 14

*Transition to the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories*

There are only two possible ways in which synthetic representations and their objects can establish connection, obtain necessary relation to one another, and, as it were, meet one another. Either the object alone must make the representation possible, or the representation alone must make the  
 B 125 object possible. In the former case, this relation is only empirical, and the representation is never possible *a priori*. This is true of appearances, as regards that [element] in them which belongs to sensation. In the latter case, 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. None the less the representation is *a priori* determinant of the object, if it be the case that only through the representation is it possible to *know* anything *as an object*. Now there are two conditions under which alone the knowledge of an object is possible, first, *intuition*, through which  
 A 93 it is given, though only as appearance; secondly, *concept*, through which an object is thought corresponding to this intuition. It is evident from the above that the first condition, namely, that under which alone objects can be intuited, does

actually lie *a priori* in the mind as the formal ground of the objects. All appearances necessarily agree with this formal condition of sensibility, since only through it can they appear, that is, be empirically intuited and given. The question now arises whether *a priori* concepts do not also serve as antecedent conditions under which alone anything can be, if not intuited, yet thought as object in general. In that case all empirical knowledge of objects would necessarily conform to such B 126 concepts, because only as thus presupposing them is anything possible as *object of experience*. 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. Concepts of objects in general thus underlie all empirical knowledge as its *a priori* conditions. The objective validity of the categories as *a priori* concepts rests, therefore, on the fact that, so far as the form of thought is concerned, through them alone does experience become possible. They relate of necessity and *a priori* to objects of experience, for the reason that only by means of them can any object whatsoever of experience be thought.

The transcendental deduction of all *a priori* concepts has A 94 thus a principle according to which the whole enquiry must be directed, namely, that they must be recognised as *a priori* conditions of the possibility of experience, whether of the intuition which is to be met with in it or of the thought. Concepts which yield the objective ground of the possibility of experience are for this very reason necessary. But the unfolding of the experience wherein they are encountered is not their deduction; it is only their illustration. For on any such exposition they would be merely accidental. Save through their original relation to possible experience, in which all B 127 objects of knowledge are found, their relation to any one object would be quite incomprehensible.

The illustrious Locke, failing to take account of these considerations, and meeting with pure concepts of the understanding in experience, deduced them also from experience, and yet proceeded so *inconsequently* that he attempted with their aid to obtain knowledge which far transcends all limits of experience. David Hume recognised that, in order to be able to do this, it was necessary that these concepts should

have an *a priori* origin. But since he could not explain how it can be possible that the understanding must think concepts, which are not in themselves connected in the understanding, as being necessarily connected in the object, and since it never occurred to him that the understanding might itself, perhaps, through these concepts, be the author of the experience in which its objects are found, he was constrained to derive them from experience, namely, from a subjective necessity (that is, from *custom*), which arises from repeated association in experience, and which comes mistakenly to be regarded as objective. But from these premisses he argued quite consistently. It is impossible, he declared, with these concepts and the principles to which they give rise, to pass beyond the limits of experience. Now this *empirical* derivation, in which both philosophers agree, cannot be reconciled with the scientific *a priori* knowledge which we do actually possess, namely, *pure mathematics* and *general science of nature*; and this fact therefore suffices to disprove such derivation.

B 128 While the former of these two illustrious men opened a wide door to *enthusiasm*—for if reason once be allowed such rights, it will no longer allow itself to be kept within bounds by vaguely defined recommendations of moderation—the other gave himself over entirely to *scepticism*, having, as he believed, discovered that what had hitherto been regarded as reason was but an all-prevalent illusion infecting our faculty of knowledge. We now propose to make trial whether it be not possible to find for human reason safe conduct between these two rocks, assigning to her determinate limits, and yet keeping open for her the whole field of her appropriate activities.

# THE DEDUCTION OF THE PURE CONCEPTS OF UNDERSTANDING <sup>1</sup>

[*In 1st edition*]

## Section 2

### THE *A PRIORI* GROUNDS OF THE POSSIBILITY OF EXPERIENCE

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. For it would then have no content, since no intuition corresponds to it; and intuitions in general, through which objects can be given to us, constitute the field, the whole object, of possible experience. An *a priori* concept which did not relate to experience would be only the logical form of a concept, not the concept itself through which something is thought.

Pure *a priori* concepts, if such exist, cannot indeed contain anything empirical; yet, none the less, they can serve solely as *a priori* conditions of a possible experience. Upon this ground alone can their objective reality rest.

If, therefore, we seek to discover how pure concepts of understanding are possible, we must enquire what are the *a priori* conditions upon which the possibility of experience A 96 rests, and which remain as its underlying grounds when everything empirical is abstracted from appearances. A concept which universally and adequately expresses such a formal and

<sup>1</sup> [The Deduction, as here given, up to p. 90, was omitted in B. The Deduction, as restated in B, is given below, pp. 91 to 105.]

objective condition of experience would be entitled a pure concept of understanding. Certainly, once I am in possession of pure concepts of understanding, I can think objects which may be impossible, or which, though perhaps in themselves possible, cannot be given in any experience. For in the connecting of these concepts something may be omitted which yet necessarily belongs to the condition of a possible experience (as in the concept of a spirit). Or, it may be, pure concepts are extended further than experience can follow (as with the concept of God). But the *elements* of all modes of *a priori* knowledge, even of capricious and incongruous fictions, though they cannot, indeed, be derived from experience, since in that case they would not be knowledge *a priori*, must none the less always contain the pure *a priori* conditions of a possible experience and of an empirical object. Otherwise nothing would be thought through them, and they themselves, being without data, could never arise even in thought.

The concepts which thus contain *a priori* the pure thought involved in every experience, we find in the categories. If we  
 A 97 can prove that by their means alone an object can be thought, this will be a sufficient deduction of them, and will justify their objective validity. But since in such a thought more than simply the faculty of thought, the understanding, is brought into play, and since this faculty itself, as a faculty of *knowledge* that is meant to relate to objects, calls for explanation in regard to the possibility of such relation, we must first of all consider, not in their empirical but in their transcendental constitution, the subjective sources which form the *a priori* foundation of the possibility of experience.

If each representation were completely foreign to every other, standing apart in isolation, no such thing as knowledge would ever arise. For knowledge is [essentially] a whole in which representations stand compared and connected. As sense contains a manifold in its intuition, I ascribe to it a synopsis. But to such synopsis a synthesis must always correspond; receptivity can make knowledge possible only when combined with spontaneity. Now this spontaneity is the ground of a threefold synthesis which must necessarily be found in all knowledge; namely, the *apprehension* of representations as modifications of the mind in intuition, their

*reproduction* in imagination, and their *recognition* in a concept. These point to three subjective sources of knowledge which make possible the understanding itself—and consequently all experience as its empirical product. A 98

### 1. *The Synthesis of Apprehension in Intuition*

Whatever the origin of our representations, whether they are due to the influence of outer things, or are produced through inner causes, whether they arise *a priori*, or being appearances have an empirical origin, they must all, as modifications of the mind, belong to inner sense. All our knowledge is thus finally subject to time, the formal condition of inner sense. In it they must all be ordered, connected, and brought into relation. This is a general observation which, throughout what follows, must be borne in mind as being quite fundamental. A 99

Every intuition contains in itself a manifold which can be represented as a manifold only in so far as the mind distinguishes the time in the sequence of one impression upon another; for each representation, *in so far as it is contained in a single moment*, can never be anything but absolute unity. In order that unity of intuition may arise out of this manifold (as is required in the representation of space) it must first be run through, and held together. This act I name the *synthesis of apprehension*, because it is directed immediately upon intuition, which does indeed offer a manifold, but a manifold which can never be represented as a manifold, and as contained *in a single representation*, save in virtue of such a synthesis.

This synthesis of apprehension must also be exercised *a priori*, that is, in respect of representations which are not empirical. For without it we should never have *a priori* the representations either of space or of time. They can be produced only through the synthesis of the manifold which sensibility presents in its original receptivity. We have thus a pure synthesis of apprehension. A 100

### 2. *The Synthesis of Reproduction in Imagination*

Experience as such necessarily presupposes the reproducibility of appearances. When I seek to draw a line in A 101

thought, or to think of the time from one noon to another, or even to represent to myself some particular number, obviously the various manifold representations that are involved must be apprehended by me in thought one after the other. But if I were always to drop out of thought the preceding representations (the first parts of the line, the antecedent parts of the time period, or the units in the order represented), and did not reproduce them while advancing to those that follow, a complete representation would never be obtained: none of the above-mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time, could arise.

The synthesis of apprehension is thus inseparably bound up with the synthesis of reproduction. And as the former constitutes the transcendental ground of the possibility of all modes of knowledge whatsoever—of those that are pure *a priori* no less than of those that are empirical—the reproductive synthesis of the imagination is to be counted among the transcendental acts of the mind. We shall therefore entitle this faculty the transcendental faculty of imagination.

A 103

### 3. *The Synthesis of Recognition in a Concept*

If we were not conscious that what we think is the same as what we thought a moment before, all reproduction in the series of representations would be useless. For it would in its present state be a new representation which would not in any way belong to the act whereby it was to be gradually generated. The manifold of the representation would never, therefore, form a whole, since it would lack that unity which only consciousness can impart to it. If, in counting, I forgot that the units, which now hover before me, have been added to one another in succession, I should never know that a total is being produced through this successive addition of unit to unit, and so would remain ignorant of the number. For the concept of the number is nothing but the consciousness of this unity of synthesis.

The word 'concept' might of itself suggest this remark. For this unitary consciousness is what combines the manifold, successively intuited, and thereupon also reproduced, into  
A 104 one representation. Such consciousness, however indistinct,



must always be present; without it, concepts, and therewith knowledge of objects, are altogether impossible.

At this point we must make clear to ourselves what we mean by the expression 'an object of representations'. We have stated above that appearances are themselves nothing but sensible representations, which, as such and in themselves, must not be taken as objects capable of existing outside our power of representation. 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= $x$ , since outside our knowledge we have nothing which we could set over against this knowledge as corresponding to it.

Now we find that our thought of the relation of all knowledge to its object carries with it an element of necessity; the object is viewed as that which prevents our modes of knowledge from being haphazard or arbitrary, and which determines them *a priori* in some definite fashion. For in so far as they are to relate to an object, they must necessarily agree with one another, that is, must possess that unity which constitutes the concept of an object.

All necessity, without exception, is grounded in a transcendental condition. There must, therefore, be a transcendental 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, a ground without which it would be impossible to think any object for our intuitions; for this object is no more than that something, the concept of which expresses such a necessity of synthesis. A 106

This original and transcendental condition is no other than *transcendental apperception*. Consciousness of self according A 107 to the determinations of our state in inner perception is merely empirical, and always changing. No fixed and abiding self can present itself in this flux of inner appearances. Such consciousness is usually named *inner sense*, or *empirical apperception*. What has *necessarily* to be represented as numerically identical cannot be thought as such through empirical data. To render such a transcendental presupposition valid, there

must be a condition which precedes all experience, and which makes experience itself possible.

There can be in us no modes of knowledge, no connection or unity of one mode of knowledge with another, without that unity of consciousness which precedes all data of intuitions, and by relation to which representation of objects is alone possible. This pure original unchangeable consciousness I shall name *transcendental apperception*. That it deserves this name is clear from the fact that even the purest objective unity, namely, that of the *a priori* concepts (space and time), is only possible through relation of the intuitions to such unity of consciousness. The numerical unity of this apperception is thus the *a priori* ground of all concepts, just as the manifoldness of space and time is the *a priori* ground of the intuitions of sensibility.

Now, also, we are in a position to determine more adequately our concept of an *object* in general. All representations have, as representations, their object, and can themselves in turn become objects of other representations. Appearances are  
 A 109 the sole objects which can be given to us immediately, and that in them which relates immediately to the object is called intuition. But these appearances are not things in themselves; they are only representations, which in turn have their object—an object which cannot itself be intuited by us, and which may, therefore, be named the non-empirical, that is, transcendental object = *x*.

The pure concept of this transcendental object, which in reality throughout all our knowledge is always one and the same, is what can alone confer upon all our empirical concepts in general relation to an object, that is, objective reality. This concept cannot contain any determinate intuition, and therefore refers only to that unity which must be met with in any manifold of knowledge which stands in relation to an object. This relation is nothing but the necessary unity of consciousness, and therefore also of the synthesis of the manifold, through a common function of the mind, which combines it in one representation. Since this unity must be regarded as necessary *a priori*—otherwise knowledge would be without an object—the relation to a transcendental object, that is, the  
 A 110 objective reality of our empirical knowledge, rests on the

transcendental law, that all appearances, in so far as through them objects are to be given to us, must stand under those *a priori* rules of synthetical unity whereby the interrelating of these appearances in empirical intuition is alone possible. In other words, appearances in experience must stand under the conditions of the necessary unity of apperception, just as in mere intuition they must be subject to the formal conditions of space and of time. Only thus can any knowledge become possible at all.

#### 4. *Preliminary Explanation of the Possibility of the Categories, as Knowledge a priori*

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. Otherwise it would be possible for appearances to crowd in **A 111** upon the soul, and yet to be such as would never allow of experience. The appearances might, indeed, constitute intuition without thought, but not knowledge; and consequently would be for us as good as nothing.

Now I maintain that the categories, above cited, are nothing but the conditions of thought in a possible experience, just as space and time are the conditions of intuition for that same experience. They are fundamental concepts by which we think objects in general for appearances, and have therefore *a priori* objective validity. This is exactly what we desired to prove.

But the possibility, indeed the necessity, of these categories rests on the relation in which our entire sensibility, and with it all possible appearances, stand to original apperception. In original apperception everything must necessarily conform to the conditions of the thoroughgoing unity of self-consciousness, that is, to the universal functions of synthesis, **A 112** namely, of that synthesis according to concepts in which alone apperception can demonstrate *a priori* its complete and necessary identity. Thus the concept of a cause is nothing but a synthesis (of that which follows in the time-series, with other appearances) *according to concepts*; and without such unity,

which has its *a priori* rule, and which subjects the appearances to itself, no thoroughgoing, universal, and therefore necessary, unity of consciousness would be met with in the manifold of perceptions. These perceptions would not then belong to any experience, consequently would be without an object, merely a blind play of representations, less even than a dream.

All attempts to derive these pure concepts of understanding from experience, and so to ascribe to them a merely empirical origin, are entirely vain and useless. I need not insist upon the fact that, for instance, the concept of a cause involves the character of necessity, which no experience can yield. Experience does indeed show that one appearance customarily follows upon another, but not that this sequence is necessary, nor that we can argue *a priori* and with complete universality from the antecedent, viewed as a condition, to the consequent. But as regards the empirical rule of *association*, which we must postulate throughout when we assert that everything  
 A 113 in the series of events is so subject to rule that nothing ever happens save in so far as something precedes it on which it universally follows—upon what, I ask, does this rule, as a law of nature, rest? How is this association itself possible? The ground of the possibility of the association of the manifold, so far as it lies in the object, is named the *affinity* of the manifold. I therefore ask, how are we to make comprehensible to ourselves the thoroughgoing affinity of appearances, whereby they stand and *must* stand under unchanging laws?

On my principles it is easily explicable. All possible appearances, as representations, belong to the totality of a possible self-consciousness. For nothing can come to our knowledge save in terms of this original apperception. Now, since this identity must necessarily enter into the synthesis of all the manifold of appearances, so far as the synthesis is to yield empirical knowledge, the appearances are subject to *a priori* conditions, with which the synthesis of their apprehension must be in complete accordance. The representation of a universal condition according to which a certain manifold can be posited in uniform fashion is called a *rule*, and, when it *must* be so posited, a *law*. Thus all appearances stand in  
 A 114 thoroughgoing connection according to necessary laws, and

therefore in a transcendental affinity, of which the empirical is a mere consequence.

That nature should direct itself according to our subjective ground of apperception, and should indeed depend upon it in respect of its conformity to law, sounds very strange and absurd. But when we consider that this nature is not a thing in itself but is merely an aggregate of appearances, so many representations of the mind, we shall not be surprised that we can discover it only in the radical faculty of all our knowledge, namely, in transcendental apperception, in that unity on account of which alone it can be entitled object of all possible experience, that is, nature. Nor shall we be surprised that just for this very reason this unity can be known *a priori*, and therefore as necessary. Were the unity given in itself independently of the first sources of our thought, this would never be possible. We should not then know of any source from which we could obtain the synthetic propositions asserting such a universal unity of nature. For they would then have to be derived from the objects of nature themselves; and as this could take place only empirically, none but a merely accidental unity could be obtained, which would fall far short of the necessary interconnection that we have in mind when we speak of nature:

*Summary Representation of the Correctness of this Deduction A 128  
of the pure Concepts of Understanding, and of its being  
the only Deduction possible*

If the objects with which our knowledge has to deal were things in themselves, we could have no *a priori* concepts of them. For from what source could we obtain the concepts? If we derived them from the object (leaving aside the question how the object could become known to us), our concepts would A 129 be merely empirical, not *a priori*. And if we derived them from the self, that which is merely in us could not determine the character of an object distinct from our representations, that is, could not be a ground why a thing should exist characterised by that which we have in our thought, and why such a representation should not, rather, be altogether empty. But if, on the other hand, we have to deal only with appearances, it is not merely possible, but necessary, that certain *a priori*

concepts should precede empirical knowledge of objects. For since a mere modification of our sensibility can never be met with outside us, the objects, as appearances, constitute an object which is merely in us. 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. Thus the mode in which the manifold of sensible representation (intuition) belongs to one consciousness precedes all knowledge of the object as the intellectual form of such knowledge, and itself constitutes a formal *a priori* knowledge of all objects, so far as they are thought. Such connection and unity must therefore precede all experience, and are required for the very possibility of it in its formal aspect. From this point of view, the only feasible one, our deduction of the categories has been developed.

# DEDUCTION OF THE PURE CONCEPTS OF UNDERSTANDING<sup>1</sup>

[As restated in 2nd edition]

## Section 2

### TRANSCENDENTAL DEDUCTION OF THE PURE CONCEPTS OF THE UNDERSTANDING

#### § 15

#### *The Possibility of Combination in General*

THE manifold of representations can be given in an intuition which is purely sensible, that is, nothing but receptivity; and the form of this intuition can lie *a priori* in our faculty of representation, without being anything more than the mode in which the subject is affected. But the combination (*conjunctio*) of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses, and cannot, therefore, be already contained in the pure form of sensible intuition. For it is an act of spontaneity of the B 130 faculty of representation; and since this faculty, to distinguish it from sensibility, must be entitled understanding, all combination—be we conscious of it or not, be it a combination of the manifold of intuition, empirical or non-empirical, or of various concepts—is an act of the understanding. To this act the general title 'synthesis' may be assigned, as indicating that we cannot represent to ourselves anything as combined in the object which we have not ourselves previously combined, and that of all representations *combination* is the only one which cannot be given through objects. Being an act of the self-activity of the subject, it cannot be executed save by the

<sup>1</sup> [What follows, up to p. 105, is Kant's restatement of the Transcendental Deduction, in B.]

subject itself. It will easily be observed that this action is originally one and is equipollent for all combination, and that its dissolution, namely, *analysis*, which appears to be its opposite, yet always presupposes it. For where the understanding has not previously combined, it cannot dissolve, since only as having been combined *by the understanding* can anything that allows of analysis be given to the faculty of representation.

But the concept of combination includes, besides the concept of the manifold and of its synthesis, also the concept of the unity of the manifold. Combination is representation of  
 B 131 the *synthetic* unity of the manifold. The representation of this unity cannot, therefore, arise out of the combination. On the contrary, it is what, by adding itself to the representation of the manifold, first makes possible the concept of the combination. 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. Thus the category already presupposes combination. We must therefore look yet higher for this unity, namely in that which itself contains the ground of the unity of diverse concepts in judgment, and therefore of the possibility of the understanding, even as regards its logical employment.

### § 16

#### *The Original Synthetic Unity of Apperception*

It must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented  
 B 132 in me which could not be thought at all, and that is equivalent to saying that the representation would be impossible, or at least would be nothing to me. That representation which can be given prior to all thought is entitled intuition. 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*, that is, it cannot be regarded as belonging to sensibility. I call it *pure apperception*, to distinguish it from empirical apperception, or,



again, *original apperception*, because it is that self-consciousness which, while generating the representation '*I think*' (a representation which must be capable of accompanying all other representations, and which in all consciousness is one and the same), cannot itself be accompanied by any further representation. The unity of this apperception I likewise entitle the *transcendental* unity of self-consciousness, in order to indicate the possibility of a *priori* knowledge arising from it. For the manifold representations, which are given in an intuition, would not be one and all my representations, if they did not all belong to one self-consciousness. As my representations (even if I am not conscious of them as such) they must conform to the condition under which alone they can stand together in one universal self-consciousness, because otherwise they would not all without exception belong to me. From B 133 this original combination many consequences follow.

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. For the empirical consciousness, which accompanies different representations, is in itself diverse and without relation to the identity of the subject. That relation comes about, not simply through my accompanying each representation with consciousness, but only in so far as I *conjoin* one representation with another, and am conscious of the synthesis of them. Only in so far, 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*. In other words, the *analytic* unity of apperception is possible only under the presupposition of a certain *synthetic* unity.

The thought that the representations given in intuition one B 134 and all belong to me, is therefore equivalent to the thought that I unite them in one self-consciousness, or can at least so unite them; and although this thought is not itself the consciousness of the *synthesis* of the representations, it presupposes the possibility of that synthesis. In other words, only in so far as I can grasp the manifold of the representations in one consciousness, do I call them one and all *mine*. For otherwise I should have as many-coloured and diverse a self as I

have representations of which I am conscious to myself. Synthetic unity of the manifold of intuitions, as generated *a priori*, is thus the ground of the identity of apperception itself, which precedes *a priori* all *my* determinate thought. Combination does not, however, lie in the objects, and cannot be borrowed from them, and so, through perception, first taken up into the understanding. On the contrary, it is an affair of  
 B 135 the understanding alone, which itself is nothing but the faculty of combining *a priori*, and of bringing the manifold of given representations under the unity of apperception. The principle of apperception is the highest principle in the whole sphere of human knowledge.

This principle of the necessary unity of apperception is itself, indeed, an identical, and therefore analytic, proposition; nevertheless it reveals the necessity of a synthesis of the manifold given in intuition, without which the thoroughgoing identity of self-consciousness cannot be thought. For through the 'I', as simple representation, nothing manifold is given; only in intuition, which is distinct from the 'I', can a manifold be given; and only through *combination* in one consciousness can it be thought. An understanding in which through self-consciousness all the manifold would *eo ipso* be given, would be *intuitive*; our understanding can only *think*, and for intuition must look to the senses. I am conscious of the self as identical in respect of the manifold of representations that are given to me in an intuition, because I call them one and all *my* representations, and so apprehend them as constituting *one* intuition. This amounts to saying, that I am conscious to myself *a priori* of a necessary synthesis of representations—to be entitled the original synthetic unity of apperception—under which all representations that are given to me must stand, but under which they have also first to be brought by  
 B 136 means of a synthesis.

## § 17

*The Principle of the Synthetic Unity is the Supreme Principle of all Employment of the Understanding*

The supreme principle of the possibility of all intuition in its relation to sensibility is, according to the Transcendental

Aesthetic, that all the manifold of intuition should be subject to the formal conditions of space and time. The supreme principle of the same possibility, in its relation to understanding, is that all the manifold of intuition should be subject to conditions of the original synthetic unity of apperception. In so far as the manifold representations of intuition are *given* to us, they are subject to the former of these two principles; in so far as they must allow of being *combined* in one consciousness, they are subject to the latter. For without such combination B 137 nothing can be thought or known, since the given representations would not have in common the act of the apperception 'I think', and so could not be apprehended together in one self-consciousness:

*Understanding* is, to use general terms, *the faculty of knowledge*. This knowledge consists in the determinate relation of given representations to an object; and an *object* is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is *united*. Now all unification of representations demands unity of consciousness in the synthesis of them. Consequently it is the unity of consciousness that alone constitutes the relation of representations to an object, and therefore their objective validity and the fact that they are modes of knowledge; and upon it therefore rests the very possibility of the understanding.

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. Thus the mere form of outer sensible intuition, space, is not yet [by itself] knowledge; it supplies only the manifold of *a priori* intuition for a possible knowledge. To know anything in space (for instance, a line), I must *draw* it, and thus synthetically bring into being a determinate B 138 combination of the given manifold, so that the unity of this act is at the same time the unity of consciousness (as in the concept of a line); and it is through this unity of consciousness that an object (a determinate space) is first known. The synthetic unity of consciousness is, therefore, an objective condition of all knowledge. It is not merely a condition that I myself require in knowing an object, but is a condition under

which every intuition must stand in order *to become an object for me*. For otherwise, in the absence of this synthesis, the manifold would *not* be united in one consciousness.

## § 18

*The Objective Unity of Self-Consciousness*

The transcendental unity of apperception is that unity through which all the manifold given in an intuition is united in a concept of the object. It is therefore entitled *objective*, and must be distinguished from the *subjective* unity of consciousness, which is a *determination of inner sense*—through which the manifold of intuition for such [objective] combination is empirically given. Only the original unity is objectively  
B 140 valid; the empirical unity of apperception, upon which we are not here dwelling, and which besides is merely derived from the former under given conditions *in concreto*, has only subjective validity. To one man, for instance, a certain word suggests one thing, to another some other thing; the unity of consciousness in that which is empirical is not, as regards what is given, necessarily and universally valid.

## § 19

*The Logical Form of all Judgments consists in the Objective Unity of the Apperception of the Concepts which they contain*

I have never been able to accept the interpretation which logicians give of judgment in general. It is, they declare, the representation of a relation between two concepts. I do not  
B 141 here dispute with them as to what is defective in this interpretation—that in any case it applies only to *categorical*, not to hypothetical and disjunctive judgments (the two latter containing a relation not of concepts but of judgments), an oversight from which many troublesome consequences have followed. I need only point out that the definition does not determine in what the asserted *relation* consists.

But if I investigate more precisely the relation 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, which has only subjective validity, 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 B 142 unity of given representations from the subjective. It indicates their relation to original apperception, and its *necessary unity*. It holds good even if the judgment is itself empirical, and therefore contingent, as, for example, in the judgment, 'Bodies are heavy'. I do not here assert that these representations *necessarily belong to one another* in the empirical intuition, but that they belong to one another *in virtue of the necessary unity* of apperception in the synthesis of intuitions, that is, according to principles of the objective determination of all representations, in so far as knowledge can be acquired by means of these representations—principles which are all derived from the fundamental principle of the transcendental unity of apperception. Only in this way does there arise from this relation a *judgment*, that is, a relation which is *objectively valid*, and so can be adequately distinguished from a relation of the same representations that would have only subjective validity—as when they are connected according to laws of association. In the latter case, all that I could say would be, 'If I support a body, I feel an impression of weight'; I could not say, 'It, the body, is heavy'. Thus to say 'The body is heavy' is not merely to state that the two representations have always been conjoined in my perception, however often that perception be repeated; what we are asserting is that they are combined *in the object*, no matter what the state of the subject may be.

## § 20

B 143

*All Sensible Intuitions are subject to the Categories, as Conditions under which alone their Manifold can come together in one Consciousness*

The manifold given in a sensible intuition is necessarily subject to the original synthetic unity of apperception, because in no other way is the *unity* of intuition possible (§ 17). But that act of understanding by which the manifold of given representations (be they intuitions or concepts) is brought

under one apperception, is the logical function of judgment (cf. § 19). All the manifold, therefore, so far as it is given in a single empirical intuition, is *determined* in respect of one of the logical functions of judgment, and is thereby brought into one consciousness. Now the *categories* are just these functions of judgment, in so far as they are employed in determination of the manifold of a given intuition (cf. § 13). Consequently, the manifold in a given intuition is necessarily subject to the categories.

## § 21

- B 145** In the above proof there is one feature from which I could not abstract, the feature, namely, that the manifold to be intuited must be given prior to the synthesis of understanding, and independently of it. How this takes place, remains here undetermined. For were I to think an understanding which is itself intuitive (as, for example, a divine understanding which should not represent to itself given objects, but through whose representation the objects should themselves be given or produced), the categories would have no meaning whatsoever in respect of such a mode of knowledge. They are merely rules for an understanding whose whole power consists in thought, consists, that is, in the act whereby it brings the synthesis of a manifold, given to it from elsewhere in intuition, to the unity of apperception—a faculty, therefore, which by itself knows nothing whatsoever, but merely combines and arranges the material of knowledge, that is, the intuition, which must be given to it by the object. This peculiarity of our understanding, that it can produce *a priori* unity of apperception solely by
- B 146** means of the categories, and only by such and so many, is as little capable of further explanation as why we have just these and no other functions of judgment, or why space and time are the only forms of our possible intuition.

## § 22

*The Category has no other Application in Knowledge  
than to Objects of Experience*

To *think* an object and to *know* an object are thus by no means the same thing. Knowledge involves two factors: first,

the concept, through which an object in general is thought (the category); and secondly, the intuition, through which it is given. 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, and no knowledge of anything would be possible by means of it. So far as I could know, there would be nothing, and could be nothing, to which my thought could be applied. Now, as the Aesthetic has shown, the only intuition possible to us is sensible; consequently, the thought of an object in general, by means of a pure concept of understanding, can become knowledge for us only in so far as the concept is related to objects of the senses. In other words, they serve only for the possibility of *empirical knowledge*; and such knowledge is what we entitle experience. Our conclusion is therefore this: the categories, as yielding knowledge of *things*, have no kind of application, save only in regard to things which may be B 148 objects of possible experience.

### § 23

The above proposition is of the greatest importance; for it determines the limits of the employment of the pure concepts of understanding in regard to objects, just as the Transcendental Aesthetic determined the limits of the employment of the pure form of our sensible intuition. Space and time, as conditions under which alone objects can possibly be given to us, are valid no further than for objects of the senses, and therefore only for experience. Beyond these limits they represent nothing; for they are only in the senses, and beyond them have no reality. The pure concepts of understanding are free from this limitation, and extend to objects of intuition in general, be the intuition like or unlike ours, if only it be sensible and not intellectual. But this extension of concepts beyond *our* sensible intuition is of no advantage to us. For as concepts of objects they are then empty, and do not even enable us to judge of their objects whether or not they are possible.

## § 24

This is a suitable place for explaining the paradox which must have been obvious to everyone in our exposition of the form of inner sense (§ 6): namely, that this sense represents  
 B 153 to consciousness even our own selves only as we appear to ourselves, not as we are in ourselves. For we intuit ourselves only as we are inwardly *affected*, and this would seem to be contradictory, since we should then have to be in a passive relation [of active affection] to ourselves. It is to avoid this contradiction that in systems of psychology *inner sense*, which we have carefully distinguished from the faculty of *apperception*, is commonly regarded as being identical with it.

How the 'I' that thinks can be distinct from the 'I' that intuit itself (for I can represent still other modes of intuition as at least possible), and yet, as being the same subject, can be identical with the latter; and how, therefore, I can say: "I, as intelligence and *thinking* subject, know myself as an object that is *thought*, in so far as I am given to myself [as something other or] beyond that [I] which is [given to myself] in intuition, and yet know myself, like other phenomena, only as I appear to myself, not as I am to the understanding"—these are questions that raise no greater nor less difficulty than how I can be an object to myself at all, and, more  
 B 156 particularly, an object of intuition and of inner perceptions. Indeed, that this is how it must be, is easily shown—if we admit that space is merely a pure form of the appearances of outer sense—by the fact that we cannot obtain for ourselves a representation of time, which is not an object of outer intuition, except under the image of a line, which we draw, and that by this mode of depicting it alone could we know the singleness of its dimension; and similarly by the fact that for all inner perceptions we must derive the determination of lengths of time or of points of time from the changes which are exhibited to us in outer things, and that the determinations of inner sense have therefore to be arranged as appearances in time in precisely the same manner in which we arrange those of outer sense in space. If, then, as regards the latter, we admit that we know objects only in so far as we



are externally affected, we must also recognise, as regards inner sense, that by means of it we intuit ourselves only as we are inwardly affected *by ourselves*; in other words, that, so far as inner intuition is concerned, we know our own subject only as appearance, not as it is in itself.<sup>a</sup>

## § 25

B 157

On the other hand, in the transcendental synthesis of the manifold of representations in general, and therefore in the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am. This *representation* is a *thought*, not an *intuition*. Now in order to *know* ourselves, there is required in addition to the act of thought, which brings the manifold of every possible intuition to the unity of apperception, a determinate mode of intuition, whereby this manifold is given; it therefore follows that although my existence is not indeed appearance (still less mere illusion), the determination of my existence<sup>b</sup> can take place only in conformity with the form of B 153

<sup>a</sup> I do not see why so much difficulty should be found in admitting that our inner sense is affected by ourselves. Such affection finds exemplification in each and every act of *attention*. In every act of attention the understanding determines inner sense, in accordance with the combination which it thinks, to that inner intuition which corresponds to the manifold in the synthesis of the understanding. How much the mind is usually thereby affected, everyone will be able to perceive in himself.

<sup>b</sup> The 'I think' expresses the act of determining my existence. Existence is already given thereby, but the mode in which I am to determine this existence, that is, the manifold belonging to it, is not thereby given. In order that it be given, self-intuition is required; and such intuition is conditioned by a given *a priori* form, namely, time, which is sensible and belongs to the receptivity of the determinable [in me]. Now since I do not have another self-intuition which gives the *determining* in me (I am conscious only of the spontaneity of it) prior to the act of *determination*, as time does in the case of the determinable, I cannot determine my existence as that of a self-active being; all that I can do is to represent to myself the spontaneity of my thought, that is, of the determination; and my existence is still only determinable sensibly, that is, as the existence of an appearance. But it is owing to this spontaneity that I entitle myself an *intelligence*.

inner sense, according to the special mode in which the manifold, which I combine, is given in inner intuition. Accordingly I have no *knowledge* of myself as I am but merely as I appear to myself. The consciousness of self is thus very far from being a knowledge of the self, notwithstanding all the categories which [are being employed to] constitute the thought of an *object in general*, through combination of the manifold in one apperception. Just as for knowledge of an object distinct from me I require, besides the thought of an object in general (in the category), an intuition by which I determine that general concept, so for knowledge of myself I require, besides the consciousness, that is, besides the thought of myself, an intuition of the manifold in me, by which I determine this thought. I exist as an intelligence which is conscious solely  
 B 159 of its power of combination; but in respect of the manifold which it has to combine I am subjected to a limiting condition (entitled inner sense), namely, that this combination can be made intuitable only according to relations of time, which lie entirely outside the concepts of understanding, strictly regarded. Such an intelligence, therefore, can know itself only as it appears to itself in respect of an intuition which is not intellectual and cannot be given by the understanding itself, not as it would know itself if its *intuition* were intellectual.

## § 26

3 163 Categories are concepts which prescribe laws *a priori* to appearances, and therefore to nature, the sum of all appearances (*natura materialiter spectata*). The question therefore arises, how it can be conceivable that nature should have to proceed in accordance with categories which yet are not derived from it, and do not model themselves upon its pattern; that is, how they can determine *a priori* the combination of the manifold of nature, while yet they are not derived from it. The solution of this seeming enigma is as follows.

3 164 That the *laws* of appearances in nature must agree with the understanding and its *a priori* form, that is, with its faculty of *combining* the manifold in general, is no more surprising than that the appearances themselves must agree with the form of *a priori* sensible intuition. For just as appearances do

not exist in themselves but only relatively to the subject in which, so far as it has senses, they inhere, so the laws do not exist in the appearances but only relatively to this same being, so far as it has understanding. Things in themselves would necessarily, apart from any understanding that knows them, conform to laws of their own. But appearances are only representations of things which are unknown as regards what they may be in themselves. As mere representations, they are subject to no law of connection save that which the connecting faculty prescribes. Consequently, all possible perceptions, and therefore everything that can come to empirical consciousness, that is, all appearances of nature, must, so far as their con- B 163  
nection is concerned, be subject to the categories. Nature, considered merely as nature in general, is dependent upon these categories as the original ground of its necessary conformity to law (*natura formaliter spectata*). Pure understanding is not, however, in a position, through mere categories, to prescribe to appearances any *a priori* laws other than those which are involved in a *nature in general*, that is, in the conformity to law of all appearances in space and time. Special laws, as concerning those appearances which are empirically determined, cannot in their specific character be *derived* from the categories, although they are one and all subject to them. To obtain any knowledge whatsoever of these special laws, we must resort to experience; but it is the *a priori* laws that alone can instruct us in regard to experience in general, and as to what it is that can be known as an object of experience.

### § 27

#### *Outcome of this Deduction of the Concepts of Understanding*

We cannot think an object save through categories; we cannot *know* an object so thought save through intuitions corresponding to these concepts. Now all our intuitions are sensible; and this knowledge, in so far as its object is given, is empirical. But empirical knowledge is experience. Conse- B 166  
*quently, there can be no a priori knowledge, except of objects of possible experience.\**

\* Lest my readers should stumble at the alarming evil con-

But although this knowledge is limited to objects of experience, it is not therefore all derived from experience. The pure intuitions [of receptivity] and the pure concepts of understanding are elements in knowledge, and both are found in us *a priori*. There are only two ways in which we can account for a *necessary* agreement of experience with the concepts of its objects: either experience makes these concepts possible or these concepts make experience possible. The former sup-  
 B 167 position does not hold in respect of the categories (nor of pure sensible intuition); for since they are *a priori* concepts, and therefore independent of experience, the ascription to them of an empirical origin would be a sort of *generatio aequivoca*. There remains, therefore, only the second supposition—a system, as it were, of the *epigenesis* of pure reason—namely, that the categories contain, on the side of the understanding, the grounds of the possibility of all experience in general. How they make experience possible, and what are the principles of the possibility of experience that they supply in their application to appearances, will be shown more fully in the following chapter on the transcendental employment of the faculty of judgment.

A middle course may be proposed between the two above mentioned, namely, that the categories are neither *self-thought* first principles *a priori* of our knowledge nor derived from experience, but subjective dispositions of thought, implanted in us from the first moment of our existence, and so ordered by our Creator that their employment is in complete harmony with the laws of nature in accordance with which experience proceeds—a kind of *preformation-system* of pure reason. Apart, however, from the objection that on such an hypo-

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sequences which may over-hastily be inferred from this statement, I may remind them that *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. In the absence of intuition, the thought of the object may still have its true and useful consequences, as regards the subject's *employment of reason*. The use of reason is not always directed to the determination of the object, that is, to knowledge, but also to the determination of the subject and of its volition—a use which cannot therefore be here dealt with.

thesis we can set no limit to the assumption of predetermined dispositions to future judgments, there is this decisive objection against the suggested middle course, that the *necessity* B 168. of the categories, which belongs to their very conception, would then have to be sacrificed. The concept of cause, for instance, which expresses the necessity of an event under a presupposed condition, would be false if it rested only on an arbitrary subjective necessity, implanted in us, of connecting certain empirical representations according to the rule of causal relation. I would not then be able to say that the effect is connected with the cause in the object, that is to say, necessarily, but only that I am so constituted that I cannot think this representation otherwise than as thus connected. This is exactly what the sceptic most desires. For if this be the situation, all our insight, resting on the supposed objective validity of our judgments, is nothing but sheer illusion; nor would there be wanting people who would refuse to admit this subjective necessity, a necessity which can only be felt. Certainly a man cannot dispute with anyone regarding that which depends merely on the mode in which he is himself organised.

### *Brief Outline of this Deduction*

The deduction is the exposition of the pure concepts of the understanding, and therewith of all theoretical *a priori* knowledge, as principles of the possibility of experience—the principles being here taken as the *determination* of appearances in space and time *in general*, and this determination, in turn, as B 169 ultimately following from the *original* synthetic unity of apperception, as the form of the understanding in its relation to space and time, the original forms of sensibility.

\* \* \*

I consider the division by numbered paragraphs as necessary up to this point, because thus far we have had to treat of the elementary concepts. We have now to give an account of their employment, and the exposition may therefore proceed in continuous fashion, without such numbering.

# TRANSCENDENTAL ANALYTIC

## BOOK II

### THE ANALYTIC OF PRINCIPLES

#### INTRODUCTION

#### TRANSCENDENTAL JUDGMENT IN GENERAL

IF understanding in general is to be viewed as the faculty of rules, judgment will be the faculty of subsuming under rules; that is, of distinguishing whether something does or does not stand under a given rule (*casus datae legis*). General logic contains, and can contain, no rules for judgment. For since general logic abstracts from all content of knowledge, the sole task that remains to it is to give an analytical exposition of the form of knowledge [as expressed] in concepts, in judgments, and in inferences, and so to obtain formal rules for all employment of understanding.

Transcendental philosophy has the peculiarity that besides the rule (or rather the universal condition of rules), which is given in the pure concept of understanding, it can also specify *a priori* the instance to which the rule is to be applied. The advantage which in this respect it possesses over all other didactical sciences, with the exception of mathematics, is due to the fact that it deals with concepts which have to relate to objects *a priori*, and the objective validity of which cannot therefore be demonstrated *a posteriori*, since that would mean the complete ignoring of their peculiar dignity. It must formulate by means of universal but sufficient marks the conditions under which objects can be given in harmony with these concepts. Otherwise the concepts would be void of all

content, and therefore mere logical forms, not pure concepts of the understanding.

This transcendental doctrine of judgment will consist of two chapters. The first will treat of the sensible condition under which alone pure concepts of understanding can be employed, that is, of the schematism of pure understanding. The second will deal with the synthetic judgments which under these conditions follow *a priori* from pure concepts of understanding, and which lie *a priori* at the foundation of all other modes of knowledge—that is, with the principles of pure understanding.

## CHAPTER I

### THE SCHEMATISM OF THE PURE CONCEPTS OF UNDERSTANDING

IN all subsumptions of an object under a concept the representation of the object must be *homogeneous* with the concept; in other words, the concept must contain something which is represented in the object that is to be subsumed under it. This, in fact, is what is meant by the expression, 'an object is contained under a concept' Thus the empirical concept of a *plate* is homogeneous with the pure geometrical concept of a *circle*. The roundness which is thought in the latter can be intuited in the former.

But pure concepts of understanding being quite heterogeneous from empirical intuitions, and indeed from all sensible intuitions, can never be met with in any intuition. For no one will say that a category, such as that of causality, can be intuited through sense and is itself contained in appearance. How, then, is the *subsumption* of intuitions under pure concepts, the *application* of a category to appearances, possible? A transcendental doctrine of judgment is necessary just because of this natural and important question. We must be able to show how pure concepts can be applicable to appearances. In none of the other sciences is this necessary. For since in these sciences the concepts through which the object is thought in [its] general [aspects] are not so utterly distinct and heterogeneous from those which represent it *in concreto*, as given, no special discussion of the applicability of the former to the latter is required.

B 177 }  
A 138 }

Obviously there must be some third thing, which is homogeneous on the one hand with the category, and on the other hand with the appearance, and which thus makes the appli-



cation of the former to the latter possible. This mediating representation must be pure, that is, void of all empirical content, and yet at the same time, while it must in one respect be *intellectual*, it must in another be *sensible*. Such a representation is the *transcendental schema*.

The concept of understanding contains pure synthetic unity of the manifold in general. Time, as the formal condition of the manifold of inner sense, and therefore of the connection of all representations, contains an *a priori* manifold in pure intuition. Now a transcendental determination of time is so far homogeneous with the category, which constitutes its unity, in that it is universal and rests upon an *a priori* rule. B 178  
But, on the other hand, it is so far homogeneous with appear- A 139  
ance, in that time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold. Thus an application of the category to appearances becomes possible by means of the transcendental determination of time, which, as the schema of the concepts of understanding, mediates the subsumption of the appearances under the category.

After what has been proved in the deduction of the categories, no one, I trust, will remain undecided in regard to the question whether these pure concepts of understanding are of merely empirical or also of transcendental employment; that is, whether as conditions of a possible experience they relate *a priori* solely to appearances, or whether, as conditions of the possibility of things in general, they can be extended to objects in themselves, without any restriction to our sensibility. For we have seen that concepts are altogether impossible, and can have no meaning, if no object is given for them, or at least for the elements of which they are composed. They cannot, therefore, be viewed as applicable to things in themselves, independent of all question as to whether and how these may be given to us. We have also proved that the only manner in which objects can be given to us is by modification of our sensibility; and finally, that pure *a priori* concepts, in addition B 179  
to the function of understanding expressed in the category, A 140  
must contain *a priori* certain formal conditions of sensibility, namely, those of inner sense. These conditions of sensibility constitute the universal condition under which alone the category can be applied to any object. This formal and pure

condition of sensibility to which the employment of the concept of understanding is restricted, we shall entitle the *schema* of the concept. The procedure of understanding in these schemata we shall entitle the *schematism* of pure understanding.

The schema is in itself always a product of imagination. Since, however, the synthesis of imagination aims at no special intuition, but only at unity in the determination of sensibility, the schema has to be distinguished from the image. If five points be set alongside one another, thus, . . . . , I have an image of the number five. But if, on the other hand, I think only a number in general, whether it be five or a hundred, this thought is rather the representation of a method whereby a multiplicity, for instance a thousand, may be represented in an image in conformity with a certain concept, than the image itself. For with such a number as a thousand the image can hardly be surveyed and compared with the concept. This representation of a universal procedure of imagination in  
 B 180 providing an image for a concept, I entitle the schema of this concept.

Indeed it is schemata, not images of objects, which underlie  
 A 141 our pure sensible concepts. No image could ever be adequate to the concept of a triangle in general. It would never attain that universality of the concept which renders it valid of all triangles, whether right-angled, obtuse-angled, or acute-angled; it would always be limited to a part only of this sphere. The schema of the triangle can exist nowhere but in thought. It is a rule of synthesis of the imagination, in respect to pure figures in space. Still less is an object of experience or its image ever adequate to the empirical concept; for this latter always stands in immediate relation to the schema of imagination, as a rule for the determination of our intuition, in accordance with some specific universal concept. The concept 'dog' signifies a rule according to which my imagination can delineate the figure of a four-footed animal in a general manner, without limitation to any single determinate figure such as experience, or any possible image that I can represent *in concreto*, actually presents. This schematism of our understanding, in its application to appearances and their mere form, is an art concealed in the depths of the human soul,

whose real modes of activity nature is hardly likely ever to B 181  
 allow us to discover, and to have open to our gaze. This much  
 only we can assert: the *image* is a product of the empirical  
 faculty of reproductive imagination; the *schema* of sensible  
 concepts, such as of figures in space, is a product and, as it A 142  
 were, a monogram, of pure *a priori* imagination, through  
 which, and in accordance with which, images themselves first  
 become possible.

The pure image of all magnitudes (*quantorum*) for outer B 182  
 sense is space; that of all objects of the senses in general is  
 time. But the pure *schema* of magnitude (*quantitatis*), as a  
 concept of the understanding, is *number*, a representation  
 which comprises the successive addition of homogeneous units.  
 Number is therefore simply the unity of the synthesis of the A 143  
 manifold of a homogeneous intuition in general, a unity due  
 to my generating time itself in the apprehension of the  
 intuition.

Reality, in the pure concept of understanding, is that  
 which corresponds to a sensation in general; it is that, there-  
 fore, the concept of which in itself points to being (in time).  
 Negation is that the concept of which represents not-being  
 (in time). The opposition of these two thus rests upon the  
 distinction of one and the same time as filled and as empty.  
 Since time is merely the form of intuition, and so of objects  
 as appearances, that in the objects which corresponds to  
 sensation is not the transcendental matter of all objects as  
 things in themselves (thinghood, reality). Now every sensation  
 has a degree or magnitude whereby, in respect of its repre-  
 sentation of an object otherwise remaining the same, it can  
 fill out one and the same time, that is, occupy inner sense more  
 or less completely, down to its cessation in nothingness  
 (=0=*negatio*). There therefore exists a relation and con-  
 nection between reality and negation, or rather a transition  
 from the one to the other, which makes every reality repre- B 183  
 sentable as a quantum. The schema of a reality, as the  
 quantity of something in so far as it fills time, is just this con-  
 tinuous and uniform production of that reality in time as we  
 successively descend from a sensation which has a certain  
 degree to its vanishing point, or progressively ascend from its  
 negation to some magnitude of it.

The schema of substance is permanence of the real in time, that is, the representation of the real as a substrate of empirical determination of time in general, and so as abiding while all else changes. (The existence of what is transitory passes away in time but not time itself. To time, itself non-transitory and abiding, there corresponds in the [field of] appearance what is non-transitory in its existence, that is, substance. Only in [relation to] substance can the succession and coexistence of appearances be determined in time.)

- A 144 The schema of cause, and of the causality of a thing in general, is the real upon which, whenever posited, something else always follows. It consists, therefore, in the succession of the manifold, in so far as that succession is subject to a rule.

- The schema of community or reciprocity, the reciprocal causality of substances in respect of their accidents, is the co-  
B 184 existence, according to a universal rule, of the determinations of the one substance with those of the other.

The schema of possibility is the agreement of the synthesis of different representations with the conditions of time in general. Opposites, for instance, cannot exist in the same thing at the same time, but only the one after the other. The schema is therefore the determination of the representation of a thing at some time or other.

- A 145 The schema of actuality is existence in some determinate time.

The schema of necessity is existence of an object at all times.

We thus find that the schema of each category contains and makes capable of representation only a determination of time. The schema of magnitude is the generation (synthesis) of time itself in the successive apprehension of an object. The schema of quality is the synthesis of sensation or perception with the representation of time; it is the filling of time. The schema of relation is the connecting of perceptions with one another at all times according to a rule of time-determination. Finally the schema of modality and of its categories is time itself as the correlate of the determination whether and how an object belongs to time. The schemata are thus nothing but *a priori* determinations of time in accordance with rules. These rules relate in the order of the categories to the *time-*

*series*, the *time-content*, the *time-order*, and lastly to the *scope of time* in respect of all possible objects.

