

# Critique of Pure Reason up to the end of the Analytic

Immanuel Kant

1781

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[Brackets] enclose editorial explanations. Small ·dots· enclose material that has been added, but can be read as though it were part of the original text. Occasional •bullets, and also indenting of passages that are not quotations, are meant as aids to grasping the structure of a sentence or a thought. Each four-point ellipsis. . . indicates the omission of a brief passage that seems to present more difficulty than it is worth. Longer omissions are reported between square brackets in normal-sized type. This version follows (B) the second edition of the *Critique*, though it also includes the (A) first-edition version of the Preface and of one other extended passage. Numerals like vii and 27 in the margins refer to page-numbers in B; ones like A xii and A 242 refer to A, and are given only for passages that don't also occur in B; and the likes of ..68 mean that B 68 (or whatever) started during the immediately preceding passage that has been omitted. These references can help you to connect this version with other translations or with the original German. Cross-references to other parts of this work include the word 'page(s)', and refer to page-numbers at the foot of each page. When something is referred to as 'on page n' it may run over onto the next page.

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## Chapter 2: Transcendental deduction

### 1. The principles of any transcendental deduction

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117 When legal theorists speak of entitlements and claims, they distinguish questions of law from questions of fact, and demand proof of both ·if a given legal action is to succeed·. They use the term ‘deduction’ to label the procedure of establishing the legal point of the person’s right or entitlement. Now, we use many empirical concepts without anyone’s objecting; we don’t need a ‘deduction’ to convince us that we are justified in taking them to have meanings. . . ., because experience is always available to prove their objective reality. But some impostor concepts—such as *fortune* and *fate*—are pretty generally allowed to get by; and when there *is* an occasional demand to know what right they have to acceptance, there’s a problem about giving them a ‘deduction’, because neither experience nor reason provides a clear basis for an entitlement to use them.

Among the many concepts that form the highly complex web of human knowledge, some are marked out for pure *a priori* use, completely independently of all experience; and these always require a deduction of their entitlement—their *right* to be used. No proofs from experience could show that it’s lawful to use a concept in an *a priori* manner; ·so their ‘deduction’ must come from somewhere else. To provide it, we have to know *how* these concepts can apply to objects that they don’t derive from any experience. So I use the label ‘transcendental deduction’ for the explanation of how concepts can apply to objects *a priori*. ·It is ‘transcendental’ because it has to do with the possibility of *a priori* knowledge [he explained this meaning of ‘transcendental’ on page 43], and it’s a ‘deduction’ in the legal sense because it secures the *right* of such *a priori* concepts to be used, the *legitimacy* of their use·.

I distinguish this from the *empirical* deduction of a concept, which shows how a concept is acquired through experience, and reflection on experience, and therefore isn’t concerned with the legitimacy of the concept but only with the facts about how we come to have it. [At the start of this chapter Kant has tied ‘deduction’ to questions of law or rights or legitimacy, and not of facts; now he says that the ‘empirical deduction’ of a (presumably empirical) concept is a matter of fact and not law. Perhaps he slid into this via the thought that the question of the •legitimacy of an empirical concept is obviously and immediately settled by the •facts about the concept’s empirical success—so obviously and immediately that one is tempted to think that we have here only a question of fact.].

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Now we already have concepts of two entirely different kinds, which are alike in that concepts of both kinds relate to objects completely *a priori*. The two are:

- the concepts of space and time, as forms of sensibility, and
- the categories, as concepts of the understanding.

It would be a waste of time to look for an *empirical* deduction of either of these, because what is special about them is precisely that they apply to •their objects without having borrowed anything from experience for the representation of •them. So if there has to be a deduction of them, it will have to be a *transcendental* one.

Still, although with these concepts we can’t look to experience for what makes them possible, we can—as we can with *any* knowledge—look to experience for the occasional causes of their production. [This means, approximately, ‘look to experience for the events that trigger the concepts, release them for action’. Throughout early modern philosophy, ‘occasion’ and ‘occasional cause’ and their equivalents in other languages were used to express the idea of one event’s having some part in the occurrence of some other event without outright *causing* it to occur.] ·Such an account, in which the crucial events are arranged in the order in which

they occur, would run as follows:

The impressions of the senses provide the first trigger for the opening of the entire power of knowledge to them and for the coming into existence of *experience*. Experience contains two very unlike elements—

- the *matter* for knowledge, obtained from the senses, and
- a certain *form* for ordering this knowledge, obtained from the inner source of pure intuiting and thinking.

The occurrence of the sensory matter is what first triggers the intellectual form and brings concepts into play.

119 That is an account of our knowledge faculty's first attempts to ascend from individual perceptions to general concepts. It's a useful kind of account to give, and we are indebted to the famous Locke for having first opened the way for it. But a *deduction* of the pure *a priori* concepts—i.e. an explanation of why they are *legitimate*—can't be achieved in this way; it doesn't lie on this path of a first-this-then-that kind of account. Given that these concepts are to be used in a way that is entirely independent of experience, they need a birth-certificate that doesn't imply that experience is their parent! [Kant is about to mention a 'physiological derivation' of the pure concepts. He is referring to the first-this-then-that account in the indented passage above. For the term 'physiological' (which won't occur again until the *Dialectic*) see the note on page 1.] The attempted physiological derivation of the pure concepts can't properly be called a 'deduction' at all, because it concerns a question of fact rather than of legitimacy. . . . It is clear, then, that any properly so-called *deduction* of them must be not empirical but transcendental. Any empirical so-called-deduction of them is an idle waste of time, and wouldn't be attempted by anyone who properly grasped the entirely special nature of

these items of knowledge.

Granted that the only possible deduction of pure *a priori* knowledge is a transcendental one, it's not obvious that there absolutely has to be any deduction of it. I have provided one: I traced the concepts of space and time to their sources by means of a transcendental deduction, and explained and pinned down their *a priori* objective validity. But is it clear that this was needed? Geometry follows its secure course through strictly *a priori* items of knowledge, without having to ask philosophy to certify the pure and lawful pedigree of its basic concept of space!

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Well, yes, but what has enabled geometry to 'go it alone' and yet be secure and successful is a special fact about the concept of space, one that doesn't carry over to the categories. Here are the two sides of the contrast I am drawing:

The use of the concept of space in geometry concerns only the external world of the senses; space is the pure form of our intuitions of that external world; so all geometrical knowledge, based as it is on a *a priori* intuition, is immediately evident. This *a priori* intuition that gives us our geometrical knowledge gives us the objects of that knowledge, so far as their form is concerned; there's no need for a deduction to show that our geometrical concepts are legitimate, because our geometrical knowledge itself presents us with the relevant objects, so there is no question of legitimacy still to be answered.

In contrast with that:

**1.** The pure concepts of the understanding (the categories) . . . speak of objects not through predicates of intuition and sensibility but through predicates of pure *a priori* thinking; so they relate to objects *as such*, not merely to objects *as given in sensibility* but to objects *period*. **2.** Since the categories are

not based on experience, they can't exhibit in *a priori* intuition any objects such as might make them legitimate prior to any experience.

121 For these two reasons, suspicions arise concerning the objective validity and limits of use of the categories. And the categories make the concept of *space* suspect too, because of their tendency to use it beyond the conditions of sensible intuition (which is why a transcendental deduction of that concept *was* needed, after all!). So you'll have to be convinced of the unavoidable necessity of a transcendental deduction of the categories before taking a single step in the field of pure reason. Otherwise you'll stumble around blindly, eventually getting back to the very state of ignorance that you started off with. There is the choice: either we surrender completely all claims to insights of pure reason in its much-prized field, namely beyond the boundaries of all possible experience, or we carry out this critical investigation—including the transcendental deduction of the categories—completely. Because there is so much at stake, you need to understand clearly in advance how hard this is going to be. Don't complain of obscurity in what I write when the trouble lies in the deeply veiled nature of the subject-matter, and don't get annoyed by the presence of an obstacle at a time when it's still too early to clear it away.

122 It hasn't been hard to explain how the concepts of space and time must necessarily apply to objects despite their *a priori* status, and must make it possible to have synthetic knowledge of those objects independently of all experience. It's only through those pure forms of sensibility (space and time) that an object can appear to us, they are pure intuitions that contain *a priori* the conditions of the possibility of objects as appearances. . . .

The categories of the understanding, on the other hand, don't represent the conditions under which objects are given

in intuition at all; so objects can appear to us without necessarily having to be related to the functions of the understanding, and therefore without the understanding containing their *a priori* conditions. [Kant doesn't mean that this *can* happen—merely that nothing has been said so far that shows that it can't.] So a difficulty turns up here that we didn't meet in the domain of sensibility, namely the difficulty of showing how subjective conditions of thinking can have objective validity, i.e. how they can set conditions for the possibility of all knowledge of objects. The question arises because appearances can certainly be given in intuition without functions of the understanding, i.e. without being brought under concepts. Take the concept of *cause*, for example. This signifies a particular kind of judgment in which

•If you have A, then there's a rule saying that you also get B.

It's not clear *a priori* why appearances should contain anything of this sort (and it can't be shown on the basis of experience, for the objective validity of this concept must be secured *a priori*); so there is a question as to whether the concept mightn't be empty, with nothing answering to it among the appearances. This much is clearly right:

•Objects of sensible intuition must fit the formal conditions of sensibility that lie in the mind *a priori*, 123

because if they didn't they would not be objects *for us*. But it's not so easy to see the argument for this:

•Objects of sensible intuition must also fit the conditions that the understanding requires for the synthetic unity of thinking.

Appearances might be so constituted that the understanding didn't find them to be in accordance with the conditions of its unity. In that case, everything would lie in such confusion that the series of appearances didn't offer anything that would furnish a rule of synthesis and thus fit the concept

of cause and effect, so that this concept would be entirely empty, null, and meaningless. Yet even then appearances would offer objects to our intuition, for intuition doesn't need the activity of thinking.

You might hope to escape these laborious investigations on the ground that:

'Experience constantly presents *regularities* in appearances; these provide plenty of opportunity to abstract the concept of cause from them, and at the same time confirm the objective validity of the concept of cause.'

124 You'll say this only if you haven't taken in that the concept of cause *can't* arise in this way. If it's not to be entirely surrendered as a mere fantasy of the brain, the concept of cause must be grounded completely *a priori* in the understanding. For it absolutely requires that something A is of such a kind that something else B follows from it *necessarily and in accordance with an absolutely universal rule*. Appearances do present cases from which we can extract a rule about what *usually happens*, but never a rule according to which the succession is necessary; we can get from appearances a rule of the form 'In most cases when an A-type event occurs, a B-type event follows', but not one of the form 'Always when an A-type event occurs, a B-type event must follow'. To judgments of cause and effect there belongs a dignity that can't ever be expressed empirically, namely that the effect doesn't merely follow *after* the cause but is posited *through* it and follows *from* it. And strict universality of the rule isn't a property of any empirical rule either. The most a rule can get from induction—i.e. from regularities in our experience—is comparative universality, i.e. extensive applicability. If we treated our pure concepts of the understanding as merely empirical products, that would be a complete change in our way of using them.

### 1/2 Final step towards the transcendental deduction of the categories

How can a synthetic representation and its object •come together, •necessarily relate to each other, as it were •come to terms with each other? There are only two possible ways.

Either (1) the object alone makes the representation possible, or (2) the representation alone makes the object possible. 125

If (1) is the case, then this relation is only empirical, and the representation is never possible *a priori*. . . . [The passage

from \* here to the next asterisk expands the original in ways that the apparatus of •small dots• can't easily convey.]