B 185

It is evident, therefore, that what the schematism of understanding effects by means of the transcendental synthesis of imagination is simply the unity of all the manifold of intuition in inner sense, and so indirectly the unity of apperception which as a function corresponds to the receptivity of inner sense. The schemata of the pure concepts of understanding A 146 are thus the true and sole conditions under which these concepts obtain relation to objects and so possess *significance*. In the end, therefore, the categories have no other possible employment than the empirical. As the grounds of an *a priori* necessary unity that has its source in the necessary combination of all consciousness in one original apperception, they serve only to subordinate appearances to universal rules of synthesis, and thus to fit them for thoroughgoing connection in one experience.

But it is also evident that although the schemata of sensibility first realise the categories, they at the same time restrict B 186 them, that is, limit them to conditions which lie outside the understanding, and are due to sensibility. The schema is, properly, only the phenomenon, or sensible concept, of an object in agreement with the category. (*Numerus est quantitas phaenomenon*, *sensatio realitas phaenomenon*, *constans et perdurable rerum substantia phaenomenon*, *aeternitas necessitas phaenomenon*, etc.) If we omit a restricting condition, we would seem to extend the scope of the concept that was previously limited. A 147 Arguing from this assumed fact, we conclude that the categories in their pure significance, apart from all conditions of sensibility, ought to apply to things in general, *as they are*, and not, like the schemata, represent them only *as they appear*. They ought, we conclude, to possess a meaning independent of all schemata, and of much wider application. Now there certainly does remain in the pure concepts of understanding, even after elimination of every sensible condition, a meaning; but it is purely logical, signifying only the bare unity of the representations. The pure concepts can find no object, and so can acquire no meaning which might yield a concept of some object. Substance, for instance, when the sensible determination of permanence is omitted, would mean simply a some-

thing which can be thought only as subject, never as a predicate of something else. Such a representation I can put to  
**B 187** no use, for it tells me nothing as to the nature of that which is thus to be viewed as a primary subject. The categories, therefore, without schemata, are merely functions of the understanding for concepts; and represent no object. This [objective] meaning they acquire from sensibility, which realises the understanding in the very process of restricting it

# TRANSCENDENTAL DOCTRINE OF JUDGMENT

## (OR ANALYTIC OF PRINCIPLES)

### CHAPTER II

#### SYSTEM OF ALL PRINCIPLES OF PURE UNDERSTANDING

IN the preceding chapter we have considered transcendental judgment with reference merely to the universal conditions under which it is alone justified in employing pure concepts of understanding for synthetic judgments. Our task now is to exhibit, in systematic connection, the judgments which understanding, under this critical provision, actually achieves *a priori*. {A 148  
B 187

Since experience, as empirical synthesis, is, in so far as such experience is possible, the one species of knowledge which is capable of imparting reality to any non-empirical synthesis, this latter [type of synthesis], as knowledge *a priori*, can possess truth, that is, agreement with the object, only in so far as it contains nothing save what is necessary to synthetic unity of experience in general. {B 196  
A 157

The highest principle of all synthetic judgments is therefore this: every object stands under the necessary conditions of synthetic unity of the manifold of intuition in a possible experience. A 158

In the application of pure concepts of understanding to possible experience, the employment of their synthesis is either *mathematical* or *dynamical*; for it is concerned partly with the mere *intuition* of an appearance in general, partly with its *existence*. The *a priori* conditions of intuition are absolutely necessary conditions of any possible experience; those of the existence of the objects of a possible empirical intuition are in themselves only accidental. The principles of mathematical {A 160  
B 195

## 116 KANT'S CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON

employment will therefore be unconditionally necessary, that is, apodeictic. Those of dynamical employment will also indeed possess the character of *a priori* necessity, but only under the condition of empirical thought in some experience, therefore only mediately and indirectly. Notwithstanding their undoubted certainty throughout experience, they will not contain that immediate evidence which is peculiar to the former. But of this we shall be better able to judge at the conclusion of this system of principles.

The table of categories is quite naturally our guide in the construction of the table of principles. For the latter are simply rules for the objective employment of the former. All principles of pure understanding are therefore—

1	
Axioms of intuition.	
2	3
Anticipations of perception.	Analogies of experience.
4	
Postulates of empirical thought in general.	

A 162 } I now proceed to discuss them in the order in which they  
B 202 } are given in the above table.

### I AXIOMS OF INTUITION

Their principle is: All intuitions are extensive magnitudes.

#### *Proof*

Appearances, in their formal aspect, contain an intuition in space and time, which conditions them, one and all, *a priori*. They cannot be apprehended, that is, taken up into empirical consciousness, save through that synthesis of the manifold whereby the representations of a determinate space



or time are generated, that is, through combination of the homogeneous manifold and consciousness of its synthetic unity. 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*). Thus even the perception of an object, as appearance, is only possible through the same synthetic unity of the manifold of the given sensible intuition as that whereby the unity of the combination of the manifold [and] homogeneous is thought in the concept of a *magnitude*. In other words, appearances are all without exception *magnitudes*, indeed *extensive magnitudes*. As intuitions in space or time, they must be represented through the same synthesis whereby space and time in general are determined. B 203

I entitle a magnitude extensive when the representation of the parts makes possible, and therefore necessarily precedes, the representation of the whole. I cannot represent to myself a line, however small, without drawing it in thought, that is, generating from a point all its parts one after another. A 163 Only in this way can the intuition be obtained. Similarly with all times, however small. In these I think to myself only that successive advance from one moment to another, whereby through the parts of time and their addition a determinate time-magnitude is generated. As the [element of] pure intuition in all appearances is either space or time, every appearance is as intuition an extensive magnitude; only B 204 through successive synthesis of part to part in [the process of] its apprehension can it come to be known. All appearances are consequently intuited as aggregates, as complexes of previously given parts. This is not the case with magnitudes of every kind, but only with those magnitudes which are represented and apprehended by us in this *extensive* fashion.

This transcendental principle of the mathematics of ap-pearances greatly enlarges our *a priori* knowledge. For it alone can make pure mathematics, in its complete precision, applicable to objects of experience. Without this principle, such application would not be thus self-evident; and there has indeed been much confusion of thought in regard to it. Appearances are not things in themselves. Empirical intuition is { A 165  
B 206

possible only by means of the pure intuition of space and of time. What geometry asserts of pure intuition is therefore undeniably valid of empirical intuition. The idle objections, that objects of the senses may not conform to such rules of construction in space as that of the infinite divisibility of lines or angles, must be given up. For if these objections hold good, we deny the objective validity of space, and consequently of all mathematics, and no longer know why and how far mathematics can be applicable to appearances. The synthesis of spaces and times, being a synthesis of the essential forms  
 A 166 of all intuition, is what makes possible the apprehension of appearance, and consequently every outer experience and all knowledge of the objects of such experience. Whatever pure mathematics establishes in regard to the synthesis of the form of apprehension is also necessarily valid of the objects apprehended. All objections are only the chicanery of a falsely  
 B 207 instructed reason, which, erroneously professing to isolate the objects of the senses from the formal condition of our sensibility, represents them, in spite of the fact that they are mere appearances, as objects in themselves, given to the understanding. Certainly, on that assumption, no synthetic knowledge of any kind could be obtained of them *a priori*, and nothing therefore could be known of them synthetically through pure concepts of space. Indeed, the science which determines these concepts, namely geometry, would not itself be possible.

## 2

## ANTICIPATIONS OF PERCEPTION\*

In all appearances, the real that is an object of sensation has intensive magnitude, that is, a degree.

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\* [In A:]

*The Anticipations of Perception*

The principle which anticipates all perceptions, as such, is as follows: In all appearances sensation, and the *real* which corresponds to it in the object (*realitas phaenomenon*), has an *intensive magnitude*, that is, a degree.

*Proof*

Apprehension by means merely of sensation occupies only an instant, if, that is, I do not take into account the succession of different sensations. As sensation is that element in the [field of] appearance the apprehension of which does not involve a successive synthesis proceeding from parts to the whole representation, it has no extensive magnitude. The absence of sensation at that instant would involve the representation of the instant as empty, therefore as  $=0$ . Now what corresponds in empirical intuition to sensation is reality (*realitas phaenomenon*); what corresponds to its absence is negation  $=0$ . Every sensation, however, is capable of diminution, so that it can decrease and gradually vanish. Between reality in the [field of] appearance and negation there is therefore a continuity of many possible intermediate sensations, the difference between any two of which is always smaller than the difference between the given sensation and zero or complete negation. In other words, the real in the [field of] appearance has always a magnitude. But since its apprehension by means of mere sensation takes place in an instant and not through successive synthesis of different sensations, and therefore does not proceed from the parts to the whole, the magnitude is to be met with only in the apprehension. The real has therefore magnitude, but not extensive magnitude.

The property of magnitudes by which no part of them is the smallest possible, that is, by which no part is simple, is called their continuity. Space and time are *quanta continua*, because no part of them can be given save as enclosed between limits (points or instants), and therefore only in such fashion that this part is itself again a space or a time. Space therefore consists solely of spaces, time solely of times. Points and instants are only limits, that is, mere positions which limit space and time. But positions always presuppose the intuitions which they limit or are intended to limit; and out of mere positions, viewed as constituents capable of being given prior to space or time, neither space nor time can be constructed. Such magnitudes may also be called *flowing*, since the synthesis of productive imagination involved in their production is a pro-

B 212 gression in time, and the continuity of time is ordinarily designated by the term flowing or flowing away.

All appearances, then, are continuous magnitudes, alike in their intuition, as extensive, and in their mere perception (sensation, and with it reality) as intensive.

B 213 }  
A 172 } There is no lack of proofs of the great value of our principle in enabling us to anticipate perceptions, and even to some extent to make good their absence, by placing a check upon all false inferences which might be drawn from their absence.

B 214 If all reality in perception has a degree, between which and negation there exists an infinite gradation of ever smaller degrees, and if every sense must likewise possess some particular degree of receptivity of sensations, no perception, and consequently no experience, is possible that could prove, either immediately or mediately (no matter how far-ranging the reasoning may be), a complete absence of all reality in the [field of] appearance. In other words, the proof of an empty space or of an empty time can never be derived from experience. For, in the first place, the complete absence of reality from a sensible intuition can never be itself perceived; and, secondly, there is no appearance whatsoever and no difference in the degree of reality of any appearance from which it can be inferred.

A 176 }  
B 218 } It is remarkable that of magnitudes in general we can know *a priori* only a single *quality*, namely, that of continuity, and that in all quality (the real in appearances) we can know *a priori* nothing save [in regard to] their intensive *quantity*, namely that they have degree. Everything else has to be left to experience.

## 3

## ANALOGIES OF EXPERIENCE\*

The principle of the analogies is: Experience is possible

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\* [In A:]

*The Analogies of Experience*

The general principle of the analogies is: All appearances are, as regards their existence, subject *a priori* to rules determining their relation to one another in one time.

only through the representation of a necessary connection of perceptions.

*Proof*

The three modes of time are *duration*, *succession*, and *co-existence*. There will, therefore, be three rules of all relations of appearances in time, and these rules will be prior to all experience, and indeed make it possible. By means of these rules the existence of every appearance can be determined in respect of the unity of all time. { B 219  
A 177

The general principle of the three analogies rests on the B 220 necessary *unity* of apperception, in respect of all possible empirical consciousness, that is, of all perception, *at every* [instant of] *time*. And since this unity lies *a priori* at the foundation of empirical consciousness, it follows that the above principle rests on the synthetic unity of all appearances as regards their relation in time.

In philosophy analogies signify something very different { A 179  
B 222 from what they represent in mathematics. In the latter they are formulas which express the equality of two quantitative relations, and are always *constitutive*; so that if three members of the proportion are given, the fourth is likewise given, that is, can be constructed. But in philosophy the analogy is not the equality of two *quantitative* but of two *qualitative* relations; and from three given members we can obtain *a priori* knowledge only of the relation to a fourth, not of the A 180 fourth member itself. The relation yields, however, a rule for seeking the fourth member in experience, and a mark whereby it can be detected. An analogy of experience is, therefore, only a rule according to which a unity of experience may arise from perception.

A

FIRST ANALOGY

*Principle of Permanence of Substance*

In all change of appearances substance is permanent; its quantum in nature is neither increased nor diminished.\*

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\* [In A:]

All appearances contain the permanent (substance) as the

*Proof*

All appearances are in time; and in it alone, as substratum (as permanent form of inner intuition), can either coexistence or succession be represented. Thus the time in which all  
**B 225** change of appearances has to be thought; remains and does not change. For it is that in which, and as determinations of which, succession or coexistence can alone be represented. Now time cannot by itself be perceived. Consequently there must be found in the objects of perception, that is, in the appearances, the substratum which represents time in general; and all change or coexistence must, in being apprehended, be perceived in this substratum, and through relation of the appearances to it. But the substratum of all that is real, that is, of all that belongs to the existence of things, is *substance*; and all that belongs to existence can be thought only as a determination of substance. Consequently the permanent, in relation to which alone all time-relations of appearances can be determined, is substance in the [field of] appearance, that is, the real in appearance, and as the substrate of all change remains ever the same. And as it is thus unchangeable in its existence, its quantity in nature can be neither increased nor diminished.

Our *apprehension* of the manifold of appearance is always successive, and is therefore always changing. Through it alone we can never determine whether this manifold, as object of experience, is coexistent or in sequence. For such determination we require an underlying ground which exists *at all times*,  
**B 226** that is, something *abiding* and *permanent*, of which all change and coexistence are only so many ways (modes of time) in which the permanent exists. And simultaneity and succession being the only relations in time, it follows that only in the  
**A 183** permanent are relations of time possible. In other words, the permanent is the *substratum* of the empirical representation of time itself; in it alone is any determination of time possible. Permanence, as the abiding correlate of all existence of

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object itself, and the transitory as its mere determination, that is, as a way in which the object exists.

appearances, of all change and of all concomitance, expresses time in general. For change does not affect time itself, but only appearances in time. (Coexistence is not a mode of time itself; for none of the parts of time coexist; they are all in succession to one another.) If we ascribe succession to time itself, we must think yet another time, in which the sequence would be possible. Only through the permanent does existence in different parts of the time-series acquire a magnitude which can be entitled duration. For in bare succession existence is always vanishing and recommencing, and never has the least magnitude. Without the permanent there is therefore no time-relation. Now time cannot be perceived in itself; the permanent in the appearances is therefore the substratum of all determination of time, and, as likewise follows, is also the condition of the possibility of all synthetic unity of perceptions, that is, of experience. All existence and all change in time have thus B 227 to be viewed as simply a mode of the existence of that which remains and persists. In all appearances the permanent is the object itself, that is, substance as phenomenon; everything, on the other hand, which changes or can change belongs only to A 184 the way in which substance or substances exist, and therefore to their determinations.

I find that in all ages, not only philosophers, but even the common understanding, have recognised this permanence as a substratum of all change of appearances, and always assume it to be indubitable. The only difference in this matter between the common understanding and the philosopher is that the latter expresses himself somewhat more definitely, asserting that throughout all changes in the world *substance* remains, and that only the *accidents* change. But I nowhere find even the attempt at a proof of this obviously synthetic proposition. Indeed, it is very seldom placed, where it truly belongs, at the head of those laws of nature which are pure and completely *a priori*. Certainly the proposition, that substance is permanent, is tautological. For this permanence is our sole ground for applying the category of substance to appearance; and we ought first to have proved that in all appearances there is something permanent, and that the transitory is nothing but determination of its existence. But such a proof B 228 cannot be developed dogmatically, that is, from concepts,

since it concerns a synthetic *a priori* proposition. Yet as it never occurred to anyone that such propositions are valid only in relation to possible experience, and can therefore be proved  
 A 185 only through a deduction of the possibility of experience, we need not be surprised that though the above principle is always postulated as lying at the basis of experience (for in empirical knowledge the need of it is *felt*), it has never itself been proved.

The determinations of a substance, which are nothing but special ways in which it exists, are called *accidents*. They are always real, because they concern the existence of substance. (Negations are only determinations which assert the non-existence of something in substance.) If we ascribe a special  
 B 230 [kind of] existence to this real in substance (for instance, to motion, as an accident of matter), this existence is entitled *inherence*, in distinction from the existence of substance which  
 A 187 is entitled *subsistence*. But this occasions many misunderstandings; it is more exact and more correct to describe an accident as being simply the way in which the existence of a substance is positively determined. But since it is unavoidable, owing to the conditions of the logical employment of our understanding, to separate off, as it were, that which in the existence of a substance can change while the substance still remains, and to view this variable element in relation to the truly permanent and radical, this category has to be assigned a place among the categories of relation, but rather as the condition of relations than as itself containing a relation.

The correct understanding of the concept of *alteration* is also grounded upon [recognition of] this permanence. Coming to be and ceasing to be are not alterations of that which comes to be or ceases to be. Alteration is a way of existing which follows upon another way of existing of the same object. All that alters *persists*, and only its *state changes*. Since this change thus concerns only the determinations, which can cease to be or begin to be, we can say, using what may seem a somewhat  
 B 231 paradoxical expression, that only the permanent (substance) is altered, and that the transitory suffers no alteration but only a *change*, inasmuch as certain determinations cease to be and others begin to be.



## B

## SECOND ANALOGY

*Principle of Succession in Time, in accordance with the  
Law of Causality\**

All alterations take place in conformity with the law of the connection of cause and effect.

*Proof*

The apprehension of the manifold of appearance is always successive. The representations of the parts follow upon one another. Whether they also follow one another in the object is a point which calls for further reflection, and which is not decided by the above statement. Everything, every representation even, in so far as we are conscious of it, may be entitled object. But it is a question for deeper enquiry what B 235 the word 'object' ought to signify in respect of appearances A 190 when these are viewed not in so far as they are (as representations) objects, but only in so far as they stand for an object. The appearances, in so far as they are objects of consciousness simply in virtue of being representations, are not in any way distinct from their apprehension, that is, from their reception in the synthesis of imagination; and we must therefore agree that the manifold of appearances is always generated in the mind successively. Now if appearances were things in themselves, then since we have to deal solely with our representations, we could never determine from the succession of the representations how their manifold may be connected in the object. How things may be in themselves, apart from the representations through which they affect us, is entirely outside our sphere of knowledge. In spite, however, of the fact that the appearances are not things in themselves, and yet are what alone can be given to us to know, in spite also of the fact that

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\* [In A:]

*Principle of Production*

Everything that happens, that is, begins to be, presupposes something upon which it follows according to a rule.

their representation in apprehension is always successive, I have to show what sort of a connection in time belongs to the manifold in the appearances themselves. For instance, the apprehension of the manifold in the appearance of a house which stands before me is successive. The question then arises, whether the manifold of the house is also in itself successive.

This, however, is what no one will grant. Now immediately  
 B 236 I unfold the transcendental meaning of my concepts of an object, I realise that the house is not a thing in itself, but only  
 A 191 an appearance, that is, a representation, the transcendental object of which is unknown. What, then, am I to understand by the question: how the manifold may be connected in the appearance itself, which yet is nothing in itself? That which lies in the successive apprehension is here viewed as representation, while the appearance which is given to me, notwithstanding that it is nothing but the sum of these representations, is viewed as their object; and my concept, which I derive from the representations of apprehension, has to agree with it. Since truth consists in the agreement of knowledge with the object, it will at once be seen that we can here enquire only regarding the formal conditions of empirical truth, and that appearance, in contradistinction to the representations of apprehension, can be represented as an object distinct from them only if it stands under a rule which distinguishes it from every other apprehension and necessitates some one particular mode of connection of the manifold. The object is *that* in the appearance which contains the condition of this necessary rule of apprehension.

Let us now proceed to our problem. That something happens, *i.e.* that something, or some state which did not pre-  
 B 237 viously exist, comes to be, cannot be perceived unless it is preceded by an appearance which does not contain in itself  
 A 192 this state. For an event which should follow upon an empty time, that is, a coming to be preceded by no state of things, is as little capable of being apprehended as empty time itself. Every apprehension of an event is therefore a perception that follows upon another perception. But since, as I have above illustrated by reference to the appearance of a house, this likewise happens in all synthesis of apprehension, the apprehension of an event is not yet thereby distinguished from other

apprehensions. But, as I also note, in an appearance which contains a happening (the preceding state of the perception we may entitle A, and the succeeding B) B can be apprehended only as following upon A; the perception A cannot follow upon B but only precede it. For instance, I see a ship move down stream. My perception of its lower position follows upon the perception of its position higher up in the stream, and it is impossible that in the apprehension of this appearance the ship should first be perceived lower down in the stream and afterwards higher up. The order in which the perceptions succeed one another in apprehension is in this instance determined, and to this order apprehension is bound down. In the previous example of a house my perceptions could begin with the apprehension of the roof and end with the basement, or could begin from below B 238 and end above; and I could similarly apprehend the manifold of the empirical intuition either from right to left or from left to right. In the series of these perceptions there was thus no A 193 determinate order specifying at what point I must begin in order to connect the manifold empirically. But in the perception of an event there is always a rule that makes the order in which the perceptions (in the apprehension of this appearance) follow upon one another a *necessary* order.

In this case, therefore, we must derive the *subjective succession* of apprehension from the *objective succession* of appearances. Otherwise the order of apprehension is entirely undetermined, and does not distinguish one appearance from another. Since the subjective succession by itself is altogether arbitrary, it does not prove anything as to the manner in which the manifold is connected in the object. The objective succession will therefore consist in that order of the manifold of appearance according to which, *in conformity with a rule*, the apprehension of that which happens follows upon the apprehension of that which precedes. Thus only can I be justified in asserting, not merely of my apprehension, but of appearance itself, that a succession is to be met with in it. This is only another way of saying that I cannot arrange the apprehension otherwise than in this very succession.

In conformity with such a rule there must lie in that which precedes an event the condition of a rule according to which B 239

this event invariably and necessarily follows. I cannot reverse  
 A 194 this order, proceeding back from the event to determine through apprehension that which precedes. For appearance never goes back from the succeeding to the preceding point of time, though it does indeed stand in relation to *some* preceding point of time. The advance, on the other hand, from a given time to the determinate time that follows is a necessary advance. Therefore, since there certainly is something that follows [*i.e.* that is *apprehended* as following], I must refer it necessarily to something else which precedes it and upon which it follows in conformity with a rule, that is, of necessity. The event, as the conditioned, thus affords reliable evidence of some condition, and this condition is what determines the event.

Let us suppose that there is nothing antecedent to an event, upon which it must follow according to rule. All succession of perception would then be only in the apprehension, that is, would be merely subjective, and would never enable us to determine objectively which perceptions are those that really precede and which are those that follow. We should then have only a play of representations, relating to no object; that is to say, it would not be possible through our perception to distinguish one appearance from another as regards relations of time. For the succession in our apprehension would always be one and the same, and there would be nothing  
 B 240 in the appearance which so determines it that a certain sequence is rendered objectively necessary, I could not then  
 A 195 assert that two states follow upon one another in the [field of] appearance, but only that one apprehension follows upon the other. That is something merely subjective, determining no object; and may not, therefore, be regarded as knowledge of any object, not even of an object in the [field of] appearance.

If, then, we experience that something happens, we in so doing always presuppose that something precedes it, on which it follows according to a rule. Otherwise I should not say of the object that it follows. For mere succession in my apprehension, if there be no rule determining the succession in relation to something that precedes, does not justify me in assuming any succession in the object. I render my subjective synthesis of apprehension objective only by reference

to a rule in accordance with which the appearances in their succession, that is, as they happen, are determined by the preceding state. The experience of an event [*i.e.* of anything as *happening*] is itself possible only on this assumption.

If, then, it is a necessary law of our sensibility, and therefore a *formal condition* of all perceptions, that the preceding time necessarily determines the succeeding (since I cannot advance to the succeeding time save through the preceding), it is also an indispensable law of *empirical representation* of the time series that the appearances of past time determine all existences in the succeeding time, and that these latter, as events, can take place only in so far as the appearances of past time determine their existence in time, that is, determine them according to a rule. *For only in appearances can we empirically apprehend this continuity in the connection of times.* {B 244  
A 199

Understanding is required for all experience and for its possibility. Its primary contribution does not consist in making the representation of objects distinct, but in making the representation of an object possible at all. This it does by carrying the time-order over into the appearances and their existence. For to each of them, [viewed] as [a] consequent, it assigns, through relation to the preceding appearances, a position determined *a priori* in time. Otherwise, they would not accord with time itself, which [in] *a priori* [fashion] determines the position of all its parts. Now since absolute time is not an object of perception, this determination of position cannot be derived from the relation of appearances to it. On the contrary, the appearances must determine for one another their position in time, and make their time-order a necessary order. In other words, that which follows or happens must follow in conformity with a universal rule upon that which was contained in the preceding state. A series of appearances thus arises which, with the aid of the understanding, produces and makes necessary the same order and continuous connection in the series of possible perceptions as is met with *a priori* in time—the form of inner intuition wherein all perceptions must have a position. B 245  
A 200

That something happens is, therefore, a perception which belongs to a possible experience. This experience becomes actual when I regard the appearance as determined in its posi-

tion in time, and therefore as an object that can always be found in the connection of perceptions in accordance with a  
 B 246 rule. This rule, by which we determine something according to succession of time, is, that the condition under which an event invariably and necessarily follows is to be found in what  
 A 201 precedes the event. The principle of sufficient reason is thus the ground of possible experience, that is, of objective knowledge of appearances in respect of their relation in the order of time.

At this point a difficulty arises with which we must at once deal. The principle of the causal connection among appearances is limited in our formula to their serial succession, whereas it applies also to their coexistence, when cause and effect are simultaneous. For instance, a room is warm while  
 B 248 the outer air is cool. I look around for the cause, and find a heated stove. Now the stove, as cause, is simultaneous with its effect, the heat of the room. Here there is no serial succession in time between cause and effect. They are simultaneous, and  
 A 203 yet the law is valid. The great majority of efficient natural causes are simultaneous with their effects, and the sequence in time of the latter is due only to the fact that the cause cannot achieve its complete effect in one moment. But in the moment in which the effect first comes to be, it is invariably simultaneous with the causality of its cause. If the cause should have ceased to exist a moment before, the effect would never have come to be. Now we must not fail to note that it is the *order* of time, not the *lapse* of time, with which we have to reckon; the relation remains even if no time has elapsed. The time between the causality of the cause and its immediate effect may be [a] *vanishing* [quantity], and they may thus be simultaneous; but the relation of the one to the other will always still remain determinable in time. If I view as a cause a ball which impresses a hollow as it lies on a stuffed cushion, the cause is simultaneous with the effect. But I still distinguish the two through the time-relation of their dynamical connection. For if I lay the ball on the cushion, a hollow follows upon the previous flat smooth shape; but if (for any reason) there  
 B 249 previously exists a hollow in the cushion, a leaden ball does not follow upon it.

## C

## THIRD ANALOGY

*Principle of Coexistence, in accordance with the Law of Reciprocity or Community*

All substances, in so far as they can be perceived to coexist in space, are in thoroughgoing reciprocity\*

*Proof*

Things are coexistent so far as they exist in one and the same time. But how do we know that they are in one and the same time? We do so when the order in the synthesis of apprehension of the manifold is a matter of indifference, that is, whether it be from A through B, C, D to E, or reversewise from E to A. For if they were in succession to one another in time, in the order, say, which begins with A and ends in E, it is impossible that we should begin the apprehension in the perception of E and proceed backwards to A, since A belongs to past time and can no longer be an object of apprehension. { A 212  
B 258

Now assuming that in a manifold of substances, as appear- A 212  
ances, each of them is completely isolated, that is, that no one acts on any other and receives reciprocal influences in return, I maintain that their *coexistence* would not be an object of a possible perception and that the existence of one could not B 259  
lead by any path of empirical synthesis to the existence of another. For if we bear in mind that they would be separated by a completely empty space, the perception which advances from one to another in time would indeed, by means of a succeeding perception, determine the existence of the latter, but would not be able to distinguish whether it follows objectively upon the first or whether it is not rather coexistent with it.

\* [In A:]

*Principle of Community*

All substances, so far as they coexist, stand in thoroughgoing community, that is, in mutual interaction.

There must, therefore, besides the mere existence of A and B, be something through which A determines for B, and also reversewise B determines for A, its position in time, because only on this condition can these substances be empirically represented as *coexisting*. Now only that which is the cause of another, or of its determinations, determines the position of the other in time. Each substance (inasmuch as only in respect of its determinations can it be an effect) must therefore contain in itself the causality of certain determinations in the other substance, and at the same time the effects of the causality of that other; that is, the substances must stand, immediately or  
**A 213** mediately, in dynamical community, if their coexistence is to be known in any possible experience. Now, in respect to the objects of experience, everything without which the experi-  
**B 260** ence of these objects would not itself be possible is necessary. It is therefore necessary that all substances in the [field of] appearance, so far as they coexist, should stand in thorough-going community of mutual interaction.

The word community is in the German language ambiguous. It may mean either *communio* or *commercium*. We here employ it in the latter sense, as signifying a dynamical community, without which even local community (*communio spatii*) could never be empirically known. We may easily recognise from our experiences that only the continuous influences in all parts of space can lead our senses from one object to another. The light, which plays between our eye and the celestial bodies, produces a mediate community between us and them, and thereby shows us that they coexist. We cannot empirically change our position, and perceive the change, unless matter in all parts of space makes perception of our position possible to us. For only thus by means of their reciprocal influence can the parts of matter establish their simultaneous existence, and thereby, though only mediately, their coexistence, even to the most remote objects. Without  
**A 214** community each perception of an appearance in space is broken off from every other, and the chain of empirical representations, that is, experience, would have to begin entirely  
**B 261** anew with each new object, without the least connection with the preceding representation, and without standing to it in any relation of time. I do not by this argument at all profess



to disprove void space, for it may exist where perceptions cannot reach, and where there is, therefore, no empirical knowledge of coexistence. But such a space is not for us an object of any possible experience.

\* \* \*

These, then, are the three analogies of experience. They are simply principles of the determination of the existence of appearances in time, according to all its three modes, viz. the relation to time itself as a magnitude (the magnitude of existence, that is, *duration*), the relation in time as a *successive* series, and finally the relation in time as a sum of all *simultaneous* existence. This unity of time-determination is altogether dynamical. For time is not viewed as that wherein experience immediately determines position for every existence. Such determination is impossible, inasmuch as absolute time is not an object of perception with which appearances could be confronted. What determines for each appearance its position in time is the rule of the understanding through which alone the existence of appearances can acquire synthetic unity as regards relations of time; and that rule consequently determines the position [in a manner that is] *a priori* and valid for each and every time.

By nature, in the empirical sense, we understand the connection of appearances as regards their existence according to necessary rules, that is, according to laws. There are certain laws which first make a nature possible, and these laws are *a priori*. Empirical laws can exist and be discovered only through experience, and indeed in consequence of those original laws through which experience itself first becomes possible. Our analogies therefore really portray the unity of nature in the connection of all appearances under certain exponents which express nothing save the relation of time (in so far as time comprehends all existence) to the unity of apperception—such unity being possible only in synthesis according to rules. Taken together, the analogies thus declare that all appearances lie, and must lie, in *one* nature, because without this *a priori* unity no unity of experience, and therefore no determination of objects in it, would be possible.

## 4

## THE POSTULATES OF EMPIRICAL THOUGHT IN GENERAL

1. That which agrees with the formal conditions of experience, that is, with the conditions of intuition and of concepts, is *possible*.

2. That which is bound up with the material conditions of experience, that is, with sensation, is *actual*.

3. That which in its connection with the actual is determined in accordance with universal conditions of experience, is (that is, exists as) *necessary*.

*Explanation*

B 267 } The postulate of the *possibility* of things requires that  
A 220 } the concept of the things should agree with the formal conditions of an experience in general. But this, the objective form of experience in general, contains all synthesis that is required for knowledge of objects. A concept which contains a synthesis is to be regarded as empty and as not related to any object, if this synthesis does not belong to experience either as being derived from it, in which case it is an *empirical concept*, or as being an *a priori* condition upon which experience in general in its formal aspect rests, in which case it is a *pure concept*. In the latter case it still belongs to experience, inasmuch as its object is to be met with only in experience. For whence shall we derive the character of the possibility of an object which is thought through a synthetic *a priori* concept, if not from the synthesis which constitutes the form of  
B 268 } the empirical knowledge of objects? It is, indeed, a necessary logical condition that a concept of the possible must not contain any contradiction; but this is not by any means sufficient to determine the objective reality of the concept, that is, the possibility of such an object as is thought through the concept. Thus there is no contradiction in the concept of a figure which is enclosed within two straight lines, since the concepts of two straight lines and of their coming together contain no  
A 221 } negation of a figure. The impossibility arises not from the concept in itself, but in connection with its construction in space,

that is, from the conditions of space and of its determination. And since these contain *a priori* in themselves the form of experience in general, they have objective validity, that is, they apply to possible things.

But if we should seek to frame quite new concepts of substances, forces, reciprocal actions, from the material which perception presents to us, without experience itself yielding the example of their connection, we should be occupying ourselves with mere fancies, of whose possibility there is absolutely no criterion since we have neither borrowed these concepts [directly] from experience, nor have taken experience as our instructress in their formation. Such fictitious concepts, unlike the categories, can acquire the character of possibility not in a *priori* fashion, as conditions upon which all experience depends, but only *a posteriori* as being concepts which are given through experience itself. And, consequently, their possibility must either be known *a posteriori* and empirically, B 270 or it cannot be known at all. A substance which would be permanently present in space, but without filling it (like that mode of existence intermediate between matter and thinking being which some would seek to introduce), or a special ultimate mental power of *intuitively* anticipating the future (and not merely inferring it), or lastly a power of standing in community of thought with other men, however distant they may be—are concepts the possibility of which is altogether ground- A 223 less, as they cannot be based on experience and its known laws; and without such confirmation they are arbitrary combinations of thoughts, which, although indeed free from contradiction, can make no claim to objective reality, and none, therefore, as to the possibility of an object such as we here profess to think. As regards reality, we obviously cannot think it *in concreto*, without calling experience to our aid. For reality is bound up with sensation, the matter of experience, not with that form of relation in regard to which we can, if we so choose, resort to a playful inventiveness.

But I leave aside everything the possibility of which can be derived only from its actuality in experience, and have here in view only the possibility of things through *a priori* concepts; and I maintain the thesis that their possibility can never be B 2 established from such concepts taken in and by themselves,

{ B 269  
A 222

but only when the concepts are viewed as formal and objective conditions of experience in general.

B 272 }  
A 225 }

The postulate bearing on the knowledge of things as *actual* does not, indeed, demand immediate *perception* (and, therefore, sensation of which we are conscious) of the object whose existence is to be known. What we do, however, require is the connection of the object with some actual perception, in accordance with the analogies of experience, which define all real connection in an experience in general.

In the *mere concept* of a thing no mark of its existence is to be found. For though it may be so complete that nothing which is required for thinking the thing with all its inner determinations is lacking to it, yet existence has nothing to do with all this, but only with the question whether such a thing be so given us that the perception of it can, if need be, precede the

B 273 concept. For that the concept precedes the perception signifies the concept's mere possibility; the perception which supplies the content to the concept is the sole mark of actuality. We can also, however, know the existence of the thing prior to its perception and, consequently, comparatively speaking, in an *a priori* manner, if only it be bound up with certain perceptions, in accordance with the principles of their empirical connection (the analogies). For the existence of the thing being thus bound up with our perceptions in a possible experience,

A 226 we are able in the series of possible perceptions and under the guidance of the analogies to make the transition from our actual perception to the thing in question. Thus from the perception of the attracted iron filings we know of the existence of a magnetic matter pervading all bodies, although the constitution of our organs cuts us off from all immediate perception of this medium. For in accordance with the laws of sensibility and the context of our perceptions, we should, were our senses more refined, come also in an experience upon the immediate empirical intuition of it. The grossness of our senses does not in any way decide the form of possible experience in general. Our knowledge of the existence of things reaches, then, only so far as perception and its advance according to empirical laws can extend. If we do not start from ex-

B 274 perience, or do not proceed in accordance with laws of the em-

pirical connection of appearances, our guessing or enquiring into the existence of anything will only be an idle pretence.

<sup>1</sup> Idealism raises, however, what is a serious objection to these rules for proving existence mediately; and this is the proper place for its refutation.

\* \* \*

### *Refutation of Idealism*

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. The former is the *problematic* idealism of Descartes, which holds that there is only one empirical assertion that is indubitably certain, namely, that 'I am'. The latter is the *dogmatic* idealism of Berkeley. He maintains that space, with all the things of which it is the inseparable condition, is something which is in itself impossible; and he therefore regards the things in space as merely imaginary entities. Dogmatic idealism is unavoidable, if space be interpreted as a property that must belong to things in themselves. For in that case space, and everything to which it serves as condition, is a non-entity. The ground on which this idealism rests has already been undermined by us in the Transcendental Aesthetic. Problematic idealism, which makes no such assertion, but merely pleads incapacity to prove, through immediate experi- B 275  
ence, any existence except our own, is, in so far as it allows of no decisive judgment until sufficient proof has been found, reasonable and in accordance with a thorough and philosophical mode of thought. The required proof must, therefore, show that we have *experience*, and not merely imagination of outer things; and this, it would seem, cannot be achieved save by proof that even our inner experience, which for Descartes is indubitable, is possible only on the assumption of outer experience.

<sup>1</sup> [This sentence, and the immediately following *Refutation of Idealism*, added in B.]

## THESIS

*The mere, but empirically determined, consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside me.*

*Proof*

I am conscious of my own existence as determined in time. All determination of time presupposes something *permanent* in perception. This permanent cannot, however, be something in me, since it is only through this permanent that my existence in time can itself be determined.<sup>1</sup> Thus perception of this permanent is possible only through a *thing* outside me and not through the mere *representation* of a thing outside me; and consequently the determination of my existence in time is possible only through the existence of  
 B 276 actual things which I perceive outside me. Now consciousness [of my existence] in time is necessarily bound up with consciousness of the [condition of the] possibility of this time-determination; and it is therefore necessarily bound up with the existence of things outside me, as the condition of the time-determination. In other words, the consciousness of my existence is at the same time an immediate consciousness of the existence of other things outside me.

*Note 1.* It will be observed that in the foregoing proof the game played by idealism has been turned against itself, and with greater justice. Idealism assumed that the only immediate experience is inner experience, and that from it we can only *infer* outer things—and this, moreover, only in an untrustworthy manner, as in all cases where we are inferring from given effects to determinate causes. In this particular case, the cause of the representations, which we ascribe, perhaps falsely, to outer things, may lie in ourselves. But in the above proof it has been shown that outer experience is

<sup>1</sup> [As stated by Kant in the Preface to B (XLI n), this sentence should be altered as follows: "But this permanent cannot be an intuition in me. For all grounds of determination of my existence which are to be met with in me are representations; and as representations themselves require a permanent distinct from them, in relation to which their change, and so my existence in the time wherein they change, may be determined".]

really immediate,\* and that only by means of it is inner B 277 experience—not indeed the consciousness of my own existence, but the determination of it in time—possible. Certainly, the representation ‘I am’, which expresses the consciousness that can accompany all thought, immediately includes in itself the existence of a subject, but it does not so include any *knowledge* of that subject, and therefore also no empirical knowledge, that is, no experience of it. For this we require, in addition to the thought of something existing, also intuition, and in this case inner intuition, in respect of which, that is, of time, the subject must be determined. But in order so to determine it, outer objects are quite indispensable; and it therefore follows that inner experience is itself possible only mediately, and only through outer experience.

*Note 2.* With this thesis all employment of our cognitive faculty in experience, in the determination of time, entirely agrees. Not only are we unable to perceive any determination of time save through change in outer relations (motion) relatively to the permanent in space (for instance, the motion of the sun relatively to objects on the earth), we have nothing B 278 permanent on which, as intuition, we can base the concept of a substance, save only *matter*; and even this permanence is not obtained from outer experience, but is presupposed *a priori* as a necessary condition of determination of time, and therefore also as a determination of inner sense in respect of [the determination of] our own existence through the existence of outer things. The consciousness of myself in the representation ‘I’ is not an intuition, but a merely *intellectual* representation of the spontaneity of a thinking subject. This

\* The *immediate* consciousness of the existence of outer things is, in the preceding thesis, not presupposed, but proved, be the possibility of this consciousness understood by us or not. The question as to its possibility would be this: whether we have an inner sense only, and no outer sense, but merely an outer imagination. It is clear, however, that in order even only to imagine something as outer, that is, to present it to sense in intuition, we must already have an outer sense, and must thereby immediately distinguish the mere receptivity of an outer intuition from the spontaneity which characterises every act of imagination. For should we merely be imagining an outer sense, the faculty of intuition, which is to be determined by the faculty of imagination, would itself be annulled.

'I' has not, therefore, the least predicate of intuition, which, as permanent, might serve as correlate for the determination of time in inner sense—in the manner in which, for instance, *impenetrability* serves in our *empirical* intuition of matter.

*Note 3.* From the fact that the existence of outer things is required for the possibility of a determinate consciousness of the self, it does not follow that every intuitive representation of outer things involves the existence of these things, for their representation can very well be the product merely of the imagination (as in dreams and delusions). Such representation is merely the reproduction of previous outer perceptions, which, as has been shown, are possible only through the reality of outer objects. All that we have here sought to prove is that inner experience in general is possible  
 B 279 only through outer experience in general. Whether this or that supposed experience be not purely imaginary, must be ascertained from its special determinations, and through its congruence with the criteria of all real experience.

\* \* \*

Lastly, as regards the third postulate, it concerns material necessity in existence, and not merely formal and logical necessity in the connection of concepts. Since the existence of any object of the senses cannot be known completely *a priori*, but only comparatively *a priori*, relatively to some other pre-  
 A 227 viously given existence; and since, even so, we can then arrive only at such an existence as must somewhere be contained in the context of the experience, of which the given perception is a part, the necessity of existence can never be known from concepts, but always only from connection with that which is perceived, in accordance with universal laws of experience. Now there is no existence that can be known as necessary under the condition of other given appearances, save the existence of effects from given causes, in accordance with laws of causality. It is not, therefore, the existence of things (substances) that we can know to be necessary, but only the existence of their state; and this necessity of the  
 B 280 existence of their state we can know only from other states, which are given in perception, in accordance with empirical



laws of causality. It therefore follows that the criterion of necessity lies solely in the law of possible experience, the law that everything which happens is determined *a priori* through its cause in the [field of] appearance. We thus know the necessity only of those *effects* in nature the causes of which are given to us, and the character of necessity in existence extends no further than the field of possible experience, and even in this field is not applicable to the existence of things as substances, since substances can never be viewed as empirical effects—that is, as happening and coming to be. Necessity concerns only the relations of appearances in conformity with A 228 the dynamical law of causality and the possibility grounded upon it of inferring *a priori* from a given existence (a cause) to another existence (the effect). That everything which happens is hypothetically necessary is a principle which subordinates alteration in the world to a law, that is, to a rule of necessary existence, without which there would be nothing that could be entitled nature. The proposition that nothing happens through blind chance (*in mundo non datur casus*) is therefore an *a priori* law of nature. So also is the proposition that no necessity in nature is blind, but always a conditioned and therefore intelligible necessity (*non datur fatum*). Both are laws through which the play of alterations is rendered B 281 subject to a *nature of things* (that is, of things as appearances), or what amounts to the same thing, to the unity of understanding, in which alone they can belong to *one* experience, that is, to the synthetic unity of appearances. Both belong to the class of dynamical principles. The first is really a consequence of the principle of causality, and so belongs to the analogies of experience. The second is a principle of modality; but this modality, while adding the concept of necessity to causal determination, itself stands under a rule of understanding. The principle of continuity forbids any leap in the series of appearances, that is, of alterations (*in mundo non datur saltus*); it also forbids, in respect of the sum of all A 229 empirical intuitions in space, any gaps or cleft between two appearances (*non datur hiatus*); for so we may express the proposition, that nothing which proves a vacuum, or which even admits it as a part of empirical synthesis, can enter into experience. As regards a void which may be conceived to lie

beyond the field of possible experience, that is, outside the world, such a question does not come within the jurisdiction of the mere understanding—which decides only upon questions that concern the use to be made of given appearances for the obtaining of empirical knowledge. It is a problem for that ideal reason which goes out beyond the sphere of a possible  
 B 282 experience and seeks to judge of that which surrounds and limits it; and is a problem which will therefore have to be considered in the Transcendental Dialectic.

A 230 To enquire whether the field of possibility is larger than the field which contains all actuality, and this latter, again, larger than the sum of that which is necessary, is to raise somewhat subtle questions which demand a synthetic solution and yet come under the jurisdiction of reason alone. For they are tantamount to the enquiry whether things as appearances one and all belong to the sum and context of a single experience, of which every given perception is a part, a part which therefore cannot be connected with any other [series of]

B 283 appearances, or whether my perceptions can belong, in their general connection, to more than one possible experience. The understanding, in accordance with the subjective and formal conditions of sensibility as well as of apperception, prescribes *a priori* to experience in general the rules which alone make experience possible. Other forms of intuition than space and time, other forms of understanding than the discursive forms of thought, or of knowledge through concepts, even if they should be possible, we cannot render in any way conceivable and comprehensible to ourselves; and even assuming that we could do so, they still would not belong to experience—the only kind of knowledge in which objects are given to us.

A 231 Whether other perceptions than those belonging to our whole possible experience, and therefore a quite different field of matter, may exist, the understanding is not in a position to decide. It can deal only with the synthesis of that which is given. Moreover, the poverty of the customary inferences through which we throw open a great realm of possibility, of which all that is actual (the objects of experience) is only a small part, is patently obvious. Everything actual is possible; from this proposition there naturally follows, in accordance with the logical rules of conversion, the merely particular

proposition, that some possible is actual; and this would seem B 284 to mean that much is possible which is not actual. It does indeed seem as if we were justified in extending the number of possible things beyond that of the actual, on the ground that something must be added to the possible to constitute the actual. But this [alleged] process of adding to the possible I refuse to allow. For that which would have to be added to the possible, over and above the possible, would be impossible. What can be added is only a relation to my understanding, namely, that in addition to agreement with the formal conditions of experience there should be connection with some perception. But whatever is connected with perception in accordance with empirical laws is actual, even although it is not immediately perceived. That yet another series of appearances in thoroughgoing connection with that which is given in perception, and consequently that more than one all-embracing A 232 experience is possible, cannot be inferred from what is given; and still less can any such inference be drawn independently of anything being given—since without material nothing whatsoever can be thought. What is possible only under conditions which themselves are merely possible is not *in all respects* possible. But such [absolute] possibility is in question when it is asked whether the possibility of things extends further than experience can reach.

I have made mention of these questions only in order to omit nothing which is ordinarily reckoned among the concepts B 285 of understanding. But as a matter of fact absolute possibility, that which is in all respects valid, is no mere concept of understanding, and can never be employed empirically. It belongs exclusively to reason, which transcends all possible empirical employment of the understanding. We have therefore had to content ourselves with some merely critical remarks; the matter must otherwise be left in obscurity until we come to the proper occasion for its further treatment.

Before concluding this fourth section, and therewith the system of all principles of pure understanding, I must explain why I have entitled the principles of modality postulates. I interpret this expression not in the sense which some recent philosophical writers, wresting it from its proper mathe- A 233 matical significance, have given to it, namely, that to postu-

late should mean to treat a proposition as immediately certain, without justification or proof. For if, in dealing with synthetic propositions, we are to recognise them as possessing unconditioned validity, independently of deduction, on the evidence [merely] of their own claims, then no matter how evident they may be, all critique of understanding is given up. In mathematics a postulate means the practical proposition which contains nothing save the synthesis through which we first give ourselves an object and generate its concept—for instance, with a given line, to describe a circle on a plane from a given point. Such a proposition cannot be proved, since the procedure which it demands is exactly that through which we first generate the concept of such a figure. With exactly the same right we may postulate the principles of modality, since they do not increase our concept of things,\* but only show the manner in which it is connected with the faculty of knowledge.

B 288

*General Note on the System of the Principles*

That the possibility of a thing cannot be determined from the category alone, and that in order to exhibit the objective reality of the pure concept of understanding we must always have an intuition, is a very noteworthy fact. Take, for instance, the categories of relation. We cannot determine from mere concepts how (1) something can exist as subject only, and not as a mere determination of other things, that is, how a thing can be substance, or (2) how, because something is, something else must be, and how, therefore, a thing can be a cause, or (3) when several things exist, how because one of them is there, something follows in regard to the others and *vice versa*, and how in this way there can be a community of substances. This likewise applies to the other categories; for example, how a thing can be equal to a number of things taken to-

\* Through the actuality of a thing I certainly posit more than the possibility of it, but not *in the thing*. For it can never contain more in its actuality than is contained in its complete possibility. But while possibility is merely a positing of the thing in relation to the understanding (in its empirical employment), actuality is at the same time a connection of it with perception.

gether, that is, can be a quantity. 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. In all these ways, then, we obtain confirmation that the categories are not in themselves knowledge, but are merely *forms of thought* for the making of knowledge from given intuitions.

For the same reason it follows that no synthetic proposi- B 289  
tion can be made from mere categories. For instance, we are not in a position to say that in all existence there is substance, that is, something which can exist only as subject and not as mere predicate; or that everything is a quantum, etc. For if intuition be lacking, there is nothing which can enable us to go out beyond a given concept, and to connect another with it. No one, therefore, has ever yet succeeded in proving a synthetic proposition merely from pure concepts of the understanding—as, for instance, that everything which exists contingently has a cause. We can never get further than proving, that without this relation we are unable to comprehend the existence of the contingent, that is, are unable *a priori* through the understanding to know the existence of such a thing—from which it does not, however, follow that this is also a condition of the possibility of the things themselves. If the reader will go back to our proof of the principle of causality—that everything which happens, that is, every event, presupposes a cause—he will observe that we were able to prove it only of objects of possible experience; and even so, not from pure concepts, but only as a principle of the possibility of experience, and therefore of the knowledge of an object given in *empirical intuition*. We cannot, indeed, deny that the proposition, that everything contingent must have a cause, is patent to every- B 290  
one from mere concepts. But the concept of the contingent is then being apprehended as containing, not the category of modality (as something the not-being of which can be *thought*), but that of relation (as something which can exist only as consequence of something else); and it is then, of course, an identical proposition—that which can exist only as consequence has a cause. As a matter of fact, when we are required to cite examples of contingent existence, we invariably have recourse to *alterations*, and not merely to the possi-

bility of *entertaining the opposite in thought*.<sup>a</sup> Now alteration  
 B 291 is an event which, as such, is possible only through a cause, and the not-being of which is therefore in itself possible. In other words, we recognise contingency in and through the fact that something can exist only as the effect of a cause; and if, therefore, a thing is assumed to be contingent, it is an analytic proposition to say that it has a cause.

But it is an even more noteworthy fact, that in order to understand the possibility of things in conformity with the categories, and so to demonstrate the *objective reality* of the latter, we need, not merely intuitions, but intuitions that are in all cases *outer intuitions*. When, for instance, we take the pure concepts of *relation*, we find, firstly, that in order to obtain something *permanent* in intuition corresponding to the concept of *substance*, and so to demonstrate the objective reality of this concept, we require an intuition in space (of matter). For space alone is determined as permanent, while time, and therefore, everything that is in inner sense, is in constant flux. Secondly, in order to exhibit *alteration* as the intuition corresponding to the concept of *causality*, we must take as our example motion, that is, alteration in space. Only in this way can we obtain the intuition of alterations, the possibility of which can never be comprehended through any pure understanding. For alteration is combination of contradictorily opposed determinations in the existence of one and the same  
 B 292 thing. Now how it is possible that from a given state of a thing an opposite state should follow, not only cannot be conceived by reason without an example, but is actually incomprehen-

<sup>a</sup> We can easily think the non-existence of matter. From this the ancients did not, however, infer its contingency. Even the change from being to not-being of a given state of a thing, in which all alteration consists, does not prove the contingency of this state, on the ground of the reality of its opposite. For instance, that a body should come to rest after having been in motion does not prove the contingency of the motion as being the opposite of the state of rest. For this opposite is *opposed* to the other only logically, not *realiter*. To prove the contingency of its motion, we should have to prove that *instead of* the motion at the preceding moment, it was possible for the body to have been *then* at rest, not that it is *afterwards* at rest; for in the latter case the opposites are quite consistent with each other.

sible to reason without intuition. The intuition required is the intuition of the movement of a point in space. The presence of the point in different locations (as a sequence of opposite determinations) is what alone first yields to us an intuition of alteration. For in order that we may afterwards make inner alterations likewise thinkable, we must represent time (the form of inner sense) figuratively as a line, and the inner alteration through the drawing of this line (motion), and so in this manner by means of outer intuition make comprehensible the successive existence of ourselves in different states. The reason of this is that all alteration, if it is to be perceived as alteration, presupposes something permanent in intuition, and that in inner sense no permanent intuition is to be met with. Lastly, the possibility of the category of *community* cannot be comprehended through mere reason alone; and consequently its objective reality is only to be determined through intuition, and indeed through outer intuition in space. For how are we to think it to be possible, when several substances exist, that, from the existence of one, something (as effect) can follow in regard to the existence of the others, and *vice versa*; in other words, that because there is something in the one there must also in the others be some- B 293  
 thing which is not to be understood solely from the existence of these others? For this is what is required in order that there be community; community is not conceivable as holding between things each of which, through its subsistence, stands in complete isolation. Leibniz, in attributing to the substances of the world, as thought through the understanding alone, a community, had therefore to resort to the mediating intervention of a Deity. For, as he justly recognised, a community of substances is utterly inconceivable as arising simply from their existence. We can, however, render the possibility of community—of substances as appearances—perfectly comprehensible, if we represent them to ourselves in space, that is, in outer intuition. For this already contains in itself *a priori* formal outer relations as conditions of the possibility of the real relations of action and reaction, and therefore of the possibility of community.

Similarly, it can easily be shown that the possibility of things as *quantities*, and therefore the objective reality of

quantity, can be exhibited only in outer intuition, and that only through the mediation of outer intuition can it be applied also to inner sense. But, to avoid prolixity, I must leave the reader to supply his own examples of this.

These remarks are of great importance, not only in confirmation of our previous refutation of idealism, but even more, when we come to treat of *self-knowledge* by mere inner  
 B 294 consciousness, that is, by determination of our nature without the aid of outer empirical intuitions—as showing us the limits of the possibility of this kind of knowledge.

The final outcome of this whole section is therefore this: all principles of the pure understanding are nothing more than principles *a priori* of the possibility of experience, and to experience alone do all *a priori* synthetic propositions relate—indeed, their possibility itself rests entirely on this relation.



## TRANSCENDENTAL DOCTRINE OF JUDGMENT

### (ANALYTIC OF PRINCIPLES)

#### CHAPTER III

##### THE GROUND OF THE DISTINCTION OF ALL OBJECTS IN GENERAL INTO PHENOMENA AND NOUMENA

WE have now not merely explored the territory of pure understanding, and carefully surveyed every part of it, but have also measured its extent, and assigned to everything in it its rightful place. This domain is an island, enclosed by nature itself within unalterable limits. It is the land of truth—enchanting name!—surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, B 295 the native home of illusion, where many a fog bank and many a swiftly melting iceberg give the deceptive appearance of farther shores, deluding the adventurous seafarer ever anew A 236 with empty hopes, and engaging him in enterprises which he can never abandon and yet is unable to carry to completion. Before we venture on this sea, to explore it in all directions and to obtain assurance whether there be any ground for such hopes, it will be well to begin by casting a glance upon the map of the land which we are about to leave, and to enquire, first, whether we cannot in any case be satisfied with what it contains—are not, indeed, under compulsion to be satisfied, inasmuch as there may be no other territory upon which we can settle; and, secondly, by what title we possess even this domain, and can consider ourselves as secured against all opposing claims. Although we have already given a sufficient answer to these questions in the course of the Analytic, a summary statement of its solutions may nevertheless help to strengthen our conviction, by focussing the various considerations in their bearing on the questions now before us.

We have seen that everything which the understanding derives from itself is, though not borrowed from experience, at the disposal of the understanding solely for use in experience. The principles of pure understanding, whether constitutive *a priori*, like the mathematical principles, or merely regulative, like the dynamical, contain nothing but what may be called the pure schema of possible experience. For experience obtains its unity only from the synthetic unity which the understanding originally and of itself confers upon the synthesis of imagination in its relation to apperception; and the appearances, as data for a possible knowledge, must already stand *a priori* in relation to, and in agreement with, that synthetic unity.

If the assertion, that the understanding can employ its various principles and its various concepts solely in an empirical and never in a transcendental manner, is a proposition which can be known with certainty, it will yield important consequences. The transcendental employment of a concept in any principle is its application to things *in general and in themselves*; the empirical employment is its application *merely to appearances*; that is, to objects of a possible experience. That the latter application of concepts is alone feasible is evident from the following considerations. We demand in every concept, first, the logical form of a concept (of thought) in general, and secondly, the possibility of giving it an object to which it may be applied. In the absence of such object, it has no meaning and is completely lacking in content, though it may still contain the logical function which is required for making a concept out of any data that may be presented. Now the object cannot be given to a concept otherwise than in intuition; for though a pure intuition can indeed precede the object *a priori*, even this intuition can acquire its object, and therefore objective validity, only through the empirical intuition of which it is the mere form. Therefore all concepts, and with them all principles, even such as are possible *a priori*, relate to empirical intuitions, that is, to the data for a possible experience. Apart from this relation they have no objective validity, and in respect of their representations are a mere play of imagination or of understanding.

That this is the case with all categories and the principles

derived from them, appears from the following consideration. We cannot define any one of them in any real fashion, that is, make the possibility of their object understandable, without at once descending to the conditions of sensibility, and so to the form of appearances—to which, as their sole objects, they must consequently be limited. For if this condition be removed, all meaning, that is, relation to the object, falls away; and we cannot through any example make comprehensible to ourselves what sort of a thing is to be meant by such a concept.

If I leave out permanence (which is existence in all time), nothing remains in the concept of substance save only the logical representation of a subject—a representation which I endeavour to realise by representing to myself something which can exist only as subject and never as predicate. But not only am I ignorant of any conditions under which this logical pre-eminence may belong to anything; I can neither put such a concept to any use, nor draw the least inference from it. For no object is thereby determined for its employment, and consequently we do not know whether it signifies anything whatsoever. If I omit from the concept of cause the time in which something follows upon something else in conformity with a rule, I should find in the pure category nothing further than that there is something from which we can conclude to the existence of something else. In that case not only would we be unable to distinguish cause and effect from one another, but since the power to draw such inferences requires conditions of which I know nothing, the concept would yield no indication how it applies to any object. So long as the definition of possibility, existence, and necessity is sought solely in pure understanding, they cannot be explained save through an obvious tautology. For to substitute the logical possibility of the *concept* (namely, that the concept does not contradict itself) for the transcendental possibility of *things* (namely, that an object corresponds to the concept) can deceive and leave satisfied only the simple-minded.\*

\* In a word, if all sensible intuition, the only kind of intuition which we possess, is removed, not one of these concepts can in any fashion *verify* itself, so as to show its *real* possibility. Only *logical* possibility then remains, that is, that the concept or thought is pos-

B 303 From all this it undeniably follows that the pure concepts of understanding can *never* admit of *transcendental* but *always* only of *empirical* employment, and that the principles of pure understanding can apply only to objects of the senses under the universal conditions of a possible experience, never to things in general without regard to the mode in which we are able to intuit them.

Accordingly the Transcendental Analytic leads to this important conclusion, that the most the understanding can achieve *a priori* is to anticipate the form of a possible experience in general. And since that which is not appearance cannot be an object of experience, the understanding can never transcend those limits of sensibility within which alone objects A 247 can be given to us. Its principles are merely rules for the exposition of appearances; and the proud name of an Ontology that presumptuously claims to supply, in systematic doctrinal form, synthetic *a priori* knowledge of things in general (for instance, the principle of causality) must, therefore, give place to the modest title of a mere Analytic of pure understanding.

But we are here subject to an illusion from which it is difficult to escape. The categories are not, as regards their origin, grounded in sensibility, like the *forms of intuition*, space and time; and they seem, therefore, to allow of an application extending beyond all objects of the senses. As a matter of fact they are nothing but *forms of thought*, which contain the merely logical faculty of uniting *a priori* in one B 306 consciousness the manifold given in intuition; and apart, therefore, from the only intuition that is possible to us, they have even less meaning than the pure sensible forms. Through these forms an object is at least given, whereas a mode of combining the manifold—a mode peculiar to our understanding—by itself, in the absence of that intuition wherein the manifold can alone be given, signifies nothing at all. At the same time, if we entitle certain objects, as appearances, sensible entities (phenomena), then since we thus distinguish the mode in which we intuit them from the nature that belongs to them in themselves, it is implied in this distinction

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sible. That, however, is not what we are discussing, but whether the concept relates to an object and so signifies something.

that we place the latter, considered in their own nature, although we do not so intuit them, or that we place other possible things, which are not objects of our senses but are thought as objects merely through the understanding, in opposition to the former, and that in so doing we entitle them intelligible entities (noumena). The question then arises, whether our pure concepts of understanding have meaning in respect of these latter, and so can be a way of knowing them.

At the very outset, however, we come upon an ambiguity which may occasion serious misapprehension. The understanding, when it entitles an object in a [certain] relation mere phenomenon, at the same time forms, apart from that relation, a representation of an *object in itself*, and so comes to represent itself as also being able to form *con-* B 307  
*cepts* of such objects. And since the understanding yields no concepts additional to the categories, it also supposes that the object in itself must at least be *thought* through these pure concepts, and so is misled into treating the entirely *indeterminate* concept of an intelligible entity, namely, of a something in general outside our sensibility, as being a *determinate* concept of an entity that allows of being known in a certain [purely intelligible] manner by means of the understanding.

If by 'noumenon' we mean a thing so far as it is *not an object of our sensible intuition*, and so abstract from our mode of intuiting it, this is a noumenon in the *negative* sense of the term. But if we understand by it an *object* of a *non-sensible intuition*, we thereby presuppose a special mode of intuition, namely, the intellectual, which is not that which we possess and of which we cannot comprehend even the possibility. This would be 'noumenon' in the *positive* sense of the term.

The doctrine of sensibility is likewise the doctrine of the noumenon in the negative sense, that is, of things which the understanding must think without this reference to our mode of intuition, therefore not merely as appearances but as things in themselves. At the same time the understanding is well aware that in viewing things in this manner, as thus apart from our mode of intuition, it cannot make any use of B 308  
the categories. For the categories have meaning only in rela-

tion to the unity of intuition in space and time; and even this unity they can determine, by means of general *a priori* connecting concepts, only because of the mere ideality of space and time. In cases where this unity of time is not to be found, and therefore in the case of the noumenon, all employment, and indeed the whole meaning of the categories, entirely vanishes; for we have then no means of determining whether things in harmony with the categories are even possible. On this point I need only refer the reader to what I have said in the opening sentences of the *General Note* appended to the preceding chapter. The possibility of a thing can never be proved merely from the fact that its concept is not self-contradictory, but only through its being supported by some corresponding intuition. If, therefore, we should attempt to apply the categories to objects which are not viewed as being appearances, we should have to postulate an intuition other than the sensible, and the object would thus be a noumenon in the *positive sense*. Since, however, such a type of intuition, intellectual intuition, forms no part whatsoever of our faculty of knowledge, it follows that the employment of the categories can never extend further than to the objects of experience. Doubtless, indeed, there are intelligible entities

**B 309** corresponding to the sensible entities; there may also be intelligible entities to which our sensible faculty of intuition has no relation whatsoever; but our concepts of understanding, being mere forms of thought for our sensible intuition, could not in the least apply to them. That, therefore, which we entitle 'noumēnon' must be understood as being such only in a *negative* sense.

If I remove from empirical knowledge all thought (through categories), no knowledge of any object remains. For through mere intuition nothing at all is thought, and the fact that this affection of sensibility is in me does not [by itself] amount to a relation of such representation to any object. But if, on the  
**A 254** other hand, I leave aside all intuition, the form of thought still remains—that is, the mode of determining an object for the manifold of a possible intuition. The categories accordingly extend further than sensible intuition, since they think objects in general, without regard to the special mode (the *sensibility*) in which they may be given. But they do not

thereby determine a greater sphere of objects. For we cannot assume that such objects can be given, without presupposing the possibility of another kind of intuition than the sensible; and we are by no means justified in so doing.

If the objective reality of a concept cannot be in any way B 310 known, while yet the concept contains no contradiction and also at the same time is connected with other modes of knowledge that involve given concepts which it serves to limit, I entitle that concept problematic. The concept of a *noumenon*—that is, of a thing which is not to be thought as object of the senses but as a thing in itself, solely through a pure understanding—is not in any way contradictory. For we cannot assert of sensibility that it is the sole possible kind of intuition. Further, the concept of a noumenon is necessary, to prevent sensible intuition from being extended to things in themselves, and thus to limit the objective validity of sensible knowledge. The remaining things, to which it does not apply, are entitled A 255 noumena, in order to show that this knowledge cannot extend its domain over everything which the understanding thinks. But none the less we are unable to comprehend how such noumena can be possible, and the domain that lies out beyond the sphere of appearances is for us empty. That is to say, we have an understanding which *problematically* extends further, but we have no intuition, indeed not even the concept of a possible intuition, through which objects outside the field of sensibility can be given, and through which the understanding can be employed *assertorically* beyond that field. The concept of a noumenon is thus a merely *limiting concept*, the function B 312 of which is to curb the pretensions of sensibility; and it is therefore only of negative employment. At the same time it is no arbitrary invention; it is bound up with the limitation of sensibility, though it cannot affirm anything positive beyond the field of sensibility.

The division of objects into phenomena and noumena, and the world into a world of the senses and a world of the understanding, is therefore quite inadmissible in the positive sense, although the distinction of concepts as sensible and intellectual is certainly legitimate. For no object can be determined for the latter concepts, and consequently they cannot be asserted to be objectively valid. If we abandon the senses, how shall we make

- A 335 it conceivable that our categories, which would be the sole remaining concepts for noumena, should still continue to signify something, since for their relation to any object more must be given than merely the unity of thought—namely, in addition, a possible intuition, to which they may be applied. None the less, if the concept of a noumenon be taken in a merely problematic sense, it is not only admissible, but as setting limits to sensibility is likewise indispensable. But in that case a noumenon is not for our understanding a special [kind of] object, namely, an *intelligible object*; the [sort of] understanding to which it might belong is itself a problem. For we cannot in the least represent to ourselves the possibility of an understanding which should know its object, not discursively
- B 312 through categories, but intuitively in a non-sensible intuition. What our understanding acquires through this concept of a noumenon, is a negative extension; that is to say, understanding is not limited through sensibility; on the contrary, it itself limits sensibility by applying the term noumena to things in themselves (things not regarded as appearances). But in so doing it at the same time sets limits to itself, recognising that it cannot know these noumena through any of the categories, and that it must therefore think them only under the title
- B 315 of an unknown something. The problematic thought which leaves open a place for them serves only, like an empty space,
- A 360 for the limitation of empirical principles, without itself containing or revealing any other object of knowledge beyond the sphere of those principles.



## THE AMPHIBOLY OF CONCEPTS OF REFLECTION

ARISING FROM THE CONFUSION OF THE EMPIRICAL WITH THE  
TRANSCENDENTAL EMPLOYMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

THE concepts of reflection, owing to a certain misinterpretation, have exercised so great an influence upon the employment of the understanding that they have misled even one of the most acute of all philosophers into a supposititious system of intellectual knowledge, which undertakes to determine its objects without any assistance from the senses. For this reason the exposition of the cause of what is deceptive—occasioning these false principles—in the amphiboly of these concepts, is of great utility as a reliable method of determining and securing the limits of the understanding. {B 336  
A 336

It is indeed true that whatever universally agrees with or B 337 contradicts a concept also agrees with or contradicts every A 283 particular which is contained under it (*dictum de omni et nullo*); but it would be absurd to alter this logical principle so as to read:—what is not contained in a universal concept is also not included in the particular concepts which stand under it. For these are particular concepts just because they include in themselves more than is thought in the universal. Nevertheless it is upon this latter principle that the whole intellectual system of Leibniz is based; and with this principle it therefore falls, together with all the ambiguities (in the employment of the understanding) that have thence arisen.

The principle of the identity of indiscernibles is really based on the presupposition, that if a certain distinction is not found in the concept of a thing in general, it is also not to be found in the things themselves, and consequently that all things which are not distinguishable from one another in their con-

cepts (in quality or quantity) are completely identical (*numero eadem*). Because in the mere concept of a thing in general we abstract from the many necessary conditions of its intuition, the conditions from which we have abstracted are, with strange

B 338 presumption, treated as not being there at all, and nothing is allowed to the thing beyond what is contained in its concept.

A 282 The concept of a cubic foot of space, wherever and however often I think it, is in itself throughout one and the same. But two cubic feet are nevertheless distinguished in space by the mere difference of their locations (*numero diversa*); these locations are conditions of the intuition wherein the object of this concept is given; they do not, however, belong to the concept but entirely to sensibility. Similarly there is no conflict in the concept of a thing unless a negative statement is combined with an affirmative; merely affirmative concepts cannot, when combined, produce any cancellation. But in the sensible intuition, wherein reality (*e.g.* motion) is given, there are conditions (opposite directions), which have been omitted in the concept of motion in general, that make possible a conflict (though not indeed a logical one), namely, as producing from what is entirely positive a zero (= 0). We are not, therefore, in a position to say that since conflict is not to be met with in the concepts of reality, all reality is in agreement with itself.<sup>a</sup>

B 339 } According to mere concepts the inner is the substratum of  
A 283 } all relational or outer determinations. If, therefore, I abstract from all conditions of intuition and confine myself to the concept of a thing in general, I can abstract from all outer relation, and there must still be left a concept of something which signifies no relation, but inner determinations only. From this it seems to follow that in whatever is a thing (substance) there is something which is absolutely inward and precedes all outer

<sup>a</sup> If we here wished to resort to the usual subterfuge, maintaining as regards *realitates noumena* that they at least do not act in opposition to each other, it would be incumbent on us to produce an example of such pure and non-sensuous reality, that it may be discerned whether such a concept represents something or nothing. But no example can be obtained otherwise than from experience, which never yields more than phenomena. This proposition has therefore no further meaning than that a concept which only includes affirmation includes no negation a proposition which we have never doubted.

determinations, inasmuch as it is what first makes them possible; and consequently, that this substratum, as no longer containing in itself any outer relations, is *simple*. (Corporeal things are never anything save relations only, at least of their parts external to each other.) And since we know of no determinations which are absolutely inner except those [given] through our inner sense, this substratum is not only simple; it is likewise (in analogy with our inner sense) determined through *representations*; in other words, all things are really *monads*, simple beings endowed with representations. These B 340 contentions would be entirely justified, if beyond the concept of a thing in general there were no further conditions A 284 under which alone objects of outer intuition can be given us—those from which the pure concept has [as a matter of fact] made abstraction. For under these further conditions, as we find, an abiding appearance in space (impenetrable extension) can contain only relations and nothing at all that is absolutely inward, and yet be the primary substratum of all outer perception. Through mere concepts I cannot, indeed, think what is outer without thinking something that is inner; and this for the sufficient reason that concepts of relation presuppose things which are absolutely [*i.e.* independently] given, and without these are impossible. But something is contained in intuition which is not to be met with in the mere concept of a thing; and this yields the substratum, which could never be known through mere concepts, namely, a space which with all that it contains consists solely of relations, formal, or, it may be, also real. Because, without an absolutely inner element, a thing can never be represented *by mere concepts*, I may not therefore claim that there is *not* also in the things themselves which are subsumed under these concepts, and *in their intuition*, something external that has no basis in anything wholly inward. Once we have abstracted from all conditions of intuition, there is, I admit, nothing left in the mere concept B 341 but the inner in general and its interrelations, through which alone the external is possible. But this necessity, which is founded solely on abstraction, does not arise in the case of things as given in intuition with determinations that express A 285 mere relations, without having anything inward as their basis; for such are not things in themselves but merely appearances.

All that we know in matter is merely relations (what we call the inner determinations of it are inward only in a comparative sense), but among these relations some are self-subsistent and permanent, and through these we are given a determinate object. The fact that, if I abstract from these relations, there is nothing more left for me to think does not rule out the concept of a thing as appearance, nor indeed the concept of an object *in abstracto*. What it does remove is all possibility of an object determinable through mere concepts, that is, of a noumenon. It is certainly startling to hear that a thing is to be taken as consisting wholly of relations. Such a thing is, however, mere appearance, and cannot be thought through pure categories; what it itself consists in is the mere relation of something in general to the senses. Similarly, if we begin with mere concepts, we cannot think the relations of things *in abstracto* in

**B 342** any other manner than by regarding one thing as the cause of determinations in another, for that is how our understanding conceives of relations. But since we are in that case disregarding all intuition, we have ruled ourselves out from any kind of recognition of the special mode in which the different elements of the manifold determine each other's positions, that is, of

**A 286** the form of sensibility (space), which yet is presupposed in all empirical causality.

# TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC

## SECOND DIVISION

### TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC

#### INTRODUCTION

##### I

#### TRANSCENDENTAL ILLUSION

WE are not here concerned with empirical (*e.g.* optical) A 295 illusion, which occurs in the empirical employment of rules of B 352 understanding that are otherwise correct, and through which the faculty of judgment is misled by the influence of imagination; we are concerned only with *transcendental illusion*, which exerts its influence on principles that are in no wise intended for use in experience, in which case we should at least have had a criterion of their correctness. In defiance of all the warnings of criticism, it carries us altogether beyond the empirical employment of categories and puts us off with a merely deceptive extension of *pure understanding*.

Logical illusion, which consists in the mere imitation of the form of reason (the illusion of formal fallacies), arises entirely from lack of attention to the logical rule. As soon as attention is brought to bear on the case that is before us, A 297 the illusion completely disappears. Transcendental illusion, on the other hand, does not cease even after it has been detected and its invalidity clearly revealed by transcendental criticism (*e.g.* the illusion in the proposition: the world must have a beginning in time). The cause of this is that there are fundamental rules and maxims for the employment of our reason (subjectively regarded as a faculty of human knowledge), and that these have all the appearance of being ob-

jective principles. We therefore take the subjective necessity of a connection of our concepts, which is to the advantage of the understanding, for an objective necessity in the determination of things in themselves. This is an *illusion* which can no more be prevented than we can prevent the sea  
 B 354 appearing higher at the horizon than at the shore, since we see it through higher light rays; or to cite a still better example, than the astronomer can prevent the moon from appearing larger at its rising, although he is not deceived by this illusion.

The transcendental dialectic will therefore content itself with exposing the illusion of transcendent judgments, and at the same time taking precautions that we be not deceived by it. That the illusion should, like logical illusion, actually disappear and cease to be an illusion, is something which tran-  
 A 298 scendental dialectic can never be in a position to achieve. For here we have to do with a *natural* and inevitable *illusion*, which rests on subjective principles, and foists them upon us as objective; whereas logical dialectic in its exposure of deceptive inferences has to do merely with an error in the following out of principles, or with an illusion artificially created in imitation of such inferences. There exists, then, a natural and unavoidable dialectic of pure reason—not one in which a bungler might entangle himself through lack of knowledge, or one which some sophist has artificially invented to confuse thinking people, but one inseparable from human reason, and which, even after its deceptiveness has been exposed, will not  
 B 355 cease to play tricks with reason and continually entrap it into momentary aberrations ever and again calling for correction.

## II

PURE REASON AS THE SEAT OF TRANSCENDENTAL  
ILLUSION*The Pure Employment of Reason*

A 299 } In the first part of our transcendental logic we treated the  
 B 350 } understanding as being the faculty of rules; reason we shall  
 here distinguish from understanding by entitling it the *faculty*  
 A 302 } of principles. Understanding may be regarded as a faculty  
 B 359 }

which secures the unity of appearances by means of rules, and reason as being the faculty which secures the unity of the rules of understanding under principles. Accordingly, reason never applies itself directly to experience or to any object, but to understanding, in order to give to the manifold knowledge of the latter an *a priori* unity by means of concepts, a unity which may be called the unity of reason, and which is quite different in kind from any unity that can be accomplished by the understanding.

Can we isolate reason, and is it, so regarded, an independent source of concepts and judgments which spring from it alone, and by means of which it relates to objects; or is it a merely subordinate faculty, for imposing on given modes of knowledge a certain form, called logical—a faculty through which what is known by means of the understanding is determined in its interrelations, lower rules being brought under higher (namely, those the condition of which includes in its own sphere the condition of the lower), as far as this can be done through [processes of] comparison? This is the question with which we are now provisionally occupying ourselves.

The formal and logical procedure of reason in syllogisms gives us sufficient guidance as to the ground on which the transcendental principle of pure reason in its synthetic knowledge will rest.

In the first place, reason in the syllogism does not concern itself with intuitions, with a view to bringing them under rules (as the understanding does with its categories), but with concepts and judgments. Accordingly, even if pure reason does concern itself with objects, it has no immediate relation to these and the intuition of them, but only to the understanding and its judgments—which deal at first hand with the senses and their intuition for the purpose of determining their object. The unity of reason is therefore not the unity of a possible experience, but is essentially different from such unity, which is that of understanding. That everything which happens has a cause, is not a principle known and prescribed by reason. That principle makes the unity of experience possible, and borrows nothing from reason, which, apart from this relation to possible experience, could never, from mere concepts, have imposed any such synthetic unity.

Secondly, reason, in its logical employment, seeks to discover the universal condition of its judgment (the conclusion), and the syllogism is itself nothing but a judgment made by means of the subsumption of its condition under a universal rule (the major premiss). Now since this rule is itself subject to the same requirement of reason, and the condition of the condition must therefore be sought (by means of a prosyllogism) whenever practicable, obviously the principle peculiar to reason in general, in its logical employment, is:—to find for the conditioned knowledge obtained through the understanding the unconditioned whereby its unity is brought to completion.

But this logical maxim can only become a principle of *pure reason* through our assuming that if the conditioned is  
 A 308 given, the whole series of conditions, subordinated to one another—a series which is therefore itself unconditioned—is likewise given, that is, is contained in the object and its connection.

Such a principle of pure reason is obviously *synthetic*; the conditioned is analytically related to some condition but not to the unconditioned. From the principle there must also follow various synthetic propositions, of which pure understanding—inasmuch as it has to deal only with objects of a  
 B 365 possible experience, the knowledge and synthesis of which is always conditioned—knows nothing. The principles arising from this supreme principle of pure reason will be *transcendent* in relation to all appearances, *i.e.* there can never be any adequate empirical employment of the principle. It will therefore be entirely different from all principles of understanding, the employment of which is wholly *immanent*, inasmuch as they have as their theme only the possibility of experience. Take the principle, that the series of conditions (whether in the synthesis of appearances, or even in the thinking of things in general) extends to the unconditioned. Does it, or does it not, have objective applicability? What are  
 A 309 its implications as regards the empirical employment of understanding? Or is there no such objectively valid principle of reason, but only a logical precept, to advance towards completeness by an ascent to ever higher conditions and so to give to our knowledge the greatest possible unity of reason?  
 B 366 To answer these questions will be our task in the Trans-



cedental Dialectic, which we shall now endeavour to develop from its deeply concealed sources in human reason. We shall divide the Dialectic into two books, the first on the *transcendent concepts* of pure reason, the second on its transcendent and *dialectical inferences*.

# THE TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC

## BOOK I

### THE CONCEPTS OF PURE REASON

#### Section 1

##### THE IDEAS IN GENERAL

DESPITE the great wealth of our languages, the thinker often finds himself at a loss for the expression which exactly fits his concept, and for want of which he is unable to be really intelligible to others or even to himself. To coin new words is to advance a claim to legislation in language that seldom succeeds; and before we have recourse to this desperate expedient it is advisable to look about in a dead and learned language, to see whether the concept and its appropriate expression are not already there provided. Even if the old-time usage of a term should have become somewhat uncertain through the carelessness of those who introduced it, it is always better to hold fast to the meaning which distinctively belongs to it (even though it remain doubtful whether it was originally used in precisely this sense) than to defeat our purpose by making ourselves unintelligible.

For this reason, if there be only a single word the established meaning of which exactly agrees with a certain concept, then; since it is of great importance that this concept be distinguished from related concepts, it is advisable to economise in the use of the word and not to employ it, merely for the sake of variety, as a synonym for some other expression, but carefully to keep to its own proper meaning. Otherwise it may easily happen that the expression ceasing to engage the attention in one specific sense, and being lost in the multitude of

other words of very different meaning, the thought also is lost which it alone could have preserved.

Plato made use of the expression '*idea*' in such a way as B 370 quite evidently to have meant by it 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 coincident with it. For Plato ideas are archetypes of the things themselves, and not, in the manner of the categories, merely keys to possible experiences. In his view they have issued from highest reason, and from that source have come to be shared in by human reason, which, however, is now no longer in its original state, but is constrained laboriously to recall, by a process of reminiscence (which is named philosophy), the old ideas, now very much obscured. I shall not engage here in any literary enquiry into the meaning which this illustrious philosopher attached to the expression. I A 314 need only remark that it is by no means unusual, upon comparing the thoughts which an author has expressed in regard to his subject, whether in ordinary conversation or in writing, to find that we understand him better than he has understood himself. As he has not sufficiently determined his concept, he has sometimes spoken, or even thought, in opposition to his own intention.

Plato very well realised that our faculty of knowledge feels a much higher need than merely to spell out appearances according to a synthetic unity, in order to be able to read them B 371 as experience. He knew that our reason naturally exalts itself to modes of knowledge which so far transcend the bounds of experience that no given empirical object can ever coincide with them but which must none the less be recognised as having their own reality, and which are by no means mere fictions of the brain.

Plato found the chief instances of his ideas in the field of the practical,<sup>a</sup> that is, in what rests upon freedom, which in its

<sup>a</sup> He also, indeed, extended his concept so as to cover speculative knowledge, provided only the latter was pure and given completely *a priori*. He even extended it to mathematics, although the object of that science is to be found nowhere except in *possible* experience. In this I cannot follow him, any more than in his mystical

- A 315 turn rests upon modes of knowledge that are a peculiar product of reason. Whoever would derive the concepts of virtue from experience and make (as many have actually done) what at best can only serve as an example in an imperfect kind of exposition, into a pattern from which to derive knowledge, would make of virtue something which changes according to time and circumstance, an ambiguous monstrosity not admitting of the formation of any rule. On the contrary, as we
- B 372 are well aware, if anyone is held up as a pattern of virtue, the true original with which we compare the alleged pattern and by which alone we judge of its value is to be found only in our minds. This original is the idea of virtue, in respect of which the possible objects of experience may serve as examples (proofs that what the concept of reason commands is in a certain degree practicable), but not as archetype. That no one of us will ever act in a way which is adequate to what is contained in the pure idea of virtue is far from proving this thought to be in any respect chimerical. For it is only by means of this idea that any judgment as to moral worth or its opposite is possible; and it therefore serves as an indispensable foundation for every approach to moral perfection—however the obstacles in human nature, to the degree of which there are no assignable limits, may keep us far removed from its complete achievement.
- A 316 The *Republic* of Plato has become proverbial as a striking example of a supposedly visionary perfection, such as can exist only in the brain of the idle thinker; and Brucker<sup>1</sup> has ridiculed the philosopher for asserting that a prince can rule well only in so far as he participates in the ideas. We should, however, be better advised to follow up this thought, and, where the great philosopher leaves us without help, to place it, through fresh efforts, in a proper light, rather than to set it
- B 373 aside as useless on the very sorry and harmful pretext of im-

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deduction of these ideas, or in the extravagances whereby he, so to speak, hypostatised them—although, as must be allowed, the exalted language, which he employed in this sphere, is quite capable of a milder interpretation that accords with the nature of things.

<sup>1</sup> [Johann Jakob Brucker (1696–1770). The reference is probably to vol. i pp. 726–7 of his *Historia Critica Philosophica* (pub. 1742–4).]

practicability. A constitution allowing *the greatest possible human freedom* in accordance with laws by which *the freedom of each is made to be consistent with that of all others*—I do not speak of the greatest happiness, for this will follow of itself—is at any rate a necessary idea, which must be taken as fundamental not only in first projecting a constitution but in all its laws. For at the start we are required to abstract from the actually existing hindrances, which, it may be, do not arise unavoidably out of human nature, but rather are due to a quite remediable cause, the neglect of the pure ideas in the making of the laws. Nothing, indeed, can be more injurious, or more unworthy of a philosopher, than the vulgar appeal to so-called adverse experience. Such experience would never have existed at all, if at the proper time those institutions had been A 377 established in accordance with ideas, and if ideas had not been displaced by crude conceptions which, just because they have been derived from experience, have nullified all good intentions. The more legislation and government are brought into harmony with the above idea, the rarer would punishments become, and it is therefore quite rational to maintain, as Plato does, that in a perfect state no punishments whatsoever would be required. This perfect state may never, indeed, come into being; none the less this does not affect the rightfulness of the idea, which, in order to bring the legal organisation of mankind ever nearer to its greatest possible perfection, advances this maximum as an archetype. For what the highest degree may be at which mankind may have to come to a stand, and how great a gulf may still have to be left between the idea and its realisation, are questions which no one can, or ought to, answer. For the issue depends on freedom; and it is in the power of freedom to pass beyond any and every specified limit. B 374

But it is not only where human reason exhibits genuine causality, and where ideas are operative causes (of actions and their objects), namely, in the moral sphere, but also in regard to nature itself, that Plato rightly discerns clear proofs of an origin from ideas. A plant, an animal, the orderly arrangement of the cosmos—presumably therefore the entire natural world—clearly show that they are possible only according to ideas, and that though no single creature in the conditions of A 318

its individual existence coincides with the idea of what is most perfect in its kind—just as little as does any human being with the idea of humanity, which he yet carries in his soul as the archetype of his actions—these ideas are none the less completely determined in the Supreme Understanding, each as an individual and each as unchangeable, and are the original causes of things. But only the totality of things, in  
 B 375 their interconnection as constituting the universe, is completely adequate to the idea. If we set aside the exaggerations in Plato's methods of expression, the philosopher's spiritual flight from the ectypal mode of reflecting upon the physical world-order to the architectonic ordering of it according to ends, that is, according to ideas, is an enterprise which calls for respect and imitation. It is, however, in regard to the principles of morality, legislation, and religion, where the experience, in this case of the good, is itself made possible only by the ideas—incomplete as their empirical expression must always remain—that Plato's teaching exhibits its quite peculiar merits. When it fails to obtain recognition, this is due to its having been judged in accordance with precisely those empirical rules, the invalidity of which, regarded as principles, it has itself demonstrated. For whereas, so far as nature is concerned, experience supplies the rules and is the source of truth, in respect of the moral laws it is, alas, the mother of  
 A 319 illusion! Nothing is more reprehensible than to derive the laws prescribing what *ought to be done* from what *is done*, or to impose upon them the limits by which the latter is circumscribed.

But though the following out of these considerations is what gives to philosophy its peculiar dignity, we must meantime occupy ourselves with a less resplendent, but still meritorious task, namely, to level the ground, and to render it  
 B 376 sufficiently secure for moral edifices of these majestic dimensions. For this ground has been honeycombed by subterranean workings which reason, in its confident but fruitless search for hidden treasures, has carried out in all directions, and which threaten the security of the superstructures. Our present duty is to obtain insight into the transcendental employment of pure reason, its principles and ideas, that we may be in a position to determine and estimate its influence and true value.

Yet, before closing these introductory remarks, I beseech those who have the interests of philosophy at heart (which is more than is the case with most people) that, if they find themselves convinced by these and the following considerations, they be careful to preserve the expression 'idea' in its original meaning, that it may not become one of those expressions which are commonly used to indicate any and every species of representation, in a happy-go-lucky confusion, to the consequent detriment of science. There is no lack of terms suitable for each kind of representation, that we should thus needlessly encroach upon the province of any one of them. A 320

Their serial arrangement is as follows. The genus is *representation* in general (*repraesentatio*). Subordinate to it stands representation with consciousness (*perceptio*). A *perception* which relates solely to the subject as the modification of its state is *sensation* (*sensatio*), an objective perception is *knowledge* (*cognitio*). This is either *intuition* or *concept* (*intuitus* B 377 *vel conceptus*). The former relates immediately to the object and is single, the latter refers to it mediately by means of a feature which several things may have in common. The concept is either an *empirical* or a *pure concept*. The pure concept, in so far as it has its origin in the understanding alone (not in the pure image of sensibility), is called a *notion*. A concept formed from notions and transcending the possibility of experience is an *idea* or concept of reason. Anyone who has familiarised himself with these distinctions must find it intolerable to hear the representation of the colour, red, called an idea. It ought not even to be called a concept of understanding, a notion.

## Section 2

### THE TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

The Transcendental Analytic has shown us how the mere logical form of our knowledge may in itself contain original pure *a priori* concepts, which represent objects prior to all experience, or, speaking more correctly, indicate the synthetic unity which alone makes possible an empirical knowledge of B 378 objects. The form of judgments (converted into a concept of the synthesis of intuitions) yielded categories which direct all

employment of understanding in experience. Similarly, we may presume that the form of syllogisms, when applied to the synthetic unity of intuitions under the direction of the categories, will contain the origin of special *a priori* concepts, which we may call pure concepts of reason, or *transcendental ideas*, and which will determine according to principles how understanding is to be employed in dealing with experience in its totality.

A 322 }  
B 379 } Now since it is the *unconditioned* alone which makes possible the totality of conditions, and, conversely, the totality of conditions is always itself unconditioned, a pure concept of reason can in general be explained by the concept of the unconditioned, conceived as containing a ground of the synthesis of the conditioned.

A 323 The number of pure concepts of reason will be equal to the number of kinds of relation which the understanding represents to itself by means of the categories. We have therefore to seek for an *unconditioned*, first, of the *categorical* synthesis in a *subject*; secondly, of the *hypothetical* synthesis of the members of a *series*; thirdly, of the *disjunctive* synthesis of the  
B 380 parts in a *system*. These transcendental concepts may, however, be without any suitable corresponding employment *in concreto*, and may therefore have no other utility than that of so directing the understanding that, while it is extended to the uttermost, it is also at the same time brought into complete consistency with itself.

A 324 But while we are here speaking of the totality of conditions and of the unconditioned, as being equivalent titles for all concepts of reason, we again come upon an expression with which we cannot dispense, and which yet, owing to an ambiguity that attaches to it through long-standing misuse, we also cannot with safety employ. The word '*absolute*' is one of the few words which in their original meaning were adapted to a concept that no other word in the same language exactly suits. Consequently its loss, or what amounts to the same  
B 381 thing, looseness in its employment, must carry with it the loss of the concept itself. And since, in this case, the concept is one to which reason devotes much of its attention, it cannot be relinquished without greatly harming all transcendental philosophy. The word '*absolute*' is now often used merely to



indicate that something is true of a thing considered *in itself*, and therefore of its *inward* nature. In this sense the *absolutely possible* would mean that which in itself (*interne*) is possible—which is, in fact, the *least* that can be said of an object. On the other hand, the word is also sometimes used to indicate that something is valid in all respects, without limitation, *e.g.* absolute despotism, and in this sense the *absolutely possible* would mean what is *in every relation* (in all respects) *possible*—which is the *most* that can be said of the possibility A 315 of a thing. Now frequently we find these two meanings combined. For example, what is internally impossible is impossible in any relation, and therefore absolutely impossible. But in most cases the two meanings are infinitely far apart, and I can in no wise conclude that because something is in itself possible, it is therefore also possible in every relation, and so absolutely possible. Indeed, as I shall subsequently show, *absolute* necessity is by no means always dependent on inner necessity, and must not, therefore, be treated as synonymous with it. If the opposite of something is internally impossible, B 352 this opposite is, of course, impossible in all respects, and the thing itself is therefore absolutely necessary. But I cannot reverse the reasoning so as to conclude that if something is absolutely necessary its opposite is *internally* impossible, *i.e.* that the *absolute* necessity of things is an *inner* necessity. For this inner necessity is in certain cases a quite empty expression to which we cannot attach any concept whatsoever, whereas the concept of the necessity of a thing in all relations (to everything possible) involves certain quite special determinations. Since the loss of a concept that is of great importance for speculative science can never be a matter of indifference to the philosopher, I trust that the fixing and careful preservation of the expression, on which the concept depends, will likewise be not indifferent to him.

It is, then, in this wider sense that I shall use the word A 326 '*absolute*', opposing it to what is valid only comparatively, that is, in some particular respect. For while the latter is restricted by conditions, the former is valid without restriction.

Now the transcendental concept of reason is directed always solely towards absolute totality in the synthesis of conditions, and never terminates save in what is absolutely, that

is, in all relations, unconditioned. For pure reason leaves  
 B 353 everything to the understanding—the understanding [alone]  
 applying immediately to the objects of intuition, or rather to  
 their synthesis in the imagination. Reason concerns itself  
 exclusively with absolute totality in the employment of the  
 concepts of the understanding, and endeavours to carry the  
 synthetic unity, which is thought in the category, up to the  
 completely unconditioned. We may call this unity of appear-  
 ances the *unity of reason*, and that expressed by the category  
 the *unity of understanding*. Reason accordingly occupies itself  
 solely with the employment of understanding, not indeed in so  
 far as the latter contains the ground of possible experience (for  
 the concept of the absolute totality of conditions is not applic-  
 able in any experience, since no experience is unconditioned),  
 but solely in order to prescribe to the understanding its  
 direction towards a certain unity of which it has itself no  
 concept, and in such manner as to unite all the acts of the  
 A 327 understanding, in respect of every object, into an *absolute*  
 whole. The objective employment of the pure concepts of  
 reason is, therefore, always *transcendent*, while that of the  
 pure concepts of understanding must, in accordance with their  
 nature, and inasmuch as their application is solely to possible  
 experience, be always *immanent*.

I understand by idea a necessary concept of reason to  
 which no corresponding object can be given in sense-experi-  
 ence. Thus the pure concepts of reason, now under considera-  
 B 384 tion, are *transcendental ideas*. They are concepts of pure  
 reason, in that they view all knowledge gained in experience  
 as being determined through an absolute totality of conditions.  
 They are not arbitrarily invented; they are imposed by the very  
 nature of reason itself, and therefore stand in necessary  
 relation to the whole employment of understanding. Finally,  
 they are transcendent and overstep the limits of all experience;  
 no object adequate to the transcendental idea can ever be  
 found within experience. If I speak of an idea, then as regards  
 its object, viewed as an object of pure understanding, I am  
 saying a *great deal*, but as regards its relation to the subject,  
 that is, in respect of its actuality under empirical conditions,  
 I am for the same reason saying *very little*, in that, as being  
 the concept of a maximum, it can never be correspondingly

given *in concreto*. Since in the merely speculative employment of reason the latter [namely, to determine the actuality of the A 328 idea under empirical conditions] is indeed our whole purpose, and since the approximation to a concept, which yet is never actually reached, puts us in no better position than if the concept were entirely abortive, we say of such a concept—it is *only* an idea. The absolute whole of all appearances—we might thus say—is *only an idea*; since we can never represent it in image, it remains a *problem* to which there is no solution. But since, on the other hand, in the practical employment of understanding, our sole concern is with the carrying out of B 335 rules, the idea of practical reason can always be given actually *in concreto*, although only in part; it is, indeed, the indispensable condition of all practical employment of reason. The practice of it is always limited and defective, but is not confined within determinable boundaries, and is therefore always under the influence of the concept of an absolute completeness. The practical idea is, therefore, always in the highest degree fruitful, and in its relation to our actual activities is indispensably necessary. Reason is here, indeed, exercising causality, as actually bringing about that which its concept contains; and of such wisdom we cannot, therefore, say disparagingly *it is only an idea*. On the contrary, just because it is the idea of the necessary unity of all possible ends, it must as an original, and at least restrictive condition, serve as standard in all that bears on the practical.

Although we must say of the transcendental concepts of A 329 reason that *they are only ideas*, this is not by any means to be taken as signifying that they are superfluous and void. For even if they cannot determine any object, they may yet, in a fundamental and unobserved fashion, be of service to the understanding as a canon for its extended and consistent employment. The understanding does not thereby obtain more knowledge of any object than it would have by means of its own concepts, but for the acquiring of such knowledge it receives better and more extensive guidance. Further—what we need here no more than mention—concepts of reason may B 386 perhaps make possible a transition from the concepts of nature to the practical concepts, and in that way may give support to the moral ideas themselves, bringing them into

connection with the speculative knowledge of reason. As to all this, we must await explanation in the sequel.

## Section 3

## SYSTEM OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

B 391 } All pure concepts in general are concerned with the  
A 334 } synthetic unity of representations, but [those of them which are] concepts of pure reason (transcendental ideas) are concerned with the unconditioned synthetic unity of all conditions in general. All transcendental ideas can therefore be arranged in three classes, the *first* containing the absolute (unconditioned) *unity* of the *thinking subject*, the *second* the absolute *unity of the series of conditions of appearance*, the *third* the absolute *unity of the condition of all objects of thought in general*.

The thinking subject is the object of *psychology*, the sum-total of all appearances (the world) is the object of *cosmology*, and the thing which contains the highest condition of the possibility of all that can be thought (the being of all beings) the object of *theology*. Pure reason thus furnishes the idea for a transcendental doctrine of the soul (*psychologia rationalis*), for a transcendental science of the world (*cosmologia rationalis*), and, finally, for a transcendental knowledge of God (*theologia transzentalis*).

In what precise modes the pure concepts of reason come under these three headings of all transcendental ideas will be fully explained in the next chapter. They follow the guiding-thread of the categories. For pure reason never relates directly to objects, but to the concepts which understanding frames in regard to objects. Similarly it is only by the process of completing our argument that it can be shown how reason, simply by the synthetic employment of that very function of which it makes use in categorical syllogisms, is necessarily brought to the concept of the absolute unity of the *thinking subject*, how the logical procedure used in hypothetical syllogisms leads to the idea of the completely unconditioned *in a series* of given conditions, and finally how the mere form of the disjunctive syllogism must necessarily involve the highest

concept of reason, that of a *being of all beings*—a thought which, at first sight, seems utterly paradoxical.

No *objective deduction*, such as we have been able to give of the categories, is, strictly speaking, possible in the case of these transcendental ideas. Just because they are only ideas they have, in fact, no relation to any object that could be given as coinciding with them. We can, indeed, undertake a subjective derivation of them from the nature of our reason; and this has been provided in the present chapter.

Finally, we also discern that a certain connection and unity is evident among the transcendental ideas themselves, and that by means of them pure reason combines all its modes of knowledge into a system. The advance from the knowledge of oneself (the soul) to the knowledge of the world, and by means of this to the original being, is so natural that it seems to resemble the logical advance of reason from premisses to conclusion.<sup>a</sup> { B 394  
A 337

<sup>a</sup> Metaphysics has as the proper object of its enquiries three ideas only: *God*, *freedom*, and *immortality*—so related that the second concept, when combined with the first, should lead to the third as a necessary conclusion. Any other matters with which this science may deal serve merely as a means of arriving at these ideas and of establishing their reality. It does not need the ideas for the purposes of natural science, but in order to pass beyond nature. Insight into them would render *theology* and *morals*, and, through the union of these two, likewise *religion*, and therewith the highest ends of our existence, entirely and exclusively dependent on the faculty of speculative reason. In a systematic representation of the ideas, the order cited, the *synthetic*, would be the most suitable; but in the investigation which must necessarily precede it the *analytic*, or reverse order, is better adapted to the purpose of completing our great project, as enabling us to start from what is immediately given us in experience—advancing from the doctrine of the *soul*, to the doctrine of the *world*, and thence to the knowledge of *God*.

## THE TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC

### BOOK II

#### THE DIALECTICAL INFERENCES OF PURE REASON

ALTHOUGH a purely transcendental idea is, in accordance with the original laws of reason, a quite necessary product of reason, its object, it may yet be said, is something of which we have no concept. For in respect of an object which is adequate to the demands of reason, it is not, in fact, possible  
A 339 that we should ever be able to form a concept of the understanding, that is, a concept that allows of being exhibited and intuited in a possible experience. But we should be better  
B 397 advised and less likely to be misunderstood if we said that although we cannot have any knowledge of the object which corresponds to an idea, we yet have a problematic concept of it.