What I envisage in (2) is not the representation's making the object possible by causing it to *exist*. A representation *can* cause an object to exist—e.g. when a man gets the thought of a sandwich, which leads him to want a sandwich, which leads him to make one.

But that's irrelevant to (2) as I intend it: I spoke of what a representation does **alone**, thus excluding anything it does *by means of the will* (which is how the thought of a sandwich produces the sandwich). Well, how else can a representation make an object possible? Like this: If it is only through this representation that anything can be known as an object, any object that the representation has will have to measure up to whatever standards the representation sets, whatever conditions it imposes; and in that way the representation can settle some aspects of what the object will be like. \*

Now let us apply this to each of the two conditions—the *only two*—under which an object can be known, namely •the conditions laid down by•

- an intuition, through which the object is *given*, though only as appearance; and

- a concept, through which the object corresponding to the intuition is *thought*.

What I have said earlier in this work makes it clear that the

126 first condition—the one that has to be satisfied if objects are to be intuited—does in fact lie in the mind *a priori* as the basis for the form of objects. So all appearances must agree with this formal condition of sensibility, because that's the only way they can *appear*, i.e. be empirically intuited and given. The question now is whether the analogous thing holds for *a priori* concepts. Do they set conditions that have to be satisfied by anything that is to be (not intuited, but) *thought*. . . .? If they do, then all empirical knowledge of objects has to conform to our *a priori* concepts, because if it doesn't then nothing is possible as an object of experience. And that is how matters stand. All experience contains, in addition to the intuition of the senses through which something is given, a concept of an object that is given in intuition (i.e. that appears). Thus, concepts of *objects as such* underlie all experiential knowledge, as *a priori* conditions that it has to satisfy; so the objective validity of the categories as *a priori* concepts rests on the fact that it's only through them that experience is possible. . . . Since it is only by means of them that any object of experience can be thought at all, it follows that they apply necessarily and *a priori* to objects of experience.

The transcendental deduction of all *a priori* concepts therefore has a principle toward which the entire investigation must be directed, namely this: *a priori* concepts must be recognised as *a priori* conditions of the possibility of experience (whether of the intuition that is encountered in experience or of the thinking that it involves). And concepts that provide the objective ground for the possibility of experience are, just because they do that, **necessary**. The unrolling of the experience in which objects of these concepts are encountered *illustrates* the concepts but isn't a *deduction* of them; if it were, that would mean that they were 127 merely **contingent**. Without this absolutely basic relation to

the possibility of experience in which objects of knowledge may be found, we couldn't understand how they could be related to any object.

·FROM HERE TO PAGE 73 THE TEXT COMPLETES THE 'TRANSCENDENTAL DEDUCTION OF THE CATEGORIES' IN (A) THE FIRST EDITION OF THE WORK. TO STAY WITH THE (B) SECOND-EDITION VERSION, JUMP TO PAGE 73.·

There are three sources (capacities or faculties of the soul) that contain the conditions of the possibility of all experience; I mean three *basic* sources—ones that can't be derived from any other faculty of the mind. They are *sense*, *imagination*, and *self-awareness*. [The last term translates Kant's *Apperzeption*. See note on page 38.] They are the bases for (1) the *a priori synopsis* of the manifold through sense, (2) the *synthesis* of this manifold through imagination, and (3) the *unity* of this synthesis through basic self-awareness. All these *faculties* have, as well as their empirical use, a transcendental use which concerns the form alone, and is possible *a priori*. I have discussed the *sense* part of this topic in Part 1; let us A 95 now try to get an understanding of the other two.

## 2. The *a priori* bases for the possibility of experience

It is altogether contradictory and impossible that a concept should be produced completely *a priori* and should refer to an object unless either

- it is contained in the concept of *possible experience*
- or
- it consists of elements of a possible experience.

If neither of those was the case, the concept would have no content because there would be no intuition corresponding to it; and intuitions are what give us objects; they are the only things that experience can be *of*. An *a priori* concept that didn't apply to experience would be only the logical form of a concept, not a real concept through which something

was thought.

Any pure *a priori* concepts that there are can't of course contain anything empirical; their objective reality will have to come from their being *a priori* conditions of possible experience.

So if we want to know how it's possible for there to be pure concepts of understanding, we must face up to this question:

- A 96 •What are the *a priori* conditions that •make experience possible, and that •remain as its substructure even when everything empirical has been filtered out from appearances?

A concept that universally and adequately expressed such a formal and objective condition of experience would be called a 'pure concept of understanding'. Once I have such concepts I can assemble them into conceptual structures through which I have thoughts about impossible objects, or about objects that aren't inherently impossible but can't be given in any experience. That can happen through my assembling them in a way that leaves out something that's essential for possible experience (as happens when people form the concept of *spirit*); or through my assembling them to make something that extends further than experience can follow (as happens when people form the concept of *God*). But the *elements* of all items of *a priori* knowledge—the conceptual building-bricks for the structures I have mentioned—even thoughts of capricious and incongruous fictions, . . . all have to contain the pure *a priori* conditions of possible experience that has an empirical object. . . .

We do have concepts that contain *a priori* the pure thought involved in every experience—they are *the categories*. If we can prove that the only way an object can be thought is through the categories, that will be a sufficient deduction of them [= 'proof of their legitimacy'], and will justify their objective

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validity. But the task is more complicated than that suggests, for two reasons. (1) When we have a thought about an object, this involves more than merely our faculty of thought, the understanding; and we'll have to investigate what else is involved. (2) Even considering just the understanding itself, we run into a question: Given that the understanding is a faculty of *knowledge*, whose job it is to refer to objects, what makes such a reference possible? So en route to our transcendental deduction of the categories we must first consider them—the subjective sources that form the *a priori* basis for the possibility of experience—in terms not of their empirical character but of their transcendental character.

If each representation were completely foreign to every other, as it were standing apart in isolation, there would be no such thing as knowledge; because knowledge is essentially a whole in which representations stand compared and connected.

**what Kant wrote next, conservatively translated:** When I ascribe to sense a synopsis [from Greek meaning 'view together'], because sense contains a manifold in its intuition, then there is always, corresponding to this synopsis, a synthesis [from Greek meaning 'put together']. Thus, receptivity can make knowledge possible only when combined with spontaneity.

**what he meant, more plainly put:** Every sensory state contains a variety of different elements, which leads me to say that each such state involves a seeing-together. And corresponding to every seeing-together there is a putting-together. Thus, •passive intake can make knowledge possible only when it is combined with something •active. This activeness is exercised in three acts of synthesis that must occur in all knowledge:

- *apprehending* representations as states of the mind in intuition,
- *reproducing* them in imagination, and
- *recognizing* them in a concept.

A 98 These three syntheses point to three subjective sources of knowledge which make possible the understanding itself—and consequently all experience as its empirical product.

### Preliminary Remark

The deduction of the categories is so difficult, forcing us to dig so deeply into the ultimate basis for the possibility of our having any knowledge, that I'll have to take steps to get it across to you. I don't want to plunge into the complexities of a complete theory, but I also don't want to leave out anything indispensable; so I have thought it best to offer the four following sub-sections [ending on page 68], to *prepare* you rather than to *instruct* you. I'll present all this systematically in Section 3 [starting on that same page]. Don't get discouraged by obscurities in these earlier sub-sections. When one is doing something that has never before been attempted, there is bound to be some obscurity. I trust that all will come clear in Section 3.

#### 2/1 The synthesis of apprehension in intuition

A 99 Whatever the origin of our representations—whether they come from the influence of outer things or from inner causes, whether they arise *a priori* or empirically as appearances—they are all states of the mind and so all belong to inner sense. So all our knowledge is ultimately subject to *time*, because that is the formal condition of inner sense. They must all be ordered, connected, and inter-related *in time*. Consider this general remark as something that is being assumed, as quite fundamental, in what follows.

Every intuition contains in itself a manifold—a variety of different elements—that can be represented as a manifold only if the mind distinguishes from one another the times at which the various elements occur. Why? Because a representation considered at a single moment can't be anything but an absolute unity—i.e. can't be in any sense a *manifold*. For this time-taking manifold to give rise to a unified intuition (in the representation of space, for example), it must first be run through and held together. I call this act of running through and holding together the 'synthesis of apprehension', because it is aimed directly at the intuition. An intuition does indeed offer a manifold; but this synthesis has to occur if the manifold of intuition is to be represented as a manifold and as contained in a single representation.

This synthesis of apprehension can be performed empirically, but it must also be performed *a priori*, i.e. in respect of non-empirical representations. That's because without it we couldn't have *a priori* the representations of space or of time. Those representations can be produced only through the synthesis of the manifold that sensibility offers in its basic passive intake. So we have a *pure* synthesis of apprehension.

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#### 2/2 The synthesis of reproduction in imagination

There is a merely empirical law according to which this happens:

Representations that have often followed or accompanied one another finally become 'associated', in such a way that one of these representations will in a regular fashion bring about a transition of the mind to the other, even if no object of the representations is present.

This 'law of reproduction' (as I call it) makes a certain demand of the appearances that come before us. It isn't demanded for the law to be *true*, but for it to *have any*

A 101 *application*. Specifically, the law requires that appearances do fit under it, i.e. that in the manifold of these representations it does happen that one representation is ‘followed or accompanied by’ another in a regular fashion. If that weren’t so, our empirical imagination would never have an opportunity to exercise its power of associating ideas, so that this power would remain concealed within the mind as a dead faculty that even we didn’t know about. If cinnabar was sometimes red and sometimes black, sometimes light and sometimes heavy; if a human changed sometimes into a fox and sometimes into a bear; if on the longest day of the year the countryside was covered with fruit in some years and with ice and snow in others; then my empirical imagination would never find an opportunity when representing a red colour to bring to mind heavy cinnabar. And there can’t be an *empirical* synthesis of reproduction unless appearances are linguistically labelled by us in ways that correspond to the likenesses and dissimilarities among the appearances themselves.

So there has to be something that makes the reproduction of appearances possible, by serving as the *a priori* basis for the necessary synthetic unity of appearances. We don’t have to look far for this ‘something’ when we bear in mind that •appearances are not things in themselves, but are the mere play of our •representations, which ultimately boil down to •states of our inner sense. For if we can show that

- even our purest *a priori* intuitions provide us with knowledge only to the extent that the manifold in them hangs together in a way that makes a thoroughgoing synthesis of reproduction possible,

then we can infer that

- this synthesis of reproduction in imagination is also—like the synthesis of apprehension—based on *a priori* principles in advance of all experience;

and we must assume a pure transcendental synthesis of imagination that underlies the very possibility of all experience. For experience as such necessarily presupposes the reproducibility of appearances. The reason for this lies even deeper than the ‘associations’ through which I first introduced this topic. Suppose I want to

- draw a line in thought, or
- think about a 24-hour period of time, or
- have the thought of some particular number,

each of these intellectual activities obviously involves me in apprehending, one after another, the various elements of a time-taking manifold. And as I work through the later stages of such a manifold, I have to keep in mind the earlier stages of it. If I didn’t—if I let go of the representation of the first parts of the line, the earlier parts of the 24 hours, the units of the number—and didn’t *reproduce* them while moving on to the later parts, a complete representation would never be obtained; I couldn’t have any of those thoughts—not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time.