The transcendental (subjective) reality of the pure concepts of reason depends on our having been led to such ideas by a necessary syllogism. There will therefore be syllogisms which contain no empirical premisses, and by means of which we conclude from something which we know to something else of which we have no concept, and to which, owing to an inevitable illusion, we yet ascribe objective reality. These conclusions are, then, rather to be called *pseudo-rational* than rational, although in view of their origin they may well lay claim to the latter title, since they are not fictitious and have not arisen fortuitously, but have sprung from the very nature of reason. They are sophistications not of men but of pure reason itself. Even the wisest of men cannot free himself from them. After long effort he perhaps succeeds in guarding himself against actual error; but he will never be able to free himself

from the illusion, which unceasingly mocks and torments him.

There are, then, only three kinds of dialectical syllogisms —just so many as there are ideas in which their conclusions A 340 result. In the *first* kind of syllogism I conclude from the transcendental concept of the subject, which contains nothing B 398 manifold, the absolute unity of this subject itself, of which, however, even in so doing, I possess no concept whatsoever. This dialectical inference I shall entitle the transcendental *paralogism*.

## CHAPTER I

### THE PARALOGISMS OF PURE REASON

A logical paralogism is a syllogism which is fallacious in form, be its content what it may. A transcendental paralogism is one in which there is a transcendental ground, constraining us to draw a formally invalid conclusion. Such a fallacy is therefore grounded in the nature of human reason, and gives rise to an illusion which cannot be avoided, although it may, indeed, be rendered harmless.

We now come to a concept which was not included in the general list of transcendental concepts but which must yet be counted as belonging to that list, without, however, in the least altering it or declaring it defective. This is the concept or, if the term be preferred, the judgment, 'I think'. As is easily seen, this is the vehicle of all concepts, and therefore also of transcendental concepts, and so is always included in the conceiving of these latter, and is itself transcendental. But it can have no special designation, because it serves only to introduce all B 400 our thought, as belonging to consciousness. Meanwhile, however free it be of empirical admixture (impressions of the A 342 senses), it yet enables us to distinguish, through the nature of our faculty of representation, two kinds of objects. 'I', as thinking, am an object of inner sense, and am called 'soul'. That which is an object of the outer senses is called 'body'. Accordingly the expression 'I', as a thinking being, signifies the object of that psychology which may be entitled the 'rational doctrine of the soul', inasmuch as I am not here seeking to learn in regard to the soul anything more than can be

inferred, independently of all experience (which determines me more specifically and *in concreto*), from this concept, 'I', so far as it is present in all thought.

The *rational* doctrine of the soul is really an undertaking of this kind; for if in this science the least empirical element of my thought, or any special perception of my inner state, were intermingled with the grounds of knowledge, it would no longer be a rational but an *empirical* doctrine of the soul. Thus we have here what professes to be a science built upon the single proposition '*I think*'. Whether this claim be well or ill grounded, we may, very fittingly, in accordance with the nature of a transcendental philosophy, proceed to investigate. The reader must not object that this proposition, which  
 B 401 expresses the perception of the self, contains an inner experience, and that the rational doctrine of the soul founded upon  
 A 343 it is never pure and is therefore to that extent based upon an empirical principle. For this inner perception is nothing more than the mere apperception '*I think*', by which even transcendental concepts are made possible; what we assert in them is '*I think substance, cause*', etc. For inner experience in general and its possibility, or perception in general and its relation to other perception, in which no special distinction or empirical determination is given, is not to be regarded as empirical knowledge but as knowledge of the empirical in general, and has to be reckoned with the investigation of the possibility of any and every experience, which is certainly a transcendental enquiry. The least object of perception (for example, even pleasure or displeasure), if added to the universal representation of self-consciousness, would at once transform rational psychology into empirical psychology.

'*I think*' is, therefore, the sole text of rational psychology, and from it the whole of its teaching has to be developed. Obviously, if this thought is to be related to an object (myself), it can contain none but transcendental predicates of that object, since the least empirical predicate would destroy the rational purity of the science and its independence of all experience.

A 344 } All that is here required is that we follow the guidance of  
 B 402 } the categories, with this difference only, that since our starting-point is a given thing, 'I' as thinking being, we begin with the



category of substance, whereby a thing in itself is represented, and so proceed backwards through the series, without, however, otherwise changing the order adopted in the table of the categories. The topic of the rational doctrine of the soul, from which everything else that it contains must be derived, is accordingly as follows:

## I

The soul is *substance*.

## 2

As regards its quality it is  
*simple*.

## 3

As regards the different times  
in which it exists, it is  
numerically identical, that  
is, *unity* (not plurality)

## 4

It is in relation to *possible* objects in space.

All the concepts of pure psychology arise from these elements, simply by way of combination, without admission of any other principle. This substance, merely as object of inner sense, gives the concept of *immateriality*, as simple substance, that of *incorruptibility*; its indentity, as intellectual substance, *personality*; all these three together, *spirituality*; while the relation to objects in space gives *commercium* with bodies, and so leads us to represent the thinking substance as the principle of life in matter, that is, as soul (*anima*), and as the ground of *animality*. This last, in turn, as limited by spirituality, gives the concept of *immortality*. {A 345  
B 403

In connection with these concepts we have four paralogisms of a transcendental psychology—which is wrongly regarded as a science of pure reason—concerning the nature of our thinking being. We can assign no other basis for this teaching B 404 than the simple, and in itself completely empty, representation A 346 'I'; and we cannot even say that this is a concept, but only that it is a bare consciousness which accompanies all concepts. Through this I or he or it (the thing) which thinks, nothing further is represented than a transcendental subject of the thoughts = X. It is known only through the thoughts which

are its predicates, and of it, apart from them, we cannot have any concept whatsoever, but can only revolve in a perpetual circle, since any judgment upon it has always already made use of its representation. And the reason why this inconvenience is inseparably bound up with it, is that consciousness in itself is not a representation distinguishing a particular object, but a form of representation in general, that is, of representation in so far as it is to be entitled knowledge; for it is only of knowledge that I can say that I am thereby thinking something.

B 405 } The proposition, 'I think', is, however, here taken only  
A 347 } problematically, not in so far as it may contain perception of an existent (the Cartesian *cogito, ergo sum*), but in respect of its mere possibility, in order to see what properties applicable to its subject (be that subject actually existent or not) may follow from so simple a proposition.

[*The Paralogisms of Pure Reason: as in 1st Edition*]<sup>1</sup>

#### FIRST PARALOGISM: OF SUBSTANTIALITY

That, the representation of which is the *absolute subject* of our judgments and cannot therefore be employed as determination of another thing, is *substance*.

I, as a thinking being, am the *absolute subject* of all my possible judgments, and this representation of myself cannot be employed as predicate of any other thing.

Therefore I, as thinking being (soul), am *substance*.

#### *Critique of the First Paralogism of Pure Psychology*

In the analytical part of the Transcendental Logic we have shown that pure categories, and among them that of substance, have in themselves no objective meaning, save in so far  
A 349 as they rest upon an intuition, and are applied to the manifold of this intuition, as functions of synthetic unity. In the absence of this manifold, they are merely functions of a judgment, without content. I can say of any and everything that it is substance, in the sense that I distinguish it from mere

<sup>1</sup> ["The Paralogisms of Pure Reason," as here given up to p. 201, were omitted in B. As restated in B, they are given below, pp. 202 to 210.]

predicates and determinations of things. Now in all our thought the 'I' is the subject, in which thoughts inhere only as determinations; and this 'I' cannot be employed as the determination of another thing. Everyone must, therefore, necessarily regard himself as substance, and thought as [consisting] only [in] accidents of his being, determinations of his state.

But what use am I to make of this concept of a substance? That I, as a thinking being, *persist* for myself, and do not in any natural manner either *arise* or *perish*, can by no means be deduced from it. Yet there is no other use to which I can put the concept of the substantiality of my thinking subject, and apart from such use I could very well dispense with it.

So far from being able to deduce these properties merely from the pure category of substance, we must, on the contrary, take our start from the permanence of an object given in experience as permanent. For only to such an object can the concept of *substance* be applied in a manner that is empirically serviceable. In the above proposition, however, we have not taken as our basis any experience; the inference is merely from the concept of the relation which all thought has to the 'I' as the common subject in which it inheres. Nor should we, in resting it upon experience, be able, by any sure observation, to demonstrate such permanence. The 'I' is indeed in all thoughts, but there is not in this representation the least trace of intuition, distinguishing the 'I' from other objects of intuition. Thus we can indeed perceive that this representation is invariably present in all thought, but not that it is an abiding and continuing intuition, wherein the thoughts, as being transitory, give place to one another. A 350

It follows, therefore, that the first syllogism of transcendental psychology, when it puts forward the constant logical subject of thought as being knowledge of the real subject in which the thought inheres, is palming off upon us what is a mere pretence of new insight. We do not have, and cannot have, any knowledge whatsoever of any such subject. Consciousness is, indeed, that which alone makes all representations to be thoughts, and in it, therefore, as the transcendental subject, all our perceptions must be found; but beyond this logical meaning of the 'I', we have no knowledge of the sub-

ject in itself, which as substratum underlies this 'I', as it does all thoughts. The proposition, '*The soul is substance*', may, however, quite well be allowed to stand, if only it be recognised that this concept [of the soul as substance] does not carry us a single step further, and so cannot yield us any of the  
 A 351 usual deductions of the pseudo-rational doctrine of the soul, as, for instance, the everlasting duration of the human soul in all changes and even in death—if, that is to say, we recognise that this concept signifies a substance only in idea, not in reality.

#### SECOND PARALOGISM: OF SIMPLICITY

That, the action of which can never be regarded as the concurrence of several things acting, is *simple*.

Now the soul, or the thinking 'I', is such a being. Therefore, etc.

#### *Critique of the Second Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology*

This is the Achilles of all dialectical inferences in the pure doctrine of the soul. It is no mere sophistical play, contrived by a dogmatist in order to impart to his assertions a superficial plausibility, but an inference which appears to withstand even the keenest scrutiny and the most scrupulously exact investigation. It is as follows.

Every *composite* substance is an aggregate of several substances, and the action of a composite, or whatever inheres in it as thus composite, is an aggregate of several actions or accidents, distributed among the plurality of the substances. Now  
 A 352 an effect which arises from the concurrence of many acting substances is indeed possible, namely, when this effect is external only (as, for instance, the motion of a body is the combined motion of all its parts). But with thoughts, as internal accidents belonging to a thinking being, it is different. For suppose it be the composite that thinks: then every part of it would be a part of the thought, and only all of them taken together would contain the whole thought. But this cannot consistently be maintained. For representations (for instance, the single words of a verse), distributed among different

beings, never make up a whole thought (a verse), and it is therefore impossible that a thought should inhere in what is essentially composite. It is therefore possible only in a *single* substance, which, not being an aggregate of many, is absolutely simple.

The so-called *nervus probandi* of this argument lies in the proposition, that in order to constitute a thought many representations must be contained in the absolute unity of the thinking subject. No one, however, can prove this proposition from *concepts*. For how should he set about the task of achieving this? The proposition, 'A thought can only be the effect A 353 of the absolute unity of the thinking being', cannot be treated as analytic. For the unity of the thought, which consists of many representations, is collective, and as far as mere concepts can show, may relate just as well to the collective unity of different substances acting together (as the motion of a body is the composite motion of all its parts) as to the absolute unity of the subject. Consequently, the necessity of presupposing, in the case of a composite thought, a simple substance, cannot be demonstrated in accordance with the principle of identity. Nor will anyone venture to assert that the proposition allows of being known synthetically and completely *a priori* from mere concepts—not, at least, if he understands the ground of the possibility of *a priori* synthetic propositions, as above explained.

It is obvious that, if I wish to represent to myself a thinking being, I must put myself in his place, and thus substitute, as it were, my own subject for the object I am seeking to consider (which does not occur in any other kind of investigation A 354), and that we demand the absolute unity of the subject of a thought, only because otherwise we could not say, '*I* think' (the manifold in a representation). For although the whole of the thought could be divided and distributed among many subjects, the subjective '*I*' can never be thus divided and distributed, and it is this '*I*' that we presuppose in all thinking.

Here again, as in the former paralogism, the formal proposition of apperception, '*I* think', remains the sole ground to which rational psychology can appeal when it thus ventures upon an extension of its knowledge. This proposition, how-

ever, is not itself an experience, but the form of apperception, which belongs to and precedes every experience; and as such it must always be taken only in relation to some possible knowledge, as a *merely subjective condition* of that knowledge. We have no right to transform it into a condition of the possibility of a knowledge of objects, that is, into a *concept* of thinking being in general. For we are not in a position to represent such being to ourselves say by putting ourselves, with the formula of our consciousness, in the place of every other intelligent being.

Nor is the simplicity of myself (as soul) really *inferred* from the proposition, 'I think'; it is already involved in every thought. The proposition, '*I am simple*', must be regarded as  
A 335 an immediate expression of apperception, just as what is referred to as the Cartesian inference, *cogito, ergo sum*, is really a tautology, since the *cogito* (*sum cogitans*) asserts my existence immediately. '*I am simple*' means nothing more than that this representation, 'I', does not contain in itself the least manifoldness and that it is absolute (although merely logical) unity.

Thus the renowned psychological proof is founded merely on the indivisible unity of a representation, which governs only the verb in its relation to a person. It is obvious that in attaching 'I' to our thoughts we designate the subject of inherence only transcendently, without noting in it any quality whatsoever—in fact, without knowing anything of it either by direct acquaintance or otherwise. It means a something in general (transcendental subject), the representation of which must, no doubt, be simple, if only for the reason that there is nothing determinate in it. Nothing, indeed, can be represented that is simpler than that which is represented through the concept of a mere something. But the simplicity of the representation of a subject is not *eo ipso* knowledge of the simplicity of the subject itself, for we abstract altogether from its properties when we designate it solely by the entirely empty expression 'I', an expression which I can apply to every thinking subject.

Everyone must admit that the assertion of the simple nature of the soul is of value only in so far as I can thereby distinguish this subject from all matter, and so can exempt it

from the dissolution to which matter is always liable. This is indeed, strictly speaking, the only use for which the above proposition is intended, and is therefore generally expressed as 'The soul is not corporeal'. If, then, I can show that, <sup>A 357</sup> although we allow full objective validity—the validity appropriate to a judgment of pure reason derived solely from pure categories—to this cardinal proposition of the rational doctrine of the soul (that is, that everything which thinks is a simple substance), we still cannot make the least use of this proposition in regard to the question of its dissimilarity from or relation to matter, this will be the same as if I had relegated this supposed psychological insight to the field of mere ideas, without any real objective use.

In the Transcendental Aesthetic we have proved, beyond all question, that bodies are mere appearances of our outer sense and not things in themselves. We are therefore justified in saying that our thinking subject is not corporeal; in other words, that, inasmuch as it is represented by us as object of inner sense, it cannot, in so far as it thinks, be an object of outer sense, that is, an appearance in space. This is equivalent to saying that thinking beings, *as such*, can never be found by us among outer appearances, and that their thoughts, consciousness, desires, etc., cannot be outwardly intuited. All these belong to inner sense. This argument does, in fact, seem to be so natural and so popular that even the commonest understanding appears to have always relied upon it, and thus <sup>A 358</sup> already, from the earliest times, to have regarded souls as quite different entities from their bodies.

But although extension, impenetrability, cohesion, and motion—in short, everything which outer senses can give us—neither are nor contain thoughts, feeling, desire, or resolution, these never being objects of outer intuition, nevertheless the something which underlies the outer appearances and which so affects our sense that it obtains the representations of space, matter, shape, etc., may yet, when viewed as noumenon (or better, as transcendental object), be at the same time the subject of our thoughts. That the mode in which our outer sense is thereby affected gives us no intuition of representations, will, etc., but only of space and its determinations, proves nothing to the contrary. For this something is not

extended, nor is it impenetrable or composite, since all these predicates concern only sensibility and its intuition, in so far as we are affected by certain (to us otherwise unknown) objects. By such statements we are not, however, enabled to know what kind of an object it is, but only to recognise that if it be considered in itself, and therefore apart from any  
 A 359 relation to the outer senses, these predicates of outer appearances cannot be assigned to it. On the other hand, the predicates of inner sense, representations and thought, are not inconsistent with its nature. Accordingly, even granting the human soul to be simple in nature, such simplicity by no means suffices to distinguish it from matter, in respect of the substratum of the latter—if, that is to say, we consider matter, as indeed we ought to, as mere appearance.

If matter were a thing in itself, it would, as a composite being, be entirely different from the soul, as a simple being. But matter is mere outer appearance, the substratum of which cannot be known through any predicate that we can assign to it. I can therefore very well admit the possibility that it is in itself simple, although owing to the manner in which it affects our senses it produces in us the intuition of the extended and so of the composite. I may further assume that the substance which in relation to our outer sense possesses extension is in itself the possessor of thoughts, and that these thoughts can by means of its own inner sense be consciously represented. In this way, what in one relation is entitled corporeal would in another relation be at the same time a thinking being, whose thoughts we cannot intuit, though we can indeed intuit their signs in the [field of] appearance. Accordingly, the thesis that only souls (as particular kinds of substances) think, would have to be given up; and we should have to fall back on the common  
 A 360 expression that men think, that is, that the very same being which, as outer appearance, is extended, is (in itself) internally a subject, and is not composite, but is simple and thinks.

But, without committing ourselves in regard to such hypotheses, we can make this general remark. If I understand by soul a thinking being in itself, the question whether or not it is the same in kind as matter—matter not being a thing in itself, but merely a species of representations in us—is by its very terms illegitimate. For it is obvious that a thing in itself is of a



different nature from the determinations which constitute only its state.

If, on the other hand, we compare the thinking 'I' not with matter but with the intelligible that lies at the basis of the outer appearance which we call matter, we have no knowledge whatsoever of the intelligible, and therefore are in no position to say that the soul is in any inward respect different from it.

The simple consciousness is not, therefore, knowledge of the simple nature of the self as subject, such as might enable us to distinguish it from matter, as from a composite being.

If, therefore, in the only case in which this concept can be of service, namely, in the comparison of myself with objects of outer experience, it does not suffice for determining what is specific and distinctive in the nature of the self, then though we may still profess to know that the thinking 'I', the soul (a A 361 name for the transcendental object of inner sense), is simple, such a way of speaking has no sort of application to real objects, and therefore cannot in the least extend our knowledge.

Thus the whole of rational psychology is involved in the collapse of its main support. Here as little as elsewhere can we hope to extend our knowledge through mere concepts—still less by means of the merely subjective form of all our concepts, consciousness—in the absence of any relation to possible experience. For [as we have thus found], even the fundamental concept of a *simple nature* is such that it can never be met with in any experience, and such, therefore, that there is no way of attaining to it, as an objectively valid concept.

### THIRD PARALOGISM: OF PERSONALITY

That which is conscious of the numerical identity of itself at different times is in so far a *person*

Now the soul is conscious, etc.

Therefore it is a person.

*Critique of the Third Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology*

If I want to know through experience, the numerical identity of an external object, I shall pay heed to that permanent element in the appearance to which as subject everything else is related as determination, and note its identity throughout the time in which the determinations change. Now I am an object of inner sense, and all time is merely the form of inner sense. Consequently, I refer each and all of my successive determinations to the numerically identical self, and do so throughout time, that is, in the form of the inner intuition of myself. This being so, the personality of the soul has to be regarded not as inferred but as a completely identical proposition of self-consciousness in time; and this, indeed, is why it is valid *a priori*. For it really says nothing more than that in the whole time in which I am conscious of myself, I am conscious of this time as belonging to the unity of myself; and it comes to the same whether I say that this whole time is in me, as individual unity, or that I am to be found as numerically identical in all this time.

In my own consciousness, therefore, identity of person is unfailingly met with. But if I view myself from the standpoint of another person (as object of his outer intuition), it is this outer observer who first represents *me in time*, for in the apprehension *time* is represented, strictly speaking, only *in me*. Although he admits, therefore, the 'I', which accompanies, and indeed with complete identity, all representations at all times in *my* consciousness, he will draw no inference from this to the objective permanence of myself. For just as the time in which the observer sets me is not the time of my own but of his sensibility, so the identity which is necessarily bound up with my consciousness is not therefore bound up with his, that is, with the consciousness which contains the outer intuition of my subject.

The identity of the consciousness of myself at different times is therefore only a formal condition of my thoughts and their coherence, and in no way proves the numerical identity of my subject. Despite the logical identity of the 'I', such a change may have occurred in it as does not allow of the retention of

its identity, and yet we may ascribe to it the same-sounding 'I', which in every different state, even in one involving change of the [thinking] subject, might still retain the thought of the preceding subject and so hand it over to the subsequent subject.\*

Although the dictum of certain ancient schools, that every- A 314 thing in the world is *in a flux* and nothing is *permanent* and abiding, cannot be reconciled with the admission of substances, it is not refuted by the unity of self-consciousness. For we are unable from our own consciousness to determine whether, as souls, we are permanent or not. Since we reckon as belonging to our identical self only that of which we are conscious, we must necessarily judge that we are one and the same throughout the whole time of which we are conscious. We cannot, however, claim that this judgment would be valid from the standpoint of an outside observer. For since the only permanent appearance which we encounter in the soul is the representation 'I' that accompanies and connects them all, we are unable to prove that this 'I', a mere thought, may not be in the same state of flux as the other thoughts which, by means of it, are linked up with one another.

Meanwhile we may still retain the concept of personality—just as we have retained the concept of substance and of the simple—in so far as it is merely transcendental, that is, concerns the unity of the subject, otherwise unknown to us, in the determinations of which there is a thoroughgoing con-

\* An elastic ball which impinges on another similar ball in a straight line communicates to the latter its whole motion, and therefore its whole state (that is, if we take account only of the positions in space). If, then, in analogy with such bodies, we postulate substances such that the one communicates to the other representations together with the consciousness of them, we can conceive a whole series of substances of which the first transmits its state together with its consciousness to the second, the second its own state with that of the preceding substance to the third, and this in turn the states of all the preceding substances together with its own consciousness and with their consciousness to another. The last substance would then be conscious of all the states of the previously changed substances, as being its own states, because they would have been transferred to it together with the consciousness of them. And yet it would not have been one and the same person in all these states.

nection through apperception. Taken in this way, the concept is necessary for practical employment and is sufficient for such use; but we can never parade it as an extension of our self-knowledge through pure reason, and as exhibiting to us from the mere concept of the identical self an unbroken continuance of the subject. For this concept revolves perpetually in a circle, and does not help us in respect to any question which aims at synthetic knowledge. What matter may be as a thing in itself (transcendental object) is completely unknown to us, though, owing to its being represented as something external, its permanance as appearance can indeed be observed. But if I want to observe the mere 'I' in the change of all representations, I have no other *correlatum* to use in my comparisons except again myself, with the universal conditions of my consciousness. Consequently, I can give none but tautological answers to all questions, in that I substitute my concept and its unity for the properties which belong to myself as object, and so take for granted that which the questioner has desired to know.

#### FOURTH PARALOGISM: OF IDEALITY

(IN REGARD TO OUTER RELATION)

That, the existence of which can only be inferred as a cause of given perceptions, has a merely doubtful existence.

▲ 367 Now all outer appearances are of such a nature that their existence is not immediately perceived, and that we can only infer them as the cause of given perceptions.

Therefore the existence of all objects of the outer senses is doubtful. This uncertainty I entitle the ideality of outer appearances, and the doctrine of this ideality is called *idealism*, as distinguished from the counter-assertion of a possible certainty in regard to objects of outer sense, which is called *dualism*.

#### *Critique of the Fourth Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology*

Let us first examine the premisses. We are justified, [it is argued], in maintaining that only what is in ourselves can be perceived immediately, and that my own existence is the sole

object of a mere perception. The existence, therefore, of an actual object outside me (if this word 'me' be taken in the intellectual [not in the empirical] sense) is never given directly in perception. Perception is a modification of inner sense, and the existence of the outer object can be added to it only in thought, as being its outer cause, and accordingly as being inferred. For the same reason, Descartes was justified in limiting all perception, in the narrowest sense of that term, to the proposition, 'I, as a thinking being, exist.' Obviously, A 368 since what is without is not in me, I cannot encounter it in my apperception, nor therefore in any perception, which, properly regarded, is merely the determination of apperception.

I am not, therefore, in a position to *perceive* external things, but can only infer their existence from my inner perception, taking the inner perception as the effect of which something external is the proximate cause. Now the inference from a given effect to a determinate cause is always uncertain, since the effect may be due to more than one cause. Accordingly, as regards the relation of the perception to its cause, it always remains doubtful whether the cause be internal or external; whether, that is to say, all the so-called outer perceptions are not a mere play of our inner sense, or whether they stand in relation to actual external objects as their cause. At all events, the existence of the latter is only inferred, and is open to all the dangers of inference, whereas the object of inner sense (I myself with all my representations) is immediately perceived, and its existence does not allow of being doubted.

The term '*idealist*' is not, therefore, to be understood as applying to those who deny the existence of external objects of the senses, but only to those who do not admit that their existence is known through immediate perception, and who therefore conclude that we can never, by way of any possible A 369 experience, be completely certain as to their reality.

Before exhibiting our paralogism in all its deceptive illusoriness, I have first to remark that we must necessarily distinguish two types of idealism, the transcendental and the empirical. By *transcendental idealism* I mean the doctrine that appearances are to be regarded as being, one and all, representations only, not things in themselves, and that time and space are therefore only sensible forms of our intuition,

not determinations given as existing by themselves, nor conditions of objects viewed as things in themselves. To this idealism there is opposed a *transcendental realism* which regards time and space as something given in themselves, independently of our sensibility. The transcendental realist thus interprets outer appearances (their reality being taken as granted) as things-in-themselves, which exist independently of us and of our sensibility, and which are therefore outside us—the phrase 'outside us' being interpreted in conformity with pure concepts of understanding. It is, in fact, this transcendental realist who afterwards plays the part of empirical idealist. After wrongly supposing that objects of the senses, if they are to be external, must have an existence by themselves, and independently of the senses, he finds that, judged from this point of view, all our sensuous representations are inadequate to establish their reality.

A 370 The transcendental idealist, on the other hand, may be an empirical realist, or, as he is called, a *dualist*; that is, he may admit the existence of matter without going outside his mere self-consciousness, or assuming anything more than the certainty of his representations, that is, the *cogito, ergo sum*. For he considers this matter and even its inner possibility to be appearance merely, and appearance, if separated from our sensibility, is nothing. Matter is with him, therefore, only a species of representations (intuition), which are called external, not as standing in relation to objects *in themselves external*, but because they relate perceptions to the space in which all things are external to one another, while yet the space itself is in us.

From the start, we have declared ourselves in favour of this transcendental idealism; and our doctrine thus removes all difficulty in the way of accepting the existence of matter on the unaided testimony of our mere self-consciousness, or of declaring it to be thereby proved in the same manner as the existence of myself as a thinking being is proved. There can be no question that I am conscious of my representations; these representations and I myself, who have the representations, therefore exist. External objects (bodies), however, are mere appearances, and are therefore nothing but a species of my representations, the objects of which are something only

through these representations. Apart from them they are nothing. Thus external things exist as well as I myself, and A 371 both, indeed, upon the immediate witness of myself-consciousness. The only difference is that the representation of myself, as the thinking subject, belongs to inner sense only, while the representations which mark extended beings belong also to outer sense. In order to arrive at the reality of outer objects I have just as little need to resort to inference as I have in regard to the reality of the object of my inner sense, that is, in regard to the reality of my thoughts. For in both cases alike the objects are nothing but representations, the immediate perception (consciousness) of which is at the same time a sufficient proof of their reality.

The transcendental idealist is, therefore, an empirical realist, and allows to matter, as appearance, a reality which does not permit of being inferred, but is immediately perceived. Transcendental realism, on the other hand, inevitably falls into difficulties, and finds itself obliged to give way to empirical idealism, in that it regards the objects of outer sense as something distinct from the senses themselves, treating mere appearances as self-subsistent beings, existing outside us. On such a view as this, however clearly we may be conscious of our representation of these things, it is still far from certain that, if the representation exists, there exists also the object corresponding to it. In our system, on the other hand, these external things, namely matter, are in all their configurations and alterations nothing but mere appearances, that is, representations in us, of the reality of which we are immediately A 372 conscious.

If then, as this critical argument obviously compels us to A 380 do, we hold fast to the rule above established, and do not push our questions beyond the limits within which possible experience can present us with its object, we shall never dream of seeking to inform ourselves about the objects of our senses as they are in themselves, that is, out of all relation to the senses. But if the psychologist takes appearances for things in themselves, and as existing in and by themselves, then whether he be a materialist who admits into his system nothing but matter alone, or a spiritualist who admits only thinking beings (that is, beings with the form of our inner sense), or a dualist who

accepts both, he will always, owing to this misunderstanding, be entangled in pseudo-rational speculations as to how that which is not a thing in itself, but only the appearance of a thing in general, can exist by itself.

A 381 *Consideration of Pure Psychology as a whole,  
in view of these Paralogisms*

If we compare the *doctrine of the soul* as the physiology of inner sense, with the *doctrine of the body* as a physiology of the object of the outer senses, we find that while in both much can be learnt empirically, there is yet this notable difference. In the latter science much that is *a priori* can be synthetically known from the mere concept of an extended impenetrable being, but in the former nothing whatsoever that is *a priori* can be known synthetically from the concept of a thinking being. The cause is this. Although both are appearances, the appearance to outer sense has something fixed or abiding which supplies a substratum as the basis of its transitory determinations and therefore a synthetic concept, namely, that of space and of an appearance in space; whereas time, which is the sole form of our inner intuition, has nothing abiding, and therefore yields knowledge only of the change of determinations, not of any object that can be thereby determined. For in what we entitle 'soul', everything is in continual flux and there is nothing abiding except (if we must so express ourselves) the 'I', which is simple solely because its representation has no content, and therefore no manifold, and

A 382 for this reason seems to represent, or (to use a more correct term) denote, a simple object. In order that it should be possible, by pure reason, to obtain knowledge of the nature of a thinking being in general, this 'I' would have to be an intuition which, in being presupposed in all thought (prior to all experience), might as intuition yield *a priori* synthetic propositions. This 'I' is, however, as little an intuition as it is a concept of any object; it is the mere form of consciousness, which can accompany the two kinds of representation and which is in a position to elevate them to the rank of knowledge only in so far as something else is given in intuition which provides material for a representation of an object. Thus the whole of rational psychology, as a science surpassing all



powers of human reason, proves abortive, and nothing is left for us but to study our soul under the guidance of experience, and to confine ourselves to those questions which do not go beyond the limits within which a content can be provided for them by possible inner experience.

But although rational psychology cannot be used to extend knowledge, and when so employed is entirely made up of paralogisms, still we cannot deny it a considerable negative value, if it is taken as nothing more than a critical treatment of our dialectical inferences, those that arise from the common and natural reason of men.

Why do we have resort to a doctrine of the soul founded A 383 exclusively on pure principles of reason? Beyond all doubt, chiefly in order to secure our thinking self against the danger of materialism. This is achieved by means of the pure concept of our thinking self which we have just given. For by this teaching so completely are we freed from the fear that on the removal of matter all thought, and even the very existence of thinking beings, would be destroyed, that on the contrary it is clearly shown that if I remove the thinking subject the whole corporeal world must at once vanish: it is nothing save an appearance in the sensibility of our subject and a mode of its representations.

I admit that this does not give me any further knowledge of the properties of this thinking self, nor does it enable me to determine its permanence or even that it exists independently of what we may conjecture to be the transcendental substratum of outer appearances; for the latter is just as unknown to me as is the thinking self. But it is nevertheless possible that I may find cause, on other than merely speculative grounds, to hope for an independent and continuing existence of my thinking nature, throughout all possible change of my state. In that case much will already have been gained if, while freely confessing my own ignorance, I am yet in a position to repel the dogmatic assaults of a speculative opponent, and to show him that he can never know more of A 384 the nature of the self in denying the possibility of my expectations than I can know in clinging to them.

Three other dialectical questions, constituting the real goal of rational psychology, are grounded on this transcend-

ental illusion in our psychological concepts, and cannot be decided except by means of the above enquiries: namely (1) of the possibility of the communion of the soul with an organised body, *i.e.* concerning animality and the state of the soul in the life of man; (2) of the beginning of this communion, that is, of the soul in and before birth; (3) of the end of this communion, that is, of the soul in and after death (the question of immortality).

Now I maintain that all the difficulties commonly found in these questions, and by means of which, as dogmatic objections, men seek to gain credit for a deeper insight into the nature of things than any to which the ordinary understanding can properly lay claim, rest on a mere delusion by which they hypostatise what exists merely in thought, and take it as a real object existing, in the same character, outside the thinking subject. In other words, they regard extension, which is nothing  
 A 385 but appearance, as a property of outer things that subsists even apart from our sensibility, and hold that motion is due to these things and really occurs in and by itself, apart from our senses. For matter, the communion of which with the soul arouses so much questioning, is nothing but a mere form, or a particular way of representing an unknown object by means of that intuition which is called outer sense. There may well be something outside us to which this appearance, which we call matter, corresponds; in its character of appearance it is not, however, outside us, but is only a thought in us, although this thought, through the above-mentioned outer sense, represents it as existing outside us. Matter, therefore, does not mean a kind of substance quite distinct and heterogeneous from the object of inner sense (the soul), but only the distinctive nature of those appearances of objects—in themselves unknown to us—the representations of which we call outer as compared with those which we count as belonging to inner sense, although like all other thoughts these outer representations belong only to the thinking subject. They have, indeed, this deceptive property that, representing objects in space, they detach themselves as it were from the soul and appear to hover outside it. Yet the very space in which they are intuited is nothing but a representation, and no counterpart of the same quality is to be found outside the soul. Con-

sequently, the question is no longer of the communion of the soul with other known substances of a different kind outside us, but only of the connection of the representations of inner sense with the modifications of our outer sensibility—as to how these can be so connected with each other according to settled laws that they exhibit the unity of a coherent experience. A 386

The much-discussed question of the communion between the thinking and the extended, if we leave aside all that is merely fictitious, comes then simply to this: *how in a thinking subject outer intuition*, namely, that of space, with its filling-in of shape and motion, *is possible*. And this is a question which no man can possibly answer. This gap in our knowledge can never be filled; all that can be done is to indicate it through the ascription of outer appearances to that transcendental object which is the cause of this species of representations, but of which we can have no knowledge whatsoever and of which we shall never acquire any concept. A 393

The settlement of all disputes or objections which concern the state of the thinking nature prior to this communion (prior to life), or after the cessation of such communion (in death), rests upon these considerations regarding the communion between thinking beings and extended beings. The opinion that the thinking subject has been capable of thought prior to any communion with bodies would now appear as an assertion that, prior to the beginning of the species of sensibility in virtue of which something appears to us in space, those transcendental objects, which in our present state appear as bodies, could have been intuited in an entirely different manner. The opinion that the soul after the cessation of all communion with the corporeal world could still continue to think, would be formulated as the view that, if that species of sensibility, in virtue of which transcendental objects, at present quite unknown to us, appear as a material world, should cease, all intuition of the transcendental objects would not for that reason be removed; and it would still be quite possible that those same unknown objects should continue to be known by the thinking subject, though no longer, indeed, in the quality of bodies. A 394

Now on speculative principles no one can give the least ground for any such assertion. Even the possibility of what is

asserted cannot be established; it can only be assumed. But it is equally impossible for anyone to bring any valid dogmatic objection against it. For whoever he may be, he knows just as little as I or anybody else of the absolute inner cause of outer corporeal appearances. Since he cannot, therefore, offer any justification for claiming to know on what the outer appearances in our present state (that of life) really rest, neither can he know that the condition of all outer intuition, or  
 A 395 the thinking subject itself, will cease with this state (in death).

Thus all controversy in regard to the nature of the thinking being and its connection with the corporeal world is merely a result of filling the gap where knowledge is wholly lacking to us with paralogsms of reason, treating our thoughts as things and hypostatizing them. Hence originates an imaginary science, imaginary both in the case of him who affirms and of him who denies, since all parties either suppose some knowledge of objects of which no human being has any concept, or treat their own representations as objects, and so revolve in a perpetual circle of ambiguities and contradictions. Nothing but the sobriety of a critique, at once strict and just, can free us from this dogmatic delusion, which through the lure of an imagined felicity keeps so many in bondage to theories and systems. Such a critique confines all our speculative claims rigidly to the field of possible experience; and it does this not by shallow scoffing at ever-repeated failures or pious sighs over the limits of our reason, but by an effective determining of these limits in accordance with established principles, inscribing its *nihil ulterius* on those Pillars of Hercules which nature herself has erected in order that the voyage of our reason may be extended no further than the continuous coast-  
 A 396 line of experience itself reaches—a coast we cannot leave without venturing upon a shoreless ocean which, after alluring us with ever-deceptive prospects, compels us in the end to abandon as hopeless all this vexatious and tedious endeavour.

\* \* \*

A 401 That the being which thinks in us is under the impression that it knows itself through pure categories, and precisely through those categories which in each type of category express absolute unity, is due to the following reason. Apper-

ception is itself the ground of the possibility of the categories, which on their part represent nothing but the synthesis of the manifold of intuition, in so far as the manifold has unity in apperception. Self-consciousness in general is therefore the representation of that which is the condition of all unity, and itself is unconditioned. We can thus say of the thinking 'I' (the soul) which regards itself as substance, as simple, as A 402 numerically identical at all times, and as the correlate of all existence, from which all other existence must be inferred, that it does *not* know *itself through the categories*, but knows the categories, and through them all objects, in the absolute unity of apperception, and so *through itself*. Now it is, indeed, very evident that I cannot know as an object that which I must presuppose in order to know any object, and that the determining self (the thought) is distinguished from the self that is to be determined (the thinking subject) in the same way as knowledge is distinguished from its object. Nevertheless there is nothing more natural and more misleading than the illusion which leads us to regard the unity in the synthesis of thoughts as a perceived unity in the subject of these thoughts. We might call it the subreption of the hypostatized consciousness (*apperceptionis substantiatae*).

If we desire to give a logical title to the paralogism contained in the dialectical syllogisms of the rational doctrine of the soul, then in view of the fact that their premisses are correct, we may call it a *sophisma figurae dictionis*. Whereas the major premiss, in dealing with the condition, makes a merely transcendental use of the category, the minor premiss and the conclusion, in dealing with the soul which has been subsumed under this condition, use the same category empirically. Thus for instance, in the paralogism of substantiality, the concept A 403 of substance is a pure intellectual concept, which in the absence of the conditions of sensible intuition admits only of transcendental use, that is, admits of no use whatsoever. But in the minor premiss the very same concept is applied to the object of all inner experience without our having first ascertained and established the condition of such employment *in concreto*, namely, the permanence of this object. We are thus making an empirical, but in this case inadmissible, employment of the category.

## THE PARALOGISMS OF PURE REASON

[*As restated in 2nd Edition*]

**B 406** SINCE the proposition 'I think' (taken problematically) contains the form of each and every judgment of understanding and accompanies all categories as their vehicle, it is evident that the inferences from it admit only of a transcendental employment of the understanding. And since this employment excludes any admixture of experience, we cannot, after what has been shown above, entertain any favourable anticipations in regard to its methods of procedure. We therefore propose to follow it, with a critical eye, through all the predicaments of pure psychology. But for the sake of brevity the examination had best proceed in an unbroken continuity.

The following general remark may, at the outset, aid us in our scrutiny of this kind of argument. I do not know an object merely in that I think, but only in so far as I determine a given intuition with respect to the unity of consciousness in which all thought consists. Consequently, I do not know myself through being conscious of myself as thinking, but only when I am conscious of the intuition of myself as determined with respect to the function of thought. *Modi* of self-consciousness in  
**B 407** thought are not by themselves concepts of objects (categories), but are mere functions which do not give thought an object to be known, and accordingly do not give even myself as object. The object is not the consciousness of the *determining* self, but only that of the *determinable* self, that is, of my inner intuition (in so far as its manifold can be combined in accordance with the universal condition of the unity of apperception in thought).

(1) In all judgments I am the *determining* subject of that relation which constitutes the judgment. That the 'I', the 'I'

that thinks, can be regarded always as *subject*, and as something which does not belong to thought as a mere predicate, must be granted. It is an apodeictic and indeed *identical* proposition; but it does not mean that I, as *object*, am for myself a *self-subsistent* being or *substance*. The latter statement goes very far beyond the former, and demands for its proof data which are not to be met with in thought, and perhaps (in so far as I have regard to the thinking self merely as such) are more than I shall ever find in it.

(2) That the 'I' of apperception, and therefore the 'I' in every act of thought, is *one*, and cannot be resolved into a plurality of subjects, and consequently signifies a logically simple subject, is something already contained in the very concept of thought, and is therefore an analytic proposition. But this does not mean that the thinking 'I' is a simple *sub-* B 408  
*stance*. That proposition would be synthetic. The concept of substance always relates to intuitions which cannot in me be other than sensible, and which therefore lie entirely outside the field of the understanding and its thought. But it is of this thought that we are speaking when we say that the 'I' in thought is simple. It would, indeed, be surprising if what in other cases requires so much labour to determine—namely, what, of all that is presented in intuition, is substance, and further, whether this substance can be simple (*e.g.* in the parts of matter)—should be thus given me directly, as if by revelation, in the poorest of all representations.

(3) The proposition, that in all the manifold of which I am conscious I am identical with myself, is likewise implied in the concepts themselves, and is therefore an analytic proposition. But this identity of the subject, of which I can be conscious in all my representations, does not concern any intuition of the subject, whereby it is given as object, and cannot therefore signify the identity of the person, if by that is understood the consciousness of the identity of one's own substance, as a thinking being, in all change of its states. No mere analysis of the proposition 'I think' will suffice to prove such a proposition; for that we should require various synthetic judgments, B 409  
based upon given intuition.

(4) That I distinguish my own existence as that of a thinking being, from other things outside me—among them

my body—is likewise an analytic proposition; for *other* things are such as I think to be *distinct* from myself. But I do not thereby learn whether this consciousness of myself would be even possible apart from things outside me through which representations are given to me, and whether, therefore, I could exist merely as thinking being (*i.e.* without existing in human form).

The analysis, then, of the consciousness of myself in thought in general, yields nothing whatsoever towards the knowledge of myself as object. The logical exposition of thought in general has been mistaken for a metaphysical determination of the object.

Indeed, it would be a great stumbling-block, or rather would be the one unanswerable objection, to our whole critique, if there were a possibility of proving *a priori* that all thinking beings are in themselves simple substances, and that consequently (as follows from this same mode of proof) personality is inseparable from them, and that they are conscious of their existence as separate and distinct from all matter. For by such procedure we should have taken a step beyond the world of sense, and have entered into the field of noumena; B 410 and no one could then deny our right of advancing yet further in this domain, indeed of settling in it, and, should our star prove auspicious, of establishing claims to permanent possession. The proposition, 'Every thinking being is, as such, a simple substance', is a synthetic *a priori* proposition; it is synthetic in that it goes beyond the concept from which it starts, and adds to the thought in general [*i.e.* to the concept of a thinking being] the mode of [its] existence: it is *a priori*, in that it adds to the concept a predicate (that of simplicity) which cannot be given in any experience. It would then follow that *a priori* synthetic propositions are possible and admissible, not only, as we have asserted, in relation to objects of possible experience, and indeed as principles of the possibility of this experience, but that they are applicable to things in general and to things in themselves—a result that would make an end of our whole critique, and would constrain us to acquiesce in the old-time procedure. Upon closer consideration we find, however, that there is no such serious danger.



The whole procedure of rational psychology is determined by a paralogism, which is exhibited in the following syllogism:

*That which cannot be thought otherwise than as subject does not exist otherwise than as subject, and is therefore substance.*

*A thinking being, considered merely as such, cannot be B 411 thought otherwise than as subject.*

*Therefore it exists also only as subject, that is, as substance*

In the major premiss we speak of a being that can be thought in general, in every relation, and therefore also as it may be given in intuition. But in the minor premiss we speak of it only in so far as it regards itself, as subject, simply in relation to thought and the unity of consciousness, and not as likewise in relation to the intuition through which it is given as object to thought. Thus the conclusion is arrived at fallaciously, *per sophisma figurae dictionis*.<sup>a</sup>

That we are entirely right in resolving this famous argument into a paralogism will be clearly seen, if we call to mind what has been said in the General Note to the Systematic Representation of the Principles and in the Section on Noumena. For it has there been proved that the concept of a thing which can exist by itself as subject and never as mere predicate, carries with it no objective reality; in other words, that we cannot know whether there is any object to which the concept is applicable—as to the possibility of such a mode of existence

<sup>a</sup> 'Thought' is taken in the two premisses in totally different senses: in the major premiss, as relating to an object in general and therefore to an object as it may be given in intuition; in the minor premiss, only as it consists in relation to self-consciousness. In this latter sense, no object whatsoever is being thought; all that is being represented is simply the relation to self as subject (as the form of thought). In the former premiss we are speaking of *things* which cannot be thought otherwise than as subjects; but in the latter premiss we speak not of *things* but of *thought* (abstraction being made from all objects) in which the 'I' always serves as the subject of consciousness. The conclusion cannot, therefore, be, 'I cannot exist otherwise than as subject', but merely, 'In thinking my existence, I cannot employ myself, save as subject of the judgment [therein involved]' This is an identical proposition, and casts no light whatsoever upon the mode of my existence.

we have no means of deciding—and that the concept therefore yields no knowledge whatsoever. If by the term 'substance' be meant an object which can be given, and if it is to yield knowledge, it must be made to rest on a permanent intuition, as being that through which alone the object of our concept can be given, and as being, therefore, the indispensable condition  
 B 413 of the objective reality of the concept. Now in inner intuition there is nothing permanent, for the 'I' is merely the consciousness of my thought. So long, therefore, as we do not go beyond mere thinking, we are without the necessary condition for applying the concept of substance, that is, of a self-subsistent subject, to the self as a thinking being. And with the objective reality of the concept of substance, the allied concept of simplicity likewise vanishes; it is transformed into a merely logical qualitative unity of self-consciousness in thought in general, which has to be present whether the subject be composite or not.

#### REFUTATION OF MENDELSSOHN'S<sup>1</sup> PROOF OF THE PERMANENCE OF THE SOUL

This acute philosopher soon noticed that the usual argument by which it is sought to prove that the soul—if it be admitted to be a simple being—cannot cease to be through *dissolution*, is insufficient for its purpose, that of proving the necessary continuance of the soul, since it may be supposed to pass out of existence through simply *vanishing*. In his *Phædo* he endeavoured to prove that the soul cannot be subject to such a process of vanishing, which would be a true annihilation, by showing that a simple being cannot cease to exist. His argument is that since the soul cannot be diminished, and so gradually lose something of its exist-  
 B 414 ence, being by degrees changed into nothing (for since it has no parts, it has no multiplicity in itself), there would be no time between a moment in which it is and another in which it is not—which is impossible. He failed, however, to observe that even if we admit the simple nature of the soul, namely, that it contains no manifold of constituents external to one

<sup>1</sup> [Moses, Mendelssohn (1729-86): *Phædon* (1767) (*Gesammelte Schriften*, 1843, ii. p. 151 ff.).]

another, and therefore no extensive quantity, we yet cannot deny to it, any more than to any other existence, intensive quantity, that is, a degree of reality in respect of all its faculties, nay, in respect of all that constitutes its existence, and that this degree of reality may diminish through all the infinitely many smaller degrees. In this manner the supposed substance—the thing, the permanence of which has not yet been proved—may be changed into nothing, not indeed by dissolution, but by gradual loss (*remissio*) of its powers, and so, if I may be permitted the use of the term, by elanguescence. For consciousness itself has always a degree, which always allows of diminution, and the same must also hold of the faculty of being conscious of the self, and likewise of all the other faculties. Thus the permanence of the soul, regarded merely as object of inner sense, remains undemonstrated, and indeed indemonstrable. Its permanence during life is, of course, evident *per se*, since the thinking being (as man) is itself likewise an object of the outer senses. But this is very far from satisfying the rational psychologist who undertakes to prove from mere concepts its absolute permanence beyond this life. B 415

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Rational psychology exists not as *doctrine*, furnishing an addition to our knowledge of the self, but only as *discipline*. B 421 It sets impassable limits to speculative reason in this field, and thus keeps us, on the one hand, from throwing ourselves into the arms of a soulless materialism, or, on the other hand, from losing ourselves in a spiritualism which must be quite unfounded so long as we remain in this present life. But though it furnishes no positive doctrine, it reminds us that we should regard this refusal of reason to give satisfying response to our inquisitive probings into what is beyond the limits of this present life as reason's hint to divert our self-knowledge from fruitless and extravagant speculation to fruitful practical employment. Though in such practical employment it is directed always to objects of experience only, it derives its principles from a higher source, and determines us to regulate our actions as if our destiny reached infinitely far beyond experience, and therefore far beyond this present life.

- B 424** Nothing is thereby lost as regards the right, nay, the necessity, of postulating a future life in accordance with the principles of the practical employment of reason, which is closely bound up with its speculative employment. For the merely speculative proof has never been able to exercise any influence upon the common reason of men. It so stands upon the point of a hair, that even the schools preserve it from falling only so long as they keep it unceasingly spinning round like a top; even in their own eyes it yields no abiding foundation upon which anything could be built. The proofs which are
- B 425** serviceable for the world at large all preserve their entire value undiminished, and indeed, upon the surrender of these dogmatic pretensions, gain in clearness and in natural force. For reason is then located in its own peculiar sphere, namely, the order of ends, which is also at the same time an order of nature; and since it is in itself not only a theoretical but also a practical faculty, and as such is not bound down to natural conditions, it is justified in extending the order of ends, and therewith our own existence, beyond the limits of experience and of life. If we judged according to *analogy with the nature* of living beings in this world, in dealing with which reason must necessarily accept the principle that no organ, no faculty, no impulse, indeed nothing whatsoever is either superfluous or disproportioned to its use, and that therefore nothing is purposeless, but everything exactly conformed to its destiny in life—if we judged by such an analogy we should have to regard man, who alone can contain in himself the final end of all this order, as the only creature that is excepted from it. Man's natural endowments—not merely his talents and the impulses to enjoy them, but above all else the moral law within him—go so far beyond all the utility and advantage which he may derive from them in this present life, that he learns thereby to prize the mere consciousness of a righteous will as being,
- B 426** apart from all advantageous consequences, apart even from the shadowy reward of posthumous fame, supreme over all other values; and so feels an inner call to fit himself, by his conduct in this world, and by the sacrifice of many of its advantages, for citizenship in a better world upon which he lays hold in idea. This powerful and incontrovertible proof is reinforced by our ever-increasing knowledge of purposiveness

in all that we see around us, and by contemplation of the immensity of creation, and therefore also by the consciousness of a certain illimitableness in the possible extension of our knowledge, and of a striving commensurate therewith. All this still remains to us; but we must renounce the hope of comprehending, from the merely theoretical knowledge of ourselves, the necessary continuance of our existence.