So there’s an intimate tie between the two syntheses I have been discussing. The •synthesis of apprehension is the transcendental basis for the possibility of *any* items of knowledge—the pure *a priori* ones just as much as the empirical ones. And the •reproductive synthesis of the imagination is presupposed by any act of empirical thinking, and therefore is also to be counted among the transcendental acts of the mind. So I shall call this faculty the ‘transcendental faculty of imagination’.

### 2/3 The synthesis of recognition in a concept

If I weren’t conscious that what I am thinking now is the same as what I thought a moment ago, none of the reproduction in the series of representations would do me

any good. For in that case •the present state of affairs would be a new representation, one that had no connection with the step-by-step act—the synthesis of reproduction—by which it was to have been generated; and •the manifold of the representation would never form a whole, since it would lack the unity that only consciousness can impart to it. Suppose that when I am counting I forget that the units that now hover before me have been added up one at a time, I would never know that by this successive addition of unit to unit a total is being produced, 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. [The German for 'concept' is *Begriff*, from the verb *begreifen*, which can mean 'comprise' or 'include' or 'bring together'.] For this unitary consciousness is what makes a single representation out of the manifold that is •intuited stepwise through a period of time and then also •reproduced. This consciousness may often be only faint, so that we notice it only in the representation that results from the synthesis, and not at all in the act of synthesis through which the representation is produced. But that's a mere matter of detail; the fact is that this consciousness, however indistinct it may be, must always be present. Without it there could be no concepts and hence no knowledge of objects.

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At this point I pause to explain what I mean by the expression 'an object of representations'. I have said that appearances are merely sensible representations, which means that they aren't objects that could exist outside our power of representation. So what do I mean when I speak of an object that corresponds to •an item of knowledge and is therefore distinct from •it? It's easy to see that this 'object' has to be thought of merely as •a perfectly abstract •*something* =  $x$ ; because outside our knowledge we have nothing that we

could set over against this knowledge as corresponding to it.

•But although we can't possibly put detailed flesh on the abstract bones of the concept of *something* =  $x$ , that doesn't mean that our thought of an object of our knowledge is vacuous and useless. It turns out that any •thought we have of knowledge as having an object carries with it •a thought about *necessity*: the object is viewed as *whatever it is* that prevents our items of knowledge from being haphazard or arbitrary, and *a priori* settles them in some orderly fashion. That's because their being related to an object requires them to agree with one another, i.e. to have the unity that constitutes the concept of an object.

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Since we're dealing only with the manifold of our representations, the  $x$  (the object) that corresponds to them is nothing to us, because it has to be something distinct from all our representations. So it's clear that the unity that the object makes necessary has to be the formal unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of representations. It is only when we have produced synthetic unity in the manifold of intuition that we are in a position to say that our knowledge-state •is *of* or *about* something, i.e. that it has an object. But for this unity to be possible, the intuition has to be generated by a rule-governed synthesis which

- makes the reproduction of the manifold *a priori* necessary, and
- makes possible a concept that can hold this manifold together.

Consider for example thinking of a *triangle* as an object: we do this by being conscious of the combination of three straight lines according to a rule by which such an intuition can always be exhibited. This *unity of the rule* fixes what is in the manifold, and stops it from having any properties that would defeat the unity of self-awareness. . . .

A 106 All knowledge requires a concept, though it may be a quite imperfect or obscure one. And a concept is always universal in its form, and can serve as a rule. For example, the unity of the manifold that is thought through our concept of *body* enables that concept to serve as a rule in our thoughts and knowledge concerning outer appearances. . . . When we perceive something outside us, the concept of body necessitates the representation of extension and, along with that, representations of impenetrability, shape, and so on.

All necessity—*all* necessity—is based on a transcendental condition. So there must be a transcendental basis

- for the unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of all our intuitions,

and consequently also

- for the concepts of objects in general,

and so also

- for all objects of experience

—a basis without which we couldn't possibly have any thought of any object for our intuitions, i.e. any thought concerning what our intuitions are intuitions *of*. That, as I have already explained, is because all there is to this 'object' is that it is the *something* the concept of which expresses that kind of necessity of synthesis.

A 107 What is usually called 'inner sense' or 'empirical self-awareness' delivers a consciousness of oneself that comes through inner perception of the details of one's inner state; but *that* self-consciousness is merely empirical, and is always changing. This flow of inner appearances can't present one with a fixed and abiding self. If something has *necessarily* to be represented as numerically identical, the thought of its identity can't be based on empirical data. It must—as I remarked a moment ago—be based on a transcendental presupposition, and *that* can't be valid unless it rests on a condition that precedes all experience and makes experience

itself possible. This basic transcendental condition is no other than *transcendental self-awareness*.

If we didn't have the unity of consciousness that precedes all data of intuitions and makes it possible for us to have representations of objects, we couldn't have any knowledge at all. . . . I use the label 'transcendental self-awareness' for this pure basic unchangeable consciousness—the one expressed by the always-true 'I think'. It merits the label 'transcendental' because. . . it is the *a priori* basis for all concepts, just as the manifoldness of space and time is the *a priori* basis for the intuitions of sensibility.

A 108

This transcendental unity of self-awareness links appearances together according to laws. (*Any* appearances can be thus linked, provided they are capable of occurring together in a single experience.) For a manifold to be taken in by a unified single mind, that mind must be conscious of the single act of synthesis through which it combines the elements of the manifold in one item of knowledge. Thus, the mind's basic and necessary consciousness of its own identity is at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances according to concepts, i.e. according to rules. Such a rule does at least two things: it pulls current appearances together with selected past ones, as all being instances of this one concept; and it provides the thought of an object in which the various aspects of appearance are united. . . .

Now I am in a position to give a more adequate account of our concept of *object*—not this or that object, just *object* as such. Every representation has, just because it is a representation, an object; and a representation can itself in turn become the object of another representation. The only objects that can be given to us directly are appearances; and the aspect of an appearance that relates immediately to the object is called 'intuition'. But these appearances are not

A 109

things in themselves; they are only representations, which in turn have their object—an object that can't itself be intuited by us, and can therefore be called 'the non-empirical, i.e. transcendental, object =  $x$ '.

The pure concept of this transcendental object—the very same object =  $x$  throughout all our knowledge—is what gives objective reality to all our empirical concepts, i.e. makes them all *refer to an object*. This concept can't have any content that would connect it with this or that specific intuition. All it does is to express the unity that must be found in any manifold of knowledge that is knowledge of something. And this *of*-relation is nothing but the necessary unity of •consciousness, and therefore also of •the synthesis through which the mind combines •the elements of• the manifold. . . .in one representation. Since this unity must be regarded as necessary *a priori*. . . .the relation to a transcendental object (i.e. the objective reality of our empirical knowledge) rests on this transcendental law:

A 110

If objects are to be given to us through appearances, the appearances must fall under the *a priori* rules of synthetic unity that make it possible for them to be inter-related in empirical intuition.

In other words, just as appearances in mere intuition must square with the formal conditions of space and of time, appearances in experience must conform to the conditions of the necessary unity of self-awareness—only thus can knowledge be possible in the first place.

#### **2/4 Preliminary explanation of the possibility of the categories as items of *a priori* knowledge**

•For any one person• there is only one experience, in which all •his• perceptions are represented as thoroughly and regularly connected, just as there is only one space and one time that contain every kind of appearance and every relation

to existence or nonexistence. We do sometimes speak of 'different experiences', but we must be referring to different *perceptions* that all belong to the very same general *experience*. This thoroughgoing synthetic unity of perceptions is indeed the form of experience; it is simply the synthetic unity of appearances in accordance with concepts.

A 111

Unity of synthesis according to empirical concepts would be entirely contingent. If the empirical concepts weren't held together by a transcendental basis, it would be possible for appearances to crowd in on the soul without adding up to *experience*. In the absence of any connection in accordance with universal and necessary laws, there would be no relation of knowledge to objects; the appearances might constitute intuition without thought, but not knowledge; so for us they would be no better than nothing.

•Any experience involves intuitions to which thought is applied•. Now I maintain that the •twelve• categories that I have presented are required for the •thought component of experience, just as space and time are required for the •intuition component. So the categories are *a priori* conditions of possible •experience, which makes them at the same time conditions of the possibility of •objects of experience. So there can't be appearances of objects that don't conform to the categories, which means that the categories have *a priori* objective validity—which is what we wanted to know.

But what makes these categories possible—indeed what makes them *necessary*—is the way our entire sensibility (and thus every possible appearance) relates to basic self-awareness. In basic self-awareness—the always-true 'I think'—everything *must* conform to the conditions of the thoroughgoing unity of self-consciousness. . . . Thus, •for example•, the concept of a cause is just a synthesis •or joining-together• of later appearances with earlier ones *according to concepts*; and without the unity that this produces. . . .no

A 112

thoroughgoing, universal, and therefore necessary unity of consciousness would be met with in the manifold of perceptions. In that case, these perceptions wouldn't belong to any experience; they wouldn't be perceptions *of* anything, merely a blind play of representations, less even than a dream.

A 113 So it's futile and useless to try to derive these pure concepts of understanding from experience, thus ascribing to them a merely empirical origin. It goes without saying that, for instance, the concept of *cause* involves *necessity*, and that this can't come from experience. Experience does indeed show that appearances of kind B usually follow appearances of kind A; but it can't show that any A appearance *must* be followed by a B one, or that from the premise 'An A appearance exists' we can argue *a priori* and with complete universality to the conclusion 'A B appearance will exist'. As for the *empirical* rule of association that we commit ourselves to when we assert that everything in the series of events is completely rule-governed, so that every event follows—in accordance with a universal rule—from some preceding event: what does *that* law of Nature rest on? How is this 'association' itself possible? Well, the basis for the possibility of the association of the manifold, so far as it lies in the object, is called the *affinity* of the manifold. So my question comes down to this: How can we make comprehensible to ourselves the thoroughgoing affinity of appearances, whereby they do and *must* conform to unchanging laws?

On my principles it is easy to explain affinity. [Kant's explanation is very hard to follow. The core of it is this: Anything we can know or think has to come to us through basic self-awareness—the always-available and always-true 'I think'. So the very same *I* has to run through it all—this is something we know *a priori*—and this means that every appearance must satisfy whatever conditions are required

for there to be this numerically identical *I*. A description of a regularity or uniformity that comes from this requirement is called a 'rule'; and when the regularity is necessary the rule is called a 'law'.] Thus, all appearances are thoroughly inter-connected according to necessary laws, which means that they stand in a transcendental *affinity*, of which the empirical affinity is a mere consequence. A 114

It sounds very strange and absurd to say that Nature •directs itself according to something subjective, namely the basis for our self-awareness, and that it •depends on this for its lawfulness. But remember what this Nature intrinsically *is*: not a thing in itself, but merely a whole lot of appearances, a crowd of mental representations. Then you won't find it surprising that what enables Nature to have its special unity is something that lies at the base of all our knowledge, namely transcendental self-awareness. (I'm talking about the unity that entitles Nature to the status of 'object of all possible experience' and thus to the name 'Nature'!) Nor will you be surprised that, just for this very reason, this unity can be known *a priori* and therefore known to be necessary. . . .

### 3. The understanding's relation to objects as such, and the possibility of knowing them *a priori*

I want now to take the themes that I presented separately in the preceding section and tie them together in a systematic whole. What enables us to have •experience—any experience—and •knowledge of its objects is a trio of subjective sources of knowledge—*sense*, *imagination*, and *self-awareness*. Each of these can be viewed as empirical, because of its application to given appearances. But all of them are likewise *a priori* elements or foundations, which even make this empirical employment possible. •When they are being used empirically, 115

- sense* represents appearances empirically in (1) *perception*,
- imagination* represents them in (2) *association* (and reproduction), and
- self-awareness* represents them in (3) *recognition*.