#### CONCLUSION, IN REGARD TO THE SOLUTION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PARALOGISM

The dialectical illusion in rational psychology arises from the confusion of an idea of reason—the idea of a pure intelligence—with the completely undetermined concept of a thinking being in general. I think myself on behalf of a possible experience, at the same time abstracting from all actual experience; and I conclude therefrom that I can be conscious of my existence even apart from experience and its empirical conditions. In so doing I am confusing the possible *abstraction* from my empirically determined existence, with the supposed consciousness of a possible *separate* existence of my thinking self, and I thus come to believe that I have *knowledge* that what is substantial in me is the transcendental subject. But all that I really have in thought is simply the unity of consciousness, on which, as the mere form of knowledge, all determination is based. B 427

The task of explaining the communion of the soul with the body does not properly belong to the psychology with which we are here dealing. For this psychology proposes to prove the personality of the soul even apart from this communion (that is, after death), and is therefore *transcendent* in the proper sense of that term. It does, indeed, occupy itself with an object of experience, but only in that aspect in which it ceases to be an object of experience. Our teaching, on the other hand, does supply a sufficient answer to this question. The difficulty peculiar to the problem consists, as is generally recognised, in the assumed heterogeneity of the object of inner sense (the soul) and the objects of the outer senses, the formal condition of their intuition being, in the case of the former, time only, and in the case of the latter, also space. But if we

consider that the two kinds of objects thus differ from each other, not inwardly but only in so far as one *appears* outwardly to the other, and that what, as thing in itself, underlies the appearance of matter, perhaps after all may not be so heterogeneous in character, this difficulty vanishes, the only question that remains being how in general a communion of substances is possible. This, however, is a question which lies outside the field of psychology, and which the reader, after what has been said in the *Analytic* regarding fundamental powers and faculties, will not hesitate to regard as likewise lying outside the field of all human knowledge.

# THE TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC

## BOOK II

### CHAPTER II

#### THE ANTINOMY OF PURE REASON

WE have shown in the introduction to this part of our work that all transcendental illusion of pure reason rests on dialectical inferences whose schema is supplied by logic in the three formal species of syllogisms—just as the categories find A 406 their logical schema in the four functions of all judgments. The first type of these pseudo-rational inferences deals with the unconditioned unity of the subjective conditions of all representations in general (of the subject or soul), in correspondence with the *categorical* syllogisms, the major premiss of which is a principle asserting the relation of a predicate to a subject. The second type of dialectical argument follows the B 433 analogy of the *hypothetical* syllogisms. It has as its content the unconditioned unity of the objective conditions in the [field of] appearance. In similar fashion, the third type, which will be dealt with in the next chapter, has as its theme the unconditioned unity of the objective conditions of the possibility of objects in general.

But there is one point that calls for special notice. Transcendental paralogism produced a purely one-sided illusion in regard to the idea of the subject of our thought. No illusion which will even in the slightest degree support the opposing assertion is caused by the concepts of reason. Consequently, although transcendental paralogism, in spite of a favouring illusion, cannot disclaim the radical defect through which in the fiery ordeal of critical investigation it dwindles

into mere semblance, such advantage as it offers is altogether on the side of pneumatism.

A 407 A completely different situation arises when reason is applied to the *objective* synthesis of appearances. For in this domain, however it may endeavour to establish its principle of unconditioned unity, and though it indeed does so with great though illusory appearance of success, it soon falls into such contradictions that it is constrained, in this cosmological field, to desist from any such pretensions.

B 434 We have here presented to us a new phenomenon of human reason—an entirely natural antithetic, in which there is no need of making subtle enquiries or of laying snares for the unwary, but into which reason of itself quite unavoidably falls. It certainly guards reason from the slumber of *fictitious* conviction such as is generated by a purely one-sided illusion, but at the same time subjects it to the temptation either of abandoning itself to a sceptical despair, or of assuming an obstinate attitude, dogmatically committing itself to certain assertions, and refusing to grant a fair hearing to the arguments for the counter-position. Either attitude is the death of sound philosophy, although the former might perhaps be entitled the *euthanasia* of pure reason.

## Section I

### SYSTEM OF COSMOLOGICAL IDEAS

In proceeding to enumerate cosmological ideas with systematic precision according to a principle, we must bear in mind two points. In the first place we must recognise that pure and transcendental concepts can issue only from the understanding. Reason does not really generate any concept. A 409 The most it can do is to *free* a concept of *understanding* from the unavoidable limitations of possible experience, and so to endeavour to extend it beyond the limits of the empirical, B 436 though still, indeed, in terms of its relation to the empirical. This is achieved in the following manner. For a given conditioned, reason demands on the side of the conditions—to which as the conditions of synthetic unity the understanding



subjects all appearances—absolute totality, and in so doing converts the category into a transcendental idea. For only by carrying the empirical synthesis as far as the unconditioned is it enabled to render it absolutely complete; and the unconditioned is never to be met with in experience, but only in the idea. Reason makes this demand in accordance with the principle that if *the conditioned is given, the entire sum of conditions, and consequently the absolutely unconditioned* (through which alone the conditioned has been possible) *is also given*. The transcendental ideas are thus, in the *first* place, simply categories extended to the unconditioned, and can be reduced to a table arranged according to the [fourfold] headings of the latter. In the *second* place, not all categories are fitted for such employment, but only those in which the synthesis constitutes a *series* of conditions subordinated to, not co-ordinated with, one another, and generative of a [given] conditioned. Absolute totality is demanded by reason only in so far as the ascending series of conditions relates to a given A 410 conditioned. It is not demanded in regard to the descending line of consequences, nor in reference to the aggregate of co-ordinated conditions of these consequences. For in the case of B 437 the given conditioned, conditions are presupposed, and are considered as given together with it. On the other hand, since consequences do not make their conditions possible, but rather presuppose them, we are not called upon, when we advance to consequences or descend from a given condition to the conditioned, to consider whether the series does or does not cease; the question as to the totality of the series is not in any way a presupposition of reason.

Thus we necessarily think time as having completely elapsed up to the given moment, and as being itself given in this completed form. This holds true, even though such completely elapsed time is not determinable by us. But since the future is not the condition of our attaining to the present, it is a matter of entire indifference, in our comprehension of the latter, how we may think of future time, whether as coming to an end or as flowing on to infinity. We have, as it were, the series *m, n, o*, in which *n* is given as conditioned by *m*, and at the same time as being the condition of *o*. The series ascends from the conditioned *n* to *m* (*l, k, i*, etc.), and also descends

from the condition  $n$  to the conditioned  $o$  ( $p, q, r$ , etc.). Now I must presuppose the first series in order to be able to view  $n$  as given. According to reason, with its demand for totality  
 A 411 of conditions,  $n$  is possible only by means of that series. Its possibility does not, however, rest upon the subsequent series,  
 B 438  $o, p, q, r$ . This latter series may not therefore be regarded as given, but only as allowing of being given (*dabilis*).

I propose to name the synthesis of a series which begins, on the side of the conditions, from the condition which stands nearest to the given appearance and so passes to the more remote conditions, the *regressive* synthesis; and that which advances, on the side of the conditioned, from the first consequence to the more distant, the *progressive*. The first proceeds *in antecedentia*, the second *in consequentia*. The cosmological ideas deal, therefore, with the totality of the regressive synthesis proceeding *in antecedentia*, not *in consequentia*. The problem of pure reason suggested by the progressive form of totality is gratuitous and unnecessary, since the raising of it is not required for the complete comprehension of what is given in appearance. For that we require to consider only the grounds, not the consequences.

A 415 When we select out those categories which necessarily lead to a series in the synthesis of the manifold, we find that there are but four cosmological ideas, corresponding to the four titles of the categories:

- |       |    |  |
|-------|----|--|
| 3 443 | 1. | Absolute completeness<br>of the <i>Composition</i><br>of the given whole of all appearances.                         |
|       | 2. | Absolute completeness<br>in the <i>Division</i><br>of a given whole in the [field of] appearance.                    |
|       | 3. | Absolute completeness<br>in the <i>Origination</i><br>of an appearance.  |
|       | 4. | Absolute completeness<br>as regards <i>Dependence of Existence</i><br>of the alterable in the [field of] appearance. |

## Section 2

## ANTITHETIC OF PURE REASON

If thetic be the name for any body of dogmatic doctrines, antithetic may be taken as meaning, not dogmatic assertions of the opposite, but the conflict of the doctrines of seemingly dogmatic knowledge (*thesis cum antithesi*) in which no one assertion can establish superiority over another. The antithetic A 421 does not, therefore, deal with one-sided assertions. It treats only of the conflict of the doctrines of reason with one another and the causes of this conflict. The transcendental antithetic is an enquiry into the antinomy of pure reason, its causes and outcome. If in employing the principles of understanding we do not merely apply our reason to objects of experience, but B 449 venture to extend these principles beyond the limits of experience, there arise *pseudo-rational* doctrines which can neither hope for confirmation in experience nor fear refutation by it. Each of them is not only in itself free from contradiction, but finds conditions of its necessity in the very nature of reason—only that, unfortunately, the assertion of the opposite has, on its side, grounds that are just as valid and necessary.

A dialectical doctrine of pure reason must therefore be distinguished from all sophistical propositions in two respects. It must not refer to an arbitrary question such as may be raised A 422 for some special purpose, but to one which human reason must necessarily encounter in its progress. And secondly, both it and its opposite must involve no mere artificial illusion such as at once vanishes upon detection, but a natural and unavoidable illusion, which even after it has ceased to beguile still B 450 continues to delude though not to deceive us, and which though thus capable of being rendered harmless can never be eradicated.

Such dialectical doctrine relates not to the unity of understanding in empirical concepts, but to the unity of reason in mere ideas. Since this unity of reason involves a synthesis according to rules, it must conform to the understanding; and yet as demanding absolute unity of synthesis it must at the same time harmonise with reason. But the conditions of this

unity are such that when it is adequate to reason it is too great for the understanding; and when suited to the understanding, too small for reason. There thus arises a conflict which cannot be avoided, do what we will.

These pseudo-rational assertions thus disclose a dialectical battlefield in which the side permitted to open the attack is invariably victorious, and the side constrained to act on the defensive is always defeated. Accordingly, vigorous fighters, no matter whether they support a good or a bad cause, if only they contrive to secure the right to make the last attack, and are not required to withstand a new onslaught from their opponents, may always count upon carrying off the laurels. We can easily understand that while this arena should time and again be contested, and that numerous triumphs should be gained by both sides, the last decisive victory always leaves the champion of the good cause master of the field, simply because his rival is forbidden to resume the combat. As impartial umpires, we must leave aside the question whether it is for the good or the bad cause that the contestants are fighting. They must be left to decide the issue for themselves. After they have rather exhausted than injured one another, they will perhaps themselves perceive the futility of their quarrel, and part good friends.

This method of watching, or rather provoking, a conflict of assertions, not for the purpose of deciding in favour of one or other side, but of investigating whether the object of controversy is not perhaps a deceptive appearance which each vainly strives to grasp, and in regard to which, even if there were no opposition to be overcome, neither can arrive at any result,—this procedure, I say, may be entitled the *sceptical method*. It is altogether different from *scepticism*—a principle of technical and scientific ignorance, which undermines the foundations of all knowledge, and strives in all possible ways to destroy its reliability and steadfastness. For the sceptical method aims at certainty. It seeks to discover the point of misunderstanding in the case of disputes which are sincerely and competently conducted by both sides, just as from the embarrassment of judges in cases of litigation wise legislators contrive to obtain instruction regarding the defects and ambiguities of their laws. The antinomy which discloses itself in

the application of laws is for our limited wisdom the best criterion of the legislation that has given rise to them. Reason, which does not in abstract speculation easily become aware of its errors, is hereby awakened to consciousness of the factors [that have to be reckoned with] in the determination of its principles.

A 426 } THE ANTINOMY OF PURE REASON { A 427  
B 454 } { B 455

FIRST CONFLICT OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

*Thesis*

The world has a beginning in time, and is also limited as regards space.

*Antithesis*

The world has no beginning, and no limits in space; it is infinite as regards both time and space.

*Proof*

If we assume that the world has no beginning in time, then up to every given moment an eternity has elapsed, and there has passed away in the world an infinite series of successive states of things. Now the infinity of a series consists in the fact that it can never be completed through successive synthesis. It thus follows that it is impossible for an infinite world-series to have passed away, and that a beginning of the world is therefore a necessary condition of the world's existence. This was the first point that called for proof.

As regards the second point

*Proof*

For let us assume that it has a beginning. Since the beginning is an existence which is preceded by a time in which the thing is not, there must have been a preceding time in which the world was not, *i.e.* an empty time. Now no coming to be of a thing is possible in an empty time, because no part of such a time possesses, as compared with any other, a distinguishing condition of existence rather than of non-existence; and this applies whether the thing is supposed to arise of itself or through some other cause. In the world many series of

let us again assume the opposite, namely, that the world is an infinite given whole of co-existing things. Now the magnitude of a quantum which is not given in intuition as within certain limits can be thought only through the synthesis of its parts, and the totality of such a quantum only through a synthesis that is brought to completion through repeated addition of unit to unit. In order, therefore, to think, as a whole, the world which fills all spaces, the successive synthesis of the parts of an infinite world must be viewed as completed, that is, an infinite time must be viewed as having elapsed in the enumeration of all co-existing things. This, however, is impossible. An infinite aggregate of actual things cannot therefore be viewed as a given whole, nor consequently as simultaneously given. The world is, therefore, as regards extension in space, not infinite, but is enclosed within limits. This was the second point in dispute.

A 428  
B 456

things can, indeed, begin; but the world itself cannot have a beginning, and is therefore infinite in respect of past time.

As regards the second point, let us start by assuming the opposite, namely, that the world in space is finite and limited, and consequently exists in an empty space which is unlimited. Things will therefore not only be related *in space* but also related *to space*. Now since the world is an absolute whole beyond which there is no object of intuition, and therefore no correlate with which the world stands in relation, the relation of the world to empty space would be a relation of it to no *object*. But such a relation, and consequently the limitation of the world by empty space, is nothing. The world cannot, therefore, be limited in space; that is, it is infinite in respect of extension.

{A 429  
B 457

A 434 }  
B 462 }

## THE ANTINOMY OF PURE REASON

{ A 435  
B 463 }

## SECOND CONFLICT OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

*Thesis*

Every composite substance in the world is made up of simple parts, and nothing anywhere exists save the simple or what is composed of the simple.

*Antithesis*

No composite thing in the world is made up of simple parts, and there nowhere exists in the world anything simple.

*Proof*

Let us assume that composite substances are not made up of simple parts. If all composition be then removed in thought, no composite part, and (since we admit no simple parts) also no simple part, that is to say, nothing at all, will remain, and accordingly no substance will be given. Either, therefore, it is impossible to remove in thought all composition, or after its removal there must remain something which exists without composition, that is, the simple. In the former case the composite would not be made up of substances; composition, as applied to substances, is only an accidental relation in independence of which they must still persist as self-subsistent beings. Since this contradicts

A 436 }  
B 464 }*Proof*

Assume that a composite thing (as substance) is made up of simple parts. Since all external relation, and therefore all composition of substances, is possible only in space, a space must be made up of as many parts as are contained in the composite which occupies it. Space, however, is not made up of simple parts, but of spaces. Every part of the composite must therefore occupy a space. But the absolutely first parts of every composite are simple. The simple therefore occupies a space. Now since everything real, which occupies a space, contains in itself a manifold of constituents external to one another, and is therefore composite; and since a real composite is not made up of accidents (for accidents

our supposition, there remains only the original supposition, that a composite of substances in the world is made up of simple parts.

It follows, as an immediate consequence, that the things in the world are all, without exception, simple beings; that composition is merely an external state of these beings; and that although we can never so isolate these elementary substances as to take them out of this state of composition, reason must think them as the primary subjects of all composition, and therefore, as simple beings, prior to all composition.

could not exist outside one another, in the absence of substance) but of substances, it follows that the simple would be a composite of substances—which is self-contradictory.

The second proposition of the antithesis, that nowhere in the world does there exist anything simple, is intended to mean only this, that the existence of the absolutely simple cannot be established by any experience or perception, either outer or inner; and that the absolutely simple is therefore a mere idea, the objective reality of which can never be shown in any possible experience, and which, as being without an object, has no application in the explanation of the appearances. For if we assumed that in experience an object might be found for this transcendental idea, the empirical intuition of such an object would have to be known as one that contains no manifold [factors] external to one another and combined into unity. But since from the non-consciousness of such a manifold we cannot conclude to its complete impossibility in every kind of intuition of an object; and since without such proof absolute simplicity

{A 437  
B 365



can never be established, it follows that such simplicity cannot be inferred from any perception whatsoever. An absolutely simple object can never be given in any possible experience. And since by the world of sense we must mean the sum of all possible experiences, it follows that nothing simple is to be found anywhere in it.

This second proposition of the antithesis has a much wider application than the first. Whereas the first proposition banishes the simple only from the intuition of the composite, the second excludes it from the whole of nature. Accordingly it has not been possible to prove this second proposition by reference to the concept of a given object of outer intuition (of the composite), but only by reference to its relation to a possible experience in general.

A 444 } THE ANTINOMY OF PURE REASON { A 445  
B 472 } B 473

### THIRD CONFLICT OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

#### *Thesis*

Causality in accordance with laws of nature is not the only causality from which the appearances of the world can

#### *Antithesis*

There is no freedom; everything in the world takes place solely in accordance with laws of nature.

one and all be derived. To explain these appearances it is necessary to assume that there is also another causality, that of freedom.

*Proof*

Let us assume that there is no other causality than that in accordance with laws of nature. This being so, everything which *takes place* presupposes a preceding state upon which it inevitably follows according to a rule. But the preceding state must itself be something which has taken place (having come to be in a time in which it previously was not); for if it had always existed, its consequence also would have always existed, and would not have only just arisen. The causality of the cause through which something takes place is itself, therefore, something that has *taken place*, which again presupposes, in accordance with the law of nature, a preceding state and its causality, and this in similar manner a still earlier state, and so on. If, therefore, everything takes place solely in accordance with laws of nature, there will always be only a relative and never a first beginning,

*Proof*

Assume that there is freedom in the transcendental sense, as a special kind of causality in accordance with which the events in the world can have come about, namely, a power of absolutely beginning a state, and therefore also of absolutely beginning a series of consequences of that state; it then follows that not only will a series have its absolute beginning in this spontaneity, but that the very determination of this spontaneity to originate the series, that is to say, the causality itself, will have an absolute beginning; there will be no antecedent through which this act, in taking place, is determined in accordance with fixed laws. But every beginning of action presupposes a state of the not yet acting cause; and a *dynamical* beginning of the action, if it is also a first beginning, presupposes a state which has no *causal* connection with the preceding state of the cause, that is to

and consequently no completeness of the series on the side of the causes that arise the one from the other. But the law of nature is just this, that nothing takes place without a cause *sufficiently* determined *a priori*. The proposition that no causality is possible save in accordance with laws of nature, when taken in unlimited universality, is therefore self-contradictory; and this cannot, therefore, be regarded as the sole kind of causality.

We must, then, assume a causality through which something takes place, the cause of which is not itself determined, in accordance with necessary laws, by another cause antecedent to it, that is to say, an *absolute spontaneity* of the cause, whereby a series of appearances, which proceeds in accordance with laws of nature, begins *of itself*. This is transcendental freedom, without which, even in the [ordinary] course of nature, the series of appearances on the side of the causes can never be complete.

say, in nowise follows from it. Transcendental freedom thus stands opposed to the law of causality; and the kind of connection which it assumes as holding between the successive states of the active causes renders all unity of experience impossible. It is not to be met with in any experience, and is therefore an empty thought-entity.

In nature alone, therefore, [not in freedom], must we seek for the connection and order of cosmical events. Freedom (independence) from the laws of nature is no doubt a liberation from compulsion, but also from the guidance of all rules. For it is not permissible to say that the *laws* of freedom enter into the causality exhibited in the course of nature, and so take the place of natural laws. If freedom were determined in accordance with laws, it would not be freedom; it would simply be nature under another name. Nature and transcendental freedom differ as do conformity to law and lawlessness. Nature does indeed impose upon the understanding the exacting task of always seeking the origin of events ever higher in the series of causes, their causality being always conditioned.

{ A 447  
B 475

But in compensation it holds out the promise of thorough-going unity of experience in accordance with laws. The illusion of freedom, on the other hand, offers a point of rest to the enquiring understanding in the chain of causes, conducting it to an unconditioned causality which begins to act of itself. This causality is, however, blind, and abrogates those rules through which alone a completely coherent experience is possible.

A 452 } THE ANTINOMY OF PURE REASON { A 453  
B 480 } B 481

FOURTH CONFLICT OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

*Thesis*

There belongs to the world, either as its part or as its cause, a being that is absolutely necessary.

*Antithesis*

An absolutely necessary being nowhere exists in the world, nor does it exist outside the world as its cause.

*Proof*

The sensible world, as the sum-total of all appearances, contains a series of alterations. For without such a series even the representation of serial time, as a condition of the possibility of the sensible world, would not be given us. But every alteration stands under its condition, which

*Proof*

If we assume that the world itself is necessary, or that a necessary being exists in it, there are then two alternatives. Either there is a beginning in the series of alterations which is absolutely necessary, and therefore without a cause, or the series itself is without any beginning,

precedes it in time and renders it necessary. Now every conditioned that is given presupposes, in respect of its existence, a complete series of conditions up to the unconditioned, which alone is absolutely necessary. Alteration thus existing as a consequence of the absolutely necessary, the existence of something absolutely necessary must be granted. But this necessary existence itself belongs to the sensible world. For if it existed outside that world, the series of alterations in the world would derive its beginning from a necessary cause which would not itself belong to the sensible world. This, however, is impossible. For since the beginning of a series in time can be determined only by that which precedes it in time, the highest condition of the beginning of a series of changes must exist in the time when the series as yet was not (for a beginning is an existence preceded by a time in which the thing that begins did not yet exist). Accordingly the causality of the necessary cause of alterations, and therefore the cause itself, must belong to time and so to appearance—time being possible only as the form of appearance. Such

and although contingent and conditioned in all its parts, none the less, as a whole, is absolutely necessary and unconditioned. The former alternative, however, conflicts with the dynamical law of the determination of all appearances in time; and the latter alternative contradicts itself, since the existence of a series cannot be necessary if no single member of it is necessary.

If, on the other hand, we assume that an absolutely necessary cause of the world exists outside the world, then this cause, as the highest member in the series of the causes of changes in the world, must begin the existence of the latter and their series. Now this cause must itself begin to act, and its causality would therefore be in time, and so would belong to the sum of appearances, that is, to the world. It follows that it itself, the cause, would not be outside the world—which contradicts our hypothesis. Therefore neither in the world, nor outside the world (though in causal connection with it), does there exist any absolutely necessary being.

1 454 }  
3 482 }

{ A 455  
B 483 }

causality cannot, therefore, be thought apart from that sum of all appearances which constitutes the world of sense. Something absolutely necessary is therefore contained in the world itself, whether this something be the whole series of alterations in the world or a part of the series.

### Section 3

#### THE INTEREST OF REASON IN THESE CONFLICTS

We have now completely before us the dialectic play of cosmological ideas. The ideas are such that an object congruent with them can never be given in any possible experience, and that even in thought reason is unable to bring them into harmony with the universal laws of nature. Yet they are not arbitrarily conceived. Reason, in the continuous advance of empirical synthesis, is necessarily led up to them whenever it endeavours to free from all conditions and apprehend in its unconditioned totality that which according to the rules of experience can never be determined save as conditioned. These pseudo-rational assertions are so many attempts to solve four natural and unavoidable problems of reason. There are just so many, neither more nor fewer, owing to the fact that there are just four series of synthetic presuppositions which impose *a priori* limitations on the empirical synthesis.

The proud pretensions of reason, when it strives to extend its domain beyond all limits of experience, we have represented only in dry formulas that contain merely the ground of their legal claims. As befits a transcendental philosophy, they have been divested of all empirical features, although only in connection therewith can their full splendour be displayed. But in this empirical application, and in the progressive extension of the employment of reason, philosophy, beginning with the field of our experiences and steadily soaring to these lofty ideas, displays a dignity and worth such that, could it but

A 463  
B 491

make good its pretensions, it would leave all other human science far behind. For it promises a secure foundation for our highest expectations in respect of those ultimate ends towards which all the endeavours of reason must ultimately converge. Whether the world has a beginning [in time] and any limit to its extension in space; whether there is anywhere, and perhaps in my thinking self, an indivisible and indestructible unity, or nothing but what is divisible and transitory; whether I am free in my actions or, like other beings, am led by the hand of nature and of fate; whether finally there is a supreme cause of the world, or whether the things of nature and their order must as the ultimate object terminate thought—an object that even in our speculations can never be transcended: these are questions for the solution of which the mathematician would gladly exchange the whole of his science. For mathematics can yield no satisfaction in regard to those highest ends that most closely concern humanity. And yet the very dignity of mathematics (that pride of human reason) rests upon this, that it guides reason to knowledge of nature in its order and regularity—alike in what is great in it and in what is small—and in the extraordinary unity of its moving forces, thus rising to a degree of insight far beyond what any philosophy based on ordinary experience would lead us to expect; and so gives occasion and encouragement to an employment of reason that is extended beyond all experience, and at the same time supplies it with the most excellent materials for supporting its investigations—so far as the character of these permits—by appropriate intuitions.

{ A 464  
B 493

Unfortunately for speculation, though fortunately perhaps for the practical interests of humanity, reason, in the midst of its highest expectations, finds itself so compromised by the conflict of opposing arguments, that neither its honour nor its security allows it to withdraw and treat the quarrel with indifference as a mere mock fight; and still less is it in a position to command peace, being itself directly interested in the matters in dispute. Accordingly, nothing remains for reason save to consider whether the origin of this conflict, whereby it is divided against itself, may not have arisen from a mere misunderstanding. In such an enquiry both parties, perchance, may have to sacrifice proud claims; but a lasting and peaceful

{ A 465  
B 493

reign of reason over understanding and the senses would thereby be inaugurated.

For the present we shall defer this thorough enquiry, in order first of all to consider upon which side we should prefer to fight, should we be compelled to make choice between the opposing parties. The raising of this question, how we should proceed if we consulted only our interest and not the logical criterion of truth, will decide nothing in regard to the contested rights of the two parties, but has this advantage, that it enables us to comprehend why the participants in this quarrel, though not influenced by any superior insight into the matter under dispute, have preferred to fight on one side rather than on the other. It will also cast light on a number of incidental points, for instance, the passionate zeal of the one party and the calm assurance of the other, and will explain why the world hails the one with eager approval, and is implacably prejudiced against the other.

Comparison of the principles which form the starting-points of the two parties is what enables us, as we shall find, to determine the standpoint from which alone this preliminary enquiry can be carried out with the required thoroughness. In the assertions of the antithesis we observe a perfect uniformity in manner of thinking and complete unity of maxims, namely, A 466  
B 494 a principle of pure *empiricism*, applied not only in explanation of the appearances within the world, but also in the solution of the transcendental ideas of the world itself, in its totality. The assertions of the thesis, on the other hand, presuppose, in addition to the empirical mode of explanation employed within the series of appearances, intelligible beginnings; and to this extent its maxim is complex. But as its essential and distinguishing characteristic is the presupposition of intelligible beginnings, I shall entitle it the *dogmatism* of pure reason.

In the determination of the cosmological ideas, we find on the side of *dogmatism*, that is, of the thesis:

First, a certain *practical interest* in which every well-disposed man, if he has understanding of what truly concerns him, heartily shares. That the world has a beginning, that my thinking self is of simple and therefore indestructible nature, that it is free in its voluntary actions and raised above the



compulsion of nature, and finally that all order in the things constituting the world is due to a primordial being, from which everything derives its unity and purposive connection—these are so many foundation stones of morals and religion. The antithesis robs us of all these supports, or at least appears to do so.

Secondly, reason has a *speculative interest* on the side of the thesis. When the transcendental ideas are postulated and employed in the manner prescribed by the thesis, the entire chain of conditions and the derivation of the conditioned can be grasped completely *a priori*. For we then start from the unconditioned. This is not done by the antithesis, which for this reason is at a very serious disadvantage. To the question as to the conditions of its synthesis it can give no answer which does not lead to the endless renewal of the same enquiry. According to the antithesis, every given beginning compels us to advance to one still higher; every part leads to a still smaller part; every event is preceded by another event as its cause; and the conditions of existence in general rest always again upon other conditions, without ever obtaining unconditioned footing and support in any self-subsistent thing, viewed as primordial being. { A 467  
B 495

Thirdly, the thesis has also the advantage of *popularity*; and this certainly forms no small part of its claim to favour. The common understanding finds not the least difficulty in the idea of the unconditioned beginning of all synthesis. Being more accustomed to descend to consequences than to ascend to grounds, it does not puzzle over the possibility of the absolutely first; on the contrary, it finds comfort in such concepts, and at the same time a fixed point to which the thread by which it guides its movements can be attached. In the restless ascent from the conditioned to the condition, always with one foot in the air, there can be no satisfaction.

In the determination of the cosmological ideas, we find on the side of *empiricism*, that is, of the *antithesis*: first, no such practical interest (due to pure principles of reason) as is provided for the thesis by morals and religion. On the contrary, pure empiricism appears to deprive them of all power and influence. If there is no primordial being distinct from the world, if the world is without beginning and therefore without { A 468  
B 496

an Author, if our will is not free, if the soul is divisible and perishable like matter, *moral* ideas and principles lose all validity, and share in the fate of the *transcendental* ideas which served as their theoretical support.

But secondly, in compensation, empiricism yields advantages to the speculative interest of reason, which are very attractive and far surpass those which dogmatic teaching bearing on the ideas of reason can offer. According to the principle of empiricism the understanding is always on its own proper ground, namely, the field of genuinely possible experiences, investigating their laws, and by means of these laws affording indefinite extension to the sure and comprehensible knowledge which it supplies. Here every object, both in itself and in its relations, can and ought to be represented in intuition, or at least in concepts for which the corresponding images can be clearly and distinctly provided in given similar intuitions. There is no necessity to leave the chain of the natural order and to resort to ideas, the objects of which are not known, because, as mere thought-entities, they can never be given. Indeed, the understanding is not permitted to leave its proper business, and under the pretence of having brought it to completion to pass over into the sphere of idealising reason and of transcendent concepts—a sphere in which it is no longer necessary for it to observe and investigate in accordance with the laws of nature, but only to *think* and to *invent*, in the assurance that it cannot be refuted by the facts of nature, not being bound by the evidence which they yield, but presuming to pass them by or even to subordinate them to a higher authority, namely, that of pure reason.

The empiricist will never allow, therefore, that any epoch of nature is to be taken as the absolutely first, or that any limit of his insight into the extent of nature is to be regarded as the widest possible. Nor does he permit any transition from the objects of nature—which he can analyse through observation and mathematics, and synthetically determine in intuition (the extended)—to those which neither sense nor imagination can ever represent *in concreto* (the simple). Nor will he admit the legitimacy of assuming in nature itself any power that operates independently of the laws of nature (freedom), and so of encroaching upon the business of the understanding,

A 469  
B 497

which is that of investigating, according to necessary rules, the origin of appearances. And, lastly, he will not grant that a cause ought ever to be sought outside nature, in an original being. We know nothing but nature, since it alone can present objects to us and instruct us in regard to their laws. (A 470  
(B 498)

If the empirical philosopher had no other purpose in propounding his antithesis than to subdue the rashness and presumption of those who so far misconstrue the true vocation of reason as to boast of insight and knowledge just where true insight and knowledge cease, and to represent as furthering speculative interests that which is valid only in relation to practical interests (in order, as may suit their convenience, to break the thread of physical enquiries, and then under the pretence of extending knowledge to fasten it to transcendental ideas, through which we really know only that we know nothing); if, I say, the empiricist were satisfied with this, his principle would be a maxim urging moderation in our pretensions, modesty in our assertions, and yet at the same time the greatest possible extension of our understanding, through the teacher fittingly assigned to us, namely, through experience. If such were our procedure, we should not be cut off from employing intellectual *presuppositions* and *faith* on behalf of our practical interest; only they could never be permitted to assume the title and dignity of science and rational insight. (A 471  
(B 499)

*Knowledge*, which as such is speculative, can have no other object than that supplied by experience; if we transcend the limits thus imposed, the synthesis which seeks, independently of experience, new species of knowledge, lacks that substratum of intuition upon which alone it can be exercised.

But when empiricism itself, as frequently happens, becomes dogmatic in its attitude towards ideas, and confidently denies whatever lies beyond the sphere of its intuitive knowledge, it betrays the same lack of modesty; and this is all the more reprehensible owing to the irreparable injury which is thereby caused to the practical interests of reason.

The contrast between the teaching of Epicurus and that of Plato is of this nature.

Each of the two types of philosophy says more than it knows. Epicurus encourages and furthers knowledge, though to the prejudice of the practical; Plato supplies (A 472  
(B 500)

excellent practical principles, but permits reason to indulge in ideal explanations of natural appearances, in regard to which a speculative knowledge is alone possible to us—to the neglect of physical investigation.

Finally, as regards the third factor which has to be considered in a preliminary choice between the two conflicting parties, it is extremely surprising that empiricism should be so universally unpopular. The common understanding, it might be supposed, would eagerly adopt a programme which promises to satisfy it through exclusively empirical knowledge and the rational connections there revealed—in preference to the transcendental dogmatism which compels it to rise to concepts far outstripping the insight and rational faculties of the most practised thinkers. But this is precisely what commends such dogmatism to the common understanding. For it then finds itself in a position in which the most learned can claim no advantage over it. If it understands little or nothing about these matters, no one can boast of understanding much more; and though in regard to them it cannot express itself in so scholastically correct a manner as those with special training, nevertheless there is no end to the plausible arguments which it can propound, wandering as it does amidst mere ideas, about which no one knows anything, and in regard to which it is therefore free to be as eloquent as it pleases; whereas when matters that involve the investigation of nature are in question, it has to stand silent and to admit its ignorance. Thus indolence and vanity combine in sturdy support of these principles. Besides, although the philosopher finds it extremely hard to accept a principle for which he can give no justification, still more to employ concepts the objective reality of which he is unable to establish, nothing is more usual in the case of the common understanding. It insists upon having something from which it can make a confident start. The difficulty of even conceiving this presupposed starting-point does not disquiet it. Since it is unaware what conceiving really means, it never occurs to it to reflect upon the assumption; it accepts as known whatever is familiar to it through frequent use. For the common understanding, indeed, all speculative

B 502 interests pale before the practical; and it imagines that it

A 474 comprehends and knows what its fears or hopes incite it to

A 473 }  
B 501 }

assume or to believe. Thus *empiricism* is entirely devoid of the popularity of transcendently idealising reason; and however prejudicial such empiricism may be to the highest practical principles, there is no need to fear that it will ever pass the limits of the Schools, and acquire any considerable influence in the general life or any real favour among the multitude.

Human reason is by nature architectonic. That is to say, it regards all our knowledge as belonging to a possible system, and therefore allows only such principles as do not at any rate make it impossible for any knowledge that we may attain to combine into a system with other knowledge. But the propositions of the antithesis are of such a kind that they render the completion of the edifice of knowledge quite impossible. They maintain that there is always to be found beyond every state of the world a more ancient state, in every part yet other parts similarly divisible, prior to every event still another event which itself again is likewise generated, and that in existence in general everything is conditioned, an unconditioned and first existence being nowhere discernible. Since, therefore, the antithesis thus refuses to admit as first or as a beginning anything that could serve as a foundation for building, a complete edifice of knowledge is, on such assumptions, altogether impossible. Thus the architectonic interest of reason—the demand not for empirical but for pure *a priori* unity of reason—forms a natural recommendation for the assertions of the thesis.

{ A 475  
B 503

If men could free themselves from all such interests, and consider the assertions of reason irrespective of their consequences, solely in view of the intrinsic force of their grounds, and were the only way of escape from their perplexities to give adhesion to one or other of the opposing parties, their state would be one of continuous vacillation. To-day it would be their conviction that the human will is *free*; to-morrow, dwelling in reflection upon the indissoluble chain of nature, they would hold that freedom is nothing but self-deception, that everything is simply *nature*. If, however, they were summoned to action, this play of the merely speculative reason would, like a dream, at once cease, and they would choose their principles exclusively in accordance with practical interests. Since, however, it is fitting that a reflective and

enquiring being should devote a certain amount of time to the examination of his own reason, entirely divesting himself of all partiality and openly submitting his observations to the judgment of others, no one can be blamed for, much less prohibited from, presenting for trial the two opposing parties, leaving them, terrorised by no threats, to defend themselves as best they can, before a jury of like standing with themselves, that is, before a jury of fallible men.

A 476 }  
B 504 }

#### Section 4

#### THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF A SOLUTION OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL PROBLEMS OF PURE REASON

To profess to solve all problems and to answer all questions would be impudent boasting, and would argue such extravagant self-conceit as at once to forfeit all confidence. Nevertheless there are sciences the very nature of which requires that every question arising within their domain should be completely answerable in terms of what is known, inasmuch as the answer must issue from the same sources from which the question proceeds. In these sciences it is not permissible to plead unavoidable ignorance; the solution can be demanded. We must be able, in every possible case, in accordance with a rule, to know what is *right* and what is *wrong*, since this concerns our obligation, and we have no obligation to that which we cannot know. In the explanation of natural appearances, on the other hand, much must remain uncertain and many questions insoluble, because what we know of nature is by no means sufficient, in all cases, to account for what has to be explained. The question, therefore, is whether in transcendental philosophy there is any question relating to an object presented to pure reason which is unanswerable by this reason, and whether we may rightly excuse ourselves from giving a decisive answer. In thus excusing ourselves, we should have to show that any knowledge which we can acquire still leaves us in complete uncertainty as to what should be ascribed to the object, and that while we do indeed have a concept sufficient to raise a question, we are entirely lacking in materials or power to answer the same.

A 477 }  
B 505 }

Now I maintain that transcendental philosophy is unique in the whole field of speculative knowledge, in that no question which concerns an object given to pure reason can be insoluble for this same human reason, and that no excuse of an unavoidable ignorance, or of the problem's unfathomable depth, can release us from the obligation to answer it thoroughly and completely. That very concept which puts us in a position to ask the question must also qualify us to answer it, since, as in the case of right and wrong, the object is not to be met with outside the concept.

In transcendental philosophy, however, the only questions {A 478  
B 506} to which we have the right to demand a sufficient answer bearing on the constitution of the object, and from answering which the philosopher is not permitted to excuse himself on the plea of their impenetrable obscurity, are the cosmological. These questions [bearing on the constitution of the object] must refer exclusively to cosmological ideas. For the object must be given empirically, the question being only as to its conformity to an idea. If, on the other hand, the object is transcendental, and therefore itself unknown; if, for instance, the question be whether that something, the appearance of which (in ourselves) is thought (soul), is in itself a simple being, whether there is an absolutely necessary cause of all things, and so forth, what we have then to do is in each case to seek an object for our idea; and we may well confess that this object is unknown to us, though not therefore impossible. The {A 479  
B 507} cosmological ideas alone have the peculiarity that they can presuppose their object, and the empirical synthesis required for its concept, as being given. The question which arises out of these ideas refers only to the advance in this synthesis, that is, whether it should be carried so far as to contain absolute totality—such totality, since it cannot be given in any experience, being no longer empirical. Since we are here dealing solely with a thing as object of a possible experience, not as a thing in itself, the answer to the transcendent cosmological question cannot lie anywhere save in the idea. We are not asking what is the constitution of any object in itself, nor as regards possible experience are we enquiring what can be given *in concreto* in any experience. Our sole question is as to what lies in the idea, to which the empirical synthesis

can do no more than merely approximate, the question must therefore be capable of being solved entirely from the idea. Since the idea is a mere creature of reason, reason cannot disclaim its responsibility and saddle it upon the unknown  
 A 484 } object. As our object is only in our brain, and cannot be  
 B 512 }

given outside it, we have only to take care to be at one with ourselves, and to avoid that amphiboly which transforms our idea into a supposed representation of an object that is empirically given and therefore to be known according to the laws of experience. The dogmatic solution is therefore not only uncertain, but impossible. The critical solution, which allows of complete certainty, does not consider the question objectively, but in relation to the foundation of the knowledge upon which the question is based.

### Section 5

#### SCPTICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE COSMOLOGICAL QUESTIONS IN THE FOUR TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS

We should of ourselves desist from the demand that our questions be answered dogmatically, if from the start we understood that whatever the dogmatic answer might turn out to be it would only increase our ignorance, and cast us from one inconceivability into another, from one obscurity into another still greater, and perhaps even into contradictions. If our question is directed simply to a yes or no, we are well advised to leave aside the supposed grounds of the answer, and first consider what we should gain according as the answer is in the affirmative or in the negative. Should we then find that in both cases the outcome is mere nonsense, there will be good reason for instituting a critical examination of our question, to determine whether the question does not itself rest on a groundless presupposition, in that it plays with an idea the falsity of which can be more easily detected through study of its application and consequences than in its own separate  
 A 486 } representation. This is the great utility of the sceptical mode  
 B 514 }

of dealing with the questions which pure reason puts to pure reason. By its means we can deliver ourselves, at but a small cost, from a great body of sterile dogmatism, and set in its



place a sober critique, which as a true cathartic will effectively guard us against such groundless beliefs and the supposed polymathy to which they lead.

If therefore, in dealing with a cosmological idea, I were able to appreciate beforehand that whatever view may be taken of the unconditioned in the successive synthesis of appearances, it must either be *too large* or *too small* for any *concept of the understanding*, I should be in a position to understand that since the cosmological idea has no bearing save upon an object of experience which has to be in conformity with a possible concept of the understanding, it must be entirely empty and without meaning; for its object, view it as we may, cannot be made to agree with it. This is in fact the case with all cosmical concepts; and this is why reason, so long as it holds to them, is involved in an unavoidable antinomy. For suppose:—

*First*, that *the world has no beginning*: it is then *too large* for our concept, which, consisting as it does in a successive regress, can never reach the whole eternity that has elapsed. Or suppose that *the world has a beginning*, it will then, in the necessary empirical regress, be *too small* for the concept of the understanding. For since the beginning still presupposes a time which precedes it, it is still not unconditioned; and the law of the empirical employment of the understanding therefore obliges us to look for a higher temporal condition; and the world [as limited in time] is therefore obviously *too small* for this law. {A 487  
B 515

This is also true of the twofold answer to the question regarding the magnitude of the world in space. If it is *infinite* and unlimited, it is *too large* for any possible empirical concept. If it is *finite* and limited, we have a right to ask what determines these limits. Empty space is no self-subsistent correlate of things, and cannot be a condition at which we could stop; still less can it be an empirical condition, forming part of a possible experience. (For how can there be any experience of the absolutely void?) And yet to obtain absolute totality in the *empirical* synthesis it is always necessary that the unconditioned be an empirical concept. Consequently, a *limited* world is *too small* for our concept.

*Secondly*, if every appearance in space (matter) consists of

infinitely many parts, the regress in the division will always be *too large* for our concept; while if the *division* of space is to *stop* at any member of the division (the simple), the regress will be *too small* for the idea of the unconditioned. For this member always still allows of a regress to further parts contained in it.

A 468 }  
B 516 }

*Thirdly*, if we suppose that nothing happens in the world save in accordance with the laws of *nature*, the causality of the cause will always itself be something that happens, making necessary a regress to a still higher cause, and thus a continuation of the series of conditions *a parte priori* without end. Nature, as working always through efficient causes, is thus *too large* for any of the concepts which we can employ in the synthesis of cosmical events.

If, in certain cases, we admit the occurrence of self-caused events, that is, generation through *freedom*, then by an unavoidable law of nature the question 'why' still pursues us, constraining us, in accordance with the law of causality [which governs] experience, to pass beyond such events; and we thus find that such totality of connection is *too small* for our necessary empirical concept.

*Fourthly*, if we admit *an absolutely necessary being* (whether it be the world itself, or something in the world, or the cause of the world), we set it in a time *infinitely* remote from any given point of time, because otherwise it would be dependent upon another and antecedent being. But such an existence is then *too large* for our empirical concept, and is unapproachable through any regress, however far this be carried.

A 480 }  
B 517 }

If, again, we hold that everything belonging to the world (whether as conditioned or as condition) is *contingent*, any and every given existence is *too small* for our concept. For we are constrained always still to look about for some other existence upon which it is dependent.

We have said that in all these cases the cosmical idea is either *too large* or *too small* for the empirical regress, and therefore for any possible concept of the understanding. We have thus been maintaining that the fault lies with the idea, in being *too large* or *too small* for that to which it is directed, namely, possible experience. Why have we not expressed our-

selves in the opposite manner, saying that in the former case the empirical concept is always too small for the idea, and in the latter too large, and that the blame therefore attaches to the empirical regress? The reason is this. Possible experience is that which can alone give reality to our concepts; in its absence a concept is a mere idea, without truth, that is, without relation to any object. The possible empirical concept is therefore the standard by which we must judge whether the idea is a mere idea and thought-entity, or whether it finds its object in the world. For we can say of anything that it is too large or too small relatively to something else, only if the former is required for the sake of the latter, and has to be adapted to it. Among the puzzles propounded in the ancient dialectical Schools was the question, whether, if a ball cannot pass through a hole, we should say that the ball is too large or the hole too small. In such a case it is a matter of indifference how we choose to express ourselves, for we do not know which exists for the sake of the other. In the case, however, of a man and his coat, we do not say that a man is too tall for his coat, but that the coat is too short for the man. {A 490  
B 518

We have thus been led to what is at least a well-grounded suspicion that the cosmological ideas, and with them all the mutually conflicting pseudo-rational assertions, may perhaps rest on an empty and merely fictitious concept of the manner in which the object of these ideas is given to us; and this suspicion may set us on the right path for laying bare the illusion which has so long led us astray.

## Section 6

### TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM AS THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION OF THE COSMOLOGICAL DIALECTIC

We have sufficiently proved in the Transcendental Aesthetic that everything intuited in space or time, and therefore all objects of any experience possible to us, are nothing but appearances, that is, mere representations, which, in the manner in which they are represented, as extended beings, or as series of alterations, have no independent existence outside our thoughts. This doctrine I entitle *transcendental idealism*. {A 491  
B 519

- B 521** The objects of experience, then, are *never given in themselves*, but only in experience, and have no existence outside it.
- A 493** That there may be inhabitants in the moon, although no one has ever perceived them, must certainly be admitted. This, however, only means that in the possible advance of experience we may encounter them. For everything is real which stands in connection with a perception in accordance with the laws of empirical advance. They are therefore real if they stand in an empirical connection with my actual consciousness, although they are not for that reason real in themselves, that is, outside this advance of experience.

Nothing is really given us save perception and the empirical advance from this to other possible perceptions. For the appearances, as mere representations, are in themselves real only in perception, which perception is in fact nothing but the reality of an empirical representation, that is, appearance. To call an appearance a real thing prior to our perceiving it, either means that in the advance of experience we must meet with such a perception, or it means nothing at all. For if we were speaking of a thing in itself, we could indeed say that it exists in itself apart from relation to our senses and possible experience. But we are here speaking only of an appearance in space and time, which are not determinations of things in themselves but only of our sensibility. Accordingly, that which is in space and time is an appearance; it is not anything in itself but consists merely of representations, which, if not given in us—that is to say, in perception—are nowhere to be met with.

The non-sensible cause of these representations is completely unknown to us, and cannot therefore be intuited by us as object. For such an object would have to be represented as neither in space nor in time (these being merely conditions of sensible representation), and apart from such conditions we cannot think any intuition. We may, however, entitle the purely intelligible cause of appearances in general the transcendental object, but merely in order to have something corresponding to sensibility viewed as a receptivity. To this transcendental object we can ascribe the whole extent and connection of our possible perceptions, and can say that it is given in itself prior to all experience. Thus we can say that the real things of past time are given in the transcendental object

of experience; but they are objects for me and real in past time only in so far as I represent to myself (either by the light of history or by the guiding-clues of causes and effects) that a regressive series of possible perceptions in accordance with empirical laws, in a word, that the course of the world, conducts us to a past time-series as condition of the present time—a series which, however, can be represented as actual not in itself but only in the connection of a possible experience. Accordingly, all events which have taken place in the immense periods that have preceded my own existence mean really nothing but the possibility of extending the chain of experience from the present perception back to the conditions which determine this perception in respect of time.

If, therefore, I represent to myself all existing objects of the senses in all time and in all places, I do not set them in space and time [as being there] prior to experience. This representation is nothing but the thought of a possible experience in its absolute completeness. Since the objects are nothing but mere representations, only in such a possible experience are they given. To say that they exist prior to all my experience is only to assert that they are to be met with if, starting from perception, I advance to that part of experience to which they belong. The cause of the empirical conditions of this advance (that which determines what members I shall meet with, or how far I can meet with any such in my regress) is transcendental, and is therefore necessarily unknown to me. We are not, however, concerned with this transcendental cause, but only with the rule of the advance in the experience in which objects, that is to say, appearances, are given to me. Moreover, in outcome it is a matter of indifference whether I say that in the empirical advance in space I can meet with stars a hundred times farther removed than the outermost now perceptible to me, or whether I say that they are perhaps to be met with in cosmical space even though no human being has ever perceived or ever will perceive them. For even supposing they were given as things in themselves, without relation to possible experience, it still remains true that they are nothing to me, and therefore are not objects, save in so far as they are contained in the series of the empirical regress. Only in another sort of relation, when

these appearances would be used for the cosmological idea of an absolute whole, and when, therefore, we are dealing with a question which oversteps the limits of possible experience, does distinction of the mode in which we view the reality of those objects of the senses become of importance, as serving to guard us against a deceptive error which is bound to arise if we misinterpret our empirical concepts.