•The third of these ties the other two together. •*Recognizing* is being conscious that an •imaginatively reproduced representation that you have is the same as one that you had in a previous •perception.

A 116 •Each of these empirical processes is based, *a priori*, on something that isn't empirical at all. All (1) perceptions involve inner intuition, the form of which is time, and the perceptions are based upon that. All (2) association is based on the pure synthesis that imagination performs. And empirical consciousness—which largely consists in (3) the recognition of one's various states as being of this or that general kind—is based on pure self-awareness, i.e. on the utter identity of the self through in all possible representations.

Well, now, all my representations must converge so as to have the unity of knowledge needed for experience. If we want to track them so as to see how this happens, we have to begin with pure self-awareness. Intuitions are nothing to us—don't concern us in the least—if they can't be taken up into consciousness, whether directly or indirectly. That's the only way knowledge can be possible. We are *a priori* conscious of the complete identity of *ourselves* in respect of all representations that can ever belong to our knowledge—conscious of this as a necessary condition for any representations to be possible •for us• (because the only way a representation can represent something for me is for it to belong with all the others to my single consciousness; so they must be at least capable of being so connected). This principle holds *a priori*, and can be called the transcendental

principle of the unity of all that is manifold in our representations, and consequently also of all that is manifold in intuition. This unity of the manifold in one subject—i.e. in one mind—is synthetic; so pure self-awareness supplies a principle of the *synthetic* unity of the manifold in all possible intuition.<sup>8</sup> A 117  
A 118

A •state of• synthetic unity can exist only if •an act of• synthesis has been performed, and if it's to be *a priori* necessary that the state exists then the act must be an *a priori* one. So the transcendental unity of self-awareness relates to—indeed, more specifically, it *derives from*—the pure synthesis of imagination, this being something that has to happen *a priori* if there is to be a single item of knowledge in which various elements are brought together into a manifold. (It's only the *productive* synthesis of the imagination that takes place *a priori*; the *reproductive* synthesis rests upon empirical conditions.) So the basic thing that makes it possible for there to be knowledge—and especially for there to be experience—is the necessary unifying work of pure (productive) synthesis of imagination, prior to self-awareness.

The imagination's act of synthesising counts as *transcendental* when it is concerned exclusively with the *a priori* combination of the manifold, . . . and the state of synthesis that the act produces counts as *transcendental* when it is represented as an *a priori* condition that has to be satisfied if the basic unity of self-awareness is to exist. So

- the transcendental unity of the synthesis of imagination underlies •the unity of self-awareness; and
- the unity of self-awareness underlies •the possibility of all knowledge; *therefore*
- the transcendental unity of the synthesis of imagination is needed for •any knowledge to be possible,

<sup>8</sup> Kant has here a long, difficult, and possibly dispensable footnote.

and for any objects of possible experience to be represented *a priori*.

A 119 It is the pure form of all possible knowledge . . . .

I will now try to make clear how the categories enable the understanding to come to grips with appearances; and I'll start from below, i.e. with the empirical, and work my way

A 120 upwards. What is first given to us is appearance, and when this is combined with consciousness it is called 'perception'. (Something that *couldn't* be combined with consciousness would be, so far as we are concerned, non-existent.) Now,

(1) Every appearance contains a manifold, and (2) Different perceptions occur in the mind separately and singly; therefore (3) Perceptions have to be combined in some way that **passive** sense doesn't provide.

[Kant writes as though (2) followed from (1); that was presumably a slip.] So we must have an **active** faculty for synthesising this manifold, i.e. assembling the perceptions to make an image. I call this faculty 'imagination'. What it does when it comes to bear directly on perceptions is what I call 'apprehending'.<sup>9</sup> Since imagination has to bring the manifold of intuition into the form of an image, it must first take the impressions up

A 121 into its activity, i.e. must first apprehend them.

But it's clear that even this apprehension of the manifold wouldn't be enough on its own to •produce an image, and to •make the impressions hang together, if there weren't something in the mind leads it to reinstate previous perceptions alongside current ones so as to form a whole series of

<sup>9</sup> Psychologists haven't realised that imagination is a necessary ingredient in perception. That's partly because (1) everyone limited 'imagination' to reproduction, and partly because (2) they thought that the senses don't just supply us with impressions but also assemble them to make images of objects. •Because of (2) they didn't realize that there was this work for imagination to do, and because of (1) they wouldn't have given the work to imagination even if they had seen the need for it to be done. . . .

perceptions. The power to do that is the *reproductive* faculty of imagination, which is merely empirical.

Merely laying past perceptions alongside current ones isn't enough to generate knowledge, because it might create a mere jumble of past and present perceptions, in which two perceptions were put together because of •some fact about how they happened to figure in the person's perceptual history rather than because of •some real connection between them. To avoid such jumbles, therefore, the reproduction of past perceptions must conform to a *rule* that governs which past perceptions are combined with which current ones. This subjective and *empirical* basis for *reproduction according to rules* is what is called the *association* of representations.

[Kant's next paragraph is stunningly obscure. Its gist seems to be this: The rule-governed reproduction of perceptions that he has been speaking of has to have something to bite on; the perceptions on which it operates must have intrinsic features in virtue of which some combinations of them are—while others are not—suitable contributors to a unified self-awareness and unified knowledge; and the rules of the reproductive imagination have to pick out the former. Kant reverts to the term 'affinity' [see page 68]. If two perceptions are suitable for being combined into something contributing to unified knowledge and self-awareness, the relation between them, he says, is *affinity*. He speaks of the existence of affinities amongst perceptions as an 'objective basis' for the kind of unity that's needed for knowledge and self-awareness; but he doesn't make clear why he calls it 'objective'. He does say: 'There must therefore be an objective basis. i.e. one that can be grasped *a priori*, prior to all empirical laws of the imagination'; but this is hard to connect with any of the meanings he has been giving to the term 'objective'. There is also a problem in the fact that in the next paragraph he says that affinity is a 'consequence'

of something that in *this* paragraph he seems to say it is a  
..A 122 'basis for'.]

A 123 The objective unity of all empirical consciousness in the single consciousness of basic self-awareness is thus a necessary condition for any possible perception; and therefore the affinity of all appearances, near or remote, is a necessary consequence of a synthesis in imagination which is grounded *a priori* on rules.

So the imagination is also a faculty of *a priori* synthesis, which is why I call it 'productive imagination'. And its synthesising activities, insofar as they aim only at producing unity in the synthesis of the manifold in appearance, can be called the imagination's 'transcendental function'. It does indeed seem strange that:

- the affinity of appearances, and with it
- their association, and through this
- their reproduction according to laws, and therefore
- experience itself

should all be possible only because of this transcendental function of imagination. But that's what my argument clearly establishes; for in the absence of this transcendental function no concepts of objects would meld to make up a unitary experience.

The always-present never-changing *I* of pure self-awareness constitutes the correlate of all representations that we can possibly become conscious of. This thesis:

- All consciousness belongs to an all-comprehensive pure self-awareness

is just as true as this one:

A 124 •All sensible intuition belongs to a pure inner intuition, i.e. to time.

This self-awareness is what has to be added to pure imagination in order to make its doings •intellectual. For the synthesis of imagination, even when exercised *a priori*, is

always in itself •sensible. . . .

So we have as one of the basic faculties of the human soul a *pure imagination* that underlies all *a priori* knowledge. Through it we can connect •the manifold of intuition on one hand with •the necessary unity of pure self-awareness on the other. The two extremes, sensibility and understanding, have to stand in necessary connection with each other through the mediation of this transcendental function of imagination; because otherwise sensibility, though it might come up with appearances, wouldn't supply any objects of empirical knowledge or, therefore, any experience. Actual experience is constituted by

- the apprehension of appearances,
- their association (reproduction), and thirdly
- their recognition;

and the third and highest of these merely empirical elements A125 of experience uses *concepts* that make possible the formal unity of experience, and along with that all objective validity (truth) of empirical knowledge. Among these concepts—these bases for recognition of elements of the manifold—are ones that have to do solely with *the form of an experience as such*; they are the *categories*. It is only by virtue of *them* and the processes they play a part in that appearances belong to knowledge, belong to our consciousness, belong to ourselves. That's because they are the basis not only for all formal unity in the synthesis of imagination, but also, thanks to that synthesis, for •all its empirical employment (in recognition, reproduction, association, apprehension) in connection with the appearances.

Thus the order and regularity in appearances, which we call *Nature*, are put there by ourselves. We could never find them in appearances if it weren't that we, or the nature of our mind, had first put them there. For this unity of Nature has to be a necessary one, an *a priori* certain unity of the

A 126 connection of appearances; and this couldn't be established *a priori* if it weren't that •subjective grounds for such unity are built into the basic powers of our mind, and that •these subjective conditions are also objectively valid.

I have explained what the understanding is, in several different ways:

- an active cognitive faculty (in contrast to the passivity of sensibility),
- a power of thought,
- a faculty of concepts,
- a faculty of judgments.

When you look at them carefully, these accounts are all equivalent. •And now I add yet another: Understanding is

- the *faculty of rules*.

This way of characterising it is more useful, and comes closer to understanding's essential nature, •than do any of the other four. Sensibility gives us *forms* (of intuition), whereas understanding gives us *rules*. The understanding is always busy in investigating appearances so as to detect some rule in them. Some rules are called 'laws'; they are the objective ones, the rules that necessarily depend on knowledge of the object. We learn many laws through experience, but they are only special cases of higher laws; and the highest of these, of which *all* the others are special cases, issue *a priori* from the understanding itself. *They* aren't borrowed from experience; on the contrary, they have to make appearances conform to law, and so make experience possible. So the understanding isn't a mere power of formulating rules through comparison of appearances; it is itself the lawgiver of Nature. It's only through the understanding that Nature exists at all!

A 127 (•If that surprises you, I should explain that I am here using 'Nature' to refer to an empirically studiable *causal order*, not to the things or stuff that are ordered. and so Nature is the synthetic unity of the manifold of •appearances

according to rules. And •appearances can't exist outside us—they exist only in our sensibility. Thus, Nature... is possible only in the unity of self-awareness. And so the unity of self-awareness is the transcendental basis for conformity to law—the conformity that appearances *must* have if they are to belong to one •person's experience. What brings items within the scope of a unitary self-awareness is a rule, and these rules are the business of the understanding. Thus,

- all appearances, considered as possible experiences, lie *a priori* in the understanding, and receive from it their formal possibility,

just as

- all appearances, considered as mere intuitions, lie in the sensibility, and are, as regards their form, possible only through it.

...Certainly, empirical laws can never derive their origin from pure understanding, any more than the pure form of sensible intuition can, unaided, explain the inexhaustible multiplicity of appearances. But all empirical laws are only special cases of the pure laws of understanding. These pure laws give appearances their orderly character, just as these same appearances, despite the differences of their empirical form, must still fit the pure form of sensibility.

A 128

So pure understanding is, through the categories, the law of the synthetic unity of all appearances, and thereby it first and basically makes experience possible as regards its form. This is all that I had to establish in the transcendental deduction of the categories, namely, to make two things comprehensible: (1) this relation of •understanding to •sensibility, and through sensibility to •all objects of experience, and (2) the objective validity of the pure *a priori* concepts. Achieving (2) also involved establishing the origin of those concepts, and showing their truth.