## Section 7

CRITICAL SOLUTION OF THE COSMOLOGICAL CONFLICT  
OF REASON WITH ITSELF

The whole antinomy of pure reason rests upon the dialectical argument: If the conditioned is given, the entire series of all its conditions is likewise given; objects of the senses are given as conditioned; therefore, etc. We shall be in a better position to detect what is deceptive in this pseudo-rational argument, if we first correct and define some of the concepts employed in it.

In the first place, it is evident beyond all possibility of doubt, that if the conditioned is given, a regress in the series of all its conditions is *set us as a task*. For it is involved in the very concept of the conditioned that something is referred to a condition, and if this condition is again itself conditioned, to a more remote condition, and so through all the members of the series. The above proposition is thus analytic, and has nothing to fear from a transcendental criticism. It is a logical postulate of reason, that through the understanding we follow up and extend as far as possible that connection of a concept with its conditions which directly results from the concept itself.

Further, if the conditioned as well as its condition are things in themselves, then upon the former being given, the regress to the latter is not only *set as a task*, but therewith already really *given*. And since this holds of all members of the series, the complete series of the conditions, and therefore the unconditioned, is given therewith, or rather is presupposed in view of the fact that the conditioned, which is only possible through the complete series, is given. The synthesis of the conditioned with its condition is here a synthesis of the mere

understanding, which represents things *as they are*, without considering whether and how we can obtain knowledge of B 527 them. If, however, what we are dealing with are appearances—as mere representations appearances cannot be given save in so far as I attain knowledge of them, or rather attain them A 499 in themselves, for they are nothing but empirical modes of knowledge—I cannot say, in the same sense of the terms, that if the conditioned is given, all its conditions (as appearances) are likewise given, and therefore cannot in any way infer the absolute totality of the series of its conditions. The *appearances* are in their apprehension themselves nothing but an empirical synthesis in space and time, and are given only in *this synthesis*. It does not, therefore, follow, that if the conditioned, in the [field of] appearance, is given, the synthesis which constitutes its empirical condition is given therewith and is presupposed. This synthesis first occurs in the regress, and never exists without it. What we can say is that a *regress* to the conditions, that is, a continued empirical synthesis, on the side of the conditions, is enjoined or *set as a task*, and that *in this regress* there can be no lack of given conditions.

These considerations make it clear that the major premiss of the cosmological inference takes the conditioned in the transcendental sense of a pure category, while the minor premiss takes it in the empirical sense of a concept of the understanding applied to mere appearances. The argument thus commits that dialectical fallacy which is entitled *sophisma B 528 figuræ dictionis*. This fallacy is not, however, an artificial A 500 one; a quite natural illusion of our common reason leads us, when anything is given as conditioned, thus to assume in the major premiss, as it were *without thought or question*, its conditions and their series. This assumption is indeed simply the logical requirement that we should have adequate premisses for any given conclusion. Also, there is no reference to a time-order in the connection of the conditioned with its condition; they are presupposed as given *together* with it. Further, it is no less natural, in the minor premiss, to regard appearances both as things in themselves and as objects given to the pure understanding, than to proceed as we have done in the major, in which we have [similarly] abstracted from all those conditions of intuition under which alone objects can be given.

Yet in so doing we have overlooked an important distinction between the concepts. The synthesis of the conditioned with its conditions (and the whole series of the latter) does not in the major premiss carry with it any limitation through time or any concept of succession. The empirical synthesis, on the other hand, that is, the series of the conditions in appearance, as subsumed in the minor premiss, is necessarily successive, the members of the series being given only as following upon one another in time; and I have therefore, in this case, no right to assume the absolute *totality* of the synthesis and of the series thereby represented. In the major premiss all the members of the series are given in themselves, without any condition of time, but in this minor premiss they are possible only through the successive regress, which is given only in the process in which it is actually carried out.

When this error has thus been shown to be involved in the argument upon which both parties alike base their cosmological assertions, both might justly be dismissed, as being unable to offer any sufficient title in support of their claims. But the quarrel is not thereby ended—as if one or both of the parties had been proved to be wrong in the actual doctrines they assert, that is, in the conclusions of their arguments. For although they have failed to support their contentions by valid grounds of proof, nothing seems to be clearer than that since one of them asserts that the world has a beginning and the other that it has no beginning and is from eternity, one of the two must be in the right. But even if this be so, none the less, since the arguments on both sides are equally clear, it is impossible to decide between them. The parties may be commanded to keep the peace before the tribunal of reason; but the controversy none the less continues. There can therefore be no way of settling it once for all and to the satisfaction of both sides, save by their becoming convinced that the very fact of their being able so admirably to refute one another is evidence that they are really quarrelling about nothing, and that a certain transcendental illusion has mocked them with a reality where none is to be found. This is the path which we shall now proceed to follow in the settlement of a dispute that defies all attempts to come to a decision.

If we regard the two propositions, that the world is infinite



in magnitude and that it is finite in magnitude, as contradictory opposites, we are assuming that the world, the complete series of appearances, is a thing in itself that remains even if I suspend the infinite or the finite regress in the series of its appearances. If, however, I reject this assumption, or rather this accompanying transcendental illusion, and deny that the world is a thing in itself, the contradictory opposition of the two assertions is converted into a merely dialectical opposition. Since the world does not exist in itself, independently of the regressive series of my representations, it exists *in itself* neither as an *infinite* whole nor as a *finite* whole. It exists only in the empirical regress of the series of appearances, and is not to be met with as something in itself. If, then, this series is always conditioned, and therefore can never be given as complete, the world is not an unconditioned whole, and does not exist as such a whole, either of infinite or of finite magnitude. { A 505  
B 533

What we have here said of the first cosmological idea, that is, of the absolute totality of magnitude in the [field of] appearance, applies also to all the others. The series of conditions is only to be met with in the regressive synthesis itself, not in the [field of] appearance viewed as a thing given in and by itself, prior to all regress. We must therefore say that the number of parts in a given appearance is in itself neither finite nor infinite. For an appearance is not something existing in itself, and its parts are first given in and through the regress of the decomposing synthesis, a regress which is never given in absolute completeness, either as finite or as infinite. This also holds of the series of subordinated causes, and of the series that proceeds from the conditioned to unconditioned necessary existence. These series can never be regarded as being in themselves in their totality either finite or infinite. Being series of subordinated *representations*, they exist only in the dynamical regress, and prior to this regress can have no existence in themselves as self-subsistent series of things. { A 504  
B 534

Thus the antinomy of pure reason in its cosmological ideas vanishes when it is shown that it is merely dialectical, and that it is a conflict due to an illusion which arises from our applying to appearances that exist only in our representations,

and therefore, so far as they form a series, not otherwise than in a successive regress, that idea of absolute totality which holds only as a condition of things in themselves. From this antinomy we can, however, obtain, not indeed a dogmatic, but a critical and doctrinal advantage. It affords indirect proof of the transcendental ideality of appearances—a proof which ought to convince any who may not be satisfied by the direct proof given in the Transcendental Aesthetic. This proof would consist in the following dilemma. If the world is a whole existing in itself, it is either finite or infinite. But both alternatives are false (as shown in the proofs of the antithesis and thesis respectively). It is therefore also false that the world (the sum of all appearances) is a whole existing in itself. From this it then follows that appearances in general are nothing outside our representations—which is just what is meant by their transcendental ideality.

B 535 }  
A 507 }

### Section 8

#### THE REGULATIVE PRINCIPLE OF PURE REASON IN ITS APPLICATION TO THE COSMOLOGICAL IDEAS

Since no maximum of the series of conditions in a sensible world, regarded as a thing in itself, is *given* through the cosmological principle of totality, but can only be *set as a task* that calls for regress in the series of conditions, the principle of pure reason has to be amended in these terms; and it then preserves its validity, not indeed as the *axiom* that we think the totality as actually in the object, but as a *problem* for the understanding, and therefore for the subject, leading it to undertake and to carry on, in accordance with the completeness prescribed by the idea, the regress in the series of conditions of any given conditioned. For in our sensibility, that is, in space and time, every condition to which we can attain in the exposition of given appearances is again conditioned. For they are not objects in themselves—were they such, the absolutely unconditioned might be found in them—but simply empirical representations which must always find in intuition the condition that determines them in space and time. The principle of reason is thus properly only a *rule*, pre-

scribing a regress in the series of the conditions of given appearances, and forbidding it to bring the regress to a close by treating anything at which it may arrive as absolutely unconditioned. It is not a principle of the possibility of experience and of empirical knowledge of objects of the senses, and therefore not a principle of the understanding; for every experience, in conformity with the given [forms of] intuition, is enclosed within limits. Nor is it a *constitutive* principle of reason, enabling us to extend our concept of the sensible world beyond all possible experience. It is rather a principle of the greatest possible continuation and extension of experience, allowing no empirical limit to hold as absolute. Thus it is a principle of reason which serves as a *rule*, postulating what we ought to do in the regress, but *not anticipating* what is present *in the object as it is in itself, prior to all regress*. Accordingly I entitle it a *regulative* principle of reason, to distinguish it from the principle of the absolute totality of the series of conditions, viewed as actually present in the object (that is, in the appearances), which would be a constitutive cosmological principle. I have tried to show by this distinction that there is no such constitutive principle, and so to prevent what otherwise, through a transcendental subreption, inevitably takes place, namely, the ascribing of objective reality to an idea that serves merely as a rule.

## Section 9

## THE EMPIRICAL EMPLOYMENT OF THE REGULATIVE PRINCIPLE OF REASON, IN RESPECT OF ALL COSMOLOGICAL IDEAS

We have already, on several occasions, shown that no transcendental employment can be made of the pure concepts either of the understanding or of reason; that the [assertion of] absolute totality of the series of conditions in the sensible world rests on a transcendental employment of reason in which reason demands this unconditioned completeness from what it assumes to be a thing in itself; and that since the sensible world contains no such completeness, we are never justified in enquiring, as regards the absolute magnitude of the

series in the sensible world, whether it be limited or *in itself* unlimited, but only how far we ought to go in the empirical regress, when we trace experience back to its conditions, obeying the rule of reason, and therefore resting content with no answer to its questions save that which is in conformity with the object.

What therefore alone remains to us is the validity of the principle of reason as a rule for the *continuation* and magnitude of a possible experience; its invalidity as a constitutive principle of appearances [viewed as things] in themselves has been sufficiently demonstrated. If we can keep these conclusions steadily in view, the self-conflict of reason will be entirely at an end. For not only will this critical solution destroy the illusion which set reason at variance with itself, but will replace it by teaching which, in correcting the misinterpretation that has been the sole source of the conflict, brings reason into agreement with itself.

## I

*Solution of the Cosmological Idea of the Totality of the  
Composition of the Appearances of a Cosmic Whole*

Here, as in the other cosmological questions, the regulative principle of reason is grounded on the proposition that in the empirical regress we can have *no experience of an absolute limit*, that is, no experience of any condition as being one that *empirically* is absolutely unconditioned. The reason is this: such an experience would have to contain a limitation of appearances by nothing, or by the void, and in the continued regress we should have to be able to encounter this limitation in a perception—which is impossible.

A 518 } This proposition, which virtually states that the only con-  
B 546 } ditions which we can reach in the empirical regress are con-  
ditions which must themselves again be regarded as empirically  
conditioned, contains the rule *in terminis*, that however far  
we may have advanced in the ascending series, we must always  
enquire for a still higher member of the series, which may or  
may not become known to us through experience.

For the solution, therefore, of the first cosmological prob-

tern we have only to decide whether in the regress to the unconditioned magnitude of the universe, in time and space, this never limited ascent can be called a regress to infinity, or only an indeterminately continued regress (*in indefinitum*).

The quite general representation of the series of all past states of the world, as well as of all the things which coexist in cosmic space, is itself merely a possible empirical regress which I think to myself, though in an indeterminate manner. Only in this way can the concept of such a series of conditions for a given perception arise at all. Now we have the cosmic whole only in concept, never, as a whole, in intuition. We cannot, therefore, argue from the magnitude of the cosmic whole to the magnitude of the regress, determining the latter in accordance with the former; on the contrary, only by reference to the magnitude of the empirical regress am I in a position to make for myself a concept of the magnitude of the world. But of this empirical regress the most that we can ever know is that from every given member of the series of conditions we have always still to advance empirically to a higher and more remote member. This is the *regressus in indefinitum*, which, as it determines no magnitude in the object, is clearly enough distinguishable from the *regressus in infinitum*. {A 519  
B 547

Thus the first and negative answer to the cosmological problem regarding the magnitude of the world is that the world has no first beginning in time and no outermost limit in space.

For if we suppose the opposite, the world would be limited on the one hand by empty time and on the other by empty space. Since, however, as appearance, it cannot in itself be limited in either manner—appearance not being a thing in itself—these limits of the world would have to be given in a possible experience, that is to say, we should require to have a perception of limitation by absolutely empty time or space. But such an experience, as completely empty of content, is impossible. Consequently, an absolute limit of the world is impossible empirically, and therefore also absolutely. {A 521  
B 549

The affirmative answer likewise directly follows, namely, that the regress in the series of appearances, as a determination of the magnitude of the world, proceeds *in indefinitum*.

This is equivalent to saying that, although the sensible world has no absolute magnitude, the empirical regress (through which alone it can be given on the side of its conditions) has its own rule, namely, that it must always advance from every member of the series, as conditioned, to one still more remote; doing so by means either of our own experience, or of the  
 A 522 }  
 B 550 } guiding-thread of history, or of the chain of effects and causes. And as the rule further demands, our sole and constant aim must be the extension of the possible empirical employment of the understanding, this being the only proper task of reason  
 A 523 }  
 B 551 } in the application of its principles. In other words, the regress does not proceed to the infinite, as if the infinite could be given, but only indeterminately far, in order [by means of the regress] to give that empirical magnitude which first becomes actual in and through this very regress.

## II

*Solution of the Cosmological Idea of the Totality of  
 Division of a Whole given in Intuition*

If we divide a whole which is given in intuition, we proceed from something conditioned to the conditions of its possibility. The division of the parts (*subdivisio* or *decompositio*) is a regress in the series of these conditions. The absolute totality of this series would be given only if the regress could reach *simple* parts. But if all the parts in a continuously progressing decomposition are themselves again divisible, the division, that is, the regress from the conditioned to its conditions, proceeds *in infinitum*. For the conditions (the parts) are themselves contained in the conditioned, and since this  
 A 524 }  
 B 552 } is given complete in an intuition that is enclosed between limits, the parts are one and all given together with the conditioned. The regress may not, therefore, be entitled merely a regress *in indefinitum*. This was permissible in regard to the first cosmological idea, since it required an advance from the conditioned to its conditions, which, as outside it, were not given through and along with it, but were first added to it in the empirical regress. We are not, however, entitled to say of a whole which is divisible to infinity, that *it is made up of infinitely many parts*. For although all parts are contained in

the intuition of the whole, *the whole division* is not so contained, but consists only in the continuous decomposition, that is, in the regress itself, whereby the series first becomes actual. Since this regress is infinite, all the members or parts at which it arrives are contained in the given whole, viewed as an *aggregate*. But the whole *series of the division* is not so contained, for it is a successive infinite and never *whole*, and cannot, therefore, exhibit an infinite multiplicity, or any combination of an infinite multiplicity in a whole.

This general statement is obviously applicable to space. Every space intuited as within limits is such a whole, the parts of which, as obtained by decomposition, are always themselves spaces. Every limited space is therefore infinitely divisible.

From this a second application of the statement quite naturally follows, namely, to an outer appearance enclosed within limits, that is, to body. Its divisibility is grounded in the divisibility of space, which constitutes the possibility of the body as an extended whole. Body is therefore infinitely divisible, without consisting, however, of infinitely many parts.

*Concluding Note on the Solution of the Mathematical-transcendental Ideas, and Preliminary Observation on the Solution of the Dynamical-transcendental Ideas.*

According to the table of categories given above, two of the classes of concepts imply a *mathematical*, the other two a *dynamical* synthesis of appearances. Hitherto it has not been necessary to take account of this distinction; for just as in the general representation of all transcendental ideas we have been conforming to conditions within the [field of] appearance, so in the two mathematical-transcendental ideas the only object we have had in mind is object as appearance. But now that we are proceeding to consider how far *dynamical* concepts of the understanding are adequate to the idea of reason, the distinction becomes of importance, and opens up to us an entirely new view of the suit in which reason is implicated. This suit, in our previous trial of it, has been *dismissed* as resting, on both sides, on false presuppositions. But since in the dynamical antinomy a presupposition compatible with the pretensions of reason may perhaps be found, and since the

judge may perhaps make good what is lacking in the pleas which both sides have been guilty of misstating, the suit may be settled to the satisfaction of both parties, a procedure impossible in the case of the mathematical antinomies.

If we consider solely the *extension* of the series of conditions, and whether the series are adequate to the idea, or the idea too large or too small for the series, the series are indeed in these respects all homogeneous. But the concept of the understanding, which underlies these ideas, may contain either a synthesis solely of the *homogeneous* (which is presupposed alike in the composition and in the division of every magnitude), or a synthesis of the *heterogeneous*. For the heterogeneous can be admitted as at least possible in the case of dynamical synthesis, alike in causal connection and in the connection of the necessary with the contingent.

Hence in the mathematical connection of the series of appearances no other than a *sensible* condition is admissible, that is to say, none that is not itself a part of the series. On the other hand, in the dynamical series of sensible conditions, a heterogeneous condition, not itself a part of the series, but *purely intelligible*, and as such outside the series, can be allowed. In this way reason obtains satisfaction and the unconditioned is set prior to the appearances, while yet the invariably conditioned character of the appearances is not obscured, nor their series cut short, in violation of the principles prescribed by the understanding.

Inasmuch as the dynamical ideas allow of a condition of appearances outside the series of the appearances, that is, a condition which is not itself appearance, we arrive at a conclusion altogether different from any that was possible in the case of the mathematical antinomy. In it we were obliged to denounce both the opposed dialectical assertions as false. In the dynamical series, on the other hand, the completely conditioned, which is inseparable from the series considered as appearances, is bound up with a condition which, while indeed empirically unconditioned, is also *non-sensible*. We are thus able to obtain satisfaction for *understanding* on the one hand and for *reason* on the other.<sup>a</sup> The dialectical arguments, which

<sup>a</sup> Understanding does not admit *among appearances* any condition which can itself be empirically unconditioned. But if for some



in one or other way sought unconditioned totality in mere appearances, fall to the ground, and the propositions of reason, when thus given this more correct interpretation, may *both* alike be *true*. This can never be the case with those cosmological ideas which refer only to a mathematically unconditioned unity; for in them no condition of the series of appearances can be found that is not itself appearance, and as appearance one of the members of the series. {A 532  
B 560

## III

*Solution of the Cosmological Idea of Totality in the  
Derivation of Cosmical Events from their Causes*

When we are dealing with what happens there are only two kinds of causality conceivable by us; the causality is either according to *nature* or arises from *freedom*. The former is the connection in the sensible world of one state with a preceding state on which it follows according to a rule. Since the causality of appearances rests on conditions of time, and the preceding state, if it had always existed, could not have produced an effect which first comes into being in time, it follows that the causality of the cause of that which happens or comes into being must itself also have *come into being*, and that in accordance with the principle of the understanding it must in its turn itself require a cause.

By freedom, on the other hand, in its cosmological meaning, I understand the power of beginning a state *spontaneously*. Such causality will not, therefore, itself stand under another cause determining it in time, as required by the law of nature. Freedom, in this sense, is a pure transcendental idea, which, in the first place, contains nothing borrowed from experience, and which, secondly, refers to an object that cannot be determined or given in any experience. That everything {A 533  
B 561

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conditioned in the [field of] appearance we can conceive an *intelligible* condition, not belonging to the series of appearances as one of its members, and can do so without in the least interrupting the series of empirical conditions, such a condition may be accepted as *empirically unconditioned*, without prejudice to the continuity of the empirical regress.

which happens has a cause is a universal law, conditioning the very possibility of all experience. Hence the causality of the cause, which *itself happens* or comes to be, must itself in turn have a cause; and thus the entire field of experience, however far it may extend, is transformed into a sum-total of the merely natural. But since in this way no absolute totality of conditions determining causal relation can be obtained, reason creates for itself the idea of a spontaneity which can begin to act of itself, without requiring to be determined to action by an antecedent cause in accordance with the law of causality.

If appearances were things in themselves, and space and time forms of the existence of things in themselves, the conditions would always be members of the same series as the conditioned; and thus, in the present case, as in the other transcendental ideas, the antinomy would arise, that the series must be too large or too small for the understanding. But the dynamical concepts of reason, with which we have to deal in this and the following section, possess this peculiarity that they are not concerned with an object considered as a magnitude, but only with its existence. Accordingly we can abstract from the magnitude of the series of conditions, and consider only the dynamical relation of the condition to the conditioned. The difficulty which then meets us, in dealing with the question regarding nature and freedom, is whether freedom is possible at all, and if it be possible, whether it can exist along with the universality of the natural law of causality. Is it a truly disjunctive proposition to say that every effect in the world must arise *either* from nature *or* from freedom; or must we not rather say that in one and the same event, in different relations, both can be found? That all events in the sensible world stand in thoroughgoing connection in accordance with unchangeable laws of nature is an established principle of the Transcendental Analytic, and allows of no exception. The question, therefore, can only be whether freedom is completely excluded by this inviolable rule, or whether an effect, notwithstanding its being thus determined in accordance with nature, may not at the same time be grounded in freedom. The common but fallacious presupposition of the *absolute reality* of appearances here manifests its injurious influence, to the confounding of reason. For if appearances are

A 536  
B 564

things in themselves, freedom cannot be upheld. Nature will then be the complete and sufficient determining cause of every event. The condition of the event will be such as can be found only in the series of appearances; both it and its effect will be necessary in accordance with the law of nature. If, on the other hand, appearances are not taken for more than they actually are; if they are viewed not as things in themselves, but merely as representations, connected according to empirical laws, they must themselves have grounds which are not appearances. The effects of such an intelligible cause appear, and accordingly can be determined through other appearances, but its causality is not so determined. While the effects are to be found in the series of empirical conditions, the intelligible cause, together with its causality, is outside the series. Thus the effect may be regarded as free in respect of its intelligible cause, and at the same time in respect of appearances as resulting from them according to the necessity of nature. {A 537  
B 565

*Possibility of Causality through Freedom, in Harmony with the Universal Law of Natural Necessity.* {A 538  
B 566

Whatever in an object of the senses is not itself appearance, I entitle *intelligible*. If, therefore, that which in the sensible world must be regarded as appearance has in itself a faculty which is not an object of sensible intuition, but through which it can be the cause of appearances, the *causality* of this being can be regarded from two points of view. Regarded as the causality of a thing in itself, it is *intelligible* in its *action*; regarded as the causality of an appearance in the world of sense, it is *sensible* in its *effects*. We should therefore have to form both an empirical and an intellectual concept of the causality of the faculty of such a subject, and to regard both as referring to one and the same effect. This twofold manner of conceiving the faculty possessed by an object of the senses does not contradict any of the concepts which we have to form of appearances and of a possible experience. For since they are not things in themselves, they must rest upon a transcendental object which determines them as mere representations; and consequently there is nothing to prevent us from ascribing to this transcendental object, besides the quality in terms {A 539  
B 567

of which it appears, a *causality* which is not appearance, although its *effect* is to be met with in appearance. Every efficient cause must have a *character*, that is, a law of its causality, without which it would not be a cause. On the above supposition, we should, therefore, in a subject belonging to the sensible world have, first, an *empirical character*, whereby its actions, as appearances, stand in thoroughgoing connection with other appearances in accordance with unvarying laws of nature. And since these actions can be derived from the other appearances, they constitute together with them a single series in the order of nature. Secondly, we should also have to allow the subject an *intelligible character*, by which it is indeed the cause of those same actions [in their quality] as appearances, but which does not itself stand under any conditions of sensibility, and is not itself appearance. We can entitle the former the character of the thing in the [field of] appearance, and the latter its character as thing in itself.

Now this acting subject would not, in its intelligible character, stand under any conditions of time; time is only a condition of appearances, not of things in themselves. In this subject no *action* would *begin* or *cease*, and it would not, therefore, have to conform to the law of the determination of all that is alterable in time, namely, that everything *which happens* must have its cause in the *appearances* which precede it. In a word, its causality, so far as it is intelligible, would not have a place in the series of those empirical conditions through which the event is rendered necessary in the world of sense. This intelligible character can never, indeed, be immediately known, for nothing can be perceived except in so far as it appears. It would have to be *thought* in accordance with the empirical character—just as we are constrained to think a transcendental object as underlying appearances, though we know nothing of what it is in itself.

In its empirical character, therefore, this subject, as appearance, would have to conform to all the laws of causal determination. To this extent it could be nothing more than a part of the world of sense, and its effects, like all other appearances, must be the inevitable outcome of nature. In proportion as outer appearances are found to influence it, and in proportion as its empirical character, that is, the law of its

A 540  
B 568

causality, becomes known through experience, all its actions must admit of explanation in accordance with the laws of nature. In other words, all that is required for their complete and necessary determination must be found in a possible experience.

In its intelligible character (though we can only have a {A 541  
B 509} general concept of that character) this same subject must be considered to be free from all influence of sensibility and from all determination through appearances. Inasmuch as it is *noumenon*, nothing *happens* in it; there can be no change requiring dynamical determination in time, and therefore no causal dependence upon appearances. And consequently, since natural necessity is to be met with only in the sensible world, this active being must in its actions be independent of, and free from all such necessity. No action begins *in* this active being itself; but we may yet quite correctly say that the active being *of itself* begins its effects in the sensible world. In so doing, we should not be asserting that the effects in the sensible world can begin of themselves; they are always predetermined through antecedent empirical conditions, though solely through their empirical character (which is no more than the appearance of the intelligible), and so are only possible as a continuation of the series of natural causes. In this way freedom and nature, in the full sense of these terms, can exist together, without any conflict, in the same actions, according as the actions are referred to their intelligible or to their sensible cause.

*Explanation of the Cosmological Idea of Freedom in its connection with Universal Natural Necessity.*

Admitting that in the whole series of events there is {A 543  
B 571} nothing but natural necessity, is it yet possible to regard one and the same event as being in one aspect merely an effect of nature and in another aspect an effect due to freedom; or is there between these two kinds of causality a direct contradiction?

Among the causes in the [field of] appearance there certainly cannot be anything which could begin a series absolutely and of itself. Every action, [viewed] as appearance, in so far as it gives rise to an event, is itself an event or happening,

and presupposes another state wherein its cause is to be found. Thus everything which happens is merely a continuation of the series, and nothing that begins of itself is a possible member of the series. The actions of natural causes in the time-sequence are thus themselves effects; they presuppose causes antecedent to them in the temporal series. An *original* act, such as can by itself bring about what did not exist before, is not to be looked for in the causally connected appearances.

A 544 }  
B 572 }

Now granting that effects are appearances and that their cause is likewise appearance, is it necessary that the causality of their cause should be exclusively empirical? May it not rather be, that while for every effect in the [field of] appearance a connection with its cause in accordance with the laws of empirical causality is indeed required, this empirical causality, without the least violation of its connection with natural causes, is itself an effect of a causality that is not empirical but intelligible? This latter causality would be the action of a cause which, in respect of appearances, is original, and therefore, as pertaining to this faculty, not appearance but intelligible; although it must otherwise, in so far as it is a link in the chain of nature, be regarded as entirely belonging to the world of sense.

A 545 }  
B 573 }

The principle of the causal connection of appearances is required in order that we may be able to look for and to determine the natural conditions of natural events, that is to say, their causes in the [field of] appearance. If this principle be admitted, and be not weakened through any exception, the requirements of the understanding, which in its empirical employment sees in all happenings nothing but nature, and is justified in so doing, are completely satisfied; and physical explanations may proceed on their own lines without interference. These requirements are not in any way infringed, if we assume, even though the assumption should be a mere fiction, that some among the natural causes have a faculty which is intelligible only, inasmuch as its determination to action never rests upon empirical conditions, but solely on grounds of understanding. We must, of course, at the same time be able to assume that the *action* of these causes in the [field of] appearance is in conformity with all the laws of empirical causality. In this way the acting subject, as *causa phaeno-*

*menon*, would be bound up with nature through the insoluble dependence of all its actions, and only as we ascend from the empirical object to the transcendental should we find that this subject, together with all its causality in the [field of] appearance, has in its *noumenon* certain conditions which must be regarded as purely intelligible. For if in determining in what ways appearances can serve as causes we follow the rules of nature, we need not concern ourselves what kind of ground for these appearances and their connection may have to be thought as existing in the transcendental subject, which is empirically unknown to us. This intelligible ground does not have to be considered in empirical enquiries; it concerns only thought in the pure understanding; and although the effects of this thought and action of the pure understanding are to be met with in the appearances, these appearances must none the less be capable of complete causal explanation in terms of other appearances in accordance with natural laws. We have to take their strictly empirical character as the supreme ground of explanation, leaving entirely out of account their intelligible character (that is, the transcendental cause of their empirical character) as being completely unknown, save in so far as the empirical serves for its sensible sign.

{ A 546  
B 574

Let us apply this to experience. Man is one of the appearances of the sensible world, and in so far one of the natural causes the causality of which must stand under empirical laws. Like all other things in nature, he must have an empirical character. This character we come to know through the powers and faculties which he reveals in his actions. In lifeless, or merely animal, nature we find no ground for thinking that any faculty is conditioned otherwise than in a merely sensible manner. Man, however, who knows all the rest of nature solely through the senses, knows himself also through pure apperception; and this, indeed, in acts and inner determinations which he cannot regard as impressions of the senses. He is thus to himself, on the one hand phenomenon, and on the other hand, in respect of certain faculties the action of which cannot be ascribed to the receptivity of sensibility, a purely intelligible object. We entitle these faculties understanding and reason. The latter, in particular, we distinguish in a quite peculiar and especial way from all empirically conditioned

{ A 547  
B 575

powers. For it views its objects exclusively in the light of ideas, and in accordance with them determines the understanding, which then proceeds to make an empirical use of its own similarly pure concepts.

That our reason has causality, or that we at least represent it to ourselves as having causality, is evident from the *imperatives* which in all matters of conduct we impose as rules upon our active powers. '*Ought*' expresses a kind of necessity and of connection with grounds which is found nowhere else in the whole of nature. The understanding can know in nature only what is, what has been, or what will be. We cannot say that anything in nature *ought to be* other than what in all these time-relations it actually is. When we have the course of nature alone in view, '*ought*' has no meaning whatsoever. It is just as absurd to ask what ought to happen in the natural world as to ask what properties a circle ought to have. All that we are justified in asking is: what happens in nature? what are the properties of the circle?

A 548 } This '*ought*' expresses a possible action the ground of  
B 576 } which cannot be anything but a mere concept; whereas in the case of a merely natural action the ground must always be an appearance. The action to which the '*ought*' applies must indeed be possible under natural conditions. These conditions, however, do not play any part in determining the will itself, but only in determining the effect and its consequences in the [field of] appearance. No matter how many natural grounds or how many sensuous impulses may impel me to *will*, they can never give rise to the '*ought*', but only to a willing which, while very far from being necessary, is always conditioned; and the '*ought*' pronounced by reason confronts such willing with a limit and an end—nay more, forbids or authorises it. Whether what is willed be an object of mere sensibility (the pleasant) or of pure reason (the good), reason will not give way to any ground which is empirically given. Reason does not here follow the order of things as they present themselves in appearance, but frames for itself with perfect spontaneity an order of its own according to ideas, to which it adapts the empirical conditions, and according to which it declares actions to be necessary, even although they have never taken place, and perhaps never will take place. And at the same time reason



also presupposes that it can have causality in regard to all these actions, since otherwise no empirical effects could be expected from its ideas.

Now, in view of these considerations, let us take our stand, and regard it as at least possible for reason to have causality with respect to appearances. Reason though it be, it must none the less exhibit an empirical character. For every cause presupposes a rule according to which certain appearances follow as effects; and every rule requires uniformity in the effects. This uniformity is, indeed, that upon which the concept of cause (as a faculty) is based, and so far as it must be exhibited by mere appearances may be named the empirical character of the cause. This character is permanent, but its effects, according to variation in the concomitant and in part limiting conditions, appear in changeable forms.

Thus the will of every man has an empirical character, which is nothing but a certain causality of his reason, so far as that causality exhibits, in its effects in the [field of] appearance, a rule from which we may gather what, in their kind and degrees, are the actions of reason and the grounds thereof, and so may form an estimate concerning the subjective principles of his will. Since this empirical character must itself be discovered from the appearances which are its effect and from the rule to which experience shows them to conform, it follows that all the actions of men in the [field of] appearance are determined in conformity with the order of nature, by their empirical character and by the other causes which co-operate with that character; and if we could exhaustively investigate all the appearances of men's wills, there would not be found a single human action which we could not predict with certainty, and recognise as proceeding necessarily from its antecedent conditions. So far, then, as regards this empirical character there is no freedom; and yet it is only in the light of this character that man can be studied—if, that is to say, we are simply *observing*, and in the manner of anthropology seeking to institute a physiological investigation into the motive causes of his actions.

But when we consider these actions in their relation to reason—I do not mean speculative reason, by which we endeavour to *explain* their coming into being, but reason in so

far as it is itself the cause *producing* them—if, that is to say, we compare them with [the standards of] reason in its *practical* bearing, we find a rule and order altogether different from the order of nature. For it may be that all that *has happened* in the course of nature, and in accordance with its empirical grounds must inevitably have happened, *ought not to have happened*. Sometimes, however, we find, or at least believe that we find, that the ideas of reason have in actual fact proved their causality in respect of the actions of men, as appearances; and that these actions have taken place, not because they were determined by empirical causes, but because they were determined by grounds of reason.

A 552 } Thus all that we are justified in saying is that, if reason can  
B 580 } have causality in respect of appearances, it is a faculty *through* which the sensible condition of an empirical series of effects first begins. For the condition which lies in reason is not sensible, and therefore does not itself begin to be. And thus what we failed to find in any empirical series is disclosed as being possible, namely, that the condition of a successive series of events may itself be empirically unconditioned. For here the condition is *outside* the series of appearances (in the intelligible), and therefore is not subject to any sensible condition, and to no time-determination through an antecedent cause.

A 554 } In order to illustrate this regulative principle of reason by  
B 582 } an example of its empirical employment—not, however, to confirm it, for it is useless to endeavour to prove transcendental propositions by examples—let us take a voluntary action, for example, a malicious lie by which a certain confusion has been caused in society. First of all, we endeavour to discover the motives to which it has been due, and then, secondly, in the light of these, we proceed to determine how far the action and its consequences can be imputed to the offender. As regards the first question, we trace the empirical character of the action to its sources, finding these in defective education, bad company, in part also in the viciousness of a natural disposition insensitive to shame, in levity and thoughtlessness, not neglecting to take into account also the occasional causes that may have intervened. We proceed in this enquiry just as we should in ascertaining for a given natural effect the

series of its determining causes. But although we believe that the action is thus determined, we none the less blame the agent, not indeed on account of his unhappy disposition, nor on account of the circumstances that have influenced him, nor even on account of his previous way of life; for we presuppose that we can leave out of consideration what this way of life may have been, that we can regard the past series of conditions as not having occurred and the act as being completely unconditioned by any preceding state, just as if the agent in and by himself began in this action an entirely new series of consequences. Our blame is based on a law of reason whereby we regard reason as a cause that irrespective of all the above-mentioned empirical conditions could have determined, and ought to have determined, the agent to act otherwise. This causality of reason we do not regard as only a co-operating agency, but as complete in itself, even when the sensuous impulses do not favour but are directly opposed to it; the action is ascribed to the agent's intelligible character; in the moment when he utters the lie, the guilt is entirely his. Reason, irrespective of all empirical conditions of the act, is completely free, and the lie is entirely due to its default.

Such imputation clearly shows that we consider reason to be unaffected by these sensible influences, and not liable to alteration. Its appearances—the modes in which it manifests itself in its effects—do alter; but in itself [so we consider] there is no preceding state determining the state that follows. That is to say, it does not belong to the series of sensuous conditions which render appearances necessary in accordance with laws of nature. Reason is present in all the actions of men at all times and under all circumstances, and is always the same; but it is not itself in time, and does not fall into any new state in which it was not before. In respect to new states, it is *determining*, not *determinable*. We may not, therefore, ask why reason has not determined *itself* differently, but only why it has not through its causality determined the *appearances* differently. But to this question no answer is possible. For a different intelligible character would have given a different empirical character. When we say that in spite of his whole previous course of life the agent could have refrained from lying, this only means that the act is under the immediate

power of reason, and that reason in its causality is not subject to any conditions of appearance or of time. Although difference of time makes a fundamental difference to appearances in their relations to one another—for appearances are not things in themselves and therefore not causes in themselves—it can make no difference to the relation in which the action stands to reason.

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The reader should be careful to observe that in what has been said our intention has not been to establish the *reality* of freedom as one of the faculties which contain the cause of the appearances of our sensible world. For that enquiry, as it does not deal with concepts alone, would not have been transcendental. And further, it could not have been successful, since we can never infer from experience anything which cannot be thought in accordance with the laws of experience. It has not even been our intention to prove the *possibility* of freedom. For in this also we should not have succeeded, since we cannot from mere concepts *a priori* know the possibility of any real ground and its causality. Freedom is here being treated only as a transcendental idea whereby reason is led to think that it can begin the series of conditions in the [field of] appearance by means of the sensibly unconditioned, and so becomes involved in an antinomy with those very laws which it itself prescribes to the empirical employment of the understanding. What we have alone been able to show, and what we have alone been concerned to show, is that this antinomy rests on a sheer illusion, and that causality through freedom is at least *not incompatible with nature*.

#### IV

**A 559**  
**B 587** } *Solution of the Cosmological Idea of the Totality of the Dependence of Appearances as regards their Existence in general*

In the preceding subsection we have considered the changes of the sensible world in so far as they form a dynamical series, each member being subordinate to another as effect to

cause. We shall now employ this series of states merely to guide us in our search for an existence that may serve as the supreme condition of all that is alterable, that is, in our search for *necessary being*. We are concerned here, not with unconditioned causality, but with the unconditioned existence of substance itself. The series which we have in view is, therefore, really a series of concepts, not a series of intuitions in which one intuition is the condition of the other.

But it is evident that since everything in the sum-total of appearances is alterable, and therefore conditioned in its existence, there cannot be in the whole series of dependent existence any unconditioned member the existence of which can be regarded as absolutely necessary. Hence, if appearances were things in themselves, and if, as would then follow, the condition and the conditioned always belonged to one and the same series of intuitions, by no possibility could a necessary being exist as the condition of the existence of appearances in the world of sense. { A 560  
B 588

The dynamical regress is distinguished in an important respect from the mathematical. Since the mathematical regress is concerned only with the combining of parts to form a whole, or the division of a whole into parts, the conditions of this series must always be regarded as parts of the series, and therefore as homogeneous and as appearances. In the dynamical regress, on the other hand, we are concerned, not with the possibility of an unconditioned whole of given parts, or with an unconditioned part for a given whole, but with the derivation of a state from its cause, or of the contingent existence of substance itself from necessary existence. In this latter regress, it is not, therefore, necessary that the condition should form part of an empirical series along with the conditioned.

A way of escape from this apparent antinomy thus lies open to us. Both of the conflicting propositions may be true, if taken in different connections. All things in the world of sense may be contingent, and so have only an empirically conditioned existence, while yet there may be a non-empirical condition of the whole series; that is, there may exist an unconditionally necessary being. This necessary being, as the intelligible condition of the series, would not belong to it as a

A 561 } member, not even as the highest member of it, nor would it  
B 589 } render any member of the series empirically unconditioned. The whole sensible world, so far as regards the empirically conditioned existence of all its various members, would be left unaffected. This way of conceiving how an unconditioned being may serve as the ground of appearance differs from that which we followed in the preceding subsection, in dealing with the empirically unconditioned causality of freedom. For there the thing itself was as cause (*substantia phaenomenon*) conceived to belong to the series of conditions, and only its *causality* was thought as intelligible. Here, on the other hand, the necessary being must be thought as entirely outside the series of the sensible world (as *ens extramundatum*), and as purely intelligible. In no other way can it be secured against the law which renders all appearances contingent and dependent.

The *regulative principle of reason*, so far as it bears upon our present problem, is therefore this, that everything in the sensible world has an empirically conditioned existence, and that in no one of its qualities can it be unconditionally necessary; that for every member in the series of conditions we must expect, and as far as possible seek, an empirical condition in some possible experience; and that nothing justifies us in deriving an existence from a condition outside the empirical series or even in regarding it in its place within the series as absolutely independent and self-sufficient. At the same time this principle does not in any way debar us from recognising that the whole series may rest upon some intelligible being that is free from all empirical conditions and itself contains the ground of the possibility of all appearances.

A 562 }  
B 590 } In these remarks we have no intention of proving the unconditionally necessary existence of such a being, or even of establishing the possibility of a purely intelligible condition of the existence of appearances in the sensible world. Just as, on the one hand, we limit reason, lest in leaving the guiding-thread of the empirical conditions it should go straying into the *transcendent*, adopting grounds of explanation that are incapable of any representation *in concreto*, so, on the other hand, we limit the law of the purely empirical employment of the understanding, lest it should presume to decide as to the

possibility of things in general, and should declare the intelligible to be *impossible*, merely on the ground that it is not of any use in explaining appearances. Thus all that we have shown is that the thoroughgoing contingency of all natural things, and of all their empirical conditions, is quite consistent with the optional assumption of a necessary, though purely intelligible, condition; and that as there is no real contradiction between the two assertions, *both may be true*. Such an absolutely necessary being, as conceived by the understanding, may be in itself impossible, but this can in no wise be inferred from the universal contingency and dependence of everything belonging to the sensible world, nor from the principle which interdicts us from stopping at any one of its contingent members and from appealing to a cause outside the world. Reason proceeds by one path in its empirical use, and by yet another path in its transcendental use.

{ A 563  
B 591

*Concluding Note on the whole Antinomy of Pure Reason.*

{ A 565  
B 593

So long as reason, in its concepts, has in view simply the totality of conditions in the sensible world, and is considering what satisfaction in this regard it can obtain for them, our ideas are at once transcendental and *cosmological*. Immediately, however, the unconditioned (and it is with this that we are really concerned) is posited in that which lies entirely outside the sensible world, and therefore outside all possible experience, the ideas become *transcendent*. They then no longer serve only for the completion of the empirical employment of reason—an idea [of completeness] which must always be pursued, though it can never be completely achieved. On the contrary, they detach themselves completely from experience, and make for themselves objects for which experience supplies no material, and whose objective reality is not based on completion of the empirical series but on pure *a priori* concepts. Nevertheless the cosmological idea which has given rise to the fourth antinomy impels us to take this step. For the existence of appearances, which is never self-grounded but always conditioned, requires us to look around for something different from all appearances, that is, for an intelligible object in which this contingency may terminate. Thus the very

{ A 566  
B 594

{ A 567  
B 595

first step which we take beyond the world of sense obliges us, in seeking for such new knowledge, to begin with an enquiry into absolutely necessary being, and to derive from the concepts of it the concepts of all things in so far as they are purely intelligible. This we propose to do in the next chapter.



# TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC

## BOOK II

### CHAPTER III

#### THE IDEAL OF PURE REASON

##### Section I

##### THE IDEAL IN GENERAL

WE have seen above that no objects can be represented through pure *concepts of understanding*, apart from the conditions of sensibility. For the conditions of the objective reality of the concepts are then absent, and nothing is to be found in them save the mere form of thought. If, however, they are applied to appearances, they can be exhibited *in concreto*, because in the appearances they obtain the appropriate material for concepts of experience—a concept of experience being nothing but a concept of understanding *in concreto*. But *ideas* are even further removed from objective reality than are categories, for no appearance can be found in which they can be represented *in concreto*. They contain a certain completeness to which no possible empirical knowledge ever attains. {A 568  
B 596. In them reason aims only at a systematic unity, to which it seeks to approximate the unity that is empirically possible, without ever completely reaching it.

But what I entitle the *ideal* seems to be further removed from objective reality even than the *idea*. By the ideal I understand the *idea*, not merely *in concreto*, but *in individuo*, that is, as an individual thing, determinable or even determined by the *idea* alone.

Reason, in its ideal, aims at complete determination in accordance with *a priori* rules. Accordingly it thinks for itself {A 571  
B 599

an object which it regards as being completely determinable in accordance with principles. The conditions that are required for such determination are not, however, to be found in experience, and the concept itself is therefore transcendent.

## Section 2

## THE TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAL

*(Prototypon Transcendentale)*

Every concept is, in respect of what is not contained in it, undetermined, and is subject to the principle of *determinability*. According to this principle, of *every two* contradictorily opposed predicates only one can belong to a concept. This principle is based on the law of contradiction, and is therefore a purely logical principle. As such, it abstracts from the entire content of knowledge and is concerned solely with its logical form.

But every *thing*, as regards its possibility, is likewise subject to the principle of *complete* determination, according to A 572  
B 600 } which if *all the possible* predicates of *things* be taken together with their contradictory opposites, then one of each pair of contradictory opposites must belong to it. This principle does not rest merely on the law of contradiction; for, besides considering each thing in its relation to the two contradictory predicates, it also considers it in its relation to *the sum of all possibilities*, that is, to the sum-total of all predicates of things. Presupposing this sum as being an *a priori* condition, it proceeds to represent everything as deriving its own possibility from the share which it possesses in this sum of all possibilities.\* The principle of complete determination con-

\* In accordance with this principle, each and every thing is therefore related to a common correlate, the sum of all possibilities. If this correlate (that is, the material for all possible predicates) should be found in the idea of some one thing, it would prove an affinity of all possible things, through the identity of the ground of their complete determination. Whereas the *determinability* of every *concept* is subordinate to the *universality* (*universalitas*) of the principle of excluded middle, the *determination* of a *thing* is subordinate to the *totality* (*universitas*) or sum of all possible predicates.

cerns, therefore, the content, and not merely the logical form. It is the principle of the synthesis of all predicates which are intended to constitute the complete concept of a thing, and not simply a principle of analytic representation in reference merely to one of two contradictory predicates. It contains a transcendental presupposition, namely, that of the material *for all possibility*, which in turn is regarded as containing *a priori* the data *for the particular possibility* of each and every thing. { A 573  
B 601

The proposition, *everything which exists is completely determined*, does not mean only that one of every pair of *given* contradictory predicates, but that one of every [pair of] *possible* predicates, must always belong to it. In terms of this proposition the predicates are not merely compared with one another logically, but the thing itself is compared, in transcendental fashion, with the sum of all possible predicates. What the proposition therefore asserts is this: that to know a thing completely, we must know every possible [predicate], and must determine it thereby, either affirmatively or negatively. The complete determination is thus a concept, which, in its totality, can never be exhibited *in concreto*. It is based upon an idea, which has its seat solely in the faculty of reason—the faculty which prescribes to the understanding the rule of its complete employment.

Although this idea of the *sum-total of all possibility*, in so far as it serves as the condition of the complete determination of each and every thing, is itself undetermined in respect of the predicates which may constitute it, and is thought by us as being nothing more than the sum-total of all possible predicates, we yet find, on closer scrutiny, that this idea, as a primordial concept, excludes a number of predicates which as derivative are already given through other predicates or which are incompatible with others; and that it does, indeed, define itself as a concept that is completely determinate *a priori*. It thus becomes the concept of an individual object which is completely determined through the mere idea, and must therefore be entitled an *ideal* of pure reason. { A 574  
B 602

Now no one can think a negation determinately, save by basing it upon the opposed affirmation. Those born blind cannot have the least notion of darkness, since they have none of { A 575  
B 603

light. The savage knows nothing of poverty, since he has no acquaintance with wealth. The ignorant have no concept of their ignorance, because they have none of knowledge, etc.<sup>a</sup> All concepts of negations are thus derivative; it is the realities which contain the data, and, so to speak, the material or transcendental content, for the possibility and complete determination of all things.

If, therefore, reason employs in the complete determination of things a transcendental substrate that contains, as it were, the whole store of material from which all possible predicates of things must be taken, this substrate cannot be anything else than the idea of an *omnitude realitatis*. All true negations are nothing but limitations—a title which would be inapplicable, were they not thus based upon the unlimited, that is, upon “the All.”

But the concept of what thus possesses all reality is just the concept of a *thing in itself* as completely determined; and since in all possible [pairs of] contradictory predicates one predicate, namely, that which belongs to being absolutely, is to be found in its determination, the concept of an *ens realissimum* is the concept of an individual being. It is therefore a transcendental *ideal* which serves as basis for the complete determination that necessarily belongs to all that exists. This ideal is the supreme and complete material condition of the possibility of all that exists—the condition to which all thought of objects, so far as their content is concerned, has to be traced back. It is also the only true ideal of which human reason is capable. For only in this one case is a concept of a thing—a concept which is in itself universal—completely determined in and through itself, and known as the representation of an individual.

It is obvious that reason, in achieving its purpose, that, namely, of representing the necessary complete determination

<sup>a</sup> The observations and calculations of astronomers have taught us much that is wonderful; but the most important lesson that they have taught us has been by revealing the abyss of our *ignorance*, which otherwise we could never have conceived to be so great. Reflection upon the ignorance thus disclosed must produce a great change in our estimate of the purposes for which our reason should be employed.

of things, does not presuppose the existence of a being that corresponds to this ideal, but only the idea of such a being, and this only for the purpose of deriving from an unconditioned totality of complete determination the conditioned totality, that is, the totality of the limited. The ideal is, therefore, the archetype (*prototypon*) of all things, which one and all, as imperfect copies (*ectypa*), derive from it. the material of their possibility, and while approximating to it in varying degrees, yet always fall very far short of actually attaining it.

If, in following up this idea of ours, we proceed to hypothesise it, we shall be able to determine the primordial being through the mere concept of the highest reality, as a being that is one, simple, all-sufficient, eternal, etc. In short, we shall be able to determine it, in its unconditioned completeness, through all predicaments. The concept of such a being is the concept of *God*, taken in the transcendental sense; and the ideal of pure reason, as above defined, is thus the object of a transcendental *theology*.

### Section 3

#### THE ARGUMENTS OF SPECULATIVE REASON IN PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF A SUPREME BEING

Notwithstanding this pressing need of reason to presuppose something that may afford the understanding a sufficient foundation for the complete determination of its concepts, it is yet much too easily conscious of the ideal and merely fictitious character of such a presupposition to allow itself, on this ground alone, to be persuaded that a mere creature of its own thought is a real being—were it not that it is impelled from another direction to seek a resting-place in the regress from the conditioned, which is given, to the unconditioned. This unconditioned is not, indeed, given as being in itself real, nor as having a reality that follows from its mere concept; it is, however, what alone can complete the series of conditions when we proceed to trace these conditions to their grounds. This is the course which our human reason, by its very nature, leads all of us, even the least reflective, to adopt, though not everyone continues to pursue it. It begins not with concepts,

but with common experience, and thus bases itself on something actually existing. But if this ground does not rest upon the immovable rock of the absolutely necessary, it yields beneath our feet. And this latter support is itself in turn without support, if there be any empty space beyond and under it, and if it does not itself so fill all things as to leave no room for any further question—unless, that is to say, it be infinite in its reality.

If we admit something as existing, no matter what this something may be, we must also admit that there is something which exists *necessarily*. For the contingent exists only under the condition of some other contingent existence as its cause, and from this again we must infer yet another cause, until we are brought to a cause which is not contingent, and which is therefore unconditionally necessary. This is the argument upon which reason bases its advance to the primordial being.

A 585 }  
B 613 } Now reason looks around for a concept that squares with so supreme a mode of existence as that of unconditioned necessity—not for the purpose of inferring *a priori* from the concept the existence of that for which it stands (for if that were what it claimed to do, it ought to limit its enquiries to mere concepts, and would not then require a given existence as its basis), but solely in order to find among its various concepts that concept which is in no respect incompatible with absolute necessity. For that there must be something that exists with absolute necessity, is regarded as having been established by the first step in the argument. If, then, in removing everything which is not compatible with this necessity, only one existence remains, this existence must be the absolutely necessary being, whether or not its necessity be comprehensible, that is to say, deducible from its concept alone.

Now that which in its concept contains a therefore for every wherefore, that which is in no respect defective, that which is in every way sufficient as a condition, seems to be precisely the being to which absolute necessity can fittingly be ascribed. For while it contains the conditions of all that is possible, it itself does not require and indeed does not allow of any condition, and therefore satisfies, at least in this one feature, the concept of unconditioned necessity. In this respect all other concepts must fall short of it; for since they are

A 586 }  
B 614 }

deficient and in need of completion, they cannot have as their characteristic this independence of all further conditions. We are not indeed justified in arguing that what does not contain the highest and in all respects complete condition is therefore itself conditioned in its existence. But we are justified in saying that it does not possess that one feature through which alone reason is in a position, by means of an *a priori* concept, to know, in regard to any being, that it is unconditioned.

The concept of an *ens realissimum* is therefore, of all concepts of possible things, that which best squares with the concept of an unconditionally necessary being; and though it may not be completely adequate to it, we have no choice in the matter, but find ourselves constrained to hold to it. For we cannot afford to dispense with the existence of a necessary being; and, once its existence is granted, we cannot in the whole field of possibility find anything that can make a better grounded claim [than the *ens realissimum*] to such pre-eminence in the mode of its existence.

Such, then, is the natural procedure of human reason. It begins by persuading itself of the existence of *some necessary* being. This being it apprehends as having an existence that is unconditioned. It then looks around for the concept of that which is independent of any condition, and finds it in that which is itself the sufficient condition of all else, that is, in that which contains all reality. But that which is all-containing and without limits is absolute unity, and involves the concept of a single being that is likewise the supreme being. Accordingly, we conclude that the supreme being, as primordial ground of all things, must exist by absolute necessity. {A 597  
B 615

If what we have in view is the *coming to a decision*—if, that is to say, the existence of some sort of necessary being is taken as granted, and if it be agreed further that we must come to a decision as to what it is—then the foregoing way of thinking must be allowed to have a certain cogency. For in that case no better choice can be made, or rather we have no choice at all, but find ourselves compelled to decide in favour of the absolute unity of complete reality, as the ultimate source of possibility. If, however, we are not required to come to any decision, and prefer to leave the issue open until the weight of the evidence is such as to compel assent; if, in other words,

what we have to do is merely to *estimate* how much we really know in the matter, and how much we merely flatter ourselves that we know, then the foregoing argument is far from appearing in so advantageous a light, and special favour is required to compensate for the defectiveness of its claims.

A 538 }  
B 616 } For if we take the issue as being that which is here stated, namely, *first*, that from any given existence (it may be, merely my own existence) we can correctly infer the existence of an unconditionally necessary being; *secondly*, that we must regard a being which contains all reality, and therefore every condition, as being absolutely unconditioned, and that in this concept of an *ens realissimum* we have therefore found the concept of a thing to which we can also ascribe absolute necessity—granting all this, it by no means follows that the concept of a limited being which does not have the highest reality is for that reason incompatible with absolute reality. For although I do not find in its concept that unconditioned which is involved in the concept of the totality of conditions, we are not justified in concluding that its existence must for this reason be conditioned; just as I cannot say, in the case of a hypothetical syllogism, that where a certain condition (in the case under discussion, the condition of completeness in accordance with [pure] concepts) does not hold, the conditioned also does not hold. On the contrary, we are entirely free to hold that any limited beings whatsoever, notwithstanding their being limited, may also be unconditionally necessary, although we cannot infer their necessity from the universal concepts which we have of them. Thus the argument has failed to give us the least concept of the properties of a necessary being, and indeed is utterly ineffective.

A 589 }  
B 617 } But this argument continues to have a certain importance and to be endowed with an authority of which we cannot, simply on the ground of this objective insufficiency, at once, proceed to divest it. For granting that there are in the idea of reason obligations which are completely valid, but which in their application to ourselves would be lacking in all reality—that is, obligations to which there would be no motives—save on the assumption that there exists a supreme being to give effect and confirmation to the practical laws, in such a situation we should be under an obligation to follow those concepts



which, though they may not be objectively sufficient, are yet, according to the standard of our reason, preponderant, and in comparison with which we know of nothing that is better and more convincing. The duty of deciding would thus, by a practical addition, incline the balance so delicately preserved by the indecisiveness of speculation. Reason would indeed stand condemned in its own judgment—and there is none more circumspect—if, when impelled by such urgent motives, it should fail, however incomplete its insight, to conform its judgment to those pleas which are at least of greater weight than any others known to us.

Though this argument, as resting on the inner insufficiency of the contingent, is in actual fact transcendental, it is yet so simple and natural that, immediately it is propounded, it commends itself to the commonest understanding. And thus, in all peoples, there shine amidst the most benighted polytheism some gleams of monotheism, to which they have been led, not by reflection and profound speculation, but simply by the natural bent of the common understanding, as step by step it has come to apprehend its own requirements. {A 590  
B 618

*There are only three possible ways of proving the existence of God by means of speculative reason.*

All the paths leading to this goal begin either from determinate experience and the specific constitution of the world of sense as thereby known, and ascend from it, in accordance with laws of causality, to the supreme cause outside the world; or they start from experience which is purely indeterminate, that is from experience of existence in general; or finally they abstract from all experience, and argue completely *a priori*, from mere concepts, to the existence of a supreme cause. The first proof is the *physico-theological*, the second the *cosmological*, the third the *ontological*. There are, and there can be, no others. {A 591  
B 619

I propose to show that reason is as little able to make progress on the one path, the empirical, as on the other path, the transcendental, and that it stretches its wings in vain in thus attempting to soar above the world of sense by the mere power of speculation. As regards the order in which these arguments should be dealt with, it will be exactly the reverse of that

which reason takes in the progress of its own development, and therefore of that which we have ourselves followed in the above account. For it will be shown that, although experience is what first gives occasion to this enquiry, it is the *transcendental concept* which in all such endeavours marks out the goal that reason has set itself to attain, and which is indeed its sole guide in its efforts to achieve that goal. I shall therefore begin with the examination of the transcendental proof, and afterwards enquire what effect the addition of the empirical factor can have in enhancing the force of the argument.

#### Section 4

#### THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF AN ONTOLOGICAL PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

It is evident, from what has been said, that the concept of an absolutely necessary being is a concept of pure reason, that is, a mere idea the objective reality of which is very far from being proved by the fact that reason requires it. For the idea instructs us only in regard to a certain unattainable completeness, and so serves rather to limit the understanding than to extend it to new objects. But we are here faced by what is indeed strange and perplexing, namely, that while the inference from a given existence in general to some absolutely necessary being seems to be both imperative and legitimate; all those conditions under which alone the understanding can form a concept of such a necessity are so many obstacles in the way of our doing so.

In all ages men have spoken of an *absolutely necessary* being, and in so doing have endeavoured, not so much to understand whether and how a thing of this kind allows even of being thought, but rather to prove its existence. There is, of course, no difficulty in giving a verbal definition of the concept, namely, that it is something the non-existence of which is impossible. But this yields no insight into the conditions which make it necessary to regard the non-existence of a thing as absolutely unthinkable. It is precisely these conditions that we desire to know, in order that we may determine whether or not, in resorting to this concept, we are thinking

anything at all. The expedient of removing all those conditions which the understanding indispensably requires in order to regard something as necessary, simply through the introduction of the word *unconditioned*, is very far from sufficing to show whether I am still thinking anything in the concept of the unconditionally necessary, or perhaps rather nothing at all.

Nay more, this concept, at first ventured upon blindly, and now become so completely familiar, has been supposed to have its meaning exhibited in a number of examples; and on this account all further enquiry into its intelligibility has seemed to be quite needless. Thus the fact that every geometrical proposition, as, for instance, that a triangle has three angles, is absolutely necessary, has been taken as justifying us in speaking of an object which lies entirely outside the sphere of our understanding as if we understood perfectly what it is that we intend to convey by the concept of that object.

All the alleged examples are, without exception, taken from *judgments*, not from *things* and their existence. But the unconditioned necessity of judgments is not the same as an absolute necessity of things. The absolute necessity of the judgment is only a conditioned necessity of the thing, or of the predicate in the judgment. The above proposition does not declare that three-angles are absolutely necessary, but that, under the condition that there is a triangle (that is, that a triangle is given), three angles will necessarily be found in it. So great, indeed, is the deluding influence exercised by this logical necessity that, by the simple device of forming an *a priori* concept of a thing in such a manner as to include existence within the scope of its meaning, we have supposed ourselves to have justified the conclusion that because existence necessarily belongs to the object of this concept—always under the condition that we posit the thing as given (as existing)—we are also of necessity, in accordance with the law of identity, required to posit the existence of its object, and that this being is therefore itself absolutely necessary—and this, to repeat, for the reason that the existence of this being has already been thought in a concept which is assumed arbitrarily and on condition that we posit its object.

If, in an identical proposition, I reject the predicate while

{ A 594  
B 622

retaining the subject, contradiction results; and I therefore say that the former belongs necessarily to the latter. But if we reject subject and predicate alike, there is no contradiction; for nothing is then left that can be contradicted. To posit a triangle, and yet to reject its three angles, is self-contradictory; but there is no contradiction in rejecting the triangle together with its three angles. The same holds true of the concept of an absolutely necessary being. If its existence is rejected, we reject the thing itself with all its predicates; and no question of contradiction can then arise. There is nothing outside it that would then be contradicted, since the necessity of the thing is not supposed to be derived from anything external; nor is there anything internal that would be contradicted, since in rejecting the thing itself we have at the same time rejected all its internal properties. 'God is omnipotent' is a necessary judgment. The omnipotence cannot be rejected if we posit a Deity, that is, an infinite being; for the two concepts are identical. But if we say, 'There is no God', neither the omnipotence nor any other of its predicates is given; they are one and all rejected together with the subject, and there is therefore not the least contradiction in such a judgment.

We have thus seen that if the predicate of a judgment is rejected together with the subject, no internal contradiction can result, and that this holds no matter what the predicate may be. The only way of evading this conclusion is to argue that there are subjects which cannot be removed, and must always remain. That, however, would only be another way of saying that there are absolutely necessary subjects; and that is the very assumption which I have called in question, and the possibility of which the above argument professes to establish. For I cannot form the least concept of a thing which, should it be rejected with all its predicates, leaves behind a contradiction; and in the absence of contradiction I have, through pure *a priori* concepts alone, no criterion of impossibility.

Notwithstanding all these general considerations, in which every one must concur, we may be challenged with a case which is brought forward as proof that in actual fact the contrary holds, namely, that there is one concept, and indeed only one, in reference to which the not-being or rejection of its object is in itself contradictory, namely, the concept of the *ens*

*realissimum*. It is declared that it possesses all reality, and that we are justified in assuming that such a being is possible (the fact that a concept does not contradict itself by no means proves the possibility of its object: but the contrary assertion I am for the moment willing to allow). Now [the argument proceeds] 'all reality' includes existence; existence is therefore contained in the concept of a thing that is possible. If, then, this thing is rejected, the internal possibility of the thing is rejected—which is self-contradictory. {A 597  
B 625}

My answer is as follows. There is already a contradiction in introducing the concept of existence—no matter under what title it may be disguised—into the concept of a thing which we profess to be thinking solely in reference to its possibility. If that be allowed as legitimate, a seeming victory has been won; but in actual fact nothing at all is said: the assertion is a mere tautology. We must ask: Is the proposition that *this or that thing* (which, whatever it may be, is allowed as possible) *exists*, an analytic or a synthetic proposition? If it is analytic, the assertion of the existence of the thing adds nothing to the thought of the thing; but in that case either the thought, which is in us, is the thing itself, or we have presupposed an existence as belonging to the realm of the possible, and have then, on that pretext, inferred its existence from its internal possibility—which is nothing but a miserable tautology. The word 'reality', which in the concept of the thing sounds other than the word 'existence' in the concept of the predicate, is of no avail in meeting this objection. For if all positing (no matter what it may be that is posited) is entitled reality, the thing with all its predicates is already posited in the concept of the subject, and is assumed as actual; and in the predicate this is merely repeated. But if, on the other hand, we admit, as every reasonable person must, that all existential propositions are synthetic, how can we profess to maintain that the predicate of existence cannot be rejected without contradiction? This is a feature which is found only in analytic propositions, and is indeed precisely what constitutes their analytic character. {A 598  
B 626}

I should have hoped to put an end to these idle and fruitless disputations in a direct manner, by an accurate determination of the concept of existence, had I not found that the illusion which is caused by the confusion of a logical with a

real predicate (that is, with a predicate which determines a thing) is almost beyond correction. Anything we please can be made to serve as a logical predicate; the subject can even be predicated of itself; for logic abstracts from all content. But a *determining* predicate is a predicate which is added to the concept of the subject and enlarges it. Consequently, it must not be already contained in the concept.

'*Being*' is obviously not a real predicate; that is, it is not a concept of something which could be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the positing of a thing, or of certain determinations, as existing in themselves. Logically, it is merely the copula of a judgment. The proposition, 'God is omnipotent', contains two concepts, each of which has its object—God and omnipotence. The small word 'is' adds no new predicate, but only serves to posit the predicate *in its relation* to the subject. If, now, we take the subject (God) with all its predicates (among which is omnipotence), and say 'God is', or 'There is a God', we attach no new predicate to the concept of God, but only posit the subject in itself with all its predicates, and indeed posit it as being an *object* that stands in relation to my *concept*. The content of both must be one and the same; nothing can have been added to the concept, which expresses merely what is possible, by my thinking its object (through the expression 'it is') as given absolutely. Otherwise stated, the real contains no more than the merely possible. A hundred real thalers do not contain the least coin more than a hundred possible thalers. For as the latter signify the concept, and the former the object and the positing of the object, should the former contain more than the latter, my concept would not, in that case, express the whole object, and would not therefore be an adequate concept of it. My financial position is, however, affected very differently by a hundred real thalers than it is by the mere concept of them (that is, of their possibility). For the object, as it actually exists, is not analytically contained in my concept, but is added to my concept (which is a determination of my state) synthetically; and yet the conceived hundred thalers are not themselves in the least increased through thus acquiring existence outside my concept.

By whatever and by however many predicates we may think a thing—even if we completely determine it—we do not

make the least addition to the thing when we further declare that this thing *is*. Otherwise, it would not be exactly the same thing that exists, but something more than we had thought in the concept; and we could not, therefore, say that the exact object of my concept exists. If we think in a thing every feature of reality except one, the missing reality is not added by my saying that this defective thing exists. On the contrary, it exists with the same defect with which I have thought it, since otherwise what exists would be something different from what I thought. When, therefore, I think a being as the supreme reality, without any defect, the question still remains whether it exists or not. 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, namely, [in so far as I am unable to assert] that knowledge of this object is also possible *a posteriori*. And here we find the source of our present difficulty. Were we dealing with an object of the senses, we could not confound the existence of the thing with the mere concept of it. For through the concept the object is thought only as conforming to the *universal conditions* of possible empirical knowledge in general, whereas through its existence it is thought as belonging to the context of experience as a whole. In being thus connected with the *content* of experience as a whole, the concept of the object is not, however, in the least enlarged; all that has happened is that our thought has thereby obtained an additional possible perception. It is not, therefore, surprising that, if we attempt to think existence through the pure category alone, we cannot specify a single mark distinguishing it from mere possibility.

{ A 601  
B 629

Whatever, therefore, and however much our concept of an object may contain, we must go outside it, if we are to ascribe existence to the object. In the case of objects of the senses, this takes place through their connection with some one of our perceptions, in accordance with empirical laws. But in dealing with objects of pure thought, we have no means whatsoever of knowing their existence, since it would have to be known in a completely *a priori* manner. Our consciousness of all existence (whether immediately through perception, or mediately through inferences which connect something with per-

ception) belongs exclusively to the unity of experience; any [alleged] existence outside this field, while not indeed such as we can declare to be absolutely impossible, is of the nature of an assumption which we can never be in a position to justify.

A 602 }  
B 630 } The concept of a supreme being is in many respects a very useful idea; but just because it is a mere idea, it is altogether incapable, by itself alone, of enlarging our knowledge in regard to what exists. It is not even competent to enlighten us as to the *possibility* of any existence beyond that which is known in and through experience. The analytic criterion of possibility, as consisting in the principle that bare positives (realities) give rise to no contradiction, cannot be denied to it. But since the realities are not given to us in their specific characters; since even if they were, we should still not be in a position to pass judgment; since the criterion of the possibility of synthetic knowledge is never to be looked for save in experience, to which the object of an idea cannot belong, the connection of all real properties in a thing is a synthesis, the possibility of which we are unable to determine *a priori*. And thus the celebrated Leibniz is far from having succeeded in what he plumed himself on achieving—the comprehension *a priori* of the possibility of this sublime ideal being.

The attempt to establish the existence of a supreme being by means of the famous ontological argument of Descartes is therefore merely so much labour and effort lost; we can no more extend our stock of [theoretical] insight by mere ideas, than a merchant can better his position by adding a few noughts to his cash account.

### Section 5

#### THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF A COSMOLOGICAL PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

To attempt to extract from a purely arbitrary idea the existence of an object corresponding to it is a quite unnatural procedure and a mere innovation of scholastic subtlety. Such an attempt would never have been made if there had not been antecedently, on the part of our reason, the need to assume as



a basis of existence in general something necessary (in which our regress may terminate); and if, since this necessity must be unconditioned and certain *a priori*, reason had not, in consequence, been forced to seek a concept which would satisfy, if possible, such a demand, and enable us to know an existence in a completely *a priori* manner. Such a concept was supposed to have been found in the idea of an *ens realissimum*; and that idea was therefore used only for the more definite knowledge of that necessary being, of the necessary existence of which we were already convinced, or persuaded, on other grounds. This natural procedure of reason was, however, concealed from view, and instead of ending with this concept, the attempt was made to begin with it, and so to deduce from it that necessity of existence which it was only fitted to supplement. Thus arose the unfortunate ontological proof, which yields satisfaction neither to the natural and healthy understanding nor to the more academic demands of strict proof. { A 604  
B 632

The *cosmological proof*, which we are now about to examine, retains the connection of absolute necessity with the highest reality, but instead of reasoning, like the former proof, from the highest reality to necessity of existence, it reasons from the previously given unconditioned necessity of some being to the unlimited reality of that being. It thus enters upon a course of reasoning which, whether rational or only pseudo-rational, is at any rate natural, and the most convincing not only for common sense but even for speculative understanding. It also sketches the first outline of all the proofs in natural theology, an outline which has always been and always will be followed, however much embellished and disguised by superfluous additions. This proof, termed by Leibniz the proof *a contingentia mundi*, we shall now proceed to expound and examine.

It runs thus: If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist. Now I, at least, exist. Therefore an absolutely necessary being exists. The minor premiss contains an experience, the major premiss the inference from there being any experience at all to the existence of the necessary.\* { A 605  
B 633

\* This inference is too well known to require detailed statement. It depends on the supposedly transcendental law of natural

The proof therefore really begins with experience, and is not wholly *a priori* or ontological. For this reason, and because the object of all possible experience is called the world, it is entitled the *cosmological* proof. Since, in dealing with the objects of experience, the proof abstracts from all special properties through which this world may differ from any other possible world, the title also serves to distinguish it from the physico-theological proof, which is based upon observations of the particular properties of the world disclosed to us by our senses.

The proof then proceeds as follows: The necessary being can be determined in one way only, that is, by one out of each possible pair of opposed predicates. It must therefore be *completely* determined through its own concept. Now there is only one possible concept which determines a thing completely *a priori*, namely, the concept of the *ens realissimum*. The concept of the *ens realissimum* is therefore the only concept through which a necessary being can be thought. In other words, a supreme being necessarily exists.

In this cosmological argument there are combined so many pseudo-rational principles that speculative reason seems in this case to have brought to bear all the resources of its dialectical skill to produce the greatest possible transcendental illusion. The testing of the argument may meantime be postponed while we detail in order the various devices whereby an old argument is disguised as a new one, and by which appeal is made to the agreement of two witnesses, the one with credentials of pure reason and the other with those of experience. In reality the only witness is that which speaks in the name of pure reason; in the endeavour to pass as a second witness it merely changes its dress and voice. In order to lay a secure foundation for itself, this proof takes its stand on experience, and thereby makes profession of being distinct from the ontological proof, which puts its entire trust in pure *a priori* concepts. But the cosmological proof uses this experience only for a single step in the argument, namely, to con-

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causality: that everything contingent has a cause, which, if itself contingent must likewise have a cause, till the series of subordinate causes ends with an absolutely necessary cause, without which it would have no completeness.

clude the existence of a necessary being. What properties this being may have, the empirical premiss cannot tell us. Reason therefore abandons experience altogether, and endeavours to discover from mere concepts what properties an absolutely necessary being must have, that is, which among all possible things contains in itself the conditions (*requisita*) essential to absolute necessity. Now these, it is supposed, are nowhere to be found save in the concept of an *ens realissimum*; and the conclusion is therefore drawn, that the *ens realissimum* is the absolutely necessary being. But it is evident that we are here presupposing that the concept of the highest reality is completely adequate to the concept of absolute necessity of existence; that is, that the latter can be inferred from the former. Now this is the proposition maintained by the ontological proof; it is here being assumed in the cosmological proof, and indeed made the basis of the proof; and yet it is an assumption with which this latter proof has professed to dispense. For absolute necessity is an existence determined from mere concepts. If I say, the concept of the *ens realissimum* is a concept, and indeed the only concept, which is appropriate and adequate to necessary existence, I must also admit that necessary existence can be inferred from this concept. Thus the so-called cosmological proof really owes any cogency which it may have to the ontological proof from mere concepts. The appeal to experience is quite superfluous, experience may perhaps lead us to the concept of absolute necessity, but is unable to demonstrate this necessity as belonging to any determinate thing. For immediately we endeavour to do so, we must abandon all experience and search among pure concepts to discover whether any one of them contains the conditions of the possibility of an absolutely necessary being. If in this way we can determine the possibility of a necessary being, we likewise establish its existence. For what we are then saying is this; that of all possible beings there is one which carries with it absolute necessity, that is, that this being exists with absolute necessity. { A 607  
B 635

Fallacious and misleading arguments are most easily detected if set out in correct syllogistic form. This we now proceed to do in the instance under discussion.

If the proposition, that every absolutely necessary being is

{ A 608  
B 636

likewise the most real of all beings, is correct (and this is the *nervus probandi* of the cosmological proof), it must, like all affirmative judgments, be convertible, at least *per accidens*. It therefore follows that some *entia realissima* are likewise absolutely necessary beings. But one *ens realissimum* is in no respect different from another, and what is true of *some* under this concept is true also of *all*. In this case, therefore, I can convert the proposition *simpliciter*, not only *per accidens*, and say that every *ens realissimum* is a necessary being. But since this proposition is determined from its *a priori* concepts alone, the mere concept of the *ens realissimum* must carry with it the absolute necessity of that being; and this is precisely what the ontological proof has asserted and what the cosmological proof has refused to admit, although the conclusions of the latter are indeed covertly based on it.

A 609 }  
B 637 }

Thus the second path upon which speculative reason enters in its attempt to prove the existence of a supreme being is not only as deceptive as the first, but has this additional defect, that it is guilty of an *ignoratio elenchi*. It professes to lead us by a new path, but after a short circuit brings us back to the very path which we had deserted at its bidding.

I have stated that in this cosmological argument there lies hidden a whole nest of dialectical assumptions, which the transcendental critique can easily detect and destroy. These deceptive principles I shall merely enumerate, leaving to the reader, who by this time will be sufficiently expert in these matters, the task of investigating them further, and of refuting them.

We find, for instance, (1) the transcendental principle whereby from the contingent we infer a cause. This principle is applicable only in the sensible world; outside that world it has no meaning whatsoever. For the mere intellectual concept of the contingent cannot give rise to any synthetic proposition, such as that of causality. The principle of causality has no meaning and no criterion for its application save only in the sensible world. But in the cosmological proof it is precisely in order to enable us to advance beyond the sensible world that it is employed. (2) The inference to a first cause, from the impossibility of an infinite series of causes, given one after the other, in the sensible world. The principles of the employment

A 610 }  
B 638 }

of reason do not justify this conclusion even within the world of experience, still less beyond this world in a realm into which this series can never be extended. (3) The unjustified self-satisfaction of reason in respect of the completion of this series. The removal of all the conditions without which no concept of necessity is possible is taken by reason to be a completion of the concept of the series, on the ground that we can then conceive nothing further. (4) The confusion between the logical possibility of a concept of all reality united into one (without inner contradiction) and the transcendental possibility of such a reality. In the case of the latter there is needed a principle to establish the practicability of such a synthesis, a principle which itself, however, can apply only to the field of possible experiences—etc.

The whole problem of the transcendental ideal amounts to this: either, given absolute necessity, to find a concept which possesses it, or, given the concept of something, to find that something to be absolutely necessary. If either task be possible, so must the other; for reason recognises that only as absolutely necessary which follows of necessity from its concept. But both tasks are quite beyond our utmost efforts { A 613  
B 641 } to *satisfy* our understanding in this matter; and equally unavailing are all attempts to induce it to acquiesce in its incapacity.

Unconditioned necessity, which we so indispensably require as the last bearer of all things, is for human reason the veritable abyss. Eternity itself, in all its terrible sublimity, as depicted by a Haller,<sup>1</sup> is far from making the same overwhelming impression on the mind; for it only *measures* the duration of things, it does not *support* them. We cannot put aside, and yet also cannot endure the thought, that a being, which we represent to ourselves as supreme amongst all possible beings, should, as it were, say to itself: 'I am from eternity to eternity, and outside me there is nothing save what is through my will, *but whence then am I?*' All support here fails us; and the *greatest* perfection, no less than the *least* perfection, is unsubstantial and baseless for the merely speculative reason, which makes not the least effort to retain either

<sup>1</sup> [Albrecht von Haller (1708-1777), a writer on medical and kindred subjects, author of *Die Alpen* and other poems.]

the one or the other, and feels indeed no loss in allowing them to vanish entirely.

### DISCOVERY AND EXPLANATION

of the Dialectical Illusion in all Transcendental Proofs of the Existence of a Necessary Being

A 615 } Both the above proofs were transcendental, that is, were  
B 643 } attempted independently of empirical principles. What, then, in these transcendental proofs is the cause of the dialectical but natural illusion which connects the concepts of necessity and supreme reality, and which realises and hypostatizes what can be an idea only? Why are we constrained to assume that some one among existing things is in itself necessary, and yet at the same time to shrink back from the existence of such a being as from an abyss? And how are we to secure that reason may come to an agreement with itself in this matter, and that from the wavering condition of a diffident approval, ever again withdrawn, it may arrive at settled insight?

There is something very strange in the fact, that once we assume something to exist we cannot avoid inferring that something exists necessarily. The cosmological argument rests on this quite natural (although not therefore certain) inference. On the other hand, if I take the concept of anything, no matter what, I find that the existence of this thing can never be represented by me as absolutely necessary, and that, whatever it may be that exists, nothing prevents me from thinking its non-existence. Thus while I may indeed be obliged to assume something necessary as a condition of the existent in general, I cannot think any particular thing as in itself necessary. In other words, I can never *complete* the regress to the conditions of existence save by assuming a necessary being, and yet am never in a position to *begin* with such a being.

A 616 }  
B 644 }

If I am constrained to think something necessary as a condition of existing things, but am unable to think any particular thing as in itself necessary, it inevitably follows that necessity and contingency do not concern the things themselves; otherwise there would be a contradiction. Consequently, neither of these two principles can be objective. They may, however, be regarded as subjective principles of reason.

The one calls upon us to seek something necessary as a condition of all that is given as existent, that is, to stop nowhere until we have arrived at an explanation which is complete *a priori*; the other forbids us ever to hope for this completion, that is, forbids us to treat anything empirical as unconditioned and to exempt ourselves thereby from the toil of its further derivation. Viewed in this manner, the two principles, as merely heuristic and *regulative*, and as concerning only the formal interest of reason, can very well stand side by side. The one prescribes that we are to philosophise about nature as if there were a necessary first ground for all that belongs to existence—solely, however, for the purpose of bringing systematic unity into our knowledge, by always pursuing such an idea, as an imagined ultimate ground. The other warns us not to regard any determination whatsoever of existing things as such an ultimate ground, that is, as absolutely necessary, but to keep the way always open for further derivation, and so to treat each and every determination as always conditioned by something else. But if everything which is perceived in things must necessarily be treated by us as conditioned, nothing that allows of being empirically given can be regarded as absolutely necessary.

{ A 617  
B 645

Since, therefore, the absolutely necessary is only intended to serve as a principle for obtaining the greatest possible unity among appearances, as being their ultimate ground; and since—inasmuch as the second rule commands us always to regard all empirical causes of unity as themselves derived—we can never reach this unity within the world, it follows that we must regard the absolutely necessary as being *outside* the world.

As follows from these considerations, the ideal of the supreme being is nothing but a *regulative principle* of reason, which directs us to look upon all connection in the world *as if* it originated from an all-sufficient necessary cause. We can base upon the ideal the rule of a systematic and, in accordance with universal laws, necessary unity in the explanation of that connection; but the ideal is not an assertion of an existence necessary in itself. At the same time we cannot avoid the transcendental subreption, by which this formal principle is represented as constitutive, and by which this unity is hypostatised.

{ A 619  
B 647

## Section 6

## THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE PHYSICO-THEOLOGICAL PROOF

If, then, neither the concept of things in general nor the experience of any *existence in general* can supply what is required, it remains only to try whether a *determinate experience*, the experience of the things of the present world, and the constitution and order of these, does not provide the basis of a proof which may help us to attain to an assured conviction of a supreme being. Such proof we propose to entitle the *physico-theological*. Should this attempt also fail, it must follow that no satisfactory proof of the existence of a being corresponding to our transcendental idea can be possible by pure speculative reason.

A 621 }  
B 649 } In view of what has already been said, it is evident that we can count upon a quite easy and conclusive answer to this enquiry. For how can any experience ever be adequate to an idea? The peculiar nature of the latter consists just in the fact that no experience can ever be equal to it. The transcendental idea of a necessary and all-sufficient original being is so overwhelmingly great, so high above everything empirical, the latter being always conditioned, that it leaves us at a loss, partly because we can never find in experience material sufficient to satisfy such a concept, and partly because it is always in the sphere of the conditioned that we carry out our search, seeking there ever vainly for the unconditioned—no law of any empirical synthesis giving us an example of any such unconditioned or providing the least guidance in its pursuit.

A 622 }  
B 650 } This world presents to us so immeasurable a stage of variety, order, purposiveness, and beauty, as displayed alike in its infinite extent and in the unlimited divisibility of its parts, that even with such knowledge as our weak understanding can acquire of it, we are brought face to face with so many marvels immeasurably great, that all speech loses its force, all numbers their power to measure, our thoughts themselves all definiteness, and that our judgment of the whole resolves itself into an amazement which is speechless, and only the more elo-



quent on that account. Everywhere we see a chain of effects and causes, of ends and means, a regularity in origination and dissolution. Nothing has of itself come into the condition in which we find it to exist, but always points to something else as its cause, while this in turn commits us to repetition of the same enquiry. The whole universe must thus sink into the abyss of nothingness, unless, over and above this infinite chain of contingencies, we assume something to support it—something which is original and independently self-subsistent, and which as the cause of the origin of the universe secures also at the same time its continuance. What magnitude are we to ascribe to this supreme cause—admitting that it is supreme in respect of all things in the world? We are not acquainted with the whole content of the world, still less do we know { A 623  
B 651 how to estimate its magnitude by comparison with all that is possible. But since we cannot, as regards causality, dispense with an ultimate and supreme being, what is there to prevent us ascribing to it a degree of perfection that sets it *above everything else that is possible*? This we can easily do—though only through the slender outline of an abstract concept—by representing this being to ourselves as combining in itself all possible perfection, as in a single substance. This concept is in conformity with the demand of our reason for parsimony of principles; it is free from self-contradiction, and is never decisively contradicted by any experience; and it is likewise of such a character that it contributes to the extension of the employment of reason within experience, through the guidance which it yields in the discovery of order and purposiveness.

This proof always deserves to be mentioned with respect. It is the oldest, the clearest, and the most accordant with the common reason of mankind. It enlivens the study of nature, just as it itself derives its existence and gains ever new vigour from that source. It suggests ends and purposes, where our observation would not have detected them by itself, and extends our knowledge of nature by means of the guiding-concept of a special unity, the principle of which is outside nature. This knowledge again reacts on its cause, namely, upon the idea which has led to it, and so strengthens the belief in a { A 624  
B 652 supreme Author [of nature] that the belief acquires the force of an irresistible conviction.

It would therefore not only be uncomfortable but utterly vain to attempt to diminish in any way the authority of this argument. Reason, constantly upheld by this ever-increasing evidence, which, though empirical, is yet so powerful, cannot be so depressed through doubts suggested by subtle and abstruse speculation, that it is not at once aroused from the indecision of all melancholy reflection, as from a dream, by one glance at the wonders of nature and the majesty of the universe—ascending from height to height up to the all-highest, from the conditioned to its conditions, up to the supreme and unconditioned Author [of all conditioned being].

But although we have nothing to bring against the rationality and utility of this procedure, but have rather to commend and to further it, we still cannot approve the claims, which this mode of argument would fain advance, to apodeictic certainty and to an assent founded on no special favour or support from other quarters. It cannot hurt the good cause, if the dogmatic language of the overweening sophist be toned down to the more moderate and humble requirements of a belief adequate to quieten our doubts, though not to command unconditional submission. I therefore maintain that the physico-theological proof can never by itself establish the existence of a supreme being, but must always fall back upon the ontological argument to make good its deficiency. It only serves as an introduction to the ontological argument; and the latter therefore contains (in so far as a speculative proof is possible at all) *the one possible ground of proof* with which human reason can never dispense.

The chief points of the physico-theological proof are as follows: (1) In the world we everywhere find clear signs of an order in accordance with a determinate purpose, carried out with great wisdom; and this in a universe which is indescribably varied in content and unlimited in extent. (2) This purposive order is quite alien to the things of the world, and only belongs to them contingently; that is to say, the diverse things could not of themselves have co-operated, by so great a combination of diverse means, to the fulfilment of determinate final purposes, had they not been chosen and designed for these purposes by an ordering rational principle in conformity

with underlying ideas. (3) There exists, therefore, a sublime and wise cause (or more than one), which must be the cause of the world not merely as a blindly working all-powerful nature, by *fecundity*, but as intelligence, through *freedom*. (4) The unity of this cause may be inferred from the unity of the reciprocal relations existing between the parts of the world as members of an artfully arranged structure—inferred with certainty in so far as our observation suffices for its verification, and beyond these limits with probability, in accordance with the principles of analogy. (A 626 B 654)

We need not here criticise natural reason too strictly in regard to its conclusion from the analogy between certain natural products and what our human art produces when we do violence to nature, and constrain it to proceed not according to its own ends but in conformity with ours—appealing to the similarity of these particular natural products with houses, ships, watches. Nor need we here question its conclusion that there lies at the basis of nature a causality similar to that responsible for artificial products, namely, an understanding and a will; and that the inner possibility of a self-acting nature (which is what makes all art, and even, it may be, reason itself, possible) is therefore derived from another, though superhuman, art—a mode of reasoning which could not perhaps withstand a searching transcendental criticism. But at any rate we must admit that, if we are to specify a cause at all, we cannot here proceed more securely than by analogy with those purposive productions of which alone the cause and mode of action are fully known to us. Reason could never be justified in abandoning the causality which it knows for grounds of explanation which are obscure, of which it does not have any knowledge, and which are incapable of proof.

On this method of argument, the purposiveness and harmonious adaptation of so much in nature can suffice to prove the contingency of the form merely, not of the matter, that is, not of the substance in the world. To prove the latter we should have to demonstrate that the things in the world would not of themselves be capable of such order and harmony, in accordance with universal laws, if they were not *in their substance* the product of supreme wisdom. But to prove this (A 627 B 656)

we should require quite other grounds of proof than those which are derived from the analogy with human art. The utmost, therefore, that the argument can prove is an *architect* of the world who is always very much hampered by the adaptability of the material in which he works, not a *creator* of the world to whose idea everything is subject. This, however, is altogether inadequate to the lofty purpose which we have before our eyes, namely, the proof of an all-sufficient primordial being. To prove the contingency of matter itself, we should have to resort to a transcendental argument, and this is precisely what we have here set out to avoid.

The inference, therefore, is that the order and purposiveness everywhere observable throughout the world may be regarded as a completely contingent arrangement, and that we may argue to the existence of a cause *proportioned* to it. But the concept of this cause must enable us to know something quite *determinate* about it, and can therefore be no other than the concept of a being who possesses all might, wisdom, etc., in a word, all the perfection which is proper to an all-sufficient being. For the predicates—'very great', 'astounding', 'immeasurable' in power and excellence—give no determinate concept at all, and do not really tell us what the thing is in itself. They are only relative representations of the magnitude of the object, which the observer, in contemplating the world, compares with himself and with his capacity of comprehension, and which are equally terms of eulogy whether we be magnifying the object or be depreciating the observing subject in relation to that object. Where we are concerned with the magnitude (of the perfection) of a thing, there is no determinate concept except that which comprehends all possible perfection; and in that concept only the allness (*omnitude*) of the reality is completely determined.

Now no one, I trust, will be so bold as to profess that he comprehends the relation of the magnitude of the world as he has observed it (alike as regards both extent and content) to omnipotence, of the world order to supreme wisdom, of the world unity to the absolute unity of its Author, etc. Physico-theology is therefore unable to give any determinate concept of the supreme cause of the world, and cannot therefore serve

as the foundation of a theology which is itself in turn to form the basis of religion.

To advance to absolute totality by the empirical road is utterly impossible. None the less this is what is attempted in the physico-theological proof. What, then, are the means which have been adopted to bridge this wide abyss? {A 629  
B 657

The physico-theological argument can indeed lead us to the point of admiring the greatness, wisdom, power, etc., of the Author of the world, but can take us no further. Accordingly, we then abandon the argument from empirical grounds of proof, and fall back upon the contingency which, in the first steps of the argument, we had inferred from the order and purposiveness of the world. With this contingency as our sole premiss, we then advance, by means of transcendental concepts alone, to the existence of an absolutely necessary being, and [as a final step] from the concept of the absolute necessity of the first cause to the completely determinate or determinable concept of that necessary being, namely, to the concept of an all-embracing reality. Thus the physico-theological proof, failing in its undertaking, has in face of this difficulty suddenly fallen back upon the cosmological proof; and since the latter is only a disguised ontological proof, it has really achieved its purpose by pure reason alone—although at the start it disclaimed all kinship with pure reason and professed to establish its conclusions on convincing evidence derived from experience.

Those who propound the physico-theological argument have therefore no ground for being so contemptuous in their attitude to the transcendental mode of proof, posing as clear-sighted students of nature, and complacently looking down upon that proof as the artificial product of obscure speculative refinements. For were they willing to scrutinise their own procedure, they would find that, after advancing some considerable way on the solid ground of nature and experience, and finding themselves just as far distant as ever from the object which discloses itself to their reason, they suddenly leave this ground, and pass over into the realm of mere possibilities, where they hope upon the wings of ideas to draw near to the object—the object that has refused itself to all their *empirical* enquiries. For after this tremendous leap, when they have, as {A 630  
B 658

they think, found firm ground, they extend their concept—the *determinate* concept, into the possession of which they have now come, they know not how—over the whole sphere of creation. And the ideal, [which this reasoning thus involves, and] which is entirely a product of pure reason, they then elucidate by reference to experience, though inadequately enough, and in a manner far below the dignity of its object; and throughout they persist in refusing to admit that they have arrived at this knowledge or hypothesis by a road quite other than that of experience.

Thus the physico-theological proof of the existence of an original or supreme being rests upon the cosmological proof, and the cosmological upon the ontological. And since, besides these three, there is no other path open to speculative reason, the ontological proof from pure concepts of reason is the only possible one, if indeed any proof of a proposition so far exalted above all empirical employment of the understanding is possible at all.

### Section 7

#### CRITIQUE OF ALL THEOLOGY BASED UPON SPECULATIVE PRINCIPLES OF REASON

Although reason, in its merely speculative employment, is very far from being equal to so great an undertaking, namely, to demonstrate the existence of a supreme being, it is A 640  
B 668 yet of very great utility in *correcting* any knowledge of this being which may be derived from other sources, in making it consistent with itself and with every point of view from which intelligible objects may be regarded, and in freeing it from everything incompatible with the concept of an original being and from all admixture of empirical limitations.

Transcendental theology is still, therefore, in spite of all its disabilities, of great importance in its negative employment, and serves as a permanent censor of our reason, in so far as the latter deals merely with pure ideas which, as such, allow of no criterion that is not transcendental. For if, in some other relation, perhaps on practical grounds, the *presupposition* of a supreme and all-sufficient being, as highest intelligence, established its validity beyond all question, it would be

of the greatest importance accurately to determine this concept on its transcendental side, as the concept of a necessary and supremely real being, to free it from whatever, as belonging to mere appearance (anthropomorphism in its wider sense), is out of keeping with the supreme reality, and at the same time to dispose of all counter-assertions, 'whether *atheistic, deistic, or anthropomorphic*. Such critical treatment is, indeed, far from being difficult, inasmuch as the same grounds which have enabled us to demonstrate the inability of human reason to maintain the existence of such a being must also suffice to prove the invalidity of all counter-assertions. For from what source could we, through a purely speculative employment of reason, derive the knowledge that there is no supreme being as ultimate ground of all things, or that it has none of the attributes which, arguing from their consequences, we represent to ourselves as analogical with the dynamical realities of a thinking being, or (as the anthropomorphists contend) that it must be subject to all the limitations which sensibility inevitably imposes on those intelligences which are known to us through experience. { A 641  
B 669

Thus, while for the merely speculative employment of reason the supreme being remains a mere *ideal*, it is yet *an ideal without a flaw*, a concept which completes and crowns the whole of human knowledge. Its objective reality cannot indeed be proved, but also cannot be disproved, by merely speculative reason. If then, there should be a moral theology that can make good this deficiency, transcendental theology, which before was problematic only, will prove itself indispensable in determining the concept of this supreme being and in constantly testing reason, which is so often deceived by sensibility, and which is frequently out of harmony with its own ideas. Necessity, infinity, unity, existence outside the world (and not as world-soul), eternity as free from conditions of time, omnipresence as free from conditions of space, omnipotence, etc., are purely transcendental predicates, and for this reason the purified concepts of them, which every theology finds so indispensable, are only to be obtained from transcendental theology. { A 642  
B 670

## APPENDIX TO THE TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC

## THE REGULATIVE EMPLOYMENT OF THE IDEAS OF PURE REASON

The outcome of all dialectical attempts of pure reason does not merely confirm what we have already proved in the Transcendental Analytic, namely, that all those conclusions of ours which profess to lead us beyond the field of possible experience are deceptive and without foundation; it likewise teaches us this further lesson, that human reason has a natural tendency to transgress these limits, and that transcendental ideas are just as natural to it as the categories are to understanding—though with this difference, that while the categories lead to truth, that is, to the conformity of our concepts with the object, the ideas produce what, though a mere illusion, is none the less irresistible, and the harmful influence of which we can barely succeed in neutralising even by means of the severest criticism.

Everything that has its basis in the nature of our powers must be appropriate to, and consistent with, their right employment—if only we can guard against a certain misunderstanding and so can discover the proper direction of these powers. We are entitled, therefore, to suppose that transcendental ideas have their own good, proper, and therefore *immanent* use, although, when their meaning is misunderstood, and they are taken for concepts of real things, they become transcendent in their application and for that very reason can be delusive. For it is not the idea in itself, but its use only, that can be either transcendent or immanent (that is, either range beyond all possible experience or find employment within its limits), according as it is applied to an object which is supposed to correspond to it, or is directed solely to the use of understanding in general, in respect of those objects that fall to be dealt with by the understanding. All errors of subreption are to be ascribed to a defect of judgment, never to understanding or to reason.

Reason is never in immediate relation to an object, but only to the understanding; and it is only through the understanding that it has its own [specific] empirical employment. It does not,

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therefore, *create* concepts (of objects) but only *orders* them, and gives them that unity which they can have only if they be employed in their widest possible application, that is, with a view to obtaining totality in the various series. The understanding does not concern itself with this totality, but only with that connection through which, in accordance with *concepts*, such *series* of conditions *come into being*. Reason has, therefore, as its sole object, the understanding and its effective application. Just as the understanding unifies the manifold in the object by means of concepts, so reason unifies the manifold of concepts by means of ideas, positing a certain collective unity as the goal of the activities of the understanding, which otherwise are concerned solely with distributive unity.

I accordingly maintain that transcendental ideas never allow of any constitutive employment. When regarded in that mistaken manner, and therefore as supplying concepts of certain objects, they are but pseudo-rational, merely dialectical concepts. On the other hand, they have an excellent, and indeed indispensably necessary, regulative employment, namely, that of directing the understanding towards a certain goal upon which the routes marked out by all its rules converge, as upon their point of intersection. This point is indeed a mere idea, a *focus imaginarius*, from which, since it lies quite outside the bounds of possible experience, the concepts of the understanding do not in reality proceed; none the less it serves to give to these concepts the greatest [possible] unity combined with the greatest [possible] extension. Hence arises the illusion that the lines have their source in a real object lying outside the field of empirically possible knowledge—just as objects reflected in a mirror are seen as behind it. Nevertheless this illusion (which need not, however, be allowed to deceive us) is indispensably necessary if we are to direct the understanding beyond every given experience (as part of the sum of possible experience), and thereby to secure its greatest possible extension, just as, in the case of mirror-vision, the illusion involved is indispensably necessary if, besides the objects which lie before our eyes, we are also to see those which lie at a distance behind our back.

If we consider in its whole range the knowledge obtained for us by the understanding, we find that what is peculiarly

distinctive of reason in its attitude to this body of knowledge is that it prescribes and seeks to achieve its *systematisation*, that is, to exhibit the connection of its parts in conformity with a single principle. This unity of reason always presupposes an idea, namely, that of the form of a whole of knowledge—a whole which is prior to the determinate knowledge of the parts and which contains the conditions that determine *a priori* for every part its position and relation to the other parts. This idea accordingly postulates a complete unity in the knowledge obtained by the understanding, by which this knowledge is to be not a mere contingent aggregate, but a system connected according to necessary laws. We may not say that this idea is a concept of the object, but only of the thoroughgoing unity of such concepts, in so far as that unity serves as a rule for the understanding. These concepts of reason are not derived from nature; on the contrary, we interrogate nature in accordance with these ideas, and consider our knowledge as defective so long as it is not adequate to them.

A 647 } The hypothetical employment of reason, based upon ideas  
B 675 } viewed as problematic concepts, is not, properly speaking, *constitutive*, that is, it is not of such a character that, judging in all strictness, we can regard it as proving the truth of the universal rule which we have adopted as hypothesis. The hypothetical employment of reason is regulative only; its sole aim is, so far as may be possible, to bring unity into the body of our detailed knowledge, and thereby to *approximate* the rule to universality.

The hypothetical employment of reason has, therefore, as its aim the systematic unity of the knowledge of understanding, and this unity is the *criterion of the truth* of its rules. The systematic unity (as a mere idea) is, however, only a *projected* unity, to be regarded not as given in itself, but as a problem only. This unity aids us in discovering a principle for the understanding in its manifold and special modes of employment, directing its attention to cases which are not given, and thus rendering it more coherent.