*Stated briefly: This deduction of the pure concepts of understanding is correct and is the only one possible*

A 129 If the objects with which our knowledge has to deal were **things in themselves**, we couldn't have *a priori* concepts of them. For in that case, where could we get the concepts from? If we derived them from the object (leaving aside the question how we could have any knowledge of the object), our concepts would be merely empirical, not *a priori*. And if we derived them from ourselves, there would be no assurance that they applied to any objects rather than being altogether empty. But if on the other hand we are dealing only with **appearances**, it's not just possible but *necessary* that certain *a priori* concepts should precede empirical knowledge of objects. An object that is an appearance is something *in ourselves*, because a mere state of our sensibility can't be found outside us! So here are three propositions about all these appearances (and thus about all objects that I have dealings with):

- They are all in me; and so
- They are states of myself—my one and only individual self; and so
- There is complete unity of them in one and the same self-awareness.

A 130 So any knowledge of any object has to satisfy the necessary condition for such knowledge, namely hanging together in a single consciousness in such a way as to represent the facts about some single object. Thus, the way in which the manifold of sensible representation (intuition) belongs to one consciousness precedes—lies deeper than—all knowledge of the object; it is the *intellectual form* of such knowledge, and itself constitutes a formal *a priori* knowledge of all objects, to the extent that they are thought (categories). [The remainder of this paragraph expands what Kant wrote, not *very* much but in ways that the ·small dots· convention can't easily indicate.] Our knowledge

deals solely with appearances, and a crucial fact about appearances is that they can't exist except in ourselves; so *we* have to embody the conditions that make them possible; *we* have to provide the connection and unity that are needed for experience to be possible. This involves the synthesis of the manifold through pure imagination, leading to the unity of all representations in relation to basic self-awareness; all this is *in us* and is prior to all empirical knowledge. All this explains why pure concepts of understanding are *a priori* possible, why indeed (when it comes to experience) they are *necessary*. These are the lines along which I have developed my deduction of the categories; there was no other way to do it. ·THAT ENDS THE 'TRANSCENDENTAL DEDUCTION' IN (A) KANT'S FIRST EDITION. WE NOW PICK UP FROM PAGE 61.·

\* \* \* \* \*

The illustrious Locke didn't take account of these considerations. So when he encountered pure concepts of the understanding *in* experience, he derived them *from* this experience; and then he proceeded so inconsistently that he ventured to use them in an attempt to get knowledge going far beyond the boundary of all experience. David Hume recognised that such knowledge could be achieved only if these concepts had an *a priori* origin. But he couldn't explain how we could have concepts that •in themselves are not combined in the understanding—i.e. aren't linked by logical necessity—yet •are necessarily combined in the object. ·A possible explanation for this· never occurred to him, namely the possibility that the understanding itself might, by means of these concepts, be the originator of the experience in which its objects are encountered. These gaps in his thinking forced him to derive these concepts from experience. ·For the concept of *cause* his account went like this:·

Our concept of *cause* comes from a subjective necessity—i.e. a *custom* of expecting events of one kind to be followed by events of a certain other kind—which arises from the frequent association in experience of events of those two kinds. And we then wrongly think of this subjective necessity as objective, i.e. we think that our compulsion to expect an F event is the necessity that an F event will occur.

128 On this basis he declared, quite consistently, that it is impossible to go beyond the boundary of experience with these concepts and the principles they give rise to. But the empirical derivation to which Locke and Hume resorted can't be squared with the fact of the scientific *a priori* knowledge that we actually have—our *a priori* knowledge of pure mathematics and general natural science. The existence of that knowledge shows that the empirical derivation is wrong.

Locke left the door wide open to fanatical extremism, because once reason is given a free hand—rather than being constrained by a critique such as I am offering—it won't let itself be reined in by any vague injunctions to be moderate; whereas Hume's position led to utter scepticism, since he thought he had found that what is generally held to be reason is really a deception in our faculty of knowledge. I'm now going to see whether I can't successfully steer human reason between these two rocks, keeping it within its proper boundaries while giving it a free hand over the entire field of its appropriate activities.

First a word of explanation about the categories. They are concepts of an object in general, by means of which the intuition of the object is regarded as determined with respect to one of the logical functions for judgments. [Kant means something like this: '... by means of which the person grasps how the intuition of the object is to be made the subject-matter of a judgment of one of the basic kinds'. The rest of the paragraph—which expands a

bit on what Kant wrote—*may* help with this, but don't worry if it doesn't. The content of this paragraph will come up again later in more accessible ways.] For example, the role of a categorical judgment is to relate a subject to a predicate, e.g. 'All bodies are divisible'. To make that judgment, you need

- the concept of *body*,
- the concept of *divisible*, and
- the logical features of the categorical or subject-predicate form.

But those aren't enough. Given just those, you might just as well come up with the judgment 'Something divisible is a body'. What you need in addition to those three items is an addition to the logical notion of *subject in a categorical judgment*, namely

- the category of *substance*.

It's clear that *that* applies to *body* and not to *divisible*, so you'll be able to get the judgment the right way around. Something similar holds for all the other categories.

## 2. Transcendental deduction of the pure concepts of the understanding

### 2/1 The possibility of combination as such

[This would be a good time to re-read the note about 'manifold' on page 20.] The manifold of representations can be given in an intuition that is merely sensible, i.e. merely something that is passively received; and the form of this intuition can lie *a priori* in our faculty of representation without being anything more than the way in which the subject—i.e. the person's mind—is affected. To express this in terms of one of the two *a priori* forms of intuition: you can have an intuition that is organized spatially because that organisation is imposed on it by your faculty of intuition, this being something in respect of which you are passive—you don't *do* anything to make the intuition spatial. But the combination—i.e.

130 the pulling-together-into-a-unity—of a manifold can never come to us through the senses; so it can't be part of the pure form of passive intuition ·as space and time are·; this combination is an *act* of the *active department* of the faculty of representation—the one we call 'understanding', to distinguish it from ·the passive department, which we call· 'sensibility'. Using this terminology, then: all combining is an action of the understanding; •whether or not we are conscious of it, and •whether it's a pulling-together of the manifold of intuition (empirical or non-empirical) or of several concepts. I want to give this action the general label 'synthesis'; this label reminds us that •we can't represent to ourselves anything as combined in the object unless we ourselves have previously combined it, and that •*combination* is the only one of all our representations that isn't given through objects. [The word 'synthesis' (the same word in German) is supposed to remind us of this because its Greek source means 'putting together', and therefore—Kant thinks—'synthesis' has *activity* built into its meaning.] Because synthesis is an act of the mind's self-activity, it can only be carried out by the mind itself. It is easy to see that •there is just *one* basic kind of action that is equally at work in all combination, and that •the pulling-apart (analysis) that seems to be its opposite in fact always presupposes it; for where the understanding hasn't previously put something together it has nothing to pull apart.

But the concept of combination involves not just

- the concept of the manifold, and
- the concept of its synthesis,

but also

- the concept of the unity of the manifold.

Combination is the representation of the synthetic unity of the manifold. . . . So the representation of this unity can't arise from the combination; rather, by being added to the

representation of the manifold, it's what makes the concept of combination possible in the first place. This unity, which precedes *a priori* all concepts of combination, is not the *category* of unity of which I have spoken [see the Table on page 52]. ·Here is why·. 131

- All the categories are based on fundamental kinds of judgment.
- A judgment of any of these kinds can be made only if some combination . . . . is already thought. So
- The category ·*unity*· presupposes that some combination has already occurred, and that the concepts are already unified. Therefore
- We have to look to an earlier stage in the whole process for this unity ·that combination involves·.

Where we have to look is to whatever it is that contains the basis for the unity of different concepts in judgments . . . .

## 2/2 The basic synthetic unity of self-awareness

*I think* must be able to accompany all my representations. If I could have a representation that wasn't accompanied by *I think*, that would mean that something was represented in me that couldn't be *thought* at all; and such a representation is impossible, or else at least it would be nothing *to me*. The representation that can be given prior to all thinking is called 'intuition'. Thus all the manifold of intuition has a necessary relation to the *I think* in the mind in which this manifold is to be encountered. But this representation—i.e. the thought *I think*—is something done by the •active department of the faculty of representation, which means that it doesn't belong to •sensibility. ·I shall now introduce three bits of terminology, the explanations of which will help to give you a grasp of the **self-awareness** [Kant writes *Apperzeption*—see note on page 38] that is expressed in the representation *I think*, which underlies our whole mental life·. (1) I call it **pure** self- 132

awareness, to distinguish it from empirical self-awareness. It is presupposed by *all* my thoughts and intuitions, so it can't result from my surveying myself, looking inwards to see what I find. (2) I also call it **basic** self-awareness, because it •is the self-consciousness [this is a literal translation of Kant's term *Selbstbewußtsein*] that produces the representation *I think* (which must be able to accompany all other representations. . . .) and therefore •can't be accompanied by •or in any way derived from• any further representation. (3) I call the unity of this self-awareness **transcendental**, as a way of indicating that it can be a source of *a priori* knowledge. How can that be? Well, the manifold representations that are given in a certain intuition wouldn't all be *my* representations if they didn't all belong to one self-consciousness; and that means that for them to be my representations (even if I don't consciously think 'Those are mine!') they must satisfy the necessary •condition for standing together in some self-consciousness. Thus, my *a priori* knowledge that any representations that are *mine* must satisfy a certain •condition enables me to have more *a priori* knowledge than that, as soon as I know what the •condition in question is.

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[This next paragraph is a somewhat free rendering (not tagged by small •dots• or. . . ellipses) of what Kant wrote. There seemed to be no other way of making this obscure paragraph at least somewhat accessible.] The unitary always-the-same self-awareness that accompanies any manifold given in intuition involves a synthesis or pulling-together of the various representations of which the given manifold is made up; and it's possible only through the consciousness of this synthesis. Don't confuse this with the *empirical* consciousness that accompanies different representations; there is nothing always-the-same about *that*, and it has no bearing on the identity of the mind in question. What *does* make the different representations that I have belong to *one* mind? I don't bring this about

by accompanying each representation with consciousness, but rather by combining the different representations *with one another* and being conscious of this synthesis of them. Therefore it is only because I can

- combine a manifold of given representations in one consciousness

that I can

- represent there being a single consciousness throughout these representations.

That is to say: the analytical unity of self-awareness is only possible under the presupposition of some synthetic one.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> In an extremely compact and difficult footnote, Kant seeks to generalize what he has said about self-awareness etc. to all conceptual thinking. In the main text he has equated

- the representations all relate thus and so to one consciousness

with

- the representations all combine in a certain way with one another;

and in the footnote he equates

- this property is possessed by a thing

with

- this property combines in a certain way with other properties.

He applies this to any thought one might have of a *property*—say the abstract thought of *red*. Just because the concept of *red* is a 'common concept', i.e. represents a general property that might be possessed by various things, the thought of *red* has built into it the thought of possible combinations that red might enter into, i.e. the different things that might be red. (Actually, Kant speaks of combining 'a property' with 'other representations', but that is presumably a slip. He must have meant that •a property combines with other •properties, or that a •representation of a property combines with other •representations (of other properties).) From this he infers something about analysis being possible only if there

135 So the thought 'These intuitively given representations are all mine' is tantamount to the thought that I do—or at least can—unite them in one self-consciousness. This thought doesn't amount to consciousness of the synthesis of the representations, but it does presuppose the possibility of that synthesis. Why? Because I'm not in a position to call these various representations *mine* unless I can •comprehend their manifold in one consciousness; if I couldn't •do that, my *self* would be as multicoloured and various as are the representations of which I am conscious. •In effect, there would be no such item as *myself*, and Hume would be right! •All my •determinate thinking has *a priori* underlying it the •identity of self-awareness, which in turn is based on the •synthetic unity of the manifold of intuitions, as given *a priori*. But combination doesn't lie in the objects; you can't borrow it from them (as it were) by perceiving it in them and taking it from there up into the understanding. Rather,

it is something that the understanding *does*. What the understanding *is* is the faculty of •combining *a priori* and •bringing the manifold of given representations under unity of self-awareness. This is the supreme principle in the whole sphere of human knowledge.

[What this 'principle' is, and why Kant is about to call it 'analytic', can be gathered from the paragraph 'Although this last. . .' on page 78.] Now this principle of the necessary unity of self-awareness is, to be sure, an identical and thus an •analytic proposition, but •it isn't trivial, because• it reveals as necessary a •synthesis of the intuitively given manifold—a synthesis without which the thoroughgoing identity of self-consciousness couldn't

has previously been synthesis. The footnote ends with this rather mysterious sentence: 'So the synthetic unity of self-awareness is the highest point, to which one must affix all use of the understanding, even the whole of logic and transcendental philosophy; this faculty is indeed the understanding itself.'

be thought. Why? Because through the *I* as a simple representation, nothing manifold is given. The only way a manifold can be **given** is through intuition, which is distinct from the *I*; and the only way a manifold can be **thought** is through combination—i.e. through the elements of the manifold being combined—in a consciousness. If there were an understanding through which. . . a manifold could be given, that would be an *intuitive understanding*; •but *our* understanding isn't like that; it isn't intuitive, but intellectual. All our •understanding can do is to •think; for intuitions •to be •given to us• we must go to our •senses. When a manifold of •representations is given to me in an intuition, what makes me conscious of my identical self •in this experience• is that I call •them one and all *my* representations, constituting *one* intuition. This amounts to saying that I am conscious to myself *a priori* of the synthesis that this required. •What• this •synthesis achieves• is called the *basic synthetic unity of self-awareness*. All representations that are given to me enter into this unity, but they must be *brought* into it by means of a synthesis.

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### **2/3 The principle of the synthetic unity of self-awareness is the supreme principle of all use of the understanding**

•We now have two supreme principles—one laid out early in this work, the other introduced just recently. To help get the latter into perspective, I remind you first of the former. •The Transcendental Aesthetic taught that the supreme principle governing how intuitions can relate to sensibility was this:

- (1) All the manifold of sensibility satisfy the formal conditions of space and time.

The supreme principle governing how intuitions relate to the understanding is this:

- (2) All the manifold of intuition satisfy the conditions

of the basic synthetic unity of self-awareness.<sup>11</sup>

137 To the extent that the manifold representations of intuition are given to us, they conform to principle (1). To the extent that they can be combined in one consciousness, they satisfy principle (2). Why? Because in the absence of that synthetic unity there wouldn't be items sharing the act of self-awareness, 'I think', i.e. there wouldn't be items gathered together in a single self-consciousness; in which case nothing would be thought or known.

*Understanding* is the faculty of knowledge. Our items of knowledge consist in the determinate relation of given representations to an object. And an *object* is something the concept of which unites the manifold of some given intuition. ·Suppose I have a variety of intuitions—a 'manifold'—involving whiteness, squareness, hardness, and a certain smell; I unify these by the thought 'a peppermint!'; so the object of this manifold is a peppermint·. Now, all unifying of representations requires unity of consciousness in the synthesis of them; ·the scatter of sensory impressions can't be pulled together by the thought that they are all appearances of one single peppermint unless a completely unitary *I* does the pulling together, while being aware that that's what *it* is doing·. Consequently the unity of consciousness is

<sup>11</sup> Space and time and all their parts are *intuitions*, and therefore they and the manifold they contain are *particulars* [see note on 'intuition' on page 8]. So they are *not* concepts through which

•many representations contain a single consciousness,

but rather ·representations through which·

•a single consciousness contains a single representation which contains many representations.

So they are encountered as composite; so the unity of consciousness, as synthetic and yet basic, is to be found in them. Their status as particulars has important applications (see **2/11** on page 85).

what underlies the relation of •representations to an object, thus •their objective validity, and consequently •their status as items of knowledge. So it's only because of the unity of consciousness that there can be any such faculty as the understanding.

The principle of the basic synthetic unity of self-awareness, therefore, is the first pure knowledge that the understanding has, and is the basis for all the other uses of the understanding. It owes nothing to any conditions of sensible intuition. ·You might think that this isn't so because there is some knowledge—and thus some use of the understanding—involving only the forms of intuition, such as knowledge of *space*. But that is wrong·. The mere form of outer sensible intuition, space, isn't •knowledge; all it does is to serve up the manifold of intuition *a priori* for •possible knowledge. In order to know anything in space (such as a line) I must *draw* it, and thus synthetically bring about a definite combination of the given manifold. . . . The synthetic unity of consciousness therefore sets an *objective* pre-condition for any knowledge. It's not merely something that I myself need in order to know an object; it's something to which every intuition must conform if it is to become an object for me; since otherwise, without this synthesis, the manifold wouldn't be united in one consciousness.

Although this last proposition makes •synthetic unity a condition of all thinking, it is in itself (I repeat) analytic; for all it says is that all *my* representations in any given intuition must satisfy the necessary condition for me to be able to ascribe them to a single self as *my* representations, and be able to grasp them all as synthetically combined in one self-awareness, through the all-purpose expression 'I think'.

But this principle doesn't hold for •every possible understanding, but only for •one that isn't *given* any manifold

through its pure self-awareness in the representation 'I am'.  
If there is an understanding such that

- 139 •through its self-consciousness the manifold of intuition is at the same time given, i.e. •through its representation the objects of the representation would at the same time exist,

that understanding wouldn't need a special act of synthesising the manifold in order for its various elements to belong to a single consciousness. The human understanding does need such an act, because all it does is to *think*; it doesn't *intuit*; which means that any manifold of intuition that comes before it isn't of *its* making but is brought before it by the faculty of intuition, which is why the understanding has to *do* something in order to pull this material together. The principle I am discussing is the inescapable first principle of the human understanding, so that we can't form even the slightest conception of any other kind of understanding—e.g. one that does the intuiting for itself, or that has a sensible intuition but not one grounded in space and time. [It may help you to grasp all this if you are reminded of these Kantian fundamentals: For Kant, 'intellectual' = 'active', and 'sensible' = 'passive'. Human intuition is sensible; we don't *create* our sensory input—it just comes to us. An active faculty of intuition would involve *making* one's intuitions; for Kant, that means that such a faculty would be intellectual; and he equates having an intellectual faculty of intuition with having an understanding that intuits, i.e. that makes its intuitions.]

#### 2/4 What the objective unity of self-consciousness is

[This one-paragraph section is especially hard to follow, but its gist seems to be this: There are three levels of *unity* to be distinguished and understood. The most basic one is:

- (1) the subjective unity of consciousness: this is a state of inner sense, in which various items are unified in the thought 'I think', i.e. in which they are claimed

as *mine*.

Less basic than that is:

(2) the objective unity of consciousness—also called the transcendental unity of self-awareness—in which I pull together various items in my sensory field and unify them as all being *of* some one object. One might think of the 'peppermint' example on page 78 as an example.

There is definite order of dependence here: (1) is brought about, and that makes it possible for me to create (2). There is no dependence running in the other direction: I can't combine items through the concept of an object unless they have already been brought together as *mine*. And then there is:

(3) the empirical unity of self-awareness or self-consciousness.

It seems clear that in Kant's view (2) depends on (1), while (3) depends on (2) and thus indirectly on (1). But his remarks about what (3) *is* are confusing; which is especially regrettable because we can't get (2) straight without understanding (3), and the announced purpose of this paragraph, as given in its title, is precisely to get (2) straight! Kant's view may be as follows. He is tying

- (1) to my acknowledging items as *mine*,  
(2) to my construing items as *perceptions of an objective world*, and  
(3) to any *further* interpretations I make of my sensory input.

If this is right, then (3) consists in *whatever it is that I make of my sensory inputs* over and above the central fact of taking them to be perceptions of a world, i.e. to be 'objectively valid'. Kant says that while there is a kind of necessity about (1), and about (2), everything pertaining to (3) is contingent. What I make of my sensory inputs—beyond the 'making of

that is involved in (2)—depends on my circumstances, what I remember my past sensory inputs to have been like, and so on. If this is right, then the ‘peppermint’ example really illustrates (3) rather than (2).—Or perhaps Kant means (2) to include •more than merely construing my sensory inputs as perceptions of an objective world, though •less than *all* my applications of objectivity-concepts to my data; in which case the line between (2) and (3) would have to be drawn differently. But in any case it is clear that (2) must be circumscribed so as to allow (3) to have room to breathe.—Kant will soon mention ‘reproductive imagination’. In a passage sketched between brackets on page 83 he implies that the work of reproductive imagination is to create instances of (3) the *empirical* unity of self-awareness. (This paragraph has used both ‘self-awareness’ and ‘self-consciousness’, following Kant’s *Apperzeption* and *Selbstbewußtsein*; but it is absolutely clear, here and throughout the work, that for him those two terms are synonymous.)]

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**2/5 The logical form of all judgments consists in the objective unity of the self-awareness of the concepts that the judgments contain**

I have never been able accept the explanation that the logicians give of what a *judgment* is. They say that a judgment is the representation of a relation between two concepts. There is something positively wrong in this, namely that it fits only categorical judgments, not hypothetical and disjunctive ones, which contain a relation not of •concepts but of •judgments.

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But I shan’t argue with them about this here, though it’s an error that has had many troublesome consequences. The point I want to make here is that this account of judgments doesn’t say *what* the relation is between the two concepts. •I am now in a position to say what the relation is.

Let us investigate more precisely the relation of given

items of knowledge in every judgment, being careful not to confuse

that relation, which is the understanding’s business, with

the relations that hold because of laws of the reproductive imagination

—of which the former is objectively valid and the latter only subjectively valid. When I inquire into this, I find that a judgment is nothing but the way to bring given items of knowledge to the objective unity of self-awareness. That’s the role of the little relational word ‘is’ in a judgment: to distinguish the •objective unity of given representations from the •subjective. [In terms of section 2/4 on page 79, Kant is here distinguishing (2) objective unity from (3) empirical unity which is subjective; he is not distinguishing (2) from (1) the synthetic unity of self-awareness—which is also ‘subjective’ but in a different way.] For the word ‘is’ designates the relation of the representations to basic self-awareness and its necessary unity, even if the judgment in which ‘is’ or ‘are’ occurs is empirical, and hence contingent, such as ‘Bodies are heavy’. •Let us be careful about how the notion of *necessity* comes in here. I’m not saying that these representations *necessarily belong to one another* in the empirical intuition. My point is that they belong to one another *in virtue of the necessary unity of self-awareness* in the synthesis of intuitions. [The rest of this paragraph is brutally difficult. Its gist is this: We have to distinguish two ways in which two representations can be related. (a) They can be related through the ‘laws of association’—what Locke called ‘the association of ideas’. That is, they can come together in my mind because of some empirical fact about how they occur there—usually an empirical fact about how they have occurred together in my mind. That yields a *subjective* judgment, such as ‘When I carry a body, I feel an impression

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of weight'. (b) They can be related through the principles that govern how representations have to be shaped up if they are to turn into knowledge—all of these principles being derived, Kant says, from 'the principle of the transcendental unity of self-awareness'. That's the only way to get an *objective* judgment such as 'It, this body, is heavy'. This judgment says that these two representations—of *body* and of *weight*—are combined **in the object**. That is, whatever state I may be in, those representations are combined. This is different from saying merely that they are found together in perception, which doesn't yield an objective judgment, no matter how often they are found together. That's the crucial distinction that has to be grasped: (a) combined **in my mind**, (b) combined **in the object**.]

**2/6 All sensible intuitions conform to the categories, because otherwise their manifold can't come together in one consciousness**

- 143 When I have an intuition that is various or complex in some way, i.e. involves a manifold, it *must* conform to the basic synthetic unity of self-awareness, because that's the only way the elements in a manifold can be brought together in a single intuition [see page 79]. But that action of the understanding—the one that brings the manifold of given representations (whether intuitions or concepts) within the scope of a single self-awareness—is done through the basic kinds of *judgment*—see **2/5**. So a manifold that is given in a single empirical intuition is shaped up for one of the basic kinds of judgment, by means of which it is brought to one consciousness. Well, the logical shape of any of these kinds of judgment is *a category* (see **3/3** . . . . Therefore the manifold in any given intuition necessarily conforms to the categories.

**2/7 Remark**

·As I have just been arguing·, a manifold contained in an intuition that I call *mine* is represented, through the synthesis of the understanding, as belonging to the *necessary* unity of self-consciousness, and this takes place by means of the category. . . . This shows that

the •empirical consciousness of a given manifold in a single intuition is subject to a •pure *a priori* self-consciousness,

just as

•empirical intuitions are subject to a •pure sensible intuition, which also has an *a priori* status.

In the opening proposition of this subsection, therefore, we make a start on a deduction [see the start of this chapter, on page 57] of the pure concepts of the understanding, ·i.e. the categories·. Now, the categories arise solely in the understanding, independently of sensibility; so in developing the deduction of them I must filter out any •facts about how the manifold for an empirical intuition is given, so as to attend only to •the unity that the intuition gets from the understanding by means of the category. Later on (**2/12** I'll show, from the way the empirical intuition is given in sensibility, that its unity must be just the unity the category prescribes to the manifold of a given intuition,. . . .according to **2/6** . That's when the aim of this deduction of the categories will be fully attained—when I explain their *a priori* validity for all objects of our senses.

In the above proof, however, I still couldn't abstract from the fact that the manifold to be intuited must already be given prior to, and independently of, the synthesis of understanding. I'm not trying to say *how* this happens. Consider the possibility of

an understanding that does the intuiting itself—a divine understanding, for example, which wouldn't

•represent objects given to it ·from elsewhere· but would •produce its objects at the same time as representing them.

For knowledge of that kind the categories would have no significance at all. They are only rules for an understanding that can't do anything except *think*, i.e. bring to the unity of self-awareness the synthesis of the manifold that it received in intuition *from elsewhere*. Such an understanding doesn't unaided know anything; all it does is to combine and order the raw material of knowledge, namely intuition, which must be given to it by the object. We can't explain why •our understanding can bring about the unity of self-awareness  
146 *a priori* only by means of categories, or why •this involves just precisely these twelve categories—any more than we can explain why •we have just precisely these twelve basic kinds of judgment, or why •space and time are the only forms of our possible intuition.

**2/8 The only work a category can do in the knowledge of things involves applying it to objects of experience**

Thus, thinking of an object is not the same as knowing an object. There are two elements in knowledge: •the concept through which an object is thought (the category), and •the intuition through which the object is given. If an intuition corresponding to the concept couldn't be given at all, then the concept would have the •form of a thought but it wouldn't have •any •matter•, any object, so it couldn't bring about knowledge of anything at all. . . . So the only way our thinking of an object through a pure concept of the understanding can become *knowledge* is by the concept's being related to objects of the senses. How do the senses come into this?  
147 Through the fact that the only intuitions *we* can have are sensible (see the Aesthetic). Sensible intuition is either •pure intuition (space and time) or •empirical intuition of whatever

it is that sensations immediately represent to us as real in space and time [see note on page 28]. By fixing on pure intuition we can get *a priori* items of knowledge of objects (in mathematics); but this knowledge is only of their form as appearances, and doesn't touch the question of whether there ·are things that are being intuited in this form, or (therefore) the question of whether· there *can* be things that *must be* intuited in this form. Consequently mathematical concepts aren't by themselves items of knowledge except on the supposition that there are *things* that can't be presented to us except in conformity with the form of that pure sensible intuition. Now, things *in* space and time are given only as perceptions (representations accompanied by sensation), which means that they are given only through •empirical representation. So the pure concepts of the understanding, even when they are applied to *a priori* intuitions (as they are in mathematics), provide knowledge only to the extent that these *a priori* intuitions—and through them the concepts of the understanding also—can be applied to •empirical intuitions. Consequently, the categories give us knowledge of things. . . .only through their possible application to •empirical intuition, i.e. they serve only for the possibility of •empirical knowledge. Our name for such knowledge is 'experience'. So the conclusion we reach is ·the one stated  
148 as the heading of this subsection·: The only work a category can do in the knowledge of things involves applying it to objects of experience.

**2/9**

That proposition is of the greatest importance, for it •sets the limits for the use of the pure concepts of the understanding in regard to objects, just as the transcendental aesthetic •sets the limits for the use of the pure form of our sensible intuition. Space and time are valid as conditions that objects

must satisfy if they are to be given to us, but only within limits. What limits? Answer: space and time have that status only with respect to objects of the senses, which implies that they have that status only within the limits of experience. Beyond that boundary, they don't represent anything at all, for they are *in* the senses and have no reality outside of them. The pure concepts of the understanding are free from this limitation; they extend to objects of intuition generally, including intuitions that are nothing like ours (though only to intuitions that are sensible and not intellectual, i.e. passive and not active). But this further stretch of concepts beyond *our* sensible intuition doesn't do anything for us. For out there they are merely empty concepts of objects; we can't even judge whether there *could* be objects for them. . . . The only way the categories can have sense and significance is through *our* sensible and empirical intuition.

[Kant devotes a further paragraph to emphasising and elaborating this point. The paragraph seems not to add anything to the doctrinal content of the work.]

### 2/10 The application of the categories to objects of the senses as such

150 The pure concepts of the understanding are related through mere understanding to objects of intuition as such—i.e. to objects of *any kind* of intuition as long as it's sensible = passive; it doesn't have to be *our* kind. Just because of this breadth of applicability, the categories can only be mere forms of thought, conveying no information about any determinate object. Well, then, what enables us to have *a priori* knowledge through the understanding? Two things. (a) The synthesis or combination that is embodied in the categories is the one that results in the unity of self-awareness—i.e. that enables me to claim items as *mine*. That is the basis for the possibility of *a priori* knowledge through the under-

standing; it's purely intellectual, and is transcendental in the sense of 'having to do with the possibility of knowledge' [see page 26]. (b) There is in us a certain basic form of *a priori* sensible intuition that depends on our *passive* faculty of representation (sensibility). The understanding can *actively* work up these passively given representations into a manifold that squares with the synthetic unity of self-awareness; so it can *think* that synthetic unity, which means that it is thinking something that is a necessary condition not only for our identity as experiencing minds, but also for anything that is to be an object of our sensible intuition. That's how the categories, though in themselves they are mere forms of thought, come to have objective reality, i.e. come to be applicable to objects that can be given to us in intuition. But these objects are only appearances; for we can't have *a priori* intuition of anything but appearances. 151

We have to distinguish two syntheses that the understanding performs. Both of them are transcendental, not merely because they happen *a priori* but also because they are the basis for the possibility of other *a priori* knowledge. (1) *Figurative* synthesis is the synthesis of the manifold of sensible intuition that I have been discussing. As I'll show in a moment, it involves a certain use of imagination. (2) *Combination*, which is the synthesis that the understanding performs, just through categories and without help from imagination, when it is brought to bear on the manifold of any intuition.

[The paragraph in which Kant explains this distinction, and explains what imagination has to do with (1) as distinct from (2), is defeatingly difficult. Here are a few things in it that seem to come fairly clear. Kant calls imagination the faculty for representing in intuition an object that is *not itself present*, and distinguishes two uses of it. The fairly humdrum everyday use of it is what he calls 'reproductive

imagination'; it is what's involved in such thoughts as 'This is like the one I saw yesterday', and also involved in the 'laws of association' according to which certain appearances cause us to have thoughts of certain others. Very different from this is 'productive imagination'. The activities that *it* is involved in are genuinely *active*; Kant holds that imagination is an active faculty, although in a certain way it 'belongs to sensibility', which is by definition passive; that tension is not clearly explained. In its role as active, the imagination works with the understanding, or works as a branch of the understanding, to bring about the synthesis that makes possible the unity of self-awareness. That is the (imaginative) figurative synthesis. The (intellectual) synthesis of combination is what the understanding does when it surveys the given world and makes judgments about what causes what, which things are bigger than which others, which substances have which properties, and so on.]

\* \* \*

..152 This is a good place to clear up the paradox that must have struck everyone in my account of the form of inner sense [see page 33], namely: the thesis that

153 inner sense presents us to our consciousness only as  
 •we *appear to* ourselves, not as •we *are in* ourselves;  
 because we intuit ourselves only as we are internally  
*affected*.

This seems to be contradictory, since we would have to relate to ourselves passively, ·i.e. would •passively undergo what we •actively do to ourselves. This will seem like a paradox or self-contradiction· because it is customary in the systems of psychology to treat •inner sense as identical with •the faculty of self-awareness. I carefully distinguish those from one another, ·which is why the seeming paradox really isn't one. I now explain this·.

What determines inner sense is the understanding and its basic power of combining the manifold of intuition, i.e. bringing it within the reach of self-awareness. . . . Now our human understanding has no power to produce intuitions; it can't even, with intuitions given in sensibility, take them up *into itself* in order to pull them together as a manifold of its own intuition (so to speak). The sensibility comes up with a manifold that conforms to the form of intuition, the understanding determines this internally—getting no help *from* sensibility, but acting *on* sensibility—and the unity of that act of determining is the synthesis that the understanding performs. Under the label 'transcendental synthesis of the imagination', it exercises that •action on the •passive subject. . . .and so we rightly say that in this process the inner sense is *affected*. Self-awareness with its synthetic unity is *not* the same as inner sense. Consider how unlike they are! The synthetic unity of self-awareness

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- is the source of all combination, and so
- applies to the manifold of intuitions in general, and
- applies, in the role of *categories*, to objects in general, doing this prior to all sensible intuition.

Inner sense, on the other hand,

- contains the mere form of intuition, without any pulled-together manifold in it; so
- it doesn't yet contain any determinate intuition at all.

A determinate intuition—·i.e. a detailed sensory state·—is possible only through. . . .the act that I have called 'the figurative synthesis'.

We can always perceive this in ourselves. We can't think of a line without *drawing* it in thought, or a circle without *tracing* it ·in thought·. We can't represent the three dimensions of space without *placing* three lines perpendicular to each other at a point. We can't even represent time except by *drawing* a straight line (to serve as our exter-

155 nal figurative representation of time), thereby focussing on the stretched-out-through-time aspect of this state of inner sense. [Kant now has an extremely obscure sentence about motion, leading on to something easier to grasp:] So the understanding doesn't •find some sort of combination of the manifold ready waiting for it in inner sense; it •produces the combination, thereby •affecting inner sense.

How can the *I* that •actively• •thinks be **distinct** from the *I* that •passively• intuits itself. . . .and yet be **identical with** it as the same subject? [In this next sentence, the phrase 'an object that is thought' means 'an object towards which thought is directed'. That is, 'thinking' and 'thought' are an active/passive pair, analogous to 'kicking' and 'kicked'.] How can I say that *I* as an intelligence, a *thinking* subject, know myself as an object that is *thought* by being given to myself in intuition? . . . .  
 156 These questions are no harder and no easier to answer than this: How can I be an object to myself at all, and especially an object of my intuition and inner perceptions? [The remainder of this paragraph is, in Kant's version of it, a single sentence.] But that it really must be so can be clearly shown, if we let space count as merely a pure form of the appearances of outer sense. •Here is how•. Although time isn't itself an object of outer intuition at all, we can't represent it to ourselves except through the image of a line that we •mentally• draw; without this sort of representation we couldn't know that time is one-dimensional. Similarly, when we want to settle •how long some inner state of ours lasted, or •when it occurred, we have to get the answers through •correlating those items with• events in the outer world. Thus, we have to settle •the details of inner sense as appearances in time in just the same way as we settle the •details of outer sense in space; so if we don't mind allowing that we know objects through outer sense only because in it we are *affected from outside*, we oughtn't to have trouble accepting that through inner sense

we intuit ourselves only because we are *internally affected by ourselves*, which is to say that our inner intuitions tell us about ourselves only as we appear, not as we are in ourselves. . . .

## 2/11

In contrast with that, in the . . . .basic synthetic unity of self-awareness what I am conscious of is not 157

- myself as I appear to myself, or
- myself, as I am in myself.

All I am conscious of is *that* I am, •i.e. that I exist•. In having this representation I am thinking, not intuiting. Now, for me to have *knowledge* of myself I must have—in addition to the •act of thinking that brings the manifold of every intuition to the unity of self-awareness—a definite sort of •passive• intuition through which this manifold is *given*. It follows that although •my own existence is not indeed appearance (let alone mere illusion!), any thought about •what I am like has to be based on. . . . the particular way in which the manifold that I combine is given in inner intuition. So I have no knowledge of myself as I am, but only as I appear to myself. My *consciousness* of myself is therefore far from being *knowledge* of myself, despite all the categories that •are at my disposal to• constitute the general *object*-thought. . . .  
 158 For any knowledge of an object distinct from me, I need

- the general *object*-thought (in the category), and also
- an intuition through which I add detail to that general concept.

Similarly for knowledge of myself, I need. . . .

- the thought of myself, and also •an intuition of the manifold in me, through which I add detail to this thought,

I exist as an •active• intelligence: all that this intelligence is conscious of is its power of combination; but in regard 159

to the manifold that it is to combine, this intelligence is subject to a limiting condition that it calls 'inner sense'. The limit imposed by inner sense is this: the understanding doesn't get to combine anything that isn't temporally ordered; and temporality is something that lies entirely outside the concepts of the understanding, properly so-called. . . .

### **2/12 Transcendental deduction of the always-possible use of the categories in experience**

In the metaphysical deduction, I established the *a priori* origin of the categories through their perfect fit with the universal logical functions of thinking—i.e. with what goes on in the basic kinds of judgment. In the transcendental deduction, I have shown that they can be items of *a priori* knowledge of intuitively given objects [see 2/6 and 2/7]. What I now have to explain is how the following can be possible:

The categories give us *a priori* knowledge of any objects that happen to come before our senses. I'm not talking about knowledge of the form of their intuition, because *that* knowledge doesn't involve the categories. My topic is knowledge concerning the laws that govern how objects combine with one another. Knowing this *a priori* amounts to telling Nature what its laws should be, and even making Nature possible.

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If the categories didn't make this possible, there would be no clear reason why everything that ever comes before our senses must be subject to laws that arise *a priori* from the understanding alone.

[Kant now introduces a new technical term, 'apprehension' (the German word is the same). In the early-modern period, 'apprehension' was used to mean 'consciously having in mind'. Thomas Reid wrote:

'Conceiving', 'imagining' and 'apprehending' are commonly used as synonymous in our language, signifying the same thing that logicians call 'simple apprehension'.

On page 100 we'll find Kant equating 'apprehended' with 'taken up into

empirical consciousness'. In our present context he announces that he will use the phrase 'the synthesis of apprehension' to stand for 'the assembling of the elements in the manifold in an *empirical* intuition'. This assembling or pulling-together, he says, enables us to have 'empirical consciousness' of the intuition, i.e. consciousness of it as an appearance; and he says that his word for such empirical consciousness is 'perception'.—A page or so later he writes that the •synthesis of apprehension (which is empirical) must conform to the •synthesis of self-awareness (which is intellectual and contained in the category entirely *a priori*). It is one and the same spontaneity pulling together the manifold of intuition, in one case as 'imagination' and in the other as 'understanding'. We now return to the main text.]

We have *a priori* forms of •outer as well as •inner sensible intuition in the representations of •space and •time; and what we are empirically conscious of in appearances must always fit these forms, because it can't occur without fitting them. But space and time are represented *a priori* not merely as *forms* of sensible intuition but also as *intuitions* which themselves contain a manifold—that is, as well as its being the case that the properties •spatiality and •temporality are formal features of all our intuitions, we also intuit those two individual items •space and •time, and each of those contains a manifold because each of them has parts. [There follow some dauntingly difficult remarks about kinds of synthesis, combination. What they are supposed to show can be seen in how Kant goes on:] So *all* synthesis, even the synthesis through which perception itself becomes possible, is subject to the categories; and since experience is knowledge through connected perceptions, the categories are conditions of the possibility of experience, and are therefore valid *a priori* of all objects of experience.

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162 For example, when I make the empirical intuition of a house into a perception by apprehending its manifold [= 'taking in its details'], my apprehension is based on the necessary unity of space. . . . I *draw* the house's shape (so to speak) to fit this synthetic unity of the manifold in space. But if I abstract from ·or filter out· the form of space, this very same synthetic unity has its seat in the understanding, and is the category of. . . . *quantity*. So the synthesis of apprehension, i.e. the perception, must perfectly fit that category.<sup>12</sup>

Here is another example. If I perceive water freezing, I apprehend two states—fluidity and solidity—as temporally related to each other. . . . But if I abstract from ·or filter out· the constant form of my inner intuition, namely time, this synthetic unity. . . . is the category of *cause*. In applying this to my sensibility, I supply a causal reading for everything that *happens in time*. Thus my apprehension of an event such as water freezing is subject to the concept of the cause-effect relation, and so the event itself, considered as a possible perception, is also cause-effect related. The same kind of thing holds for all the other categories.

\* \* \*

Categories are concepts that prescribe laws *a priori* to appearances, and therefore to the sum total of all appearances, which we call 'Nature'. The laws aren't derived from Nature—they don't follow Nature as their pattern—for that would make them merely empirical. That being so, how can it conceivably be the case that Nature has to follow these laws?

<sup>12</sup> In this way we prove that the empirical synthesis of apprehension *must* conform to the synthesis of self-awareness, which is intellectual and is contained completely *a priori* in the category. The activeness that brings combination into the manifold of intuition is the very same in both cases: in apprehension it does so under the title 'imagination', in self-awareness under the title 'understanding'.

How can the laws determine *a priori* the combination of the manifold of Nature, without being derived from it? Here is the solution to this riddle. It's no more surprising that

- the laws of appearances in Nature must agree with the **understanding** and its *a priori* form, i.e. its faculty of combining the manifold in general,

than that

- the appearances themselves must agree with the form of *a priori* sensible **intuition**.

For just as appearances don't exist in themselves, but only relative to the sensing subject in which they inhere, so also laws don't exist in the appearances, but only relative to that same subject, considered as having understanding. •Things in themselves would necessarily conform to *their* laws, even without an understanding that knew them. But •appearances are only representations of things of whose nature in themselves we know nothing. As mere representations, however, they aren't subject to any law of connection except what the connecting faculty prescribes. Now, the faculty that connects the manifold of sensible intuition is **imagination**, which depends on •sensibility for the manifoldness of apprehension, and on •understanding for the unity of its intellectual synthesis ·of that manifold·. Now,

- all possible perception depends on the synthesis of apprehension, and

- that empirical synthesis ·of apprehension· depends on the transcendental synthesis and thus on the categories; and therefore

- all possible perceptions are subject to the categories.

This means that the categories apply to everything that can ever reach empirical consciousness, i.e. to all appearances of Nature. . . . Thus, Nature considered in a general way just as Nature, must be lawful. But the pure faculty of understanding isn't in a position to deploy its categories so

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as to prescribe to the appearances any *a priori* laws beyond those that are required for something to be a *Nature*. . . . Specific laws, because they concern empirically determined appearances, can't be •derived from the categories, although they are all •subject to them. To know anything about specific laws, you need experience; but it's to the *a priori* laws •embodied in the categories• that you must turn for knowledge about experience as such, and about what *can* be known as an object of experience.

### 2/13 Result of this deduction of the concepts of the understanding

We can't think any object except through categories; we can't know any object that is thought except through intuitions that fit the categories. Now, all our intuitions are sensible, and when the object of this knowledge is given,  
166 the knowledge is empirical. Such knowledge is experience. *Consequently, we can't have any a priori knowledge except about objects of possible experience.*

But although this knowledge is limited to objects of experience, that doesn't mean that it is all borrowed from experience. Rather, the pure intuitions •of sensibility• as well as the pure concepts of the understanding are elements of knowledge, and both are to be encountered in us *a priori*. Now, we can conceive of only two ways in which it might be *necessary* that experience should fit the concepts of its  
167 objects: either •experience makes these concepts possible or •these concepts make experience possible. The former of these is *not* the case with the categories (or with pure sensible intuition); because they are *a priori* concepts, so they don't depend on experience. . . . That leaves us with the second way: the categories contain, on the side of the understanding, the basis for the possibility of there being any experience at all. *How* they make experience possible, and

*what* principles of the possibility of experience they provide us with in their application to appearances, will be shown more fully in the next chapter—on the transcendental use of the faculty of judgment.

You might want to suggest a middle way for concepts to align with experience—middle, that is, between the two I have mentioned. The suggestion would be that the categories are not •self-thought *a priori* first principles of our knowledge, and are not •drawn from experience; and that they are, rather, subjective *dispositions* to think in certain ways, implanted in us from the outset by our creator in such a way that our thinking exactly fits the laws of Nature along which experience runs. . . . This is at best a risky hypothesis. If we accept it, the floodgates will be opened to endless hypotheses involving 'subjective pre-determined predispositions to think  
168 in certain ways'. Anyway, this hypothesis is just wrong, because if it were right the categories would lack the *necessity* that is an essential aspect of the conception of them. The concept of cause, for example, which says that given the cause the effect *necessarily* follows, would be false if it rested only on our having been constructed in such a way that we couldn't help combining certain empirical representations in a cause-effect way. If that were how things stood, I wouldn't be able to say that the effect is combined with the cause *in the object* (i.e. necessarily), but only that I am so constituted that I can't think of this representation except as connected in that way. That's just what the sceptic wants! If it were so, then all our 'insight', based on the supposed objective validity of our judgments, would be sheer illusion; and there would be plenty of people who wouldn't concede that *they* have this subjective necessity, •and who therefore refused to talk in cause-effect terms. Their position would be impregnable: the subjective necessity must be *felt*; we can't quarrel over things that depend on how our minds are organized. . . .