A 648 } But the only conclusion which we are justified in drawing  
B 676 } from these considerations is that the systematic unity of the manifold knowledge of understanding, as prescribed by reason,

is a *logical* principle. Its function is to assist the understanding by means of ideas, in those cases in which the understanding cannot by itself establish rules, and at the same time to give to the numerous and diverse rules of the understanding unity or system under a single principle, and thus to secure coherence in every possible way. But to say that the constitution of the objects or the nature of the understanding which knows them as such, is in itself determined to systematic unity, and that we can in a certain measure postulate this unity *a priori*, without reference to any such special interest of reason, and that we are therefore in a position to maintain that knowledge of the understanding in all its possible modes (including empirical knowledge) has the unity required by reason, and stands under common principles from which all its various modes can, in spite of their diversity, be deduced—that would be to assert a *transcendental* principle of reason, and would make the systematic unity necessary, not only subjectively and logically, as method, but objectively also.

It is, indeed, difficult to understand how there can be a logical principle by which reason prescribes the unity of rules, unless we also presuppose a transcendental principle whereby such a systematic unity is *a priori* assumed to be necessarily inherent in the objects. For with what right can reason, in its logical employment, call upon us to treat the multiplicity of powers exhibited in nature as simply a disguised unity, and to derive this unity, so far as may be possible, from a fundamental power—how can reason do this, if it be free to admit as likewise possible that all powers may be heterogeneous, and that such systematic unity of derivation may not be in conformity with nature? Reason would then run counter to its own vocation, proposing as its aim an idea quite inconsistent with the constitution of nature. Nor can we say that reason, while proceeding in accordance with its own principles, has arrived at knowledge of this unity through observation of the accidental constitution of nature. The law of reason which requires us to seek for this unity, is a necessary law, since without it we should have no reason at all, and without reason no coherent employment of the understanding, and in the absence of this no sufficient criterion of empirical truth. In order, therefore, to secure an empirical criterion we have no option save to pre-

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suppose the systematic unity of nature as objectively valid and necessary.

That such unity is to be found in nature, is presupposed by philosophers in the well-known scholastic maxim, that rudiments or principles must not be unnecessarily multiplied (*entia praefer necessitatem non esse multiplicanda*). This maxim declares that things by their very nature supply material for the unity of reason, and that the seemingly infinite variety need not hinder us from assuming that behind this variety there is a unity of fundamental properties—properties from which the diversity can be derived through repeated determination. It might be supposed that this is merely an economical contrivance whereby reason seeks to save itself all possible trouble, a hypothetical attempt, which, if it succeeds, will, through the unity thus attained, impart probability to the presumed principle of explanation. But such a selfish purpose can very easily be distinguished from the idea. For in conformity with the idea everyone presupposes that this unity of reason accords with nature itself, and that reason—although indeed unable to determine the limits of this unity—does not here beg but command.

If among the appearances which present themselves to us, there were so great a variety—I do not say in form, for in that respect the appearances might resemble one another; but in content, that is, in the manifoldness of the existing entities—that even the acutest human understanding could never by comparison of them detect the slightest similarity (a possibility which is quite conceivable), the logical law of genera would have no sort of standing; we should not even have the concept of a genus, or indeed any other universal concept; and the understanding itself, which has to do solely with such concepts, would be non-existent. If, therefore, the logical principle of genera is to be applied to nature (by which I here understand those objects only which are given to us), it presupposes a transcendental principle. And in accordance with this latter principle, homogeneity is necessarily presupposed in the manifold of possible experience (although we are not in a position to determine in *a priori* fashion its degree); for in the absence of homogeneity, no empirical concepts, and therefore no experience, would be possible.

The logical principle of genera, which postulates identity, is balanced by another principle, namely, that of *species*, which calls for manifoldness and diversity in things, notwithstanding their agreement as coming under the same genus, and which prescribes to the understanding that it attend to the diversity no less than to the identity. This law of specification can be formulated as being the principle: *entium varietates non temere esse minuendas*. {A 656  
B 684}

Reason thus prepares the field for the understanding: (1) through a principle of the *homogeneity* of the manifold under higher genera; (2) through a principle of the *variety* of the homogeneous under lower species; and (3) in order to complete the systematic unity, a further law, that of the *affinity* of all concepts—a law which prescribes that we proceed from each species to every other by gradual increase of the diversity. These we may entitle the principles of *homogeneity*, *specification*, and *continuity* of forms. {A 658  
B 686}

The first law thus keeps us from resting satisfied with an excessive number of different original genera, and bids us pay due regard to homogeneity; the second, in turn, imposes a check upon this tendency towards unity, and insists that before we proceed to apply a universal concept to individuals we distinguish subspecies within it. The third law combines these two laws by prescribing that even amidst the utmost manifoldness we observe homogeneity in the gradual transition from one species to another, and thus recognise a relationship of the different branches, as all springing from the same stem. {A 660  
B 688}

The remarkable feature of these principles, and what in them alone concerns us, is that they seem to be transcendental, and that although they contain mere ideas for the guidance of the empirical employment of reason—ideas which reason follows only as it were asymptotically, *i.e.* ever more closely without ever reaching them—they yet possess, as synthetic *a priori* propositions, objective but indeterminate validity, and serve as rules for possible experience. They can also be employed with great advantage in the elaboration of experience, as heuristic principles. A transcendental deduction of them cannot, however, be effected; in the case of ideas, as we have shown above, such a deduction is never possible. {A 663  
B 691}

A 669 } THE FINAL PURPOSE OF THE NATURAL DIALECTIC  
B 697 } OF HUMAN REASON

The ideas of pure reason can never be dialectical in themselves; any deceptive illusion to which they give occasion must be due solely to their misemployment. For they arise from the very nature of our reason; and it is impossible that this highest tribunal of all the rights and claims of speculation should itself be the source of deceptions and illusions. Presumably, therefore, the ideas have their own good and appropriate vocation as determined by the natural disposition of our reason. The mob of sophists, however, raise against reason the usual cry of absurdities and contradictions, and though unable to penetrate to its innermost designs, they none the less inveigh against its prescriptions. Yet it is to the beneficent influences, exercised by reason that they owe the possibility of their own self-assertiveness, and indeed that very culture which enables them to blame and to condemn what reason requires of them.

We cannot employ an *a priori* concept with any certainty without having first given a transcendental deduction of it. The ideas of pure reason do not, indeed, admit of the kind of deduction that is possible in the case of the categories. But if they are to have the least objective validity, no matter how indeterminate that validity may be, and are not to be mere empty thought-entities (*entia rationis ratiocinantis*), a deduction of them must be possible, however greatly (as we admit) it may differ from that which we have been able to give of the categories. This will complete the critical work of pure reason, and is what we now propose to undertake.

A 670 }  
B 698 } There is a great difference between something being given to my reason as an *object absolutely*, or merely as an *object in the idea*. In the former case our concepts are employed to determine the object; in the latter case there is in fact only a schema for which no object, not even a hypothetical one, is directly given, and which only enables us to represent to ourselves other objects in an indirect manner, namely in their systematic unity, by means of their relation to this idea. Thus I say that the concept of a highest intelligence is a mere idea, that is to say, its objective reality is not to be taken as consisting in its referring directly to an object (for in that sense we

should not be able to justify its objective validity). It is only a schema constructed in accordance with the conditions of the greatest possible unity of reason—the schema of the concept of a thing in general, which serves only to secure the greatest possible systematic unity in the empirical employment of our reason. We then, as it were, derive the object of experience from the supposed object of this idea, viewed as the ground or cause of the object of experience. We declare, for instance, that the things of the world must be viewed *as if* they received their existence from a highest intelligence. The idea is thus really only a heuristic, not an ostensive concept. It does not show us how an object is constituted, but how, under its guidance, we should *seek* to determine the constitution and connection of the objects of experience. If, then, it can be shown that the three transcendental ideas (the psychological, the cosmological, and the theological), although they do not directly relate to, or determine, any object corresponding to them, none the less, as rules of the empirical employment of reason, lead us to systematic unity, under the presupposition of such an *object in the idea*; and that they thus contribute to the extension of empirical knowledge, without ever being in a position to run counter to it, we may conclude that it is a necessary maxim of reason to proceed always in accordance with such ideas. This, indeed, is the transcendental deduction of all ideas of speculative reason, not as *constitutive* principles for the extension of our knowledge to more objects than experience can give, but as *regulative* principles of the systematic unity of the manifold of empirical knowledge in general, whereby this empirical knowledge is more adequately secured within its own limits and more effectively improved than would be possible, in the absence of such ideas, through the employment merely of the principles of the understanding.

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I shall endeavour to make this clearer. In conformity with these ideas as principles we shall, *first*, in psychology, under the guidance of inner experience, connect all the appearances, all the actions and receptivity of our mind, *as if* the mind were a simple substance which persists with personal identity (in this life at least), while its states, to which those of the body belong only as outer conditions, are in continual change. *Secondly*, in cosmology, we must follow up the conditions of

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both inner and outer natural appearances, in an enquiry which is to be regarded as never allowing of completion, just *as if* the series of appearances were in itself endless, without any first or supreme member. We need not, in so doing, deny that, outside all appearances, there are purely intelligible grounds of the appearances; but as we have no knowledge of these whatsoever, we must never attempt to make use of them in our explanations of nature. *Thirdly*, and finally, in the domain of theology, we must view everything that can belong to the context of possible experience *as if* this experience formed an absolute but at the same time completely dependent and *sensibly* conditioned unity, and yet also at the same time *as if* the sum of all appearances (the sensible world itself) had a single, highest and all-sufficient ground beyond itself, namely, a self-subsistent, original, creative reason. For it is in the light of this idea of a creative reason that we so guide the empirical employment of *our* reason as to secure its greatest possible extension—that is, by viewing all objects *as if* they drew their origin from such an archetype. In other words, we ought not to derive the inner appearances of the soul from a simple thinking substance but from one another, in accordance with the idea of a simple being; we ought not to derive the order and systematic unity of the world from a supreme intelligence, but to obtain from the idea of a supremely wise cause the rule according to which reason in connecting empirical causes and effects in the world may be employed to best advantage, and in such manner as to secure satisfaction of its own demands.

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Now there is nothing whatsoever to hinder us from *assuming* these ideas to be also objective, that is, from hypostatising them—except in the case of the cosmological ideas, where reason, in so proceeding, falls into antinomy. The psychological and theological ideas contain no antinomy, and involve no contradiction. How, then, can anyone dispute their [possible] objective reality? He who denies their possibility must do so with just as little knowledge [of this possibility] as we can have in affirming it. It is not, however, a sufficient ground for assuming anything, that there is no positive hindrance to our so doing; we are not justified in introducing thought-entities which transcend all our concepts, though without contradicting them, as being real and determinate



objects, merely on the authority of a speculative reason that is bent upon completing the tasks which it has set itself. They ought not to be assumed as existing in themselves, but only as having the reality of a schema—the schema of the regulative principle of the systematic unity of all knowledge of nature. They should be regarded only as analoga of real things, not as in themselves real things. We remove from the object of the idea the conditions which limit the concept provided by our understanding, but which also alone make it possible for us to have a determinate concept of anything. What we then think is a something of which, as it is in itself, we have no concept whatsoever, but which we none the less represent to ourselves as standing to the sum of appearances in a relation analogous to that in which appearances stand to one another.

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If, in this manner, we assume such ideal beings, we do not really extend our knowledge beyond the objects of possible experience; we extend only the empirical unity of such experience, by means of the systematic unity for which the schema is provided by the idea—an idea which has therefore no claim to be a constitutive, but only a regulative principle. For to allow that we posit a thing, a something, a real being, corresponding to the idea, is not to say that we profess to extend our knowledge of things by means of transcendental concepts. For this being is posited only in the idea and not in itself; and therefore only as expressing the systematic unity which is to serve as a rule for the empirical employment of reason. It decides nothing in regard to the ground of this unity or as to what may be the inner character of the being on which as cause the unity depends.

This, then, is how matters stand: if we assume a divine being, we have indeed no concept whatsoever either of the inner possibility of its supreme perfection or of the necessity of its existence; but, on the other hand, we are in a position to give a satisfactory answer to all those questions which relate to the contingent, and to afford reason the most complete satisfaction in respect to that highest unity after which it is seeking in its empirical employment. The fact, however, that we are unable to satisfy reason in respect to the assumption itself, shows that it is the speculative interest of reason, not any insight, which justifies it in thus starting from a point

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that lies so far above its sphere; and in endeavouring, by this device, to survey its objects as constituting a complete whole.

We here come upon a distinction bearing on the procedure of thought in dealing with one and the same assumption, a distinction which is somewhat subtle, but of great importance in transcendental philosophy. I may have sufficient ground to assume something, in a relative sense (*suppositio relativa*), and yet have no right to assume it absolutely (*suppositio absoluta*). This distinction has to be reckoned with in the case of a merely regulative principle. We recognise the necessity of the principle, but have no knowledge of the source of its necessity; and in assuming that it has a supreme ground, we do so solely in order to think its universality more determinately.

A 680 }  
B 708 } We are now in a position to have a clear view of the outcome of the whole Transcendental Dialectic, and accurately to define the final purpose of the ideas of pure reason, which become dialectical only through heedlessness and misapprehension. Pure reason is in fact occupied with nothing but itself. It can have no other vocation. For what is given to it does not consist in objects that have to be brought to the unity of the empirical concept, but in those modes of knowledge supplied by the understanding that require to be brought to the unity of the concept of reason—that is, to unity of connection in conformity with a principle. The unity of reason is the unity of system; and this systematic unity does not serve objectively as a principle that extends the application of reason to objects, but subjectively as a maxim that extends its application to all possible empirical knowledge of objects. Nevertheless, since the systematic connection which reason can give to the empirical employment of the understanding not only furthers its extension, but also guarantees its correctness, the principle of such systematic unity is so far also objective, but in an indeterminate manner (*principium vagum*). It is not a constitutive principle that enables us to determine anything in respect of its direct object, but only a merely regulative principle and maxim, to further and strengthen *in infinitum* (indeterminately) the empirical employment of reason—never in any way proceeding counter to the laws of its empirical employment, and yet at the same time opening out new paths which are not within the cognisance of the understanding.

## NATURAL DIALECTIC OF HUMAN REASON 311

But reason cannot think this systematic unity otherwise than by giving to the idea of this unity an object; and since experience can never give an example of complete systematic unity, the object which we have to assign to the idea is not such as experience can ever supply. This object, as thus entertained by reason (*ens rationis ratiocinatae*), is a mere idea; it is not assumed as a something that is real absolutely and *in itself*, but is postulated only problematically (since we cannot reach it through any of the concepts of the understanding) in order that we may view all connection of the things of the world of sense *as if* they had their ground in such a being. In thus proceeding, our sole purpose is to secure that systematic unity which is indispensable to reason, and which while furthering in every way the empirical knowledge obtainable by the understanding can never interfere to hinder or obstruct it.

This highest formal unity, which rests solely on concepts of reason, is the *purposive* unity of things. The *speculative* interest of reason makes it necessary to regard all order in the world as if it had originated in the purpose of a supreme reason. Such a principle opens out to our reason, as applied in the field of experience, altogether new views as to how the things of the world may be connected according to teleological laws, and so enables it to arrive at their greatest systematic unity. And provided we restrict ourselves to a merely regulative use of this principle, even error cannot do us any serious harm. For the worst that can happen would be that where we expected a teleological connection (*nexus finalis*), we find only a mechanical or physical connection (*nexus effectivus*). In such a case, we merely fail to find the additional unity; we do not destroy the unity upon which reason insists in its empirical employment.

If, however, we overlook this restriction of the idea to a merely regulative use, reason is led away into mistaken paths. For it then leaves the ground of experience, which alone can contain the signs that mark out its proper course, and ventures out beyond it to the incomprehensible and unsearchable, rising to dizzy heights where it finds itself entirely cut off from all possible action in conformity with experience.

The first error which arises from our using the idea of a

supreme being in a manner contrary to the nature of an idea, that is, constitutively, and not regulatively only, is the error of *ignava ratio*.<sup>a</sup> We may so entitle every principle which makes us regard our investigation into nature, on any subject, as absolutely complete, disposing reason to cease from further enquiry, as if it had entirely succeeded in the task which it had set itself. Thus the psychological idea, when it is employed as a constitutive principle to explain the appearances of our soul, and thereby to extend our knowledge of the self beyond the limits of experience (its state after death), does indeed simplify the task of reason; but it interferes with, and entirely ruins, our use of reason in dealing with nature under the guidance of our experiences. These detrimental consequences are even more obvious in the dogmatic treatment of our idea of a supreme intelligence, and in the theological system of nature (physico-theology) which is falsely based upon it. For in this field of enquiry, if instead of looking for causes in the universal laws of material mechanism, we appeal directly to the unsearchable decree of supreme wisdom, all those ends which are exhibited in nature, together with the many ends which are only ascribed by us to nature, make our investigation of the causes a very easy task, and so enable us to regard the labour of reason as completed, when, as a matter of fact, we have merely dispensed with its employment—an employment which is wholly dependent for guidance upon the order of nature and the series of its alterations, in accordance with the universal laws which they are found to exhibit. This error can be avoided, if we consider from the teleological point of view not merely certain parts of nature, such as the distribution of land, its structure, the constitution and location of the mountains, or only the organisation of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, but make this systematic unity of nature completely *universal*, in relation to the idea of a supreme intelligence.

<sup>a</sup> This was the title given by the ancient dialecticians to a sophistical argument, which ran thus: If it is your fate to recover from this illness, you will recover, whether you employ a physician or not. Cicero states that this mode of argument has been so named, because, if we conformed to it, reason would be left without any use in life. On the same ground I apply the name also to the sophistical argument of pure reason.

For we then treat nature as resting upon a purposiveness, in accordance with universal laws, from which no special arrangement is exempt, however difficult it may be to establish this in any given case. We then have a regulative principle of the systematic unity of teleological connection—a connection which we do not, however, predetermine. What we may presume to do is to follow out the physico-mechanical connection in accordance with universal laws, in the hope of discovering what the teleological connection actually is. In this way alone can the principle of purposive unity aid always in extending the employment of reason in reference to experience, without being in any instance prejudicial to it. {A 692  
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The second error arising from the misapprehension of the above principle of systematic unity is that of *perversa ratio* (ὑστέρων πρότερον). The idea of systematic unity should be used only as a regulative principle to guide us in seeking for such unity in the connection of things, according to universal laws of nature; and we ought, therefore, to believe that we have approximated to completeness in the employment of the principle only in proportion as we are in a position to verify such unity in empirical fashion—a completeness which is never, of course, attainable. Instead of this the reverse procedure is adopted. The reality of a principle of purposive unity is not only presupposed but hypostatized; and since the concept of a supreme intelligence is in itself completely beyond our powers of comprehension, we proceed to determine it in an anthropomorphic manner, and so to impose ends upon nature, forcibly and dictatorially, instead of pursuing the more reasonable course of searching for them by the path of physical investigation. And thus teleology, which is intended to aid us merely in completing the unity of nature in accordance with universal laws, not only tends to abrogate such unity, but also prevents reason from carrying out its own professed purpose, that of proving from nature, in conformity with these laws, the existence of a supreme intelligent cause. For if the most complete purposiveness cannot be presupposed a priori in nature, that is, *as belonging to its essence*, how can we be required to search for it, and through all its gradations to approximate to the supreme perfection of an Author of all things, a perfection that, as absolutely necessary, must be {A 693  
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knowable *a priori*? The regulative principle prescribes that systematic unity as a *unity in nature*, which is not known merely empirically but is presupposed *a priori* (although in an indeterminate manner), be presupposed absolutely, and consequently as following from the essence of things. If, however, I begin with a supreme purposive being as the ground of all things, the unity of nature is really surrendered, as being quite foreign and accidental to the nature of things, and as not capable of being known from its own universal laws. There then arises a vicious circle; we are assuming just that very point which is mainly in dispute.

To take the regulative principle of the systematic unity of nature as being a constitutive principle, and to hypostatise, and presuppose as a cause, that which serves, merely in idea, as the ground of the consistent employment of reason, is simply to confound reason. The investigation of nature takes its own independent course, keeping to the chain of natural causes in conformity with their universal laws. It does indeed, in so doing, proceed in accordance with the idea of an Author of the universe, but not in order to deduce therefrom the purposiveness for which it is ever on the watch, but in order to obtain knowledge of the existence of such an Author from this purposiveness. And by seeking this purposiveness in the essence of the things of nature, and so far as may be possible in the essence of things in general, it seeks to know the existence of this supreme being as absolutely necessary. Whether this latter enterprise succeed or not, the idea remains always true in itself, and justified in its use, provided it be restricted to the conditions of a merely regulative principle.

In discussing the antinomy of pure reason we have stated that the questions propounded by pure reason must in every case admit of an answer, and that in their regard it is not permissible to plead the limits of our knowledge (a plea which in many questions that concern nature is as unavoidable as it is relevant). For we are not here asking questions in regard to the nature of things, but only such questions as arise from the very nature of reason, and which concern solely its own inner constitution. We are now in a position to confirm this assertion—which at first sight may have appeared rash—so far as regards the two questions in which pure reason is most of all

interested; and thus finally to complete our discussion of the dialectic of pure reason.

If, in connection with a transcendental theology,\* we ask, *first*, whether there is anything distinct from the world, which contains the ground of the order of the world and of its connection in accordance with universal laws, the answer is that there *undoubtedly* is. For the world is a sum of appearances; and there must therefore be some transcendental ground of the appearances, that is, a ground which is thinkable only by the pure understanding. If, *secondly*, the question be, whether this being is substance, of the greatest reality, necessary, etc., we reply that *this question is entirely without meaning*. For all categories through which we can attempt to form a concept of such an object allow only of empirical employment, and have no meaning whatsoever when not applied to objects of possible experience, that is, to the world of sense. Outside this field they are merely titles of concepts, which we may admit, but through which [in and by themselves] we can understand nothing. If, *thirdly*, the question be, whether we may not at least think this being, which is distinct from the world, in *analogy* with the objects of experience, the answer is: certainly, but only as object in *idea* and not in reality, namely, only as being a substratum, to us unknown, of the systematic unity, order, and purposiveness of the arrangement of the world—an idea which reason is constrained to form as the regulative principle of its investigation of nature. Nay, more, we may freely, without laying ourselves open to censure, admit into this idea certain anthropomorphisms which are helpful to the principle in its regulative capacity. For it is always an idea only, which does not relate directly to a being distinct from the world, but to the regulative principle of the systematic unity of the world, and only by means of a schema of this unity, namely, through the schema of a supreme intelligence which,

\* After what I have already said regarding the psychological idea and its proper vocation, as a principle for the merely regulative employment of reason, I need not dwell at any length upon the transcendental illusion by which the systematic unity of all the manifoldness of inner sense is hypostatized. The procedure is very similar to that which is under discussion in our criticism of the theological ideal.

in originating the world, acts in accordance with wise purposes. What this primordial ground of the unity of the world may be in itself, we should not profess to have thereby decided, but only how we should use it, or rather its idea, in relation to the systematic employment of reason in respect of the things of the world.

But the question may still be pressed: Can we, on such grounds, assume a wise and omnipotent Author of the world? *Undoubtedly* we may; and we not only may, but *must*, do so. But do we then extend our knowledge beyond the field of possible experience? *By no means*. All that we have done is merely to presuppose a something, a merely transcendental object, of which, as it is in itself, we have no concept whatsoever. It is only in relation to the systematic and purposive ordering of the world, which, if we are to study nature, we are constrained to presuppose, that we have thought this unknown being *by analogy* with an intelligence (an empirical concept); that is, have endowed it, in respect of the ends and perfection which are to be grounded upon it, with just those properties which, in conformity with the conditions of our reason, can be regarded as containing the ground of such systematic unity. This idea is thus valid only in respect of the *employment* of our reason *in reference to the world*. If we ascribed to it a validity that is absolute and objective, we should be forgetting that what we are thinking is a being in idea only; and in thus taking our start from a ground which is not determinable through observation of the world, we should no longer be in a position to apply the principle in a manner suited to the empirical employment of reason.

But, it will still be asked, can I make any such use of the concept and of the presupposition of a supreme being in the rational consideration of the world? Yes, it is precisely for this purpose that reason has resorted to this idea. But may I then proceed to regard seemingly purposive arrangements as purposes, and so derive them from the divine will, though, of course, mediately through certain special natural means, themselves established in furtherance of that divine will? Yes, we can indeed do so; but only on condition that we regard it as a matter of indifference whether it be asserted that divine wisdom has disposed all things in accordance with its supreme



ends, or that the idea of supreme wisdom is a regulative principle in the investigation of nature and a principle of its systematic and purposive unity, in accordance with universal laws, even in those cases in which we are unable to detect that unity. In other words, it must be a matter of complete indifference to us, when we perceive such unity, whether we say that God in his wisdom has willed it to be so, or that nature has wisely arranged it thus. For what has justified us in adopting the idea of a supreme intelligence as a schema of the regulative principle is precisely this greatest possible systematic and purposive unity—a unity which our reason has required as a regulative principle that must underlie all investigation of nature. The more, therefore, we discover purposiveness in the world, the more fully is the legitimacy of our idea confirmed. But since the sole aim of that principle was to guide us in seeking a necessary unity of nature, and that in the greatest possible degree, while we do indeed, in so far as we attain that unity, owe it to the idea of a supreme being, we cannot, without contradicting ourselves, ignore the universal laws of nature—{ A 700  
B 728 with a view to discovering which the idea was alone adopted—and look upon this purposiveness of nature as contingent and hyperphysical in its origin. For we were not justified in assuming above nature a being with those qualities, but only in adopting the idea of such a being in order to view the appearances as systematically connected with one another in accordance with the principle of a causal determination.

For the same reasons, in thinking the cause of the world, we are justified in representing it in our idea not only in terms of a certain subtle anthropomorphism (without which we could not think anything whatsoever in regard to it), namely, as a being that has understanding, feelings of pleasure and displeasure, and desires and volitions corresponding to these, but also in ascribing to it a perfection which, as infinite, far transcends any perfection that our empirical knowledge of the order of the world can justify us in attributing to it. For the regulative law of systematic unity prescribes that we should study nature *as if* systematic and purposive unity, combined with the greatest possible manifoldness, were everywhere to be met with, *in infinitum*. For although we may succeed in discovering but little of this perfection of the world, it is never-

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 theless required by the legislation of our reason that we must always search for and surmise it; and it must always be beneficial, and can never be harmful, to direct our investigations into nature in accordance with this principle. But it is evident that in this way of respecting the principle as involving the idea of a supreme Author, I do not base the principle upon the existence and upon the knowledge of such a being, but upon its idea only, and that I do not really derive anything from this being, but only from the idea of it—that is, from the nature of the things of the world, in accordance with such an idea. A certain, unformulated consciousness of the true use of this concept of reason seems indeed to have inspired the modest and reasonable language of the philosophers of all times, since they speak of the wisdom and providence of nature and of divine wisdom, just as if nature and divine wisdom were equivalent expressions—indeed, so long as they are dealing solely with speculative reason, giving preference to the former mode of expression, on the ground that it enables us to avoid making profession of more than we are justified in asserting, and that it likewise directs reason to its own proper field, namely, nature.

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 Thus pure reason, which at first seemed to promise nothing less than the extension of knowledge beyond all limits of experience, contains, if properly understood, nothing but regulative principles, which, while indeed prescribing greater unity than the empirical employment of understanding can achieve, yet still, by the very fact that they place the goal of its endeavours at so great a distance, carry its agreement with itself, by means of systematic unity, to the highest possible degree. But if, on the other hand, they be misunderstood, and be treated as constitutive principles of transcendent knowledge, they give rise, by a dazzling and deceptive illusion, to persuasion and a merely fictitious knowledge, and therewith to contradictions and eternal disputes.

\* \* \*

Thus all human knowledge begins with intuitions, proceeds from thence to concepts, and ends with ideas. Although in respect of all three elements it possesses *a priori* sources of

knowledge, which on first consideration seem to scorn the limits of all experience, a thoroughgoing critique convinces us that reason, in its speculative employment, can never with these elements transcend the field of possible experience, and that the proper vocation of this supreme faculty of knowledge is to use all methods, and the principles of these methods, solely for the purpose of penetrating to the innermost secrets of nature, in accordance with every possible principle of unity—that of ends being the most important—but never to soar beyond its limits, outside which there is *for us* nothing but empty space. The critical examination, as carried out in the Transcendental Analytic, of all propositions which may seem to extend our knowledge beyond actual experience, has doubtless sufficed to convince us that they can never lead to anything more than a possible experience. Were it not that we are suspicious of abstract and general doctrines, however clear, and were it not that specious and alluring prospects tempt us to escape from the compulsion which these doctrines impose, we might have been able to spare ourselves the laborious interrogation of all those dialectical witnesses that a transcendent reason brings forward in support of its pretensions. For we should from the start have known with complete certainty that all such pretensions, while perhaps honestly meant, must be absolutely groundless, inasmuch as they relate to a kind of knowledge to which man can never attain. But there is no end to such discussions, unless we can penetrate to the true cause of the illusion by which even the wisest are deceived. Moreover, the resolution of all our transcendent knowledge into its elements (as a study of our inner nature) is in itself of no slight value, and to the philosopher is indeed a matter of duty. Accordingly, fruitless as are all these endeavours of speculative reason, we have none the less found it necessary to follow them up to their primary sources. And since the dialectical illusion does not merely deceive us in our judgments, but also, because of the interest which we take in these judgments, has a certain natural attraction which it will always continue to possess, we have thought it advisable, with a view to the prevention of such errors in the future, to draw up in full detail what we may describe as being the records of this lawsuit, and to deposit them in the archives of human reason.

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## TRANSCENDENTAL DOCTRINE OF METHOD

IF we look upon the sum of all knowledge of pure speculative reason as an edifice for which we have at least the idea within ourselves, it can be said that in the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements we have made an estimate of the materials, and have determined for what sort of edifice and for what height and strength of building they suffice. We have found, indeed, that although we had contemplated building a tower which should reach to the heavens, the supply of materials suffices only for a dwelling-house, just sufficiently commodious for our business on the level of experience, and just sufficiently high to allow of our overlooking it. The bold undertaking that we had designed is thus bound to fail through lack of material—not to mention the babel of tongues, which inevitably gives rise to disputes among the workers in regard to the plan to be followed, and which must end by scattering them over all the world, leaving each to erect a separate building for himself, according to his own design. At present, however, we are concerned not so much with the materials as with the plan; and inasmuch as we have been warned not to venture at random upon a blind project which may be altogether beyond our capacities, and yet cannot well abstain from building a secure home for ourselves, we must plan our building in conformity with the material which is given to us, and which is also at the same time appropriate to our needs.

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### Section I

#### THE DISCIPLINE OF PURE REASON IN ITS DOGMATIC EMPLOYMENT

Mathematics presents the most splendid example of the successful extension of pure reason, without the help of experi-

ence. Examples are contagious, especially as they quite naturally flatter a faculty which has been successful in one field, [leading it] to expect the same good fortune in other fields.

A 713 } Thus pure reason hopes to be able to extend its domain as suc-  
B 741 } cessfully and securely in its transcendental as in its mathematical employment, especially when it resorts to the same method as has been of such obvious utility in mathematics. It is therefore highly important for us to know whether the method of attaining apodeictic certainty which is called *mathematical* is identical with the method by which we endeavour to obtain the same certainty in philosophy, and which in that field would have to be called *dogmatic*.

*Philosophical* knowledge is the *knowledge gained by reason from concepts*; mathematical knowledge is the knowledge gained by reason from the *construction* of concepts. The essential difference between these two kinds of knowledge through reason consists therefore in this formal difference, and does not depend on difference of their material or objects. Those who propose to distinguish philosophy from mathematics by saying that the former has as its object *quality* only and the latter *quantity* only, have mistaken the effect for the cause. The form of mathematical knowledge is the cause why it is limited exclusively to quantities. For it is the concept of quantities only that allows of being constructed, that is, exhibited *a priori* in intuition; whereas qualities cannot be presented in any intuition that is not empirical.

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Suppose a philosopher be given the concept of a triangle and he be left to find out, in his own way, what relation the sum of its angles bears to a right angle. He has nothing but the concept of a figure enclosed by three straight lines, and possessing three angles. However long he meditates on this concept, he will never produce anything new. He can analyse and clarify the concept of a straight line or of an angle or of the number three, but he can never arrive at any properties not already contained in these concepts. Now let the geometrician take up these questions. He at once begins by constructing a triangle. Since he knows that the sum of two right angles is exactly equal to the sum of all the adjacent angles which can be constructed from a single point on a straight line, he prolongs one side of his triangle and obtains two

adjacent angles, which together are equal to two right angles. He then divides the external angle by drawing a line parallel to the opposite side of the triangle, and observes that he has thus obtained an external adjacent angle which is equal to an internal angle—and so on. In this fashion, through a chain of inferences guided throughout by intuition, he arrives at a fully evident and universally valid solution of the problem. {A 717  
B 745

We have made it our duty to determine, with exactitude and certainty, the limits of pure reason in its transcendental employment. But the pursuit of such transcendental knowledge has this peculiarity, that in spite of the plainest and most urgent warnings men still allow themselves to be deluded by false hopes, and therefore to postpone the total abandonment of all proposed attempts to advance beyond the bounds of experience into the enticing regions of the intellectual world. It therefore becomes necessary to cut away the last anchor of these fantastic hopes, that is, to show that the pursuit of the mathematical method cannot be of the least advantage in this kind of knowledge (unless it be in exhibiting more plainly the limitations of the method); and that mathematics and philosophy, although in natural science they do, indeed, go hand in hand, are none the less so completely different, that the procedure of the one can never be imitated by the other.

The exactness of mathematics rests upon definitions, axioms and demonstrations. I shall content myself with showing that none of these, in the sense in which they are understood by the mathematician, can be achieved or imitated by the philosopher.

1. *Definitions.*—To *dēfine*, as the word itself indicates, really only means to present the complete, original concept of a thing within the limits of its concept. If this be our standard, an *empirical* concept cannot be defined at all, but only *made explicit*. For since we find in it only a few characteristics of a certain species of sensible object, it is never certain that we are not using the word, in denoting one and the same object, sometimes so as to stand for more, and sometimes so as to stand for fewer characteristics. 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. We make use of certain {A 728  
B 756

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. And indeed what useful purpose could be served by defining an empirical concept, such, for instance, as that of water? When we speak of water and its properties, we do not stop short at what is thought in the word, water, but proceed to experiments. The word, with the few characteristics which we attach to it, is more properly to be regarded as merely a designation than as a concept of the thing: the so-called definition is nothing more than a determining of the word. In the second place, it is also true that no concept given *a priori*, such as substance, cause, right, equity, etc., can, strictly speaking, be defined. For I can never be certain that the clear representation of a given concept, which as given may still be confused, has been completely effected, unless I know that it is adequate to its object. But since the concept of it may, as given, include many obscure representations, which we overlook in our analysis, although we are constantly making use of them in our application of the concept, the completeness of the analysis of my concept is always in doubt, and a multiplicity of suitable examples suffices only to make the completeness *probable*, never to make it *apodeictically* certain. There remain, therefore, no concepts which allow of definition except only those which contain an arbitrary synthesis that admits of *a priori* construction. Consequently, mathematics is the only science that has definitions.

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Whereas, therefore, mathematical definitions *make* their concepts, in philosophical definitions concepts are only *explained*. From this it follows:

(a) That in philosophy we must not imitate mathematics by beginning with definitions, unless it be by way simply of experiment. For since the definitions are analyses of given concepts, they presuppose the prior presence of the concepts, although in a confused state; and the incomplete exposition must precede the complete. Consequently, we can infer a good deal from a few characteristics, derived from an incomplete analysis, without having yet reached the complete exposition, that is, the definition. In short, the definition in all its precision and clarity ought, in philosophy, to come rather at the end

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than at the beginning of our enquiries.\* In mathematics, on the other hand, we have no concept whatsoever prior to the definition, through which the concept itself is first given. For this reason mathematical science must always begin, and it can always begin, with the definition.

(b) That mathematical definitions can never be in error. For since the concept is first given through the definition, it includes nothing except precisely what the definition intends should be understood by it. Analytic definitions, on the other hand, may err in many ways, either through introducing characteristics which do not really belong to the concept, or by lacking that completeness which is the essential feature of a definition. The latter defect is due to the fact that we can never be quite certain of the completeness of the analysis. For these reasons the mathematical method of definition does not admit of imitation in philosophy.

2. *Axioms*.—These, in so far as they are immediately certain, are synthetic *a priori* principles. Now one concept cannot be combined with another synthetically and also at the same time immediately, since, to be able to pass beyond either concept, a third something is required to mediate our knowledge. Accordingly, since philosophy is simply what reason knows by means of concepts, no principle deserving the name of an axiom is to be found in it. Mathematics, on the other hand, can have axioms, since by means of the construction of concepts in the intuition of the object it can combine the predicates of the object both *a priori* and immediately, as, for instance, in the proposition that three points always lie in a plane. But a synthetic principle derived from concepts alone

\* Philosophy is full of faulty definitions, especially of definitions which, while indeed containing some of the elements required, are yet not complete. If we could make no use of a concept till we had defined it, all philosophy would be in a pitiable plight. But since a good and safe use can still be made of the elements obtained by analysis so far as they go, defective definitions, that is, propositions which are properly not definitions, but are yet true, and are therefore approximations to definitions, can be employed with great advantage. In mathematics definition belongs *ad esse*, in philosophy *ad melius esse*. It is desirable to attain an adequate definition, but often very difficult. The jurists are still without a definition of their concept of right.

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B 768

can never be immediately certain, for instance, the proposition that everything which happens has a cause. Consequently, the synthetic propositions of pure, transcendental reason are, one and all, infinitely removed from being as evident—which is yet so often arrogantly claimed on their behalf—as the proposition that *twice two make four*.

3. *Demonstrations*.—An apodeictic proof can be called a demonstration, only in so far as it is intuitive. Experience teaches us what is, but does not teach us that it could not be other than what it is. Consequently, no empirical grounds of proof can ever amount to apodeictic proof. Even from *a priori* concepts, as employed in discursive knowledge, there can never arise intuitive certainty, that is, [demonstrative] evidence, however apodeictically certain the judgment may otherwise be. Mathematics alone, therefore, contains demonstrations, since it derives its knowledge not from concepts but from the construction of them, that is, from intuition, which can be given *a priori* in accordance with the concepts.

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From all this it follows that it is not in keeping with the nature of philosophy, especially in the field of pure reason, to take pride in a dogmatic procedure, and to deck itself out with the title and insignia of mathematics, to whose ranks it does not belong, though it has every ground to hope for a sisterly union with it. Such pretensions are idle claims which can never be satisfied, and indeed must divert philosophy from its true purpose, namely, to expose the illusions of a reason that forgets its limits, and by sufficiently clarifying our concepts to recall it from its presumptuous speculative pursuits to modest but thorough self-knowledge. Reason must not, therefore, in its transcendental endeavours, hasten forward with sanguine expectations, as though the path which it has traversed led directly to the goal, and as though the accepted premisses could be so securely relied upon that there can be no need of constantly returning to them and of considering whether we may not perhaps, in the course of the inferences, discover defects which have been overlooked in the principles, and which render it necessary either to determine these principles more fully or to change them entirely.

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## Section 2

THE DISCIPLINE OF PURE REASON IN RESPECT OF ITS  
POLEMICAL EMPLOYMENT

Reason must in all its undertakings subject itself to criticism; should it limit freedom of criticism by any prohibitions, it must harm itself, drawing upon itself a damaging suspicion. Nothing is so important through its usefulness, nothing so sacred, that it may be exempted from this searching examination, which knows no respect for persons. Reason depends on this freedom for its very existence. For reason has no dictatorial authority; its verdict is always simply the agreement of free citizens, of whom each one must be permitted to express, without let or hindrance, his objections or even his veto. {A 739  
{B 767

Everything which nature has itself instituted is good for some purpose. Even poisons have their use. They serve to counteract other poisons generated in our bodily humours, and must have a place in every complete pharmacopoeia. The objections against the persuasions and complacency of our purely speculative reason arise from the very nature of reason itself, and must therefore have their own good use and purpose, which ought not to be disdained. Why has Providence placed many things which are closely bound up with our highest interests so far beyond our reach that we are only permitted to apprehend them in a manner lacking in clearness and subject to doubt—in such fashion that our enquiring gaze is more excited than satisfied? We may, indeed, be in doubt whether it serves any useful purpose, and whether it is not perhaps even harmful, to venture upon bold utterances in regard to such uncertain matters. But there can be no manner of doubt that it is always best to grant reason complete liberty, both of enquiry and of criticism, so that it may not be hindered in attending to its own proper interests. These interests are no less furthered by the limitation than by the extension of its speculations, and will always suffer when outside influences intervene to divert it from its proper path, and to constrain it by what is irrelevant to its own proper ends. {A 744  
{B 772

Allow, therefore, your opponent to speak in the name of

reason, and combat him only with weapons of reason. For the rest, have no anxiety as to the outcome in its bearing upon our practical interests, since in a merely speculative dispute they are never in any way affected. The conflict serves only to disclose a certain antinomy of reason which, inasmuch as it is due to the very nature of reason, must receive a hearing and be scrutinised. Reason is benefited by the consideration of its object from both sides, and its judgment is corrected in being thus limited. What is here in dispute is not the practical interests of reason but the mode of their presentation. For

A 745 }  
B 773 } although we have to surrender the language of *knowledge*, we still have sufficient ground to employ, in the presence of the most exacting reason, the quite legitimate language of a firm *faith*.

A 753 }  
B 781 } Whenever I hear that a writer of real ability has demonstrated away the freedom of the human will, the hope of a future life, and the existence of God, I am eager to read the book, for I expect him by his talents to increase my insight into these matters. Already, before having opened it, I am perfectly certain that he has not justified any one of his specific claims, not because I believe that I am in possession of conclusive proofs of these important propositions, but because the transcendental critique, which has disclosed to me all the resources of our pure reason, has completely convinced me that, as reason is incompetent to arrive at affirmative assertions in this field, it is equally unable, indeed even less able, to establish any negative conclusion in regard to these questions. For from what source will the freethinker derive his professed knowledge that there is, for example, no supreme being? This proposition is outside the field of possible experience, and therefore beyond the limits of all human insight. The reply of the *dogmatic* defender of the good cause I should not read at all. I know beforehand that he will attack the sophistical arguments of his opponent simply in order to gain acceptance for his own; and I also know that a quite familiar line of false argument does not yield so much material for new observations as one that is novel and ingeniously elaborated. The opponent of religion is indeed, in his own way,

A 754 }  
B 782 } no less dogmatic, but he affords me a welcome opportunity of applying and, in this or that respect, amending the principles

of my Critique, while at the same time I need be in no fear of these principles being in the least degree endangered.

The sceptic is thus the taskmaster who constrains the dogmatic reasoner to develop a sound critique of the understanding and reason. When we have advanced thus far, we need fear no further challenge, since we have learned to distinguish our real possessions from that which lies entirely outside them; and as we make no claims in regard to this latter domain, we cannot become involved in any dispute in respect to it. While, therefore, the sceptical procedure cannot of itself yield any *satisfying* answer to the questions of reason, none the less it *prepares the way* by arousing reason to circumspection, and by indicating the radical measures which are adequate to secure it in its legitimate possessions.

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### Section 3

#### THE DISCIPLINE OF PURE REASON IN REGARD TO HYPOTHESES

Since criticism of our reason has at last taught us that we cannot by means of its pure and speculative employment arrive at any knowledge whatsoever, may it not seem that a proportionately wider field is opened for *hypotheses*? For are we not at liberty, where we cannot make assertions, at least to invent theories and to have opinions?

If the imagination is not simply to be *visionary*, but is to be *inventive* under the strict surveillance of reason, there must always previously be something that is completely certain, and not invented or merely a matter of opinion, namely, the *possibility* of the object itself. Once that is established, it is then permissible to have recourse to opinion in regard to its actuality; but this opinion, if it is not to be groundless, must be brought into connection with what is actually given and so far certain, as serving to account for what is thus given. Then, and only then, can the supposition be entitled an *hypothesis*.

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As we cannot form the least conception *a priori* of the possibility of dynamical connection, and as the categories of the pure understanding do not suffice for devising any such

conception, but only for apprehending it when met with in experience, we cannot, in accordance with these categories, creatively imagine any object in terms of any new quality that does not allow of being given in experience; and we cannot, therefore, make use of such an object in any legitimate hypothesis; otherwise we should be resting reason on empty figments of the brain, and not on concepts of things. Thus it is not permissible to invent any new original powers, as, for instance, an understanding capable of intuiting its objects without the aid of senses; or a force of attraction without any contact; or a new kind of substance existing in space and yet not impenetrable. Nor is it legitimate to postulate a form of communion of substances which is different from  
 A 771 }  
 B 799 } any revealed in experience, a presence that is not spatial, a duration that is not temporal. In a word, our reason can employ as conditions of the possibility of things only the conditions of possible experience; it can never proceed to four concepts of things quite independently of these conditions. Such concepts, though not self-contradictory, would be without an object.

The concepts of reason are, as we have said, mere ideas, and have no object that can be met with in any experience. None the less they do not on this account signify objects that having been invented are thereupon assumed to be possible. They are thought only problematically, in order that upon them (as heuristic fictions), we may base regulative principles of the systematic employment of the understanding in the field of experience. Save in this connection they are merely thought-entities, the possibility of which is not demonstrable, and which therefore do not allow of being employed, in the character of hypotheses; in explanation of the actual appearances.

In the explanation of given appearances, no things or grounds of explanation can be adduced other than those which have been found to stand in connection with given appearances in accordance with the already known laws of the appearances. A *transcendental hypothesis*, in which a mere idea of reason is used in explanation of natural existences, would really be no explanation; so to proceed would be to explain something, which in terms of known empirical prin-

ciples we do not understand sufficiently, by something which we do not understand at all. The wildest hypotheses, if only they are physical, are here more tolerable than a hyper-physical hypothesis, such as the appeal to a divine Author, assumed simply in order that we may have an explanation. That would be a principle of *ignava ratio*; for we should be passing over all causes the objective reality of which, at least as regards their possibility, can be ascertained in the course of experience, in order to rest in a mere idea—an idea that is very comforting to reason. {A 773  
B 808

The second requirement for the admissibility of an hypothesis is its adequacy in accounting *a priori* for those consequences which are [*de facto*] given. If for this purpose we have to call in auxiliary hypotheses, they give rise to the suspicion that they are mere fictions; for each of them requires the same justification as is necessary in the case of the fundamental hypothesis, and they are not, therefore, in a position to bear reliable testimony. If we assume an absolutely perfect cause, we need not be at a loss in explaining the purposiveness, order, and vastness which are displayed in the world; but in view of what, judged at least by our concepts, are the obvious deviations and evils, other new hypotheses are required in order to uphold the original hypothesis in face of the objections which these suggest. {A 774  
B 808

But although, in dealing with the merely speculative questions of pure reason, hypotheses are not available for the purposes of basing propositions upon them, they are yet entirely permissible for the purposes of defending propositions; that is to say, they may not be employed in any dogmatic, but only in polemical fashion. By the defence of propositions I do not mean the addition of fresh grounds for their assertion, but merely the nullifying of the sophistical arguments by which our opponent professes to invalidate this assertion. In the practical sphere reason has rights of possession, of which it does not require to offer proof, and of which, in fact, it could not supply proof. The burden of proof accordingly rests upon the opponent. But since the latter knows just as little of the object under question, in trying to prove its non-existence, as does the former in maintaining its reality, it is evident that the former, who is asserting something as a practically necessary {A 776  
B 804  
  
A 777  
B 805

supposition, is at an advantage (*melior est conditio possidentis*). For he is at liberty to employ, as it were in self-defence, on behalf of his own good cause, the very same weapons that his opponent employs against that cause, that is, hypotheses. These are not intended to strengthen the proof of his position, but only to show that the opposing party has much too little understanding of the matter in dispute to allow of his flattering himself that he has the advantage in respect of speculative insight.

Hypotheses are therefore, in the domain of pure reason, permissible only as weapons of war, and only for the purpose of defending a right, not in order to establish it. If, for instance, having assumed (in some non-speculative connection) the nature of the soul to be immaterial and not subject to any corporeal change, we are met by the difficulty that nevertheless experience seems to prove that the exaltation and the derangement of our mental powers are alike in being merely diverse modifications of our organs, we can weaken the force of this proof by postulating that our body may be nothing more than a fundamental appearance which in this our present state (in this life) serves as a condition of our whole faculty of sensibility, and therewith of all our thought, and that separation from the body may therefore be regarded as the end of this sensible employment of our faculty of knowledge and the beginning of its intellectual employment. Thus regarded, the body would not be the cause of thought, but merely a restrictive condition of it, and therefore, while indeed furthering the sensible and animal life, it would because of this very fact have to be considered a hindrance to the pure and spiritual life. The dependence of the animal and sensible upon the bodily constitution would then in nowise prove the dependence of our entire life upon the state of our organs. We might go yet further, and discover quite new objections, which either have never been suggested or have never been sufficiently developed.

Now of all this we have not the least knowledge. We plead it only in hypothetical fashion, to meet the attack; we are not actually asserting it. For it is not even an idea of reason, but is a concept *devised* merely for the purposes of self-defence. None the less we are here proceeding in entire conformity



with reason. Our opponent falsely represents the absence of empirical conditions as itself amounting to proof of the total impossibility of our belief. and is therefore proceeding on the assumption that he has exhausted all the possibilities. What we are doing is merely to show that it is just as little possible for him to comprehend the whole field of possible things through mere laws of experience as it is for us to reach, outside experience, any conclusions justifiable for our reason. For to make principles of possible experience conditions of the possibility of things in general is just as transcendent a procedure as to assert the objective reality of [transcendent] concepts, the objects of which cannot be found anywhere save outside the limits of all possible experience. What pure reason judges *assertorically*, must (like everything that reason knows) be necessary; otherwise nothing at all is asserted. Accordingly, pure reason does not, in point of fact, contain any opinions whatsoever. The hypotheses, above referred to, are merely *problematic* judgments, which at least cannot be refuted, although they do not indeed allow of any proof. They are therefore nothing but private opinions. Nevertheless, we cannot properly dispense with them as weapons against the misgivings which are apt to occur; they are necessary even to secure our inner tranquillity. We must preserve to them this character, carefully guarding against the assumption of their independent authority or absolute validity, since otherwise they would drown reason in fictions and delusions.

